

# Languages and dialects of Northwestern Europe, and their heritage

Written and published by Linden Alexander Pentecost, published on July 7<sup>th</sup> 2022. Photos also by Linden Alexander Pentecost I am a UK resident and was born in the UK. This book was published on my website [www.bookofdunbarra.co.uk](http://www.bookofdunbarra.co.uk)  
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This book is a new publication, a collective, re-formed compilation including some of my previous articles and books, with many previously unpublished articles, and many articles which I previously published but under pseudonyms, such as Joss Gospatrick and Sven Isaksen. I created these pseudonyms when in the past, I did not want to become widely known in the topics of languages and dialects, as I had previously felt discouraged. But I decided that pseudonyms were the wrong way, and so I began publishing under my own name in 2020 and 2021, and recently, I decided to form a book, including articles I previously wrote under pseudonyms, and many other articles, including not previously published. These are articles which collectively form a part of this greater topic of languages and dialects in Northwestern Europe, and their heritage. This book contains 305 pages, the first article is on page 9 and after the contents. This is page one.

I, Linden Alexander Pentecost, wrote all of these articles and took all of the photos. I am grateful to all those who have helped me, including for example the Pitemål speakers who taught me, and for those who provided me examples of their dialect in some of the tables. I also conducted the research on the Værøya and Røstland dialects for instance and wrote in Norwegian.

Please note, that the book published on amazon was soon removed by myself from publication so I could publish it for free, this book includes the only copy of that book, as the printed version on amazon was never actually printed nor archived.

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How my perceptions on the origins of Celtic languages have changed, written on the July the 7<sup>th</sup> in 2022



The photo above shows the landscape of the Isle of Skye, close to an ancient structure.

Many years ago when I was around fifteen to sixteen, I became very interested in the Goidelic languages. For some years I had already had an interest in languages, including Welsh for example, but it was 2008 when I first went to Arran and started to feel a deep connection with the Gaelic language.

At this time I was also aware of the presence of the ancient Cumbric language in Southern Scotland. During this time I believed that Cumbric and

the Scottish Gaelic language were 'Celtic languages' and that that classification was sufficient.

But even back then in 2008, Scottish Gaelic, whilst an Indo-European language, felt to me more connected to the land upon which it was spoken than to the Iron Age 'Celts' of continental Europe. And over many many years, after many failures, I began to see how the Scottish Gaelic language, and other Celtic languages, might somehow be both Indo-European and pre-Indo-European simultaneously.

Trying to demonstrate this more ancient theory on the origins of Gaelic has been difficult, and really I've only just started to make any sense of it.

The Isle of Skye is a magical place to me. All of the islands have their similarities that I feel, the feel of the air, language and ancestry, interrelated across the islands. But each island is also an individual, with its own sacred names, a deep history, which I have long felt far pre-dates the Iron Age 'Celts'.

I take great joy in being on the islands, in feeling their energy, and seeing it unfold around me in the beauty of animals, plants, and of nature itself.

I don't know exactly how to explain why my perceptions changed on the origin of Celtic. But I came to feel that the answer was not in comparing ancient Celtic languages, and in looking through the Celtic languages just through the scope of their 'Celticness' and 'Indo-Europeanness'. These are definitely important *aspects* I think of uncovering the story of these languages, but, I feel that the origins of for example, Skye Gaelic, can also be studied by studying the language, folklore, archaeology and other aspects of the island in a detailed way, and allowing connections between these things to make sense of themselves.

The hypothesis that I am suggesting is that Scottish Gaelic is a little like several ancient languages existing as one language. I believe that some aspects of Scottish Gaelic are the Indo-European languages. But that other aspects, are the speech of the Mesolithic seafarers, and of the broch builders, and that perhaps other parts are connected to the ancient stone dún's, and others are connected to the Bronze Age and Iron Age house builders. I do understand in what way these many ancient cultures formed Gaelic, but that they have shared the landscape and collectively form a part of the heritage of Gaelic and of Scotland, this I feel certain of.

I hope that this book is enjoyable to read.

## The Gaelic language on The Isle of Arran, and topics of other languages

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This book contains the following sections:

- .The Gaelic language on the Isle of Arran
- .Lismore Gaelic
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- .An Ghaelig i dTír Chonaill
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- .A Norwegian dialect comparison

## The Gaelic language on The Isle of Arran – A' Ghàidhlig air Àrainn

– text and photos by myself, Linden Alexander Pentecost, the original work is a part of my 'lethou' language project between 2008 and 2011. Mainly written (including with photos) in 2008-2009, published 28<sup>th</sup> May 2020, republished online on 20<sup>th</sup> June 2020 after corrections in days previous.

Arran is a mountainous island in the Firth of Clyde, the rocky moorlands and forests of Galloway to the south open to the wide Firth of Clyde, separating Gall-Gaelic Scotland from Argyle-Gaelic Scotland. To the north and east of Arran are the mountains and sea lochs/fjords of southern Argyle. The native Arran Gaelic has not been used on the island now for decades, but at one time it was the first and only language of the island. Even to other Argyle Gaelic speakers, the Arran dialect sounded peculiar and unusual.

The island was isolated in its dialect, but people from Arran would readily adapt their dialect to be more easily understandable by other Gaels. Arran has had a long and fascinating geological history, there are granite mountains, limestone cliffs and sandstone hills to the south. These different environments also meant that the Gaelic was spoken a little differently in the south and north of the island. The south of the island with its green and fertile valleys has had a long human history. Back in the Stone Age time, the tribal people of Arran began to farm, and started to build stone monuments.

We don't know why they were built, or why they chose certain places and stones, but it's fair to say that these early people shared a special closeness to their land, the monuments may go back to an animistic religion where all nature was alive and somehow would affect our human lives. Before Gaelic arrived on Arran there was probably some kind of Cumbric or Pictish spoken here, these Celtic languages come from the P-Celtic branch along with Welsh, Breton and Cornish. The stone age

monuments are much older, and it appears that these people disappeared without much of a trace. It's sort of possible that they contributed in some way to the ancestry of the Gaels, but from the Gaelic myths and histories I have read there are no indications about what these places were for. A common story is that the stone circles are petrified witches, obviously a story to try and make sense of what they are. Their original builders are lost to time, and even the ancient Gaelic tradition doesn't remember who built them or why.

The Gaelic of Arran by Nils Holmer is the resource I used to learn a little about Arran Gaelic, the basics that I have written below about Arran (and Rathlin Gaelic) are quite common knowledge among people interested in Gaelic dialects, but this resource (which I do not own) gives a much more detailed account of Arran Gaelic. The photos included here were taken by me (Linden Alexander Pentecost).



**Eilean Àrainn** 'elan Eran' - Isle of Arran

Above: the Machrie Moor standing stones on the south of Arran, 'Machrie' **Am Machaire** is from Gaelic **machair**, which originally meant an expanse of land or fields. In Scottish Gaelic and English it can mean more specifically the fertile land behind the coast that is built on old sands and dunes. The Arran Gaelic used some words more commonly, there are many 'torrs' on the south of the island, a word normally associated with the Brythonic languages in Cornwall, Devon and Cumbria. One is **Torr Meadhonach** near Lochranza; while this word exists in Gaelic it may be of Pictish origin originally. In other senses the vocabulary of Arran was a bit closer to Irish in terms of some of its word choices. But normally the vocabulary was pretty much the same.

**Torr a' Chaisteal** is an Iron Age fort on the island, which would date to around the time that Brythonic would have been spoken, but I suppose that 'torr' names probably have an Old Irish explanation too.

The main differences with Arran Gaelic lie in the pronunciation of words. Arran Gaelic was much 'softer' sounding, it didn't have the 'kh' or 'h' pre-aspiration sounds of Gaelic, indeed the guttural 'ch' sounds in their broad and slender versions tended to become 'h' or not to be pronounced at all, giving Arran Gaelic a different flow from one word to the next. A word such as *bliadhnaichean* 'years' would be pronounced as though the 'ch' is silent, aka **bliadhnaidhean**.

The broad 'ch' in *machair* sometimes became a 'h' as well. Unlike in Standard Scottish Gaelic, the pronunciation of b, d, g was closer to phonemic b, d and g no matter where in the word, so that Sannaig 'Sannox' would be pronounced with a final 'g' and not with a 'k' as in standard Scottish Gaelic. Also this applies to slender pronunciation, so slender 'd' in *théid* sounds like 'j' and not like 'tch'. Arran Gaelic pronounces the broad final -dh or as though a broad 'g' without lenition, so *feadh* 'duration, length' and *smaoineachadh* 'thinking' take a final -g, spelled here as **feag** and **sm̀yintinn**.



Above: the coastline of Southern Arran. Words **tràich** – beach, standard: *tràigh*, **tìr** – land, **mwàth** – good, standard: *math* pronounced ‘mweh’

A unique thing for Arran is that certain broad consonants when followed by ‘a’ are pronounced with a ‘w glide’, so standard spelling ‘ba’ ‘fa’ ‘ma’ are pronounced like ‘bwa’ ‘fwa’ ‘mwa’. In the old way of speaking, the following ‘a’ becomes an ‘e’ sound [ɛ] so sound like ‘bwe’ ‘fwe’ ‘mwe’. This pronunciation can be found in words like *bàta* – boat, *math* – good (these are standard spellings, on Arran, ‘boat’ might be written as **bwáta**). There is no way to write Arran Gaelic as all Gaelic dialects tend to use the same spelling rules and there is no ‘w’ in standard Gaelic, and in any case writing the dialects differently may distance dialects from the bigger Gaelic language.

The pronouns in Arran Gaelic were slightly different. Like in Irish the form of you singular without lenition was used on Arran, but not that commonly, *tu* instead of *thu*, Irish *tú*. The word *iad* for ‘they’ was pronounced like ‘ad’ or ‘ed’. These can be written in my improvised dialect spelling as **tu** and **ad** or **ád**.

Below: the mountains of Arran taken from Goat Fell, the highest of which is Goat Fell – **Gaoda Bheinn** in Gaelic, *gaoda* might come from the Norse word for a goat. This could be written on Arran as **Göda Bheinn**.



Above: view from part of Goat Fell - *Gaoda Bheinn*

Of the Arran Gaelic vowels, as we have already mentioned the ‘a’ can become ‘e’ in pronunciation, this further extends to the long à which becomes a longer version of the ‘e’ sound. There is a difference in a way that ao is pronounced, it sounds a bit like the German ö and sometimes it can sound like the Gaelic é [e:] (no-longer in written Gaelic), similar to the Munster Irish pronunciation. This ö sound can also come from ‘ei’, like in *creidsinn* – believing, pronounced like ‘kröj’shinn’, which I write as **cròidsinn**.

On Arran the eu is sometimes pronounced [e:] and not ‘ia’, but this depends on the word and some words on Arran have ‘ia’.

Many of these traits of Arran Gaelic were used interchangeably. By the time the Gaelic was recorded by Nils Holmer it is clear that pronunciations like ‘ha’, ‘va’ were also used alongside ‘he’ ‘vwe’ for *tha*, *bha*. The original



Arran pronunciation seems to have added emphasis and reference to the story being about Arran or related to Arran, whereas by this day the more ordinary pronunciation was known and adapted to contextually. Probably to help communicate with other Gaelic speakers from beyond the Isle of Arran. Arran Gaelic was also different because it used a glottal stop, as in 'uh-oh' where 'th' was found broad and between the vowels, like in *rathad* – road, which I write in Arran Gaelic as **raʔad**.

### Will Arran Gaelic return?

Because there are not many speakers of Arran Gaelic, it would not be a simple task to teach the old Gaelic there. A person would have to deduce the Arran pronunciation of each word, when the Gaelic media and official guides would give very different pronunciations. This isn't simple, it isn't as easy as following rules because in Arran the sounds may be pronounced differently in different words, perhaps making the standard spelling quite inapt for using and speaking Arran Gaelic when there are no fluent speakers to show learners.

Arran Gaelic could come back, if there is enough interest. Gaelic is taught on Arran and there is interest, but Arran Gaelic is not taught. For Arran Gaelic to be reestablished it would have to be taken out of the realm of official learning and promotion and be given to the people of Arran to use in their daily lives. This is the difference between Gaelic being a second language of education and Gaelic being a used island language. Currently the Gaelic being taught is not the 'native Gaelic' and perhaps the people of Arran would embrace Gaelic again with even more enthusiasm, if it was their native island Gaelic that was being taught and spoken. All of the original Arran place-names are from Gaelic, Lochranza – *Loch Raonasa*, Brodick – *Breadhaig*, Glensannox – *Gleann Shannaig*. The name Arran isn't totally understood, if it's not Gaelic, it must come from the previous Brythonic language spoken here. Scottish Islands have poetic and song names in Gaelic, Mac an Tàilleir (2003) notes that the poetic name for Arran is *Arainn nan Aighean Iomadh*, which I believe means 'Arran of the many stags', presumably pronounced 'Eran nan eye-an imag'. In some places *aighean* refers to fawns or young deer.

Below: Lochranza on North Arran – *Loch Raonasa, Loch Rönasa*



### Early Gaelic on Arran

Gaelic would have arrived on Arran with the coming of Dál Riada, the medieval Irish kingdom which crossed the sea to Argyle. It brought with it Gaelic and the Christian faith. There is however a cave on the south of Arran that contains an Ogham inscription, but I believe the cave is not easily accessible. It would make an interesting photo-project for next time though! Ogham was used during this period, but comes from the Primitive Irish period just after the Iron Age. The Pictish language in Scotland also used Ogham, but less liberally.

I am unsure if the Arran Ogham inscription is in an early form of Gaelic or Pictish, but in any case, the alphabet was brought from Ireland. So perhaps even before Dál Riada there would have been some early Irish influence on Arran. Which is not surprising, Arran after all isn't very far

across the North Channel from Ulster. Across the North Channel lies Rathlin Island off the coast of Antrim.

The Gaelic of Rathlin was 'Irish', but grammatically it was more like Scottish Gaelic in some ways. It employed Scottish Gaelic plurals and other choices. The Gaelic of Rathlin also shared the ö sound with Arran Gaelic. But apart from a few similarities, it is important not to overstate them. Each island in the Gaelic world had its own distinct Gaelic that developed there, and Rathlin Gaelic lacked the distinctive 'w' sound of Arran, and the change from 'a' to 'e'.



Above: the coast of Arran with dark clouds. Words *muir* – sea, *feasgar* – evening, *uisge* – water, *sgòthan* - clouds

### Poetry in Arran Gaelic – Bàrdachd

**O, Àrainn nan Aighean Iomag  
Thá do Ghàidhlig an-seo a-ri?isd  
Chi mi Dia nad bheanntan móra  
Agus thá do ghuth a' fwás àrd**

Oh Arran of the many stags  
 Your Gaelic is here again  
 I see God in your big mountains  
 And your voice is becoming loud

Poem written by, myself. And another below.

Arran is a rather magical island. All islands are, but maybe Arran spoke to my heart especially. There was definitely something special I felt when walking on the mountains and in the glens of Arran; and when swimming in the waters, and being in the wee glens at dusk. Arran certainly opened my poetic side, and made me look at life itself a little differently.

*May Gaelic be forever alive in the glens of Arran  
 In the names of the birds and of the hills  
 And of the names of all beasts and plants  
 Great and small  
 May Gaelic guide us home*



Above: **beanntan móra air Àrainn** – great mountains on Arran  
 Arran's scenery is unlike anywhere else in Scotland, or possibly the world.  
 Although I wouldn't know that of course. These mountains are made of  
 granite,  
 a rock-type which isn't so common in Britain, nor in Scotland. There are  
 cliffs on South Arran of sandstone, and limestone at Corrie.



Above: the author/myself/*mise fhéin* paddling on a small puddle, Isle of Arran, taken 2008.

## Lismore Gaelic

Gaelic on the island of Lismore is in some ways close to Arran, but it does for example have pre-aspiration, unlike Arran Gaelic for the most part. A distinguishing feature of Lismore Gaelic is that the broad velarised L becomes [w] or, in some cases [v] as written in the *Survey of the Gaelic dialects of Scotland: questionnaire materials collected for the Linguistic Survey of Scotland*, edited by Cathair Ó Dochartaigh. For example, I choose to write this in the written language e.g. **cluais** – ‘ear’ might be written as **cwuais** or as **cvuais**.

## Gaelic in the East Highlands

Photo below (on next page): gnarly looking Scots Pine trees in semi-open forest close to Aviemore These forests are beautiful and calming places to be, even the foggy air, spelling of pine, makes me feel very close to nature. I like to think on how very similar trees were around in the times of dinosaurs, and so smelling the scent of the pines feels like something in dreamtime, more or less unchanged for hundreds of millions of years. Except of course humans weren't around at the same time as dinosaurs, and maybe their sense of smell was different to ours. Nevertheless, these forests are magical and sacred places, they are a like a sacred space to me.



Strathspey and the Cairngorms represent a well known area of natural beauty and indigenous Scots pine forests. The Gaelic dialects of this region were typically 'eastern' dialects, so for example the word for

‘summer’, **samhradh**, would often not possess the final syllable, and so would become **samhr** or **saur**, the second example is inspired by information in the Gaelic dialects that nasalisation was also not always present in this word. These dialects can also contain a [z] sound, from what I understand this may appear after the definite article, for example **an samhradh** could be written **an zaur**. The information in the previous paragraph, I picked up from studying the *Survey of the Gaelic dialects of Scotland: questionnaire materials collected for the Linguistic Survey of Scotland*, edited by Cathair Ó Dochartaigh

Another curious thing about Strathspey Gaelic indicated in *the Survey of the Gaelic dialects of Scotland: questionnaire materials collected for the Linguistic Survey of Scotland*, edited by Cathair Ó Dochartaigh, is the appearance of what is written as [ɬ], I don’t know the exact quality of this sound or what closeness it has to a voiced alveolar lateral fricative. It appears in words such as **sailte** ‘salted’, written here as **sailɬt**. and **soillsich** – ‘shine’, may be written as **soilɬich**.

Note that these phonetic changes aren’t always specific where indicated in *the Survey of the Gaelic dialects of Scotland: questionnaire materials collected for the Linguistic Survey of Scotland*, edited by Cathair Ó Dochartaigh. The spirit of the pine in some Gaelic traditions may be connected to the letter A, or Ailm of the Ogham alphabet, which is thought may be referring to a Scots pine tree. Not only are these trees very ancient in Scotland, one of the first trees to have arrived after the Ice Age; but as I mentioned earlier, they are pretty similar to trees that are hundreds of millions of years old. I feel that is a statement of a beautiful spirit that continues to help us. These pine forests are such special and beautiful places, and it is extremely important that we protect them and allow them to remain wild. I feel that the letter Ailm in Goidelic spirituality is related to the cross, as it appears as a cross in the Ogham alphabet, when as a single vowel upon a line. It is connected I feel to the purifying scent of pine, and to the way in which pines are often angular and may show crosses in the dimensions of their branches and general shape. I feel perhaps most importantly, that Ailm is about new beginnings. The drawing together of north, east, south and west, to find a centre, in the sacred and enchanting protective forests. Please do not put these forests at risk of fire damage.

## Gaelic on the Small Isles



Photo above: An Sgùrr, Eilean Eige. The Small Isles are considered part of Argyll, and their Gaelic dialects share much in common with other Northern Argyll dialects. Although there are differences, on the Isle of Canna the Gaelic can share some more ‘Gàidhlig Meadhan na Mara’ features, features of Gaelic that are less localised and which seem associated with the general passage of contact via the sea between island communities. The dialects of Eigg and Rùm were quite different though, although in the case of Rùm, there are not as far as I am aware, any records of how Gaelic was spoken there, and Rùm might also have had another ancient language present until relatively recently, I believe less than two thousand years ago. For Eigg there are recordings and some information about the dialect, including from the ... Eigg Gaelic is known for the Eigg gluck, a glottalised broad velarised l, [w̥lʲ], for example *cluais* - ‘ear’, - **cw̥luais**, *làidir* – ‘strong’, - **w̥làidir**. Note that I learned about the [w̥] from *the Survey of the Gaelic dialects of Scotland: questionnaire materials collected for the Linguistic Survey of Scotland*, edited by Cathair Ó Dochartaigh.



## An Ghaelig i dTír Chonaill



The photo above is the estuary of **Gaoth Barra**, in **Tír Chonaill** also known as **Condaidh Dhún na nGall** and in the Caighdeán as *Contae Dhún na nGall*. The Irish of Donegal is Ulster Irish, and within Donegal the language may vary quite considerably. For me personally, Donegal Irish dialects are perhaps the most distinctive sounding. Many of the things in the prosody and sound of Donegal Irish may occur in other dialect areas, but other things are specific to Donegal. This includes that for example the vowels may have a quite different sound in Donegal Irish and also that the ‘ch’ may be a much softer sound, although arguably this is a common Ulster Irish feature in general. I know far more about Scottish Gaelic dialects than I do those of Irish, but what I have always felt is that, in language, poetry and music, the nature and spirit of Donegal shines full of hope, and many of us feel it.

## Introduction to The Northern Sámi language and landscapes

Written and published by Linden Alexander Pentecost, originally on archive.org. Published on June the 7<sup>th</sup> 2022. Photos also by Linden Alexander Pentecost. (I am from the UK, and my little knowledge of the Sámi languages does not by any means make me an expert). This article including the photos are not copyrighted, I want this to be available to people. I would appreciate being accredited though.

Note that the autumn pictures in this section, are photos which I originally published under the pseudonym *Lauri Karvonen* in the book *Autumn on the Border* on blurb. However rather than choosing a Finnish name, I chose instead to use my own name and to make these photos more available. Some of the content from that book will be in this course. My name on blurb is Linden Pentecost despite the pseudonym, although, it was an old account.

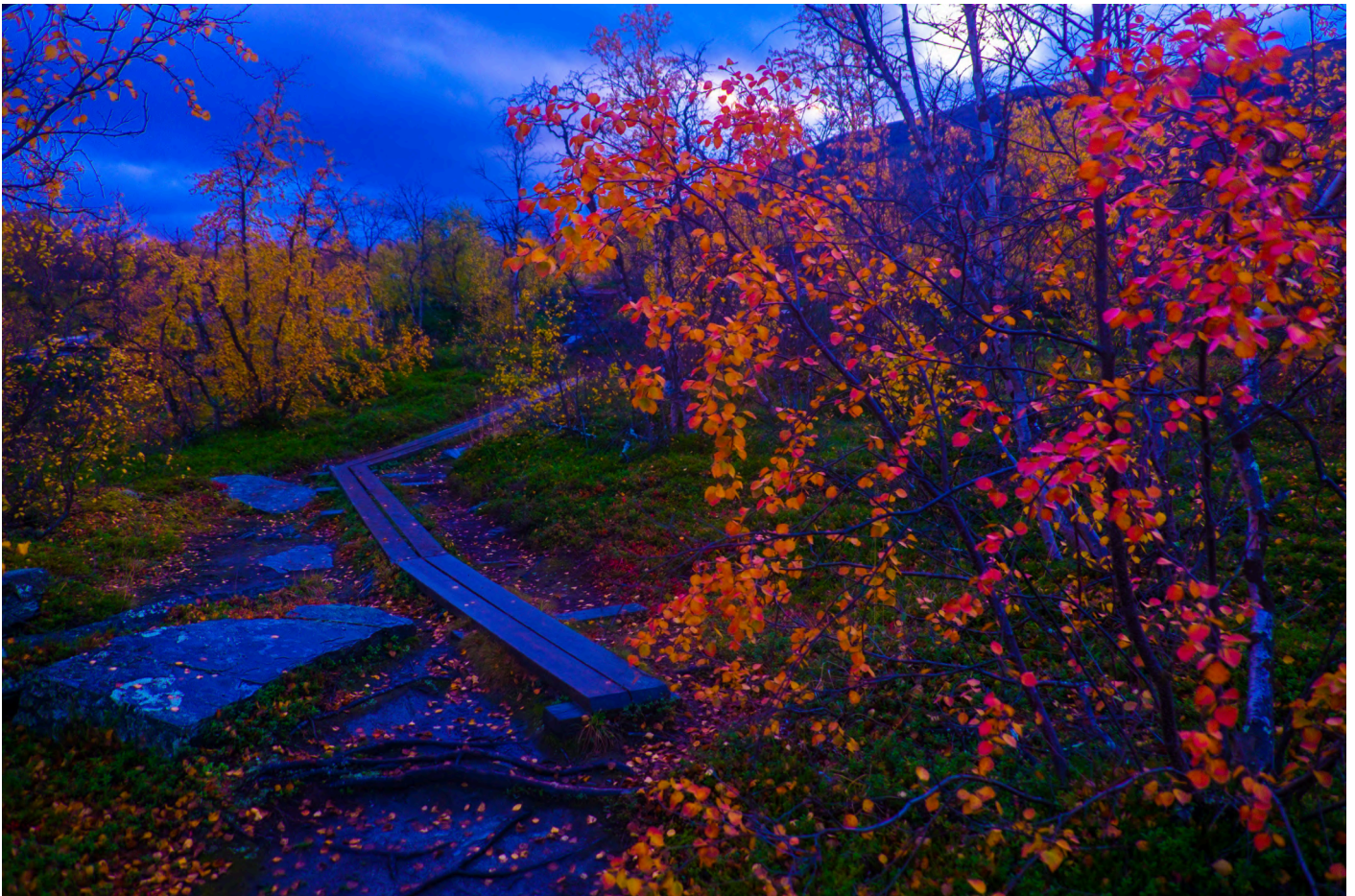


Photo above: autumn birch leaves, like glowing embers and stars. In Northern Sámi, autumn is **čakča**, and a birch tree is **soahki**. These beautiful trees are located close to the lake of **Duortnosjávri**, known in Meänkieli as Torniojärvi and in Swedish as Torneträsk. These trees are a

part of the vastness of nature that is Sápmi, the most northern part of mainland Europe, and homeland of the indigenous Sámi people.

Sámi languages are Uralic languages, like Finnish and Meänkieli, but belonging to a different branch of Uralic. The Sámi language with the largest number of speakers is Northern Sámi, **davvisámegiella**, when distinguishing it from other Sámi languages; it may more commonly be referred to as **sámegiella** ‘Sámi language’.

Northern Sámi is spoken in the most northern parts of Sweden, and in the most northwestern parts of Finland. Northern Sámi is spoken in the three northern Norwegian counties of Finnmark, Troms and in a part of northern Nordland. There are three main dialect groups of Northern Sámi: the Finnmark dialects, which have the largest number of speakers, the coastal Sea Sámi dialects, and the Torne Sámi dialects, which are spoken in areas, including that in the photo around **Duortnosjávri**. Torne Sámi dialects are also spoken in Northern Finland and the Ofoten region of northern Norway Not far to the south of **Duortnosjávri**, a different Sámi language is spoken, namely Lule Sámi. Lule Sámi is spoken around the Lule Valley in Northern Sweden, and in around Tysfjord in Northern Norway. Tysfjord is situated to the south of the Torne North Sámi speaking area of Ofoten and Sortland. The alphabet of Northern Sámi consists of these letters:

**a, á, b, c, č, d, đ, e, f, g, h, i, j, k, l, m, n, ŋ, o, p, r, s, š, t, ʦ, u, v, z, ž**

Northern Sámi spelling is not similar to that of Swedish and Norwegian, and this will be noticeable on signs. Often the Northern Sámi sounds written by **č** and **š** are transliterated to *tj* and *sj* in the orthographies of Swedish and Norwegian on maps. The valley formation of **Čuonjávaggi**, ‘goose valley’, is transliterated in Swedish on maps as Tjuonavagge for instance. **Čuonjávaggi** is located just to the south of lake **Duortnosjávri**.

**b** – is often pronounced closer to the English ‘p’ in ‘speak’

**c** – is pronounced like the ‘ts’ in ‘let’s’

**č** – is pronounced like the ‘ch’ in ‘cheese’

**d** – is often pronounced closer to the English ‘t’ in ‘step’

**đ** – is pronounced like the English ‘th’ in ‘this’

**f** – pronounced as in English  
**g** – often pronounced closer to the ‘k’ in ‘skip’  
**j** – pronounced like the ‘y’ in ‘yes’  
**k** – as in ‘score’ or sometimes aspirated as in ‘kite’  
**l** – is pronounced as in English ‘lake’  
**m** – is pronounced as in the English ‘mother’  
**n** – is pronounced as in English  
**ŋ** – is pronounced like the ‘ng’ in ‘song’  
**p** – pronounced as in English, sometimes aspirated as in ‘pip’  
**r** – in some dialects of Northern Sámi is noticeably rolled  
**s** – as in the English ‘sing’  
**š** – as in the ‘sh’ in ‘ship’  
**t** – like the English ‘t’ or sometimes aspirated  
**ʈ** – pronounced like the English ‘th’ in ‘thank you’  
**v** – pronounced like a softer version of the ‘v’ in ‘vast’  
**z** – pronounced like a ‘d’ followed by ‘z’, e.g. like ‘dz’  
**ž** – is pronounced like the ‘j’ in ‘jug’. Note that ‘v’ is pronounced more like ‘w’ when not as a syllable onset, for example in words such as **jávri** – ‘lake’, and **lávlla** – ‘song’. Depending on context, voiced sounds **b, d, g** can sound voiceless, like **p, t, k**, especially at the start of a word. **k, p, t** can also be pre-aspirated after a vowel.



The photo above ( on the previous page), shows the valley of **Čuonjávággi**. This wild landscape is very sacred I feel, and I feel that it must be respected, as must be the ancestors who watch over it.



Above, the island of Austvågøya in Northern Norway, July. I am unsure what the North Sámi name for the island is, but it is one of the Lofoten islands, and in Northern Sámi, Lofoten is **Lufuohtá**. The town of Svolvær is also located on this island. The type of Northern Sámi spoken in this region was one of the Tornesami dialects, which go across from Finland into this part of Northern Norway. They are also spoken in Northern Sweden from Finland towards Gällivare, Kiruna and Abisko.

Like the Finnish language, the Northern Sámi language has a number of noun cases or noun suffixes. Northern Sámi also has consonant gradation, like Finnish, a process in some ways similar to consonant mutation in Celtic languages, although the positioning and grammatical meaning is completely different.



Photo above: the city of Narvik, **Áhkanjárga** in Northern Sámi, with the june rays of midnight sun shining magestically across the Ofotfjorden, Northern Sámi: **Uffuohtta**. In Northern Sámi, ‘sun’ is **beaivi**, which is also the word for ‘day’.

<b>mun in ipmir</b>	minä en ymmärrä	I don’t understand
<b>čakča</b>	syksy	autumn
<b>muhto</b>	mutta	but
<b>datamašiidna</b>	tietokone	computer
<b>sátnegirji</b>	sanakirja	dictionary
<b>diehtosátnegirji</b>	tietosanakirja	encyclopedia
<b>báiki</b>	paikka	place
<b>beana</b>	koira	dog
<b>boazu</b>	poro	reindeer
<b>bussá</b>	kissa	cat
<b>leat</b>	olla	to Be

Although **boazu** and *poro* are thought to be of a connected etymology, the sound differences are pretty interesting I think. It’s interesting also that Northern Sámi has **datamašiidna** for ‘computer’, which is from the Norwegian *datamaskin* of the same meaning. Finnish has *tietokone*, literally ‘knowledge device’. And it’s interesting that for the words for ‘dictionary’ though, Northern Sámi and Finnish have the same cognate word connected to knowledge.

## An introduction to the sounds of Finnish

Finnish is a Uralic language, a large family of languages that stretch from the Urals to the Baltic. Most Uralic languages are spoken in Russia, but three groups are spoken in Europe. Hungarian is one of them, and the only Uralic language in central Europe. Hungarian is related to Finnish and Estonian but only distantly, its closest relatives are actually in the Ural Mountains.

The other branches of the Uralic family in Europe are the Sámi and Finnic languages. The Sámi languages are indigenous to the interior of Scandinavia, and includes for example Northern Sámi, Inari Sámi and Skolt Sámi in Finland. Other Sámi languages are spoken in the other areas of the north.



Photo above: typical nature of Northern Finland, in **Lapin Lääni** and close to **Muonio**.

The Finnic group includes two main languages, Finnish and Estonian. Estonian has two main types, north and south. South Estonian is not the standard, it is among other lesser known Finnic languages in that area. In Russia there are the Veps and Votic languages, which can be quite similar to the Karelian language in Russia and Finland. Karelian and Finnish have important phonological differences, but they are very similar. Finland also has many dialects, including the southwestern dialects and the eastern Savonian dialects. Similar languages to Finnish are also spoken in Sweden and in Norway, called Meänkieli and Kven. These are, like dialects in Northern Finland, Peräpohjola dialects.

Finnish is not related to the Danish, Norwegian and Swedish languages. And how its grammar and sounds work is not in any way similar. Finnish has very few voiced stops, like b, d, g, and z. These only occur in loanwords, the letters ng represent a single sound. Finnish does not have aspirated consonants like English does. One of the hardest things about learning Finnish for me is keeping this in mind, and that the letters k, p and t are pronounced closer to like in the English words 'score', 'explore' and 'store'. Not as in 'cap', 'pen' and 'top'. In English we don't distinguish these sounds, they are allophones of each other and vary depending on their position. Finnish on the other hand, does not possess these aspirated sounds, or the voiced stop sounds like b and z.

Generally though, Finnish pronunciation is very regular, and the language is easy to read from the spelling. The Finnish alphabet includes many of the same letters as the English alphabet. The original sounds of Finnish are written:

**a, d, e, ng, h, i, j, k, l, m, n, o, p, r, s, t, u, v, y, ä, ö**

The *d* is a weak sound, and the only voiced sound used natively in standard Finnish. But the *d* has a tendency to disappear for a lot of speakers, especially in quicker speech.

**h** is like the English *h*, but for some speakers it becomes more guttural in certain positions

**k** is pronounced closer to like the English sound in 'skip', not as in 'kite' or 'camp'.



**l, m and n** are pronounced similarly to the English l, m and n

**ng** is as in the English word 'song'

**p** is closer to like the p in 'spin' or 'spore', not as in 'pitch' or 'plod'.

**r** is a rolled r sound, similar to the r for many speakers of Italian and Spanish

**s** is like the English s, and never a z sound

**t** is like the t in stop or stare, not as in tip or tongue.

**v** is like the German w and slightly softer than the English v

**d** may be pronounced as a complete 'd' sound, like in the word 'dance', but this is more what is known as 'book-speech', speaking as though writing. The d sound wasn't originally in Finnish, but as people started to speak more like the written language, [d] emerged for some speakers. To some speakers of colloquial Finnish, the 'd' becomes a tapped 'r' sound, when 'but' is pronounced like 'bur'. For other speakers it becomes silent, hence **nähdään** and **kahdeksan** may sound like **nähään** and **kaheksan**.

**r** is rolled strongly, sometimes lengthened to show emphasis.

**s** the Finnish 's' is close to the English 's' in 'store', but with the mouth more closed, sounding a bit more like a whistle. This isn't that uncommon as languages go.

**t** is pronounced as a dental t by many speakers, with the front of the tongue placed behind the top teeth.

Finnish has eight vowels, **a, e, i, o, u, y, ä** and **ö**.

**a** is similar to the a in 'father'

**e** is similar to the French é

**i** is like the English vowel in leap, not as in 'bin'

**o** is like the English o in ghost

**u** is like the English u in moon

**y** is like the German ü or French u

**ä** is like the English a in fan, not like the German or Swedish ä sounds

**ö** is like the German ö

These vowels can be either long or short, the long versions are doubled and written **aa, ee, ii, oo, uu, yy, ää, öö**

Finnish has several diphthong sounds, which are pronounced as one vowel followed by the other. So **au** is similar to the vowels in the word now, **äy** sounds like an **ä** followed by **y**, **yö** sounds like **y** followed by **ö**.

The consonants can occur double as well, this prolongs the sound of the consonant, but the second consonant is always a part of the next syllable in the word. This is important for understanding the flow and prosody of Finnish.

**kissa**, a cat, sound like **kis-sa**

**alla**, above, sounds like **al-la**

**kymmenen**, ten, sounds like **kym-me-nen**.



Photo above: a tranquil lake close to some hills, not far from **Kemijärvi** in Northern Finland.

Finnish has something called vowel harmony, or **vokaaliharmonia**, which means that all the vowels in the connected syllables of a word must agree with each other. **e** and **i** are neutral vowels, so can occur with any of the others. Words with **a**, **o** and **u**, cannot have **ä**, **ö** and **y**, and vice versa. All noun and verb ending have to agree to this rule.

Finnish does not use many prepositions like the English to, from, over, and against. In Finnish these are normally indicated using suffixes on the end of a noun, or using postpositional words which come after the noun.

A common locative suffix, the inessive case **-ssa** or **-ssä**, often translates to 'in', e.g **talo** – a house, **talossa** – in a house, **huone** – a room, **huoneessa** – in a room.

If the noun contains **ä**, **ö**, **y**, then the ending has to be changed to **-ssä**. **Jyväskylä**, a city in central Finland, **Jyväskylässä** – in Jyväskylä.

### Iceland and Icelandic

Icelandic is an insular north-Germanic language, closely similar to the Old West Norse language, and via that to Faroese and to some extent the languages of mainland Scandinavia.

Some of the sound changes found in Icelandic, are also found in some Western Norwegian dialects for example. Icelandic spelling and pronunciation is an interesting topic, but I won't delve into it here, as I want to talk more about Icelandic in the landscape of Iceland. Unlike say Danish or Norwegian, Icelandic doesn't have many loanwords from other languages, including in the sciences, often an Icelandic word is pretty different from the Norwegian, Swedish or Danish. Faroese is pretty conservative with its vocabulary formation as well, but perhaps slightly less so than Icelandic. For example, the Norwegian word for 'tourist' is *turist*, whereas in Icelandic it is **ferðamaður**, Norwegian *nasjonalpark* for 'national park' is **þjóðgarður** in Icelandic.

Icelandic	Norwegian	Swedish	English
ég	eg	jag	I
þú	du	du	thou
hann	han	han	he
hún	ho	hon	she
það	det	det	it, that
við	me	vi	we
þið	dokker, di	ni	you plural
þeir, þær, þau	dei	dom	they



The photo above is from near **Kirkjufell**, which means ‘church mountain’. The photo itself looks towards **Grundarfjörður**, with a river and lagoon in the foreground. On the next page I describe the magic I feel there.

In Iceland I found it very easy to feel the spirit in nature and to understand how Iceland, a vivid and untamed land, reflects so accurately some of the themes in Norse mythology, such as the worlds of fire and ice, **muspelheim** and **niflheim**.

The Icelandic language and mythology also gives us English speakers a glimpse into the reality behind many of our words and concepts. In Icelandic, **heim** is 'home' and is cognate to the English word 'home'.

But in the examples of these two words, we may see that **heim** may refer to something vaster than a domestic place, in Icelandic mythology, **heim** may essentially refer to a realm, on this world, partially celestial perhaps, connected to this world and perhaps visible in its patterns, but distinct from **Miðgarður**, which refers to our, central, physical world. Kirjufell may be such a place, where perhaps one may feel the magic of those other worlds, in the clouds, sounds of waterfalls, and in the gentleness of the amber midnight sun.

The photo on the page previous shows a very beautiful and magical part of Iceland, where I felt this magic.

## A Norwegian Dialect comparison



Photo above: a typical fjord in southwestern Norway

The following is a short comparison of different Norwegian dialects. I am very appreciative to all those who helped me with this. Note:

.These examples are written accordingly to how folk may tend to write that dialect, the spellings do not distinguish all sounds. For instance the pronunciation of **ei** is often not distinguished, although in Northern Norway it is generally not [ai] or [æi].

.Palatal consonants vary in realisation and there is also no preferred way of writing them, that I am aware of. Some prefer to write palatals by placing **j** after the consonant, e.g. **lj**, **nj**, whilst others might take about a sort of pre-palatalisation, written often by placing **i** before the consonant, a bit like how slender vowels influence slender consonants in Scottish Gaelic, e.g. **aille** for **alle**, **kainn** for **kan** etc.

.Most of these dialect spellings don't distinguish between the different pronunciations of **kj** and **tj**. Note that Gren. Stands for Grenland

English	Bokmål	Gren.	Bø	Vossa.	Ålen	Hessdal	Leka	Onøya
I	jeg	jæ	eg	eg	e	e	eg	eg
you (s)	du	du	du	du	du	du	du	du
he	han	han	han	han	hain	hainn	hannj, n	hainn
she	hun	hun	ho	hó	ho	ho	ho	ho
it (c)	den	den	den	dan	dæin	deinn	dennj	den
it (n)	det	de	det	da	det	det	de	dæ
we	vi	vi	vi	me	vi	vi	vi	vi
you (p)	dere	dere	dekkan	dikkan, de	dåkk	dokk	dokk, di	dåkker
they	de	dem	dom, dæi	dei	døm	døm	dæm	di
the water is deep	vannet er dypt	vanne er jupt	vatnet e djupt	vatné è jupt	vatne e jupt	vatne e djupt	vatne e jufft	vatne e jupt
the fjords are deep	fjordene er dype	fjordane er jupe	fjordane e djupe	fjórane è jupe	fjoLæin e djup	fjoLan e djup	fjoLan e jup	fjoLan e jup
the beach was long	stranden var lang	stranna va lang	stránda va lang	strándè va lang	stranda va lang	stranda va lang	strannja va lang	strainnæ va lang
the fish were	fiskene var	fiskene var	fiskane va	fiskane va	feskæin va	fiskan va	feskan va	feskan va
I can	jeg kan	jæ kan	eg kan	eg kann	e kan	e kainn	eg kannj	eg kainn
I think	jeg tenker	jæ tenkær	eg tenker	eg tenkjé	e tænkje	e tenkje	eg tænki	eg tænk
I thought	jeg tenkte	jæ tenkte	eg tenkte	eg tenkte	e tenkte	e tenkte	eg tænk	eg tænk
I have thought	jeg har tenkt	jæ har tenkt	eg har tenkt	eg ha tenkt	e har tenkt	e ha tenkt	eg ha tænk	eg ha tænk
I come	jeg kommer	jæ kommær	eg kjem	eg kjemma	e kjæm	e kjæm	eg kjæm	eg kjæm
I came	jeg kom	jæ kom	eg kom	eg komm	e kom	e kom	eg kom	eg kom
I have come	jeg har kommet	jæ har kommet	eg har kommi	eg è komminn	e har kømmi	e ha kømmi	eg ha kommi	eg ha kommen
I go	jeg går	jæ går	eg gjeng	eg gaor	e går	e går	eg går	eg går
I went	jeg gikk	jæ gikk	eg gjekk	eg jekk	e gikk	e gjekk	eg gjekk	eg gjækk
I have gone	jeg har gått	jæ har gått	eg har gjingi	eg ha jenjé	e har gått	e ha gått	eg ha gått	eg ha gådd
I have been	jeg har vært	jæ har vært	eg har vori	eg ha vóre	e har vør	e ha vørri	eg ha vørri	eg ha vørre
I would like to	jeg vil gjerne	jæ vil gjerne	eg vil gjønne	eg ve jedna	e vil gjæinne	e vil gjænne	eg vil gjern	eg vell gjærne

a boat	en bát	en bát	æin bát	ain baot	en bát	en bát	ein bát	ein bát
a tidal stream	en strøm	ei strøm	æin straum	ain straum	en strøm	en strøm	ein straum	ein strøm
the boat	báten	báten	báten	baot'n	báten	báten	bátn	báten
a man	en mann	en mann	æin mann	ain mann	en mainn	en mainn	ein mannj	ein mainn
the man	mannen	mannen	mannen	mann'n	mainn'	ma'ainn	manj	mainn
an island	en øy	en øy	æi øy	ai áy	i øy	i øy	ei øy	ei øy
the island	øyen	øya	øya	áyè	øya	øya	øya	øyæ
a woman	en jente	ei jente	æi jente	ai jenta	i jeinte	i jeinte	ei jennjt	ei jeinntæ
the woman	jenten	jenta	jenta	jentó	jeinta	jeinta	jennjtå	jeinntæ
boats	båter	båtær	båtar	baota	båta	båtæ	båta	båtæ
women	jenter	jenter	jenter	jentå	jæinta	jeinta	jennjtår	jeinnte
the boats	båtene	båtane	båtane	baotané	båtæin	båtæinn	båtan	
the women	jentene	jentene	jentun	jent'na	jæintæin	jeintainn	jennjtån	
the big stone	den store steinen	den store steinen	den store stæinen	dan stóré staidn	dæin store ste'en	deinn store ste'en	dennj store stein	deinn store stein
the big tree	det store treet	det store tre'e	det store treet	da stóra tréé	det store tree	det store treet	det store tree	dæ store treet
the big stones	de store steinene	di store steinane	dæi store stæinane	dai stóré stainané	di store stenæin	døm store stenainn	di store steinan	di store steinan
the big houses	de store husene	di store husa	dæi store husa	dai stóra husè	di store husa	døm store husa	di stora husa	di stora husan
to travel	å reise	å reise	å ræise	å raisa	å rese	å rese	å reis	å reis
I travel	jeg reiser	jæ reiser	eg ræiser	eg raisé	e rese	e rese	eg reisi	eg reis
I travelled	jeg reiste	jæ reiste	eg reste	eg raisté	e reste	e reste	eg rest	eg for
I have travelled	jeg har reist	jæ har reist	eg har rest	eg ha raist	e har rest	e har rest	eg ha rest	eg ha førre
to swim	å svømme	å svømme	å svømme	å symja	å svømme	å svømme	å svøm	å svømm
I swim	jeg svømmer	jæ svømmær	eg svømmær	eg symmå	e svømme	e svømme	eg svømmi	eg svømm
I swam	jeg svømte	jæ svømte	eg svømte	eg sumdé	e svømte	e svømte	eg svømt	eg svømmt



I have swum	jeg har svømmet	jæ har svømmi / svømt	eg har svømt	eg ha sumd	e har svømt	e ha svømt	eg ha svømt	eg ha svømmt
to eat	å spise	å ete	å eta	å eta	å åtå	å eta	å eta	å et
I eat	jeg spiser	jæ eter	eg et	eg etå	e et	e et	eg et	eg et
I ate	jeg spiste	jæ åt	eg åt	eg aot	e ot	e åt	eg åt	eg åt
I have eaten	jeg har spist	jæ har eti	eg har eti	eg har eté	e har iti	e har etti	eg ha eti	eg ha ette
I am called	jeg heter	jæ heter	eg hæiter	eg haité	e hete	e hete	eg heita	eg heitæ
I dream	jeg drømmer	jæ drømmer	eg draumer	eg dråymé	e drømme	e drømme	eg drømmi	eg drømm
here	her	hær	her	her	her	her	her	her
there	der	dær	der	dar	der	da	der	der
sure	sikker	sikker	sikker	sikkor	sikker	sikker	sekker	sekker
to	til	til	te	té	te/åt	åt	te	tell
for	for	for	fær	fø	ferr	fer	ferr	førr
under	under	under	onder	óndé	puinni	punni	onnjer / ponnj	uinner
over	over	over	over	yve/øve	over	ovai	åver	åver
through	gjennom	gjennom	gjønnum	jønó	gjænnøm	gjennom	gjønnå	gjønnum
between	mellom	mellom	mellom	mydló	i mijlla	milla	millå	mellom
on	på	på	på	pao	på	på	på	på
with	med	med	med	mè	med	me	med	mæ
which /that	som	som	som	só	som	søm	som	som
what?	hva?	hva?	hått?	ka?	ker?	ker?	ke?	ka?
where?	hvor?	hvor?	hårre?	kar/kór?	kerhæn?	ker hen?	kor?	kor?
why?	hvorfor?	hvorfor?	håffer?	kåffø?	keffer?	kefer?	keffer?	keffør?
how?	hvordan?	hvordan?	håssen?	kórlais(ne) /kåss'n?	kest?	kest?	kelles?	korsn?

I hope this book was an interesting read, and I thank especially those who helped me to gather information about Norwegian dialects. Thank you for reading.

## The Gaelic of Arran and Galloway

*Cormac Ó Shuileabháin Meitheamh 2019*

- .Scottish Gaelic as a single language
- .Languages within languages
- .Basics of the Arran dialect and the dialect spelling
- .Gaelic in Galloway

### Scottish Gaelic as a single language

Scottish Gaelic is described as a single language, and today it has one written standard, with a quickly evolving spoken standard based on the Hebridean dialects, but often more formal to the written language. The modern standard for Scottish Gaelic has evolved from a 'perfected' pronunciation of one dialect area. Scottish Gaelic dialects, seen as a variable entity, can be classified as a *levelled* language, the original dialects have been largely replaced by a levelled standard, making less the distance between one spoken variety and the written language.

The original Gaelic dialects functioned and evolved independently of the written form used in Scotland, so there was no standard Gaelic, and the differences between the dialects can be quite large. Scottish Gaelic today has become one language, but the original Gaelic language was not one language, but a continuum of related, but different forms of speech used across the Atlantic coastline, particularly in Scotland and in Ireland. It was never a language as a single form, but a common culture and language basis shared among many different peoples, and the modern inventions of a standard Irish and Scottish Gaelic are partly artificial.

Both Irish and Scottish Gaelic spelling is adapted from Classical Irish spelling, a formal register of Gaelic language that looked little like any of the spoken dialects. These dialects have never really been written at all outside of the International Phonetic Alphabet (IPA), instead the Irish spelling was updated to level the differences between dialects and the written language, but bringing the dialects further away from their origins and closer to each other. Irish spelling distinguishes things like the spellings *faoi*, *fé*, *fá* but doesn't distinguish most differences or any of the finer differences within each dialect group.

Scottish Gaelic dialects come from a multicultural background, similarly to Irish dialects, there was no single 'Gaelic' Scotland, Gaelic always being something that was transferred

and came to be spoken by peoples belonging to different tribes, these differences later appeared as clan differences. If we are able to understand how the Gaelic language was picked up and used differently by different peoples, then we may better understand where Gaelic comes from and identify possible signatures in how the previous Pictish languages might have influenced Gaelic.

But by studying Scottish Gaelic as a single entity, based on its modern standard manifestation, the information in the original dialects becomes obscured and has been sadly, often unmentioned in the academic or teaching communities. This information is immensely important and I hope in the future that this information becomes more available to academics researching the origins of Celtic languages, as in the future, more thorough representations of the dialects may help to give a better reconstruction of the ancient forms.

## Languages within languages?

Languages such as French, English, Danish, Irish and Scottish Gaelic, are not written in a way that phonemically represents how they are actually spoken. This is partly because the Latin alphabet was not designed to represent the sounds of these languages. But partly because a higher register of language was chosen as the written language, rather than the language spoken.

This has obscured the nature of these languages and their dialects, and as we come to account more for dialects, the way that we reconstruct the proto-forms of these languages is likely to change. The big differences in these languages can be an indicator of where an older dialect or variety of that language has gradually changed and adopted more standard forms. In Gaelic this might be the case where some dialects lack the lenition of consonants in certain words. An article that was recently posted in a linguistics group about the Cockney Dialect, gives a look at how Cockney English might appear if it were written as it actually sounds. This article can be found at: <https://www.scribd.com/document/421892441/A-Guide-to-the-Cockney-Language-or-dialect-and-its-ancient-origins>

The borders in language come alongside cultural differences, but the status of that speech and its status as a language seems often determined by where there are set borders. The Scots language is a separate language from English, but Scots can also be called the same language as the Northumbrian dialects of Northern English. But these aren't classed as a language. Cockney English can sometimes be unintelligible to some people, but it has no status as a unique language variety. The trends in what a language is seem to coincide with whichever cultural entity people feel that they belong to. Within England, some of the dialects could be called languages, but there is an identification with England and with English which tends to 'disregard' dialects as having less status, perhaps because they are floating in a larger entity.

Over time, the identification with this larger culture or language seems to actually influence language, because it becomes trendier and more 'normal' to speak in a certain manner. We can see that with Gaelic, originally Gaelic may have been a single group or set of identities which manifested with the Primitive Irish language, the Old Irish language and then Middle Irish. Over time Gaelic was spread to different areas and cultures across the Atlantic world, where it was adapted. At this time there may have been an identification with 'Gaelic' across different parts of Britain and Ireland, but with individual identities, perhaps pre-Gaelic, which continued to be separate and speak the language differently. Later on, it became more common to identify with 'Scotland', so the speech became 'Scottish Gaelic', and gradually these older dialectal forms have come out of use to embrace a language which is 'classically and culturally Gaelic-Scottish', but which has largely left the older, pre-Gaelic identity groups and dialects in the past. How we view our own language, and how we classify it, seems to change it, spookily similar to the quantum observation affect. Language changes depending on which contexts we measure it in, how we measure it, and how we identify to it.

## Basics of the Arran dialect

Arran is an island in the Firth of Clyde, it is the most south-westerly location in which Gaelic survived long enough to be studied and recorded. Gaelic dialects in Scotland can be split into a number of rough groupings based upon how certain sounds are treated. Within these groupings are other dialects, some of which have little mutual intelligibility with speakers of main dialect areas. The Arran dialect can be said to belong to the southern group of Argyle dialects, which also includes the dialects of Kintyre, Islay and slightly north-east towards Ballachulish. Argyle has complex Gaelic dialects, with at least two or three major areas identifiable. This was the first part of Scotland where Gaelic developed, so it's unsurprising that these islands and peninsulas have several dialects in a relatively small area of Scotland.

The Southern Argyle dialects are closer to Irish in some ways, just as the dialects of Antrim in Ireland are closer to Scottish Gaelic than other Irish dialects are. There are some common traits found in the Ulster dialects of Irish and in Argyle dialects of Gaelic in Scotland. But Ulster Irish is not necessarily a halfway link between Irish and Scottish, it is unique in its own ways, with peaking clusters of divergent dialects such as those in Gweedore and SW Donegal. This dialect grouping with Ulster Irish can also include the Manx language, and the extinct Galloway Gaelic language to the south of Arran in Galloway.

In many respects the Arran Gaelic is similar to the dialects of Kintyre and the nearby islands. But it is also quite unique in many respects. A common change in Argyle Gaelic is from /a/ and /a:/ to /ɛ/ and /ɛ:/. This happens differently in different parts of Argyle, on Arran the change from orthographic *a* and *à* to /ɛ/ and /ɛ:/ is more common than elsewhere. For example, standard *stad* – **sḁḁ** - stop, standard *sgàthan* - **sgèhan** - mirror.

Another notable feature of Arran is the semivowel /w/, which develops as a glide after certain broad consonants. For example: *bàta* - **bwèṭṭe** – boat, *a-mach* – **ḡ-mwèch** – out.

*snàthad* - **ṛnèhéd** - needle

*garadh* - **gèrḡ** - warming

*an àtha* - **ḡ nèḡ** - the kiln

*dachaidh* - **ḏèhi** - home

*fàradh* - **fwèrḡ** - ladder

*facal* - **fwècḡl̄** - word

*màthair* - **mwèhḡr** - mother

*cat* - **cèt** - cat

*bha* - **vwè** - was/were

*casan* - **cèsḡn** - feet

*dà* - **ḏè** - two

*an Lag* - **ḡn ḏlḡ** - ‘Lag’

*fantuinn* - **fwèhin'** - staying

*fada* - **fwèḏḡ** - far or long

Pronunciation guide.

Arran Gaelic is written here using the Gaelic dialect alphabet, created by Ruairí Ó Conghaile. This was originally adapted to the Ring dialect of Irish in Waterford by Ruairí, I have further adapted it for the speech of Arran.

ḏ, ḡ, n, ṭ and ṛ are the dental equivalents of these consonants, e.g. **ḏè** – two, **ṭrí** – three. ḡ becomes ḏḡ after n, but may do in other contexts as a normal pronunciation, but this is only written after n. It approaches an interdental stop similar to /ð/. The Gaelic slender n may become n on Arran, as in *fhèin* - **fén**.

Lh is a voiceless ṫ similar to the Welsh ll or /ɬ/, coming from where a fricative has disappeared, this is quite unique to Arran and to Rathlin Island, many speakers on Arran were unable to pronounce it according to Nils Homer. It occurred in a few words such as *balach* - **balhach** – boy. Could it be a remnant of the Cumbric or Pictish influence in phonology?

Palatal consonants are written with a bar above them, sometimes with a bar below for l and v in Gaelic dialect spelling due to how well this appears on screen, it seems that this spelling system was difficult to use when Ruairí was creating it. Ruairí also records Connaught Irish sliabh as taking /w/ but this was perhaps not taken from a native Connemara speaker.

[https://www.academia.edu/38361627/The\\_Gaelic\\_dialect\\_alphabet](https://www.academia.edu/38361627/The_Gaelic_dialect_alphabet)

The letters **ch** and **gh** represent the broad equivalents in Scottish Gaelic, **ċ** is used for slender ch. **Tḡ** is used for the Arran slender t, and **ḏs̄** is the Arran equivalent of a slender d, or j in the

dialect alphabet, but on Arran this is a **d** sound followed by **ś**, equivalent to 'sh' in English, not quite the same as **j**.

## On Arran Gaelic phonology

The Gaelic word *tràigh* – beach, comes from the same etymology giving *traeth* in Welsh, the Irish form is *trá* but *tráigh* is used in parts of Munster. This etymology may be linked to the English word 'track', the original Brythonic etymology may have been something like *trect-*, in Brythonic the *c* became /x/ and then disappeared, in Gaelic the *-t* disappeared. Sometimes this original sound is preserved differently, which again isn't indicated in the spelling of Gaelic. Arran Gaelic has **ᵿráċ** and **ᵿᵿċ** for *tràigh* and *taigh*, compare Munster Irish *tráigh* and *tigh*, but in Munster Irish, final *-igh* is /j/.

The sound **ǿ** is special on Arran, it represents a sound similar to /ø/, /ɜ/ or /œ/, using Nils Holmer's comparison of words. It often varies with other sounds on Arran as on Arran itself were many local pronunciations and forms, e.g. *faoileag* - **fǿlag** or **fwélag** – seagull. This sound is often equivalent to *ao(i)*, which may vary with /e:/, *aodach* - **ǿᵿach** or **éᵿach** – clothes.

The slender *n* is a very weak sound in Scottish Gaelic, in some dialects, especially the Northern ones it can become *r*, on Arran it can sometimes disappear, *ainm* - **ajm** – name. Disappearance of slender *n* occurs commonly in Scottish Gaelic, but where it happens depends on the dialect.

Modern Gaelic dialects have *f* as a weak consonant, which is unaspirated and inserted before vowels of many words which lacked an *f* in Old Irish. On Arran, *inneach* – 'woof' becomes **fin'ach**.

Sometimes on Arran words that originally began with a vowel can begin with **t-**, when the definite article is assimilated into the following word, this has then become the normal form.

On Arran, the Scottish Gaelic broad and slender *ch* sounds can often become a *h* or disappear.

Occasionally the older Gaelic lenition of *m* to *v* does not take place on Arran, thus *tamhailt* - **cameltċ** and *ag amharc* - **ᵿ gamerc**. This lenition process does not take place equally throughout all Gaelic dialects, and the spelling is really a rough model to fit how lenition has 'generally' evolved. We can ponder whether Arran Gaelic did not mutate medial broad *m* until more recently. The Connaught and Ulster dialects of Irish sometimes show these pre-lenited forms, where *sibh* and *roimh* are pronounced with a slender *b* or *m* in some areas.

*Uamhaidh* – cave, **uagi** (South Arran), **uavi** (North Arran), shows an unusual change from *v* to **g**. This could be in part influenced by a Pictish or Cumbric form, Welsh *ogof* – cave, an etymology which wouldn't otherwise be indicated or visible, if Arran Gaelic was spelt using standard Gaelic spelling. Sometimes medial *mh* is *f* on Arran, *famhair* - **fafer** – giant.

The Scottish Gaelic final broad *-dh* and *gh* become **-g** on Arran, sometimes this also occurs elsewhere *dha* – **ga**. *dèanamh* - **dšèneḡ** – doing, *deanadh* is an Argyle variant, *fiodh* – **fig**, *sgalladh* - **sgaṡṡeḡ**.

I myself	<i>mi fhèin</i>	<b>mi féN</b>
thou thyself	<i>thu fhèin</i>	<b>u fé</b>
he himself	<i>e fhèin</i>	<b>a/è fé</b>
She herself	<i>i fhèin</i>	<b>i fé</b>
we ourselves	<i>sinn fhèin</i>	<b>šin' fé(N)</b>
you yourselves	<i>sibh fhèin</i>	<b>ši(v) pé(N)</b>
they themselves	<i>iad fhèin</i>	<b>èð fé(N)</b>

The above pronouns, demonstrate just how much the original, spoken varieties of Gaelic, differ from the modern 'set' pronunciation. In standard Scottish Gaelic, *fhèin* with a slender *n* and *fh* pronounced /h/ is common, the Arran forms are quite different.

Ruairí has emailed me to tell me that he has abandoned the Dialect Alphabet project, but myself and a couple of others hope to adapt it and make use for it. He told me that "although incomplete and not completely useable yet, if it can be adapted from me then my original work can serve as a basis". He has asked me if I would be interested in adapting the spelling to cover more Irish dialects, including some of the extinct ones, which I hope to start on in the near future.

## References

.The Gaelic of Arran, Nils M Holmer – this is the source of the Arran phonetic transcriptions, which were used to write Arran Gaelic in the dialect alphabet. The information on Gallowegian Gaelic below was obtained through place-name analysis from old maps.

## Gaelic in Galloway

We can suggest that the extinct Galloway Gaelic could have been close to Arran due to Arran being the closest recorded dialect to the area where Galloway Gaelic was spoken. In reality, Gaelic dialects are rarely clearly divided or fit into easily identifiable patterns. Whilst Arran Gaelic and Galloway Gaelic could have shared 'radial' features in common, similarly to Ulster Irish, that doesn't prove that they were the same dialect or even that close. Galloway itself is a large area of land, with many isolated villages and settlements, some regions are coastal, and not far from Northern Ireland, others are inland. We find Gaelic surviving on the coast near Stranraer in later place-names, and we typically 'Modern Gaelic' place-names inland and to the east, such as Barjarg, Gaelic *Barr Dearg*.

When Galloway Gaelic has been more recently written, it is sometimes written in a spelling based on Classical Irish. This indicates the relationship that all early Goidelic languages have to one another. This is also the same spelling that was once used in Scotland, or a variant of it, the exclusion of acute accents *é* and *ó* in Scottish Gaelic was very recent, and in the view of many, not a necessary move. It has made 'Scottish Gaelic' more distinct from 'Irish Gaelic', but only on a standard and visual level. The traditional languages and differences between them are much less defined. Galloway Gaelic, stood in some way between the Scottish and Irish dialects, therefore it may not make sense to 'turn' Galloway Gaelic into Standard Scottish Gaelic. That would be like turning Norwegian into Swedish because 'they're close enough that it doesn't matter'. This would also be an act against indigenous Gallowegians, we know historically that Gallowegians did not identify with Hebridean Gaelic culture, or with Scotland until much later, Galloway was originally a Brythonic/Welsh speaking region that later became part of the Norse-Gael culture, similarly to the Isle of Man, and linked to the Norse ruled islands in Western Scotland, but not equivalent to the Gaelic identity of Hebridean people or Highlanders. Gaelic and Norse served as cultural webs between these islands and places, but that doesn't mean we should simplify them into being the same people, particularly when we know that the Brythonic/Welsh culture was highly influential here.

Whilst the medieval kingdom of Rheged has often assumed to be in Cumbria, the 'heart of the Cumbric language', Rheged may have in fact been in Galloway, where we have Dunragit, *Dún Ragid*? A place of archaeological significance in the Bronze Age. We also have place-names such as Penpont, which is identical to the Welsh *pen pont*.

Dornock – *Dórnach*, unknown meaning, also found in E. Scotland as *Dòrnach*

Clachanmore – *Clachan Mór*, possibly *clachan* refers to the stones of a nearby stone circle and not to the settlement.



Lochinvar - *Loch An Bharra* - **loch in var, lohan var**, where the Gordon Family lived.

Balmaghie - *Baile Mac Aoidh*, - **bal magi**, town of the MacKay Clan.

Cummertrees, or Cumbertrees, Gaelic *Cumar Treas*, estuary of the violence, Cumbric *Cömber Trís*, Welsh *cymer tres*.

Dalbeattie - *Dail Bheithe*, or *Dail Bheite*, valley of birch, Cumbric \**dâl/dôl bedô/bedwi*.

Glencaple, *Gleann + Capall/Capaill*, lacking an article dialect alphabet **glen, capal**, Cumbric *Glenn + Capal*, Welsh *Glyn and Ceffyl*. 'horse valley'.

Penpont, with its late Bronze Age hill forts, Cumbric *Penn Pont*.

Rhins, *Na Rannaibh*, but also Brittonic *rhin-* or *rin-*, and originally *rind-*. Welsh *Rhinog*.

Mennock, Cumbric *maínoc, mēnoc, mēnoc* - stoney, Gaelic *mèineach* 'abounding in mines', but I think more likely Gallowegian *Meanach* 'abounding in stones'? Neither the words *maen* in Welsh meaning a stone, or *mwyn* 'mine' have a well understood etymology, this could theoretically be a link between the two.

Palnackie - *Poll an Achaidh*

Mochrum, Gaelic *Muc Dhruim*, Cumbric *Moch Drum*, pig back or hill

Ardwell near Stranraer, perhaps *Árd Bhaile*, but we also have 'Ruthwell' and 'well' may come from a different etymology. '

One thing noticeable about Galloway Gaelic is the apocope, where the final vowel disappears in words such as *baile*. The definite article comes closer to a kind of /i/ sound in place-names. Sometimes *ch* disappears, but this isn't the case in all examples, so we can assume /x/ existed as a phoneme in much of Galloway. It is interesting that *beite* lacks the lenition of t to /h/, \**betwiyos* was a possible origin of this word in Proto-Celtic. Cumbric behaves similarly sometimes, i.e. Brettargh, a place-name, Brett- and not Breth-. The pronunciation of *poll* in Palnackie, suggests a sound similar to /ʌ/. In the song *Òran Bagraidh*, Galloway Gaelic *riamh* appears as *riam*, indicative that like on Arran, the lenition processes hadn't fully taken place. In reality the lenition and 'broad with broad, slender with slender' rules in Irish and Scottish Gaelic, tend to break down as set rules when dialects are taken into account.

On Islay, the Scottish Gaelic spelling is already used, although with some variants in spelling sometimes used, these generally don't indicate the major changes of the Islay dialect. Because there is already enough knowledge about Islay Gaelic, and already enough people using the spelling to write it, there would be less need for a dialect spelling to be used. With

Arran on the other hand, there isn't a presence of recent Gaelic speakers to help the younger generation learn the finer details of the dialect through the standard spelling.

I believe that using the dialect spelling on Arran would make a lot of sense, and would enable the dialect to be taught and used far easier than if Standard Scottish Gaelic spelling was used. We also have enough data on the dialect to be able to do this accurately. This wouldn't change the status that Standard Gaelic already has in the Gaelic name translations on Arran, but in fact a knowledge of the dialect spelling at a local level could help people to more easily understand how to use the standard spelling when using or relating to Scottish Gaelic in general. Some examples of these place-names include:

*Eilean Arainn* – Isle of Arran

*Gleann Shannaig* – Glensannox

*Loch Raonasa* – Lochranza

Since we don't know the exact pronunciation of Galloway Gaelic, it would perhaps make sense to use a spelling based upon the classical system for place-names, and a 'Gallowegian' standard could eventually be created, with the same Classical Gaelic spelling basis as Scottish and Irish Gaelic. This isn't truly representative of Gaelic in Galloway but symbolically it would stand in the same way that Scottish and Irish spelling does. Another consideration is the Welsh/Cumbric in Galloway and to what degree it will be included in place-names and signage. We may imagine a situation where we might have signs using all three languages. Note the reconstructed Cumbric form below would be *Croeso i Ddin Rheged* in Welsh.

<p>Welcome to Galloway</p> <p><i>Fáilte go Gall-Gháedhealaibh</i></p>
<p>Welcome to Dunragit</p> <p><b>Crôs doch do Dhyn Ragit</b></p> <p><i>Fáilte go Dún Ragid</i></p>

Next articles:

.Scottish Gaelic dialect spelling, a look at Islay, Sutherland and Uist.

## The Gaelic dialect alphabet - with special attention to Munster Irish

Ruairí Ó Conghaile, 2018

“The sections in blue brackets are new, this article was originally written in 2018 but has been updated in September 2019 after discussions with Cormac Ó Shuilleabháin”.

The Gaelic dialect alphabet is being created to make it easier to write and teach dialects in Ireland, Scotland and Manx Gaelic. The two standard spelling systems in Ireland and Scotland are based upon the Classical Gaelic language. Over the centuries, classical Gaelic has slowly been changed to compensate for the living dialects in Scotland and Ireland. But the spellings based on Classical Gaelic don't always fit the spoken language, which in cases may have diverged already before the appearance of Classical Gaelic.

Gaelic dialects have regional phonemes and archaic phonemes. The regional phonemes are the typical sounds that developed across a particular place, forming the difference between Scottish and Irish Gaelic. Archaic phonemes are found in more localised dialects, and they show something of the original Gaelic pronunciation in that place. Archaic phonemes include consonants which have otherwise undergone lenition in other dialects. In parts of Connaught *sibh* is pronounced *sibʰ*, with the slender *b* sound still preserved and having not undergone lenition to *sivʰ*.

[[Some Connaught dialects, such as that of Cois Fhairrge in Galway, are more like the Caighdeán in some respects, but completely different in others. One common thing in this dialect is the lengthening of vowels, where their length would not be shown in spelling, such as: *sean* - *śéan*, *léamh* - *léw*, *áirithe* - *Árédʰ*, *snámh* - *snÁw*, *amhrán* - *órÁN*, *faigh* - *fÁ*, *scríobh* - *scríw*, *déan* - *díN*, *déanamh* - *díNə*, *craic* - *cráécʰ*, *trom* - *trúm*. Other words that show different pronunciation include *uafásach* - *úÁsəch*, *rith* - *ru*. The dialect in Erris, County Mayo, is technically a Connaught dialect, but shares a lot of its vocabulary in common with the Ulster dialects of Donegal to the North. Some features of Erris Gaelic, such as the sporadic change from *ch* to */f/* are not usually written, and would otherwise be unrepresented in the written language, e.g. *chuaigh* - *fuej*, *doicheall* - *defeL*, *cluiche* - *clife*. The special *f* in the last two words is a slender *f*, occasionally *chuaigh* and *cluiche* are written *fuaigh* and *cluife*.]]

Ulster Irish can be so different to the standard, that the Classical Gaelic based spelling system can't represent the sounds. For example: *amharc* - *ḡnc* (Cois Fhairrge *áfręc*), *chomh* - *gḡ*. [[There is a unique vocabulary, *fríj* or *frídʰ* for *trí* (written also as *fríd*), *wa* or *a* for *ó*, *wuam* for *uaim*, *da* for *de*. The pronouns are also different, *mé*, *tú* and *sé* become *mæ*, *tuw* and *śæ*, *siad* and *iad* are *śod* and *jod*. *bhíodh* is pronounced *víʰ* before *sé*, *sí*, *sibh*, *siad* in Ulster, but *víw* elsewhere. Ulster Irish has a number of special vowels, such as in *caora* - *cořə*, *im* - *ímʰ*, *oibrí* - *íbrí*. Gaelic from the island of Tory is also a bit different from the others. *Teach* is pronounced *te* on this island, *déanamh* is *dānu*, *agat* is *ogat*, often the form *aighead* or *ad* is found in Ulster.]]

*Gaoth* is pronounced *gí* or *gé*. In the Ring dialect of Munster the final consonant is preserved as *[x]*, written here as *géch*. The sound represented by *ao* is different in Connaught and Munster, with words like *saor*, *sér* in Munster but *sír* in Connaught. The Irish of Connemara is a Connaught dialect, the Caighdeán is based on Connaught pronunciation in part. But the local dialects within Connaught can be very different in pronunciation to the Caighdeán. A main difference between Connaught and Munster Irish is that Connaught Irish, like Ulster Irish, often has a *[w]* sound where Munster would have *[v]* or no consonant. Compare Cois Fhairrge Irish *ślíew*, Munster Irish *ślíev* - *sliabh*, Ulster Irish *fōwəř*, Cois Fhairrge Irish *fúwəř*, Munster Irish *fór*, standard Irish *fómhar*. Slender consonants are written with a bar above them. Examples from Ring Irish *n'so* - *anseo*, *n'sun* - *ansin*, *aim'* - *im*, *líech* -

liath, léur - leabhar, báing' - binn, g'faun - gleann, b'aulhēnē - bealtaine, śgial - scéal, áť - áit, n Raing' - An Rinn, fáłhē - fáilte, ván' - amháin, h'aim'pēl - timpeall, ęung' - abhainn, cēsť - ceist, Íach - leath, rev' - raibh, śd'ach - isteach, mad'n - maidin, b'eg - beag. The schwa sound is written ę.

Ring Irish is an East Munster dialect from County Waterford, known for its extensive diphthongisation and consonants which differ a little from other dialects. As with other Munster dialects, initial vowels are often dropped and may also disappear between consonants. T is liable to mutation in Munster Irish, e.g. há - tá, h'aim'pēl - timpeall.

Broad consonants in Ring Irish are followed by two types of semivowel glide, the first occurs after b, f, m and p when followed by a long e or i. bwíł- an bhfuil, mwél - maol. A more unrounded glide appears after other consonants when followed by a long e or i, this may be written as a bar below the consonant, t̄év - taobh, d̄inē - duine. Nasal vowels are sporadically indicated in this text where the nasal vowels are important to those particular words. The writing of nasal sounds is optional but may be necessary in the future. This introductory text will be followed by more examples of different Gaelic dialects and how to write them in the dialect spelling.

Dialects in Scotland can be so different from Standard Scottish Gaelic, that it renders the standard spelling impossible for writing them. This has likely contributed to the demise of these dialects, all the mainland dialects of Scottish Gaelic are now extinct or number to only a handful of speakers. The second person plural pronoun is always written as sibh, despite being pronounced śu in several places. The sound [ɫ̪] is written ll in the dialect alphabet. Its variation across Scotland means that words containing this sound can be written differently across Scotland. On the Isle of Eigg this was pronounced [wɫ̪]. On Ardnamurchan, it was pronounced [ɫ̪w], written as wll and llw. The Gaelic dialect of St. Kilda has replaced [ɫ̪] with [w] or [ɔ̃], regardless of where this sound occurs in a word, written as w. This sound becomes [ð] or [ð̪] on the island of Easdale and in parts of South Western Mull, written as ð in the dialect alphabet. On Islay, this sound is pronounced [ɫ̪] or [ɫ̪ɫ̪], (Ó Dochartaigh, Cathair (1997), *Survey of the Gaelic Dialects of Scotland I-V*, Dublin Institute for Advanced Studies). There is a lot of variation in the way that Scottish Gaelic vowels are pronounced. The word gaoth commonly has a long form of [u], written gó in the dialect alphabet. The dialect once spoken on Arran would have had [ø:] or [ɜ:], so gaoth would be written as gǽ in the dialect alphabet. The Arran dialect is another example of a dialect, where the standard Scottish Gaelic spelling can't really be used accurately, vwè - bha, hè - tha, mwèhę - màthair.

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## South Jutlandic – Sven Isaksen

The standard Danish language Riksdansk isn't native to Jutland, that historically had its own traditional language quite unlike the other traditional languages across Scandinavia. Jutland is the part of Denmark connected to mainland Europe, Copenhagen and many of the other administrative centers in Denmark are on the islands to the east like Zealand. Jutland itself has several dialects, the South Jutlandic dialect comes from a traditional language similar to north Jutlandic but not the same, in this way there is no single Jutlandic traditional language but Jutlandic dialects all share things in common.

South Jutlandic is spoken closest to the border with Germany, around where Denmark and Germany have their border there was historically many languages. Low German was spoken on the German side, and Anglo-Danish or Angel Danish, a Nordic dialect that was similar in many ways to West Germanic languages. Many dialects of the North Frisian language were spoken around or on the coast and adjacent islands.

South Jutlandic is mainly divided into Eastern and Western dialects, in fact the east to west differences exist throughout Jutland including in the South Jutlandic and North Jutlandic dialects which are spoken around the Limfjorden. Areas that aren't particularly south or north can be divided into eastern and western dialects. Eastern dialects share more with Riksdansk than the other Jutlandic dialects, including three genders, found commonly in some eastern dialects of North Jutlandic. West Jutlandic almost always has the definite article before the noun like in English, and often no gender distinction.

South Jutlandic doesn't have the *stød* found in Riksdansk but instead uses pitch accents like most Norwegian and Swedish dialects. It shares the /x/ sound with German which is written *ch*, this normally occurs in place of Danish *g*. This lenition occurs when some consonants follow a vowel, *b* also becomes *f*. In Northern South Jutlandic these sounds are voiced between two vowels, e.g. *bøche* - *bøghe* - books. In Danish the *d* becomes /ðˀ/ a dental fricative released similarly to /l/, in South Jutlandic the lenition is different and /d/ tends to become *j* or *i* after vowels, *mad* - *maj*. Apocope is very common, this means that the final vowel is dropped, *å rejs* - to travel, which would be *at rejse* in Danish.

After *e*, *i*, *y*, *æ*, *ø*, *g* is pronounced [ç], and after other vowels it becomes [x]. For example *blech* 'pale', with [ç]. Final *-b* can become [f], e.g. *skab* 'closet', *skib* 'ship' - *skaf* and *skif*.

In eastern South Jutlandic, *a* is used in place of *æ* in a lot of words, the phrases below were corrected by Linda Mikkelsen to match her dialect, she is a young adult speaker of Padborg Jutlandic in South East Jutland who's language differs a little from older generations.

**hva æ dit naun?** - what is your name?

**hva heje do?** - what are you called?

**a heje...** - I am called

**vodan har do dæ?** - how are you?

**a har dæ godt, hva mæ dæ?** - I am well thank you and with you?

**hvo komme do fræ?** - where do you come from?

**a komme fræ...** - I come from...

**a saj et å jysk** - I say it in Jutlandic

**hva ska vi spis?** - what shall we eat?

**a kåmme inn i 'hus** - I am coming into the house

**ska vi læjs a boch?** - shall we read the book?

**gi vos a boch** - give us the book!

**a vann æ et dyf i a Limfjoe** - the water is not deep in the Limfjord

**æ dæ naunn hæej som snakke Synnejysk?** - is there anyone here who speaks South Jutlandic?

**han æ æn fiskemand** - he is a fisherman

**han æ æn bohn** - he is a farmer

**vi bløw bøndæ** - we became farmers

**a vil gæhrn besøch Kjøffenhaun ægæn** - I would like to visit Copenhagen again

**vi æ mælæmme** - we are members

**di æ glæej fo at a såj dæ/et** - they are glad that I said it

**vi har it begynt å snak Synnejysk** - we haven't began to speak South Jutlandic

**vi ska høej a sproch og fotæhl min kuhn om et** - we shall hear the language and tell my wife about it

**nu ska vi gå tebahch, a daw var dæjlæ** - now we shall go back, the day was wonderful

English	Danish	Padborg dialect, Sønder- Jylland	Røde kro	Østsønder -Jylland	Åbenrå	Vollerup, Tinglev
I	jeg	æ	æ	æ	æ	æ
you (singular)	du	do	do	do	dæ	do
he	han	han	han	han	han	han
she	hun	hun	hun	hun	hun	hun
it (neuter)	det	de	det	det	det	dæ
it, that	den	dæn/æ	den	den	den	den
we	vi	vi	vi	vi	vi	vi
you (plural)	I	i	i	i	i	i
they	de	di	dem	di	de	de
a man	en mand	æn man	en man	en mand	en mand	ænd mand
the man	manden	æ man	æ man	æ mand	æ mand	æ mand
men	mænd	mæn	mind	mandfolk	mænd	mænd
the men	mændene	æ mæn	æ mind	æ mandfolk	æ mænd	æ mænd
a book	en bog	æn boch	en boch	en bouch	æn boch	ænd boch
the book	bogen	æ boch	æ boch	æ bouch	æ boch	æ boch
books	bøger	bøche	bøcher	bøche	bøche	bøche
the books	bøgerne	æ bøche	æ bøcher	æ bøche	æ bøche	æ bøche
a house	et hus	æt hus	et hus	et hus	et hus	ed hus
the house	huset	æ hus	æ hus	æ hus	æ hus	æ hus
the houses	husene	æ huus	æ huus	æ huus	æ huus	æ huus
the big fjord	den store fjord	dæn stoø fjoe	den store fjoe	den stoue fjoue	den stoe fjoe	den stoe fjoe
the long beach	den lange strand	dæn lang straan	den lang stran	den laang strand	den lanng straan	den lang straan
the orange table	det orange bord	de orangesje boø	det orange boe	det orange boue	det orange bøe	dæ orange boe
the big stones	de store sten	di stoø steen	de stoe sten	de stoue stein	de stoe sten	de stoe sten
the long beaches	de lange strande	di lang strand	de lang stran	de laang straand	de lanng straan	de lang straan
the green trees	de grønne træer	di grøn trææ	de grøn træe	de grøøn træe	de grøøn træe	de grøn træe
I go	jeg går	æ gee	æ gæe	æ gee	æ gee	æ gæe
I went	jeg gik	æ geg	æ gik	æ gek	æ gik	æ gik
I have gone	jer er gået	æ æ gaun	æ æ gån	æ æ gaun	æ æ gaun	æ æ gaun
I am called	jeg hedder	æ heje	æ heje	æ heie	æ heje	æ heje
I write	jeg skriver	æ skriuø	æ skriue	æ skriue	æ skrive	æ skrive
I wrote	jeg skrev	æ skreu	æ skreu	æ skreu	æ skrev	æ skrev
I have written	jeg har skrevet	æ hæ skreun	æ har skreun	æ har skreun	æ har skrevn	æ har skrevn

the town	byen	æ by	æ by	æ by	æ by	æ by
the language	sproget	æ sproch	æ sproch	æ sproch	æ sproch	æ sproch
all the fjords	alle fjordene	ålle æ fjoø	æle fjorer	ålle æ fjoue	ålle æ fjoer	olle æ fjoer
to	til	te	te	te	til	tæ
on	på	å	å	å	å	å
behind	bag	bach	bach	bach	bach	bach
to be	at være	å vææ	å væe	å vææ	at væe	å væe
to sing	at synge	å søng	å syng	å syng	at synng	å syng
to travel	at rejse	å rajs	å rejs	å rejs	å reejs	å rejs
head	hoved	hoi	hoej	hoj	hoi	hoej
what?	hvad?	hva?	hva?	hva?	hva?	hva?
where?	hvor?	vå?	hvo?	hvo?	wo?	hvo?

The Åbenrå examples were provided by Lisbeth Ulderup. The example of the Padborg dialect in the table is not the same as the example used in the sentences. Some of these differences are also a matter of how close to Danish someone speaks. The word fjord does not mean the exact same thing in Danish, it can mean any brackish sea inlet or enclosed body of saline water. De and di are variants in pronunciation with di having a more defined, longer vowel. Danish de usually sounds like /di/.

Dialects a bit to the north and east show different variants in vowels and consonants, e.g. blewn - became, møj - much, æuwe - over, bugh – book.

## Further reading

I learned this dialect with help from people in different parts of Jutland, who I met mainly through Æ Synnejysk Forening. More information can be found at the official site here.

<https://www.synnejysk.dk/>



## *The Thy dialect – Thybomålet – Æ Tyjbomoel*

Søren Ralph, offentliggjort den 24. februar 2020

All articles I publish on Danish dialects may be shared for free on the net. This article is written by myself, Alex Søren Ralph, with the help of a resident of Hundborg who helped to correct some things. I give thanks to people in Thy who have helped me to learn their dialect over successive visits around Thy National Park.

Jutlandic is one of the three main dialects of the Danish language, Jutlandic being the group of dialects that are spoken on the mainland part of Denmark, which is the peninsula of Jutland north of Germany. Scandinavian dialects have always been difficult to classify, rather than calling Jutlandic a dialect of the Danish language, we may also refer to it as the Jutlandic Language, since its features pre-date the appearance of Rigsdansk/Sjællandsk Danish in Jutland. Jutlandic dialects are fundamentally different from every other North-Germanic language, these fundamental differences are embedded within Jutlandic and are not a recent stage of changes. Jutlandic dialects can be further divided. Some may talk about the South Jutlandic language. The southern dialects of the Jutland Peninsula share things which set them apart from the Northern dialects, they in a way form their own language between Northern Jutlandic dialects and German to the south.

Northern Jutlandic is a less united group of dialects, arguably the dialects of Northern Jutland are more different to each other than those of Southern Jutland. The northern dialects possess a very local identity in their names, like Thybomål and Vendelbomål. There are significant differences between the western and eastern varieties of North Jutlandic. Eastern varieties have three genders, like most traditional North-Germanic dialects but not the modern standard languages, except for Nynorsk in Norway. Western Jutlandic dialects, whether they be north or south, have no gender in nouns at all. This means that Western Jutlandic and English, stand out as being some of the only Indo-European languages to not distinguish nouns by gender. One of the other main things which makes Jutlandic dialects unique among all the North-Germanic languages, is that the definite article may come before the noun, rather than being attached to the end of it.

Standard Danish, Rigsdansk, has two genders: common and neuter. Common nouns end with -en in the definite form, neuter nouns end with -et.

*en mand* – a man, *manden* – the man  
*en kvinde* – a woman, *kvinden* – the woman  
*et hus* – a house, *huset* – the house

In the Thy dialect, these forms are:

*æn mand* – a man, *æ mand* – the man  
*æn kwind* – a woman, *æ kwind* – the woman  
*æn huws* – a house, *æ huws* – the house

The indefinite article has a remarkable similarity to the indefinite article 'yan' used in parts of Northern England. The article *æn* means 'a' or 'an', *jæn* means 'one', Danish *én*.

### Pronouns

English	Rigsdansk Danish	Thy Dialect
I	jeg	<i>æ</i> or <i>a</i> in places
thou	du	<i>do</i>
he	han	<i>han</i>
she	hun	<i>hun</i>
it (m/f)	den	<i>den</i>
it (n)	det	<i>dæ</i>
we	vi	<i>wi</i>
you plural	I	<i>i</i>
they	de	<i>de</i>

Like South Jutlandic is a grouping of dialects, the Thy dialect is in itself a grouping of related dialects, the Thy dialect can be spoken quite differently from place to place. Some speakers may use a *v* rather than *w*, *vi* instead of *wi*, *vææ* instead of *wææ* etc. Danish uses *os* as the first person plural object pronoun, English *us*. Like the Norn Language from Scotland, North Jutlandic uses the form *wos*. For example *æ hunn æ wæ æ wand å mæ' wos* – the dog is beside the water and with us, Rigsdansk: *hunden er ved vandet og med os*. It is common in North Jutlandic to preserve the initial *w-* found in Ingaevonic languages, but lost in North Germanic languages.

Nouns with regional variations.

English	Rigsdansk Danish	Thy dialect
day	dag	<i>daw/då</i>
house	hus	<i>huws</i>
houses	huse	<i>huuws</i>
fish	fisk	<i>fesk/feesk/fiesk</i>
stone	sten	<i>sten/steen/stien</i>
horse	hest	<i>hæst/hææst/hæjst/haist</i>
week	uge	<i>u`gh</i>

The vowels in the words ‘fish’ and ‘stone’ show similar variation to the vowels in Northern English for the word ‘stone’, e.g. steen, stian, styan, stane. The sound variation of fisk – fesk is something that also occurs in some of the southern coast dialects of Norway and those of Nordland in Northern Norway. Another example from Thybomål is that the word *ringe* in Danish is *renng* in Thybomål, the process of the final vowel disappearing is known as *apocope*, and it also occurs in Northern Norway and is common in Thybomål, *tenke* – *tenk*, *hjælpe* – *hjælp*. In fact these areas share many things in common. Like in Denmark, some of the dialects in Southern Norway and Nordland voice medial stops, like in much of Denmark. South Coast and Nordland dialects of Norway commonly have æ or e as the first person singular pronoun, but the pronunciation of this in Norwegian is different to in Jutlandic.

The prepositions in Jutlandic are also rather like those of Northern English dialects and of Scots.

English	Rigsdansk Danish	Thy dialect
to	til	<i>te</i>
by	ved	<i>wæ'</i>
with	med	<i>mæ'</i>
from	fra	<i>fræ</i>

Sample sentence:

they do not like fish - English

de kan ikke lide fisk – Rigsdansk Danish

de ka e' lie feesk – Thy dialect

In standard Danish ‘not’ is *ikke*, in the Thy dialect it varies. *It* or *itt* is used in the northern part of Thy, elsewhere it can be *ikk*, *int*, *intj*. Another variation is *i'* or *e'*.

In Jutlandic the *d* disappears between vowels. Also the *n* in *kan* has disappeared, this happens in Sjællandsk Danish too, but in the Thy dialect *ka* is always heard and is grammatically standard.

Interrogative pronouns in the Thy dialect change the initial *hv* of Danish to *hw*.

what	hvad	<i>hwa, wa</i>
where	hvor	<i>hwoe, woe</i>
how	hvordan	<i>hwodan, wodan</i>

### Phrases

English	Rigsdansk Danish	Thy dialect
welcome	velkommen	<i>wælkommen/walkommen</i>
good day	god dag	<i>go daw</i>
good evening	god aften	<i>go awten</i>
how are you? (how is it going?)	hvordan går det?	<i>hwodan goe æ'e?</i>
Fine thanks, and with you?	Fint tak, og hvad med dig?	<i>Fint tak, å hwa mæ' dæ?</i>
what are you called?	hvad hedder du?	<i>hwa hi'ker do?</i>
I am called...	jeg hedder...	<i>æ hier...</i>
where are you from?	hvor er du fra?	<i>hwoe æ do fræ?</i>
I am from Thy	jeg er fra Thy	<i>æ æ fræ Thyj'k</i>

One of the very unusual features of the Thy dialect is the insertion of a 'k' sound where standard Rigsdansk Danish would have the *stød*. The process can be compared to pre-aspiration in Icelandic, Faroese and some dialects of Norwegian. Pre-aspiration occurs also in Scottish Gaelic and the Sámi languages. The process that happens in the Thy dialect is not identical, since the *stød* sound, as well as the general phonemic inventory of colloquial Sjællandsk Danish, is very unique. Danish phonology is in general very unique, some saying unique in the world. How the *stød* functions with the prosody of Danish would seem to reflect features in grammar and speech that we cannot fully identify or explain. In the Thy dialect, the 'k' equivalent seems to serve some kind of grammatical function, visible in the examples given of 'to be called', where the interrogative of the verb has this 'k' sound inserted, where the affirmative form does not.

Thy – *Thyj'k* – 'Thy'

sund – *suw'kn* – sound (water channel)

ud – *uw'k* – 'out'

Norwegian dialect comparison (Vikværsk, Kristiansand dialect, Setesdal dialect, Sunnmørsk dialect) – Juri Michaelsen 2019

The following dialect comparisons were made by studying those dialects individually, but the examples below were provided by G. Kverndalen. Vikværsk is similar to the traditional Oslo dialect, it is spoken around the Oslofjord region.

English	Norwegian Bokmål	Vikværsk, Skien
I	jeg	jæi - jæ
you (singular)	du	du
he	han	hann
she	hun	ho
it	det/den	de
we	vi	vi
you (plural)	dere	dere
they	de	di
a stone	en stein	æin stæin
a sun	en sol	æi soL
a tree	et tre	ett tre
stones	steiner	stæinærr
suns	soler	soLer
trees	trær	trer
the stone	steinen	stæin'
the sun	solen	soLa
the tree	treet	tre'e
the big stone	den store steinen	denn store stæin'
the big sun	den store solen	den store soLa
the big tree	det store treet	de store tre'e
the big stones	de store steinene	di store stæinane
the big suns	de store solene	di store soLene
the big trees	de store trærne	di store trenæ
obviously the water is high	vannet er tydeligvis høyt	vanne ér tydlivis høkket
the water disappears towards the fjord	vannet forsvinner mot fjorden	vanne fåSvinne mot fjoN
the fjord is behind the house	fjorden er bak huset	fjoN er bak huse
she wakes every morning at seven o' clock	hun våkner hver morgen klokken 7	ho vakknar værr marra kLåkka 7
the valley is covered in forest and it has been wet for many months	dalen er skogkledd og den har vært våt i mange måneder	dæN ér skaukLedd å denn ha vorri våt i mange månærr
these boats have laid on the beach since the old times	disse båtene har lagt på stranden siden de gamle dager	di båtane hær ha liggi på stranna sea gamle daer
it was exactly as I said	det var nøyaktig som jeg sa	de va nøyakti sãm jæ sae

the cat hides himself between the boulders	katten gjemmer seg mellom steinblokkene	kata jømme sæ mellom stæinblåkkene
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Old Kristiansand Norwegian is a southern dialect on the coast facing Denmark. It contains some eastern and some western features, and the stops are voiced making the dialect a little like Danish.

English	Bokmål	Old Kristiansand Dialect
I	jeg	æ
you (sing)	du	du
he	han	han
she	hun	ho
it	det, den	dæ, dø, dæn
what are you called	hva heter du	å hedår du
I will travel	jeg skal reise	æ ska ræisø
I come back	jeg kommer tilbake	æ kåmmår tebagø
how are you	hvordan har du det	åssån, åssøn har du dø
what is it	hva er det	å e dæ, dø
september	september	sæbtæmbår
are you home	er du hjemme	æddu jemmø
to visit	å besøke	å besøgø
I hope	jeg håper	æ håbår
I hope not	jeg håper ikke	æ håbårkø
I shall know	jeg skal vite	æ ska vidø
I saw the boat behind the building	jeg så båten bak bygningen	æ så bådøn bag bøgningen
I do not know all of your friends	jeg kjenner ikke alle dine venner	æ kjennårkø allø dine vænnår
the dog sits	hunden sitter	honnen siddår
I have bought new books recently	jeg har kjøpt nye bøker i det siste	æ ha kjøpt nyø bøgår i dæ sistø
out	ut	ud
not	ikke	ikkø
I am not	jeg er ikke	æ ækkø

The Kristiansand dialect of Norwegian is spoken on the south coast. Kristiansand is not far from the large valley of Setesdal. Despite the proximity between these two places, the dialect of Setesdal is not similar to the Kristiansand dialect. Both of them are different to Bokmål or Nynorsk, but the Setesdal dialect is so different that some consider it to be a different language.

Setesdalsk even uses its own spelling system, the accented vowels most often represent diphthongs. Setesdalsk has a high number of diphthongs, é is /ɛɪ/, è is /ɛɛ/, ú is /ɛʉ/, ý is /uɪ/, ø is /øʏ/, ei is /ɔɪ/ or /æɪ/.

English	Bokmål	Setesdalsk
I	jeg	eg, èg
you (sing)	du	dú
I have	jeg har	eg hèv
what	hva	kò, ko
it	det	dèt
be	være	vère
the sun	solen	sólí
earth	jord	jórd
always	alltid	allstótt

These words and more information about Setesdalsk available at [www.vallemal.no](http://www.vallemal.no), this was also the source of the vocabulary used here. Website copyrighted by Valle Mållag.

Western Norwegian dialects have a lot of internal variation, the dialects in Møre and Romsdal stand someway between the typical West Fjord dialects and the Trøndelag dialects.

English	Bokmål Norwegian	Sunnmørsk Norwegian, Ulsteinvik
the men stand by the river	mennene står ved elven	karanje står mæ elva
I can look at the fjords the next morning	jeg kan se på fjordene neste morgen	ej kan sjå på fjårane neste morgen
we get the car tomorrow	vi får bilen i morgen	me fæ bilen i morgå
the storm will come today	stormen skal komme i dag	stormen skal kome i dag
I do not have cows in the car	jeg har ikke kyr i bilen	ej hekje kyr i bilen
I saw the fjord in a dream	jeg så fjorden i en drøm	ej såg fjåren i en draum
where are they?	hvor er de?	kar e dæi?
they drive to Sunnmøre	de kjører til Sunnmøre	dæi kjøyre til Sunnmøre
we go to the beach	vi går til stranden	me går til stranda

The Sunnmørsk dialect in Ørsta has extensive palatalization such as *karanje, daminje, enj, mannj, hannj* for *mennene, damene, en, mann, han*. The pronouns are similar to Ulsteinvik, *ej, mej* etc but may be closer to *ij* and *mij*. The Ørsta dialect has one of the western Norwegian kj sounds, between the English tch and the Standard Østnorsk kj. This sound is written as *tkj*, e.g. *itkje, tkjøme, tkjøyre* for *ikke, komme, kjøre*.

Dialects in Trøndelag and Northern Norway commonly display different types of palatalization and apocope, where the final vowel is dropped, like *æ heit* instead of *jeg heter*. The same happens in the Jutlandic dialects in Denmark.



## Finland Swedish dialect wordlist (Malax and Närpes dialects) – Juri Michaelsen 2018

Outside of Sweden itself are the Gutnish, Estonian Swedish and Finland Swedish dialects or languages. The Finland Scandinavian dialects are numerous and can be quite different to one another. They are not to be confused with the standard Finland Swedish, which is a variant of standard Swedish used in Finland. Here is a comparison of the Malax and Närpes dialects of Finland Norse with Swedish and English. The Malax and Närpes dialects have their own smaller dialects, in some versions of Malax one can hear *huise* instead of *huse*.

English	Swedish	Malax language	Närpes language
I	jag	ja	jag
you singular	du	tu, du	tu
he	han	a	han
she	hon	o	hon
it (neuter)	det	e	hede
it (masculine and feminine)	den	ta in certain expressions, like ta föscht maj – the first of may.	hande
we	vi	vi	vi
you plural	ni	ni	ni
they	dom	di	täide
I am	jag är	ja ji	ja jie
I was	jag var	ja va	ja vaa
I have been	jag har varit	ja ha vuri	ja ha vuri
I shall	jag ska	ja ska	ja skaa
I have	jag har	ja ha	ja haa
I had	jag hade	ja hadd	ja had
I have had	jag har haft	ja ha haft	ja ha haft
we are	vi är	vi ji	vi jie
we were	vi var	vi va	vi vaa
we have been	vi har varit	vi ha vuri	vi ha vuri
we had	vi hade	vi hadd	vi had
we have had	vi har haft	vi ha haft	vi ha haft
I speak	jag talar	ja talar	ja talar
I spoke	jag talade	ja tala	ja tala
I have spoken	jag har talat	ja ha tala	ja ha tala
you speak plural	ni talar	ni talar	ni talar
you spoke	ni talade	ni tala	ni tala
you have spoken	ni har talat	ni ha tala	ni ha tala
I go	jag går	ja gar	ja gaar
I went	jag gick	ja jieg	ja jieg
I have gone	jag har gått	ja ha gaji	ja ha gaa
we go	vi går	vi gar	vi gaar
we went	vi gick	vi jieg	vi jieg
we have gone	vi har gått	vi ha gaji	vi ha gaa

I see	jag ser	ja sir	ja siir
I saw	jag såg	ja soå	ja soåg
I write	jag skriver	ja skriver	ja skriivär
I wrote	jag skrev	ja skräiv	ja skräiv
you plural write	ni skriver	ni skriver	ni skriivär
you plural wrote	ni skrev	ni skräiv	ni skräiv
I have written	jag har skrivit	ja ha skrivi	ja ha skrivi
I know	jag vet	ja väit	ja väit
I love	jag älskar	ja älskar	ja älskar
I travel	jag reser	ja räiser	ja räisär
forest	skog	skog	skog
the forest	skogen	skoji	skojin
forests	skogar	skogar	skogan
the forests	skogarna	skoga	skogan
house	hus	hus	hus
the house	huset	huse	huuse
houses	hus	hus	huusän
the houses	husen	huse	huusän
dream	dröm	dryöm	dryöm
the dream	drömmen	dryömi	dryömin
dreams	drömmar	dryömar	dryömar
the dreams	drömmarna	dryöma	dryöman
sun	sol	sol	sol
the sun	solen	sole	solän
suns	solar	solar	solar
the suns	solarna	sola	solan
a big stone	en stor sten	i stor stäin	in stoor stäin
a big house	ett stort hus	i stort hus	e stoort huus
a big beach	en stor strand	i stor strand	en stoor straand
big stones	stora stenar	stora stäinar	stoora stäinar
big houses	stora hus	stora hus	stoora huus
big beaches	stora stränder	stora stränder	stoora striendär
the big stone	den stora stenen	ande stor stäini	hande stoor stäinin
the big house	det stora huset	ede stort huse	hede stoort huuse
the big beach	den stora stranden	onde stor strande	honde stoor straandän
the big stones	de stora stenarna	täide stor stäina	täide stoor stäinan
the big houses	de stora husen	täide stor huse	täide stoor huusän
the big beaches	de stora stränderna	täide stor strändre	täide stoor striendrän
to have	att ha	ti ha	ti haa
to be	att vara	ti va	ti vaa
to know	att veta	ti väit	ti viet
to swim	att simma	ti sem	ti siem
to eat	att äta	ti jiet	ti jiet
to forget	att glömma	ti glyöm	ti glyöm
to understand	att förstå	ti föshta	ti förstoå
what?	vad?	va?	kva?

where?	var?	vann?	kvann?
who?	vem?	vem?	köm?
how?	hur?	hur?	hulis?
when?	när?	noår?	noår?
here	här	ije	schenn
there	där	tide	tenn
this (masculine)	den här	ande	hisin
this (feminine)	den här	onde	hison
this	detta	eje	hitche
after	efter	baket	baaket
for	för	furi	fö
to	till	ti	oåt
over	över	uvi	uvi
on	på	på	oåp
through	genom	jenom	jönom
between	mellan	milla	milan
before	före	föri	furi
with	med	me	mie
but	men	men	men
the fish	fisken	fischi	fischtjin
the water	vattnet	vattne	vattne
the island	ön	öji	öjin
the road	vägen	vieji	viejin
the valley	dalen	dali	daalin
the lake	sjön	sjjön	sjön (different sj sound)

Malax dialect translations were given by A.H. Sund, and the Närpes dialect words are provided by Maria Vestdijk.

## Uralic Languages in Northern Europe – Juri Michaelsen

The North-Germanic languages are spoken throughout Scandinavia and the Baltic, but as one goes east, the historic language becomes Uralic. Uralic languages are not related to the Scandinavian languages. North-Germanic languages are closer to languages like Urdu and Persian than they are to the Uralic languages, which represent another huge family of languages, extending from the Urals in Russia towards the Baltic and south. Hungarian is the only Uralic language in Europe that is spoken outside of this area, but Hungarian is not very similar to the Finnic and Sámi languages in Northern Europe.

There are two sub branches of Uralic spoken in Northern Europe, the Finnic languages and the Sámi languages. The people who spoke Finnic languages were historically distinguished from the Sámi, the Finnic speakers had agriculture and the Sámi retained an indigenous hunter gatherer lifestyle. The Finnic languages may have spread over areas which were originally Sámi speaking, but nobody is sure which language family is earlier or if they both appeared at around the same time. The Sámi languages were originally spoken in Southern Finland, to Northern Finland, Northwestern Russia, across Lapland, and down Norway and Sweden nearly as far south as Oslo. The Sámi languages slowly retreated with the expansion of Scandinavian dialects. Today there are nine living Sámi languages, from south to north, Southern Sámi, Ume Sámi, Pite Sámi, Lule Sámi, then across Sweden and Finland to Lake Inari, where there is Inari Sámi and Skolt Sámi. East in Russia is Ter Sámi, Akkala Sámi and Kildin Sámi.

The Kemi Sámi people lived in southern Lapland and south of the Sámi speakers in Finland today. They lived around Kuusamo, and north towards Lake Inari. Lake Inari lies in the area where the Northern, Inari, Skolt and Kemi Sámi languages once converged. The Kemi Sámi language was native to a large area of Northern Finland and is more similar to Finnish than the other Sámi languages are.

English	Northern Sámi	Kemi Sámi	Finnish
I	mun, mon	mun	minä, mä
you (sing)	don	tun	sinä, sä
your (sing)	du	tu	sinun
lake	jávri	javre	järvi
spruce	guossa	koasa	kuusi
day	beaivi	päivä	päivää
father	áhčči	äätj	isä
but	muhto	mutto	mutta
power	fápmu	vuojme	voimakas

A comparison of some of the living Sámi languages can be seen when the numbers are compared.

English	Finnish	Southern Sámi	Pite Sámi	Northern Sámi	Inari Sámi	Skolt Sámi
one	yksi	akte	akttá	okta	ohtâ	õhtt
two	kaksi	göökte	guoktte	guokte	kyehti	kuáhht
three	kolme	golme	gálbmá	golbma	kulmâ	koumm
four	neljä	nieljje	nállje	njeallje	nelji	nellj
five	viisi	vijhte	vihtta	vihtta	vittâ	viit
six	kuusi	govhte	guhtta	guhhta	kuttâ	kutt
seven	seitsemän	tjihhtje	gietjav	čieža	čiččâm	čiččâm
eight	kahdeksan	gaektsie	gáktse	gávcci	käävci	kääu'c
nine	yhdeksän	uktsie	ákkse	ovcci	oovce	ááu'c
ten	kymmenen	luhkie	lågev	logi	love	låái

The Finnic languages were concentrated around St Petersburg and spread north into Karelia, and then west into Finland and north to Northern Sweden and Northern Norway. These dialects or languages are quite close to one another but Karelian and Finnish are phonetically different. Finnic languages were spoken inland in the St Petersburg region, and south, then west in Estonia and eastern Latvia where the Livonian language still has some speakers and is being revived.

English	Livonian	Estonian	Livvi Karelian	Finnish
language	kēļ	keel	kieli	kieli
man	mīez	mees	mies	mies
woman	nai	naine	naine, akka	nainen
child	lāpš	laps	lapsi	lapsi
water	vež	vesi	vezi, veži	vesi
forest	mōtsā	metsa	meččā	metsä
railway	rōdariek	raudtee	raududorogu, mašindorogu	rautatie
house	kuodā	maja	pertti	talo
tree	pū	puu	puu	puu
river	jō'ug	jōgi	jogi	joki
lake	jōra	järv	järvi	järvi
light	va'l	valgus	valo	valo
day	pāva	päev	päivy	päivää
night	īe	öö	yö	yö
bird	lind	lind	lindu	lintu
cat	kaš	kass	kaži	kissa
wolf	suž	hunt	hukku	susi
bear	okš	kandma	kondii	karhu

Some of these words are found in neighbouring Indo-European languages, the Latvian word for forest is *mežs*, like the Finnic words. These are mostly early Germanic and Balto-Slavic loanwords in the Finnic languages.

# An introduction to language – with particular focus on the Celtic languages and upon Scottish Gaelic dialects

By Linden Alexander Pentecost

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Published on my website [www.bookofdunbarra.co.uk](http://www.bookofdunbarra.co.uk) – which itself contains pages with articles not found in this book.

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Note that articles titled part one, part two etc, are parts of long running serieses. The future parts will be published in future books but will not be freely available online.

I was born in Pembury, England, and am of UK/British/English nationality, currently living in Northern England. This book was also published online in Cumbria, Northern England. This book is written for my patient family and friends, and for all those who have helped me, and for all those who love languages, or who wish to connect with native languages and cultures. It is also written for my beloved animals.

## The Norfolk Dialect

By Linden Alexander Pentecost, written in summer 2021

What we now define as English is not the full of extent of what English was in our dialects and historic language. The English dialects could sometimes be so different from one another that they were barely understandable to each other, so they could be called 'languages'. Such an example of a lesser known, unique English dialect is the Norfolk dialect from Eastern England. The *v* in words like *vicar* and *vintage* became *w*, so giving *wicar* and *wintage*. The speakers of the Norfolk dialect also use verbs in a way which is, unusual. I think that they might have made a sudden transition from Old English or perhaps Brittonic, so perhaps not adopting English grammar in the same way that many other peoples did.

Furthermore, some of the English dialects are similar to others through historic ties of language, linking back to the dialects of Old English, and also to the influence of Norse. For example, many will have heard of the Scots language in Scotland. The language was apparently originally known as *Inglis*, so it perhaps wasn't distinguished from 'English' in the sense of it being Scottish, Scots formed a dialect continuum with other Northumbrian dialects in Northern England, and the languages as a whole was known as *Inglis* I think. But the English and England of then was not a set out place and standard language at that time, 'Inglis' originally came from 'Anglisc', and referred to the people who were 'Angle'. This included tribes on both sides of the North Sea.

## North-Germanic languages - the topic of dialects

By Linden Alexander Pentecost, January 2022

In this article I look mainly at the Continental North-Germanic languages, and more specifically at their dialects. In terms of national language identity, there are three 'Continental North-Germanic languages', Danish, Norwegian, Swedish. The differences between these languages, are, on one level, easily identifiable, in certain grammatical, phonetic and lexical differences. But on the other hand the three languages are, in their word concepts and grammatical basis, very similar.

It can be said that across recorded history, for at least two thousand years, Denmark, Norway and Sweden have had a dialect continuum of North-Germanic languages. Some of these dialects or languages may have been more similar to West-Germanic in Denmark, and there is in some cases very little difference between the earliest recorded West and North Germanic. In Norway and Sweden, these dialects have been spoken alongside the indigenous Sámi languages, which were originally spoken in many of the interior regions of Norway, Sweden and Finland.

The North-Germanic languages in Northern Europe comes to us as a wide range of dialects or local languages, which may in themselves change accordingly to a localised or regional audience. Each of the traditional major dialect groups, or languages, has many individual dialects. Sometimes these dialect areas or languages converge, or are differentiated in a way that makes it hard to identify where one area becomes another. Certainly there were multiple directions of trade, contact, and movements, which must in some way be connected to these divergences and similarities. Below are some of the traditional dialect areas.

Insular/Western non-continental dialects:

.Greenlandic Norse (Southern Greenland)

.Icelandic (Iceland)

.Faroese (Faroe Islands)

.Norn, Shetland (Shetland Islands), has strong indications of eastern and western dialect areas

.Norn, Orkney and Caithness (Orkney Islands, to some extent Caithness)

.Norn, Western Isles, Dublin, Isle of Man, Cumbria

.Anglo-Norse/Anglo-Danish, Eastern England

Denmark:

.Angeldansk (Northern Germany, Southern Denmark)

.South Jutlandic (South Jutland) - East and West division

.North Jutlandic (North Jutland) - East and West Division

.Fynsk - (Island of Fyn)

.Sjællandsk - (Sjælland), dialects closest to the phonetic realisation of written



standard Danish, Rigsdansk

.Bornholmsk - (Bornholm), similar in some ways to Scanian, but also very different.  
Has palatal consonants

Sweden:

.Scanian - (Scania, southern Sweden), in many ways shares sprachbund-like features with Danish, not quite a continuum in my opinion.

.Götamål - (Southern Sweden), often parallels Scanian, unique prosodic patterns, lots of local phoneme variation

.Bohuslänska - (Southwestern Sweden), highly variable coastal dialect group

.Värmlandic - (Southwestern Sweden, sometimes shows parallels with Nordnorsk and West Bothnian)

.Dalsk - (Dalarna), includes Elfdalian and other local languages

.Gutnish - (Gotland)

.Jamtlandic - (Jamtland, shows similarity to nearby Norrlandic and Trønder dialects)

.West Bothnian/Bondska - (coastal Northern Sweden)

Other dialects in the Baltic Sea area:

.Northern East Bothnian dialects (Western Finland), parallels West Bothnian and Northern Scandinavian in general, hence sometimes associated as being as Swedish dialect

.Western East Bothnian dialects (Finland)

.Estonian Swedish dialects (Coastal Estonia, with some speakers who moved to Ukraine)

In more recent times, a standard version was built from the dialects, or rather a 'Norwegian', 'Swedish' and 'Danish' version of a common Scandinavian language was brought into place.

## The Gaelic dialects of Islay

By Linden Alexander Pentecost, January 2022

The Isle of Islay is one of the Inner Hebridean Islands of Western Scotland. Its Gaelic may be called Argyll Gaelic, in the sense that it is part of the larger Argyll dialect continuum, or association of common phonetic, grammatical and lexical features, even though the dialects within Argyll may differ greatly from each other. For example, the predominance of [x] in pre-aspiration is common in Argyll, and has sometimes been called a feature of Argyll Gaelic, although the 'Argyll' dialect of Arran does not have pre-aspiration in most examples.

Like on Arran, and, in different ways, in many Scottish Gaelic dialects, the written letter **a** varies with [ɛ] in certain words, often the particular words in which this occurs differs throughout Gaelic dialects. On Islay this sound is common heard in the word **math** - 'good'. In ordinary, non-lenited form, the initial velarised l is pronounced something like [t̪ɫ̪ʲ] or [t̪ʲ], as my best guess, although from what I understand, this initial sound can sound more like a voiced, dental [d], indistinguishable from a dental t. It occurs in words such as **laogh** - 'calf', **latha** - 'day', **làmh**han – 'hands'.

Photo below: Isle of Islay, taken by Andrea Pentecost, my beloved mother, and uploaded with her permission.



# An introduction to language – with particular focus on the Celtic languages and upon Scottish Gaelic dialects

By Linden Alexander Pentecost

The following is a collection of articles pertaining to language, in particular to Celtic language, published originally on archive.org. These are

- .Irish dialects and Primitive Irish on the Béarra Peninsula
- .An introduction to Scottish Gaelic dialects
- .The Barra Gaelic dialect, part one
- .The Arran Gaelic dialect, lesson one
- .The Arran Gaelic dialect, lesson two
- .Blas Ghàidhlig Lios Mhóir
- .Cruthan-Tìre, dualchainntean is cànanan
- .Scottish Gaelic dialects and ancient languages in Scotland
- .The Manx Gaelic language, Gaelg/Gailck Vanninagh
- .Manx language and folklore traditions, part one
- .Skeal ny Marrey, the story of the sea, a short poem in Manx Gaelic, with grammatical analysis
- .A poem in Manx and in Revived Cumbric, Sollys Blah y Gheuree
- .Ancient language in Cumbria, and potentially new archaeological sites
- .A poetic introduction to the Welsh language and to North Wales
- .Cornish language and heritage, part one
- .Cornish language and heritage, part two
- .Basic Late Cornish, part one
- .Basic Breton, part one
- .Two poems to horsey goddesses Epona and Rhiannon in reconstructed Gallo-Brittonic and in Welsh
- .From Scottish Gaelic to Norwegian to Finnish, to Ancient Language in the North Atlantic
- .Prehistoric Gaelic speaking settlement in the Faroe Islands
- .The Finnish Language And Finnish Spiritual Traditions With Comments On Spirituality And Language
- .Shetlandic and North-Caucasian, a connection?
- .Orkney Norn
- .A short discussion on languages in and around Helsinki
- .An introduction to Finno-Baltic languages
- .A basic description of five languages: Scottish Gaelic, Manx, Norwegian, Finnish and Nuxalk

## Irish dialects and Primitive Irish on the Beara Peninsula – **An Ghaeilge i mBéarra, canúintí na Gaeilge is Gaeilge Ársa**

Photos and text Linden Alexander Pentecost, writing at my blog Iwerjon, published by me on archive.org



**An grianghraf: an samhradh i mBéarra, an tír agus An tAigéan Atlantach**

I thought I would make a post about this, possibly one of several. In all fairness, I don't know much about Irish on the Beara Peninsula, at all, but it's interesting. The Doegan records may have some speakers from The Beara Peninsula, and it is possible to hear many Irish dialects on this website. I will give more details further down the page.

As an introduction to those who aren't familiar with the place, Beara is a peninsula in southwestern Ireland, not far from the Iveragh and Dingle Peninsulas, and not too far Killarney and the Gap of Dunloe. The Beara Peninsula is situated southwest of Kenmare, and is located in County Cork, Irish **Contae Chorcaigh**.

I cannot say, only from when I was there, there was less Irish spoken than there is on The Dingle Peninsula, which is a Gaeltacht. I actually only met one Irish speaker in Beara, and I remember that he said, he hadn't used in much in a long while. This man was a lovely and friendly farm owner, living in

a valley behind Castletownbere. Irish always sounds beautiful, and hearing a new dialect is quite exciting. I remember that the speaker's Irish had a very Munster-sounding prosody and syllabic divisions, the dialect sounded lovely.

Munster Irish has many smaller dialects within it, perhaps the three with the most resources, are the dialects of The Dingle Peninsula in Kerry, those of Muscraí in Cork, and those of Ring in County Waterford. These dialects, and the others across Munster, share certain things in common, grammatical differences, their own words, and a particular range of prosodic patterns. The dialects of West Munster also share features along the coastline as I understand, so Dingle Irish shares some of these with the Iveragh and Beara dialects, I think. The Beara Peninsula, was, until recently, Irish-speaking, and the names across the peninsula are almost entirely of Irish origin. The area also boasts some beautiful ancient sites.

Some of the Irish place-names in the area, include:

Castletownbere – **Baile Chaisleáin Bhéarra** ‘castle town of Bearra’

Eyries – **Na hAorigh** – I can't comment on this etymology, I think it might be a spelling variation?

Ardgroom – **Dhá Dhrom** ‘two drumlins’

Allihies – **Na hAilichí** – ‘the cliff fields’ (A. D. Mills, 2003, A Dictionary of British Place-Names, Oxford University Press)

Dursey Island – **Oileán Baoi** – I don't know what **baoi** means, but this word is connected to the Cailleach Bhéarra, a local pre-Christian goddess, and likely to the word **bó**, ‘cow’.



The Doegan records is a great website; there is a speaker on here, Mícheál Ó Laoghaire, who's Irish is likely one of the traditional, native pronunciations of the Beara Peninsula. The area also boasts ancient, and later copper mines, such as those at Allihies; the oldest evidence of copper mining on these peninsulas of Western Munster goes back to the Bronze Age. This part of Ireland was at the forefront of copper mining, and I am certain, that it must in some way be connected to Celtic tribes recorded later, and to the Primitive Irish, or Ogham language, which is well attested in this part of Ireland. Having said that, The Beara Peninsula has far fewer Ogham inscriptions than the Iveragh and Dingle Peninsulas have, and I wonder if there was some cultural difference during this time. An example of an Ogham stone is at Ballycrovane, reads MAQI-DECCEDDAS AVI TURANIAS. As in most Ogham inscriptions, we mainly have examples of words in the genitive case, MAQI means 'of (the) son'. AVI means 'of the descendant' or perhaps simply 'descendant', the original nominative forms of both nouns would be MAQOS and AVOS or something close to that. The name TURANIAS looks very much like the Welsh word 'taran' for thunder, although the ending -IAS is a little problematic from a Proto-Celtic *\*taranos/\*toranos*. However, if the word was instead from *\*toranis* is may make more sense. These etymologies are related to Irish **torann** and **toirneach**; the origin of these words relates to thunder and its magical, inner meaning and deity. It's interesting because, the Q-Celtic languages seem to keep an [o] whereas the P-Celtic languages have [a], including in the name of the Gaulish deity, Taranis. In this example from Beara, perhaps one of the oldest Ogham inscriptions, the sound appears to be U. This word for thunder also has a similar deity name in many Indo-European languages, as in the name Thor for example.



Photo above: Allihies/**Na hAilichí**

Allihies became famous for its copper mining over the past few hundred years. But copper was mined here before then, back in the Bronze Age. This must have been of tremendous importance, because copper mining began in this part of Ireland, before it went elsewhere in Ireland or to Britain. And it came to Britain from the west. This area's history, and its ancient Ogham Celtic language, must hold a lot of the secrets that can tell us who the Celts were, when they came and how they were connected to other Celtic speakers in Britain and elsewhere. Allihies has a sacred, most likely pre-Christian site, connected to the Children of Lir in Irish mythology. They were transformed into swans, but, upon reaching Allihies, became people again.

I hope that you all have a blessed day



Photo above: a view towards Glengariff, looking towards the inland parts of Cork

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## An Introduction to Scottish Gaelic dialects

Article and photos by Linden Alexander Pentecost, also published on archive.org in December 2020 by Linden Alexander Pentecost, republished June 2021 and again in August 2021 on archive.org



Above: dune landscape on the Ardnamurchan Peninsula, Western Scotland. Unfortunately I was not long enough in Ardnamurchan to meet any Gaelic speakers, but this long peninsula, north of Mull, and separated from the mainland to the south by the great Loch Sunart, is a part of the mainland where Gaelic has persisted as a spoken language. The dialect of Gaelic on Ardnamurchan is different to that of Mull and other, smaller Hebridean islands, and is quite different from other mainland dialects. The Goidelic languages make up a dialect continuum, running from the southernmost tip of Ireland to the top of Scotland. The dialects in Ireland can be grouped into main sub-groups, Ulster, Connaught and Munster, named accordingly to the provinces in Ireland where they are spoken. Outside of Ireland, the Manx and Scottish Gaelic languages share several developments that aren't found in Irish. These same features may be found in the most northern parts of Ulster, where for example the Rathlin Irish dialect uses *bhá* for 'was, were', similar to *bha* in Scottish Gaelic, and *va* in Manx, where other Irish dialects have *bhí*. The dialects outside of Ireland also developed in their own individual ways. Manx underwent several phonetic and morphological developments, and the same happened in Scotland to create what we now define as Scottish Gaelic. But, that isn't necessarily to say that Scottish Gaelic is one, single language. Historically speaking, Scottish Gaelic was a wide variety of dialects. They all used much the same structure and words, often the same as those in Manx and Irish too. But nevertheless, some things are very variable across the Goidelic languages, including the differences between dialects within Scotland.



There are no clear dialect boundaries in Scotland, and it would suffice to say that there is only what is standard for a relatively small area. There is no eastern or northern Gaelic dialect, instead, changes in pronunciation and word choice are distributed down to the boundaries of clans, and how people interacted with one another over time. Whilst there is no eastern dialect of Gaelic, there are features that are only found in the eastern dialects. The region of Argyll was believed to be the first settled by the Gaels in Scotland, and across Argyll, there are patterns and similarities in the Gaelic. But, in contrast, some of these also extend east into the eastern dialects, some of them are found all over the west coast, and others are shared with Irish and Manx. So even though Argyll Gaelic is in a sense, a connected group of dialects, there are other major differences within Argyll Gaelic, which might in some cases be shared with eastern Scotland, sometimes with Western or Northern Scotland, and sometimes specifically with the Isle of Man and Ireland. The differences and similarities between dialects, seem in-part due to the original patterns in how Gaelic spread across Scotland, how these 'spreads' later re-formed, and how contact was specifically maintained due to cultural ties, and due to geography and environment; islands often share similarities in their Gaelic due in part to maintained maritime connections. The dialect of Islay is an extension of the Argyll Gaelic towards the North Channel and to Ulster. So even though Islay Gaelic shares much in common with other Argyll dialects, it also shares certain things with Irish. For example on Islay, 'thank you' is *gu robh math agad*, very close to the Manx *gura mie ayd* and, even closer to the Irish *go raibh maith agat*, in Ulster Irish it can be *go rabh maith agad*. In Scotland, the usual word for morning is *madainn*, with a broad d sound. In Irish, the d is a slender sound, and the Irish word is *maidin*. Like the Irish, Islay Gaelic also has *maidin*.

Àdhamh Ó Broin is a speaker of a northern Argyll dialect, quite distinct from that of Islay. He is working to revitalise and to teach the language, which he writes *Gáilig*. The á is used to mark the 'broad' version of è /ɛ:/ in the standard language, in his dialect, the pronunciation of *Gàidhlig* was much like the way that many English speakers would pronounce 'Gaelic'. A feature of Àdhamh's dialect, and a common feature of Argyll dialects, is not to diphthongise vowels before -n, so that the words *ceann*, *ann*, *clann* have a short [a] rather than the [au] diphthong in Mid-Minch Gaelic. This pronunciation also continues into Ulster in Ireland.

More northern Argyll dialects also have pre-aspiration. How exactly pre-aspiration occurs is one of the key ways to divide and look at Gaelic dialects in Scotland. Some parts of Argyll, such as Arran, have no pre-aspiration, whereas those in the north of Argyll have a guttural pre-aspiration, where for instance *cat* is pronounced [kʰax̥t̪]. The Western Isles have a slightly softer pronunciation, as [kʰaht̪], whereas the northern and much of the eastern mainland has no pre-aspiration.

Other easily measurable divisions across Gaelic dialects, include apocope, the loss of the final vowel, which is only on the eastern and northern mainland. Another is the pronunciation of the diphthong *eu*, but this can sometimes be pronounced differently, in different words, in the same dialect.

Although Gaelic has no standard pronunciation, a sort of standard has evolved from the dialects of Skye and the Outer Hebrides. The differences between Gaelic dialects, and their unique variations, are sadly less common to come across nowadays. Many of the dialects have ceased to be spoken, and subsequently the fine details of these dialects can be obscured by the standard language. Modern Scottish Gaelic uses a spelling that comes from the Middle Irish Period, the etymological spelling is useful for speakers of any dialect, but when it comes to writing the dialects themselves, it is hard to use the spelling to represent the spoken language. One of the first people to record colloquial Gaelic in Scotland, was Edward Llwyd, and he even devised his own spelling system for these dialects. The examples below give a clue to how colloquial Gaelic and Classical Gaelic

differ. The spelling of both modern Irish and Scottish Gaelic is based upon Classical Gaelic, and ultimately comes from Middle Irish. Whereas Llwyd's system, and the system used to spell Manx, were devised specifically for the colloquial languages.

Mid-Minch Scottish Gaelic	Inverness Gaelic (Lluyd)	Argyll Gaelic (Lluyd)	Manx	Irish (Caighdeán)	English
<b>abhainn</b>	<i>avin</i>	<i>ôyn</i>	<i>awin</i>	<b>abhainn</b>	river
<b>muir, cuan</b>	<i>muir</i>	<i>fairge</i>	<i>keayn, faarkey, mooir</i>	<b>farrage, muir</b>	sea
<b>beinn</b>	<i>beann</i>	<i>slîaw, monav</i>	<i>slieau, beinn</i>	<b>sliabh, beinn</b>	mountain
<b>cnoc</b>	<i>crok</i>	<i>kronk</i>	<i>cronk</i>	<b>cnoc</b>	hill
<b>cù</b>	<i>kû</i>	<i>madyv, kû</i>	<i>moddey</i>	<b>madra</b>	dog
<b>sneachd</b>	<i>shneachk</i>	<i>sneacht</i>	<i>sniaghtey</i>	<b>sneacht</b>	snow
<b>doimhne, doimhneachd</b>	<i>dein</i>	<i>divigan</i>	<i>diunid</i>	<b>domhain, doimhneacht</b>	depth
<b>uisge</b>	<i>wishg</i>	<i>wisge</i>	<i>ushtey</i>	<b>uisce</b>	water
<b>craobh</b>	<i>krÿw</i>	<i>krÿv</i>	<i>billey</i>	<b>crann</b>	tree
<b>cnò</b>	<i>krô</i>	<i>kryû, krû</i>	<i>cro</i>	<b>cnó</b>	nut
<b>seiche, bian, leathar</b>	<i>shehe</i>	<i>fèann</i>	<i>sheh, crackan</i>	<b>seithe, craiceann, leathar</b>	animal hide
<b>ath</b>	<i>ãn</i>	<i>â</i>	<i>aah</i>	<b>ath</b>	ford

In the table, it's noticeable that the standard Irish and Scottish Gaelic languages bare a close written resemblance, sharing a common historic phonology. These can represent the phonology of the descendant spoken dialects, sometimes but not always. However, when we talk of the actual phonology and colloquial Goidelic languages, the sounds, grammar and even some of the vocabulary is not an exact fit.

Some areas of Goidelic have different word choices. The word *craobh* in Scottish Gaelic comes from Old Irish *cráeb*, but this doesn't exist in Modern Irish as the usual word for a tree, instead it may be used to mean 'branch'. In Scotland, *crann* exists, but it may refer more specifically to a mast of a boat. While on the Isle of Man, they use the word *billey* or for a tree. In Ireland, *sliabh* and *beinn* are the generic words for a mountain. The Isle of Man is the same, using *beinn* and *slieau*. Scottish Gaelic uses *beinn* as the generic word for a mountain, but *monadh* is also used, particularly in place-names, whilst the word *sliabh* is less common in Scotland.

In the word for a 'nut', the historic combinations *cn-* and *gn-* change the n to an r, this happens in all modern Goidelic dialects except those in Munster, where initial consonant clusters are more numerous. This includes the preservation of the n, but may also be formed from syncope.

### A final note: northern Scottish dialects

The dialects of the northern mainland are another area. There is often apocope, the loss of the final vowel, and several changes in how vowel combinations are pronounced, as well as in the intonation and accent, which is quite different to that found anywhere else. Even though these dialects are an area, a sort of miniature sprachbund of dialects sharing similar sounds and words, the origins of these dialects can be quite different. The dialect of the region of Assynt is quite different from its neighbours, sharing certain things in common with Lewis Gaelic in the Outer Hebrides. Lewis shared maritime contact with the northern mainland, and other small islands between, more so than the other Outer Hebridean islands did. Subsequently the Gaelic of Lewis shares some, but not the key features, with dialects on the northern mainland. In Assynt this is more apparent in phonology. In the Durness area near Cape Wrath, *cionnas* is used for 'how', instead of *ciamar*. Lewis also had *cionnas* in places. It's quite interesting that the most northern part of Scotland uses the word also used in Munster and the Isle of Man.

Àdhamh Ó Broin is also working to revive his ancestral Caithness Gaelic, which, whilst sharing things in common with other north mainland dialects, had quite different origins. Àdhamh did a presentation on the dialect at an Edinburgh language event, and spoke it aloud. Some examples of words are *eirm* 'name' for *ainm*. Goidelic dialects outside of Munster, all turn n to r in the clusters *cn-* and *gn-*. But Gaelic in Northern Scotland turns n into r where it would not be elsewhere in Scotland.



The photo above shows the area of sea between Broadford, on the Isle of Skye, and the mainland of Wester Ross. Skye is a large island, and still remains a stronghold of the Gaelic language. Gaelic is not uniform across Skye, and the dialects of Skye do in a way form a continuum with the dialects of Wester Ross, although the dialect boundaries are not exact. To cross the bridge over to Skye, one goes past Loch Duich, a sea loch extending inland. To give an example of how the term 'dialect continuum' isn't always apt, the dialects of the Loch Duich area were very distinctive from the Skye dialects, and those of Applecross, Loch Carron, Loch Kishorn and Loch Torridon in Wester Ross.

Gaelic remaining widely spoken on Skye, also helped to facilitate the creation of the modern 'Mid-Minch' Gaelic, which in a sense has become standard pronunciation. This is because, as well as Skye, Gaelic is spoken a lot in the Outer Hebrides opposite Skye, the islands of Lewis, Harris, North Uist, Benbecula, South Uist, Eriskay, Barra and Vatersay.

Already there were strong tribal (or clan) and linguistic ties between the communities of Skye and The Outer Hebrides, which helped to facilitate a more recent merging of these already connected dialects, to create the Mid-Minch 'standard'.

The image below shows Loch Glen Dhu. This is a sea loch from the Atlantic Ocean, which separates McKay Country to the north (left side of the loch), and Assynt to the south (right side of the loch). The loch extends inland to the mountains, and so accordingly the Gaelic dialects of McKay Country to the north, and Assynt to the south, are quite different.

Travelling by sea was often easier than going across the mountains, and the sea has a lot to do with how dialects are connected or more distant. The land to the north, and the Gaelic dialect, are McKay, the Gaelic is sometimes called McKay Gaelic after the clan, and the region is the traditional territory of the McKays, from Gaelic *MacAoidh*, Old Irish *Macc Áed*, Primitive Irish *maqq-aid-* 'son of fire', although *áed* was also a deity and can be associated with the idea of an ethereal or spiritual fire.

Meanwhile, the land of Assynt to the south was MacLeod *Mac Leòid* territory, this tribe were the large tribe also living on Lewis, and so accordingly Assynt Gaelic shares things with Lewis Gaelic (and other MacLeod dialects) as well as with other north mainland dialects, again indicative of how cultural ties were maintained through language, by the sea, as much as by land.



References: most of the material in this article came from my own life experiences, and knowledge I have picked up about Gaelic dialects in Scotland. Often the only way to conduct research on this subject is by actually going out into the field, talking to people and learning from them. Some of this knowledge has come from studying clan boundaries, but even then, I have often found out far more about historical communities and dialects, by talking to people. I am grateful to all those who have helped me, especially to Àdhamh.

However, with regards to the examples by Llwyd, these come from the book *The Scottish Gaelic translation of John Ray's Dictionarium Trilangue* by Edward Llwyd. I am extremely grateful to Edward Llwyd for his care and regard for our indigenous languages.

## The Barra Gaelic dialect; part one

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some corrections in June 2021. My  
photos may not be used commercially

This introduction to Barra Gaelic is written mainly for an audience of people who already have some knowledge of the language; but I hope it is interesting for all readers. Barra Gaelic is one of the Outer Hebridean dialects, which, as well as the Skye dialects, are similar on many levels to Mid-Minch Gaelic and to



‘Modern Gaelic’; these dialects form the sub-basis of Mid-Minch Gaelic. Despite the similarity between Outer Hebridean dialects, there are also large differences. Some of the features of Outer Hebridean and Skye dialects, include:

- .Softer pre-aspiration, unlike [x] in Argyll
- .Frequent devoicing of stops b, d, g
- .Sr pronounced with medial ‘t’
- .Diphthongisation of certain vowels

In the area around Barra, there is little I can tell about the dialect of Mingulay. Barra itself has differences from place to place, some parts of Barra have a concentration of unique Barra features. On other parts of the island, Barra Gaelic is spoken, but without including these particular features that are unique to the island. I don’t know how to explain the Barra Gaelic prosody at this moment in time, that will be in parts two or three. The prosody of a language frequently seems to work together with the phoneme inventory; the prosody is significantly different to that of South Uist to the north. Most place-names on the Isle of Barra are in Gaelic, when Gaelic arrived on the island is unknown, but generally put to shortly after the formation of the kingdom of Dál Riada, but parts of Gaelic are no doubt much much older, and I think some form of Gaelic has been in Scotland for at least 2000 years. Names of mountains on the island are frequently in the Norse language, such as the mountain Heaval, where the Norse fell has become -val. Names like Vatersay and Sandray are Norse too, the second element in these names is Norse ‘ey’ for ‘island’. Barra Gaelic has also borrowed the Norse word for ‘sea’ to refer to the Atlantic Ocean, **Na Haf** which is always plural. Below are examples of Barra Gaelic words, written with the International Phonetic Alphabet. This has been improvised to the best of my understanding of the dialect, coming from my own experience, and with the help of the book *The Dialect of Barra in the Outer Hebrides*, by Carl Hj. Borgstrøm. Note that I am unclear if the [tʰ] shown here is actually closer to [tʃ]. The examples below do not represent the language of one speaker on Barra, these are words I have heard, and there may be dialectal differences involved.

[ən dʒe:]	<b>an-dé</b> – ‘yesterday’	[saiˈtʲɔ̃]	<b>saille</b> – ‘salted’
[kʰarætʲ]	<b>caraid</b> – ‘friend’	[paːˈhʲɔ̃]	<b>bàta</b> – ‘boat’
[ʃi:tʲɔ̃]	<b>sìde</b> – ‘weather’	[kʰaˈhʲɪ]	<b>cat</b> – ‘cat’
[fær]	<b>fear</b> – ‘man’	[æx]	<b>each</b> – ‘horse’

These examples show where Barra Gaelic has [æ] as in ‘mat’, frequently, in certain positions.

The slender **d** on Barra often takes the pronunciation [dʒ]-[tʒ]. The **d** in words like **dé**, **dìreach**, has a sound close to the ‘s’ in ‘leisure’ following the ‘d’.

The final unstressed vowel in Gaelic words can vary from place to place, the most common pronunciation in modern Gaelic is the schwa. On Barra this is uniquely [ɔ̃], which sounds like an unstressed version of [ɔ], or an [ɔ] articulated closer to a schwa. This is also found word-medially, it also occurs word-medially in Rosshire on the Mainland. If another word follows, this [ɔ̃] sound becomes a schwa; it is not heard on every part of the island, and nowadays seems to be less common.

The slender **r** on the Isle of Barra, can take a pronunciation almost identical to the slender **d**, [tʒ]; the only difference to my ears is that this [tʒ] is articulated with the mouth positioned more to produce a slender **r**.

Photo above: Uidh on the Isle of Vatersay, stormy weather. Top photo: Castlebay, **Bàgh a’ Chaisteil** with Heaval behind.



## The Arran dialect of Gaelic, lesson one, and introduction to the Arran Gaelic dialect project

Written by Linden Alexander Pentecost, published on archive.org by Linden Alexander Pentecost in July 2021

The Arran dialect of Gaelic was a little different sounding to the dialects of Scottish Gaelic which are more commonly heard today. The alphabet is the same, except for the addition of a few extra letters. For this first lesson I am not going to focus too much on pronunciation, as there is info out there online about Gaelic pronunciation, and Arran Gaelic is similar in most respects; so I will only give a basic overview of the pronunciation and the differences. I believe Arran Gaelic is important, and can be seen as a vehicle and living manifestation of the island itself and her people.

First off, Arran Gaelic doesn't really have pre-aspiration, so when pronouncing words like *mwàc* 'son', and *pwápa* 'pope', there is no pre-aspiration before the *c* in *mwàc* nor before the second *p* in *pwápa*.

Sometimes in Arran Gaelic a 'voiced' sound was more common, so sometimes what is normally written as a *t* in Gaelic, becomes a *d* on Arran. For example *toilichte* 'happy', becomes *toilide* in Arran Gaelic orthography. Arran Gaelic frequently doesn't have the slender *ch*, as visible in the above word. This is particularly common in plural endings, so *bàtaichean* 'boats' would be pronounced on Arran as though the *ch* is missing. In dialect orthography, it may be written as *bwátaidhean*, note that the vowels on either side of the *dh* become a single, short vowel [i].

The written *á* and *à* represent where standard orthography *a* and *à* have shifted to [ɛ] and [ɛ:] in Arran pronunciation. Here are some examples of words, written in this Arran Gaelic orthography:

*álainn* for *àlainn* 'beautiful'

*càt* for *cat* 'cat'

*mwàc* for *mac* 'son'

*thá* for *tha* – 'is, are, there is, there are'

The 'w', not an exact 'w' as in English, may occur after *b*, *f*, *m* and *p* when followed by *á* or *à*.

The letter *ó* occurs to show what is probably a short [ø], perhaps [œ], as in *tóigh* 'house', standard spelling *taigh*; this is found more in Northern Arran, and it is the dialect of Northern, specifically northwestern Arran, that my spelling is based upon. When this sound is long, it is written *ö*, as in *teöghlach* 'family', standard *teaghlach*, *göth* 'wind', standard *gaoth*, *söghal* 'world', standard *saoghal*.

The vowel *y* was probably pronounced similarly to the [y] in Finnish, I am unsure on the exact phoneme but am quite confident in this comparison with Finnish [y], examples are: *iydhal* – idol, standard *iodhal*, *cyimhne* 'memory', standard *cuimhne*. When long it is written *ÿ*, as in *smÿintidh* – 'to think', standard spelling *smaintich*.

Below are a couple of sample sentences I have written to show the differences between this Arran orthography and how the sentences would look in standard orthography.

*thá mi a' cröidsinn gum bi Gàidhlig Àrainn beo a-rithisd* – I believe that Arran Gaelic will be alive again  
*tha mi a' creidsinn gum bi Gàidhlig Arainn beò a-rithist* - in standard spelling

*bhwá a' ghöth a' seinn* – the wind was singing

*bha a' ghaoth a' seinn* – in standard spelling

Trivia: on a cave on the Isle of Arran, there is an Ogham inscription, which is only readable thus far as *f-----mll* MEQ 'son of', this inscription would seem to indicate an early Q-Celtic language on the island. It is unknown for how long Q-Celtic language has been on Arran, or how it might relate to the island's indigenous language and cultures from the distant past, but it seems possible I think that the Arran dialect as recorded, radiates the history of the land, across the ages.

The Arran Gaelic orthography has been in part inspired by the more accurate dialect orthography for Gaelic, developed by Ruairí Ó Conghaile and C. Ó Shuilleabháin, I have gained permission to use this orthography by the original creators, but my own orthography is a separate project and not so similar. I was inspired to use *ö* from Nils M. Holmer's book, mentioned below.

I have learned about the Arran dialect, from the book *The Gaelic of Arran* by Nils M. Holmer, and from some others who know about Arran Gaelic and Argyll dialects in general, including from Àdhamh Ó Broin.

The Arran Gaelic Dialect, lesson two – written and published by Linden Alexander Pentecost August 2021, also published on archive.org under the creative commons non-commercial license

This is lesson two of Arran Gaelic. I learned most of what I know about the dialect, from Nils M. Holmer's book, The Gaelic of Arran. I have later learned more about the dialect and have created a spelling for the northwestern dialect on the island, near Lochranza and Catacol specifically. My spelling has been partially based on the Gaelic Dialect Alphabet, originally created by Ruairí Ó Conghaile, and adapted for Arran Gaelic by Cormac Ó Shuilleabháin, who helped and advised me on this article and upon how to present the information.

Pronunciation notes:

.**â** – sounds like the 'e' in some pronunciations of 'ken', [ɛ]

.**á** – is a longer version of the sound above, [ɛ:]

.In Arran Gaelic, the pronunciation of words like **ceann** does not have diphthongisation, instead the sound is [a], rather than [au].

.medial broad **bh** and **mh** tend to sound like [v] in Arran Gaelic, as in **samhrag** 'summer'

.preaspiration isn't really found in Arran Gaelic as a whole, only in certain words which may be from the influence of other dialects.

.**ô** is a written variant of short **ö**, which sounds like the ö in German, written in the IPA as [ø]

.**y** is pronounced similarly to [y] or to the y in Finnish, like the German ü and French u, so the word for 'night', normally written **oidhche** would be pronounced close to [y:çə]

Phrases and sample sentences:

**c' ainm a th'ort?** - what is your name?

**is mise...** - I am

**latha mwàth** – good day

**feasgar mwàth** – good afternoon

**yidhche mhwàth** – good night

**maidinn mhwàth** – good morning

**gu dé thá mi a' dèanag an-diug?** - what am I doing today?

**thá mi a' seólag** – I am sailing

**thá mi a' cróidsinn** – I am believing

**a' bheil an t-each fwàthast ann an Àrainn?** - is the horse still on the Isle of Arran?

**a' bheil?** - is? Are? Is there? Are there?

**an t-each** – the horse

**fwàthast** – still

**ann an Àrainn** – on Arran, literally 'in Arran'

**thá cyimhn' ágam gun robh mi ann an Àrainn** – I remember that I was on the Isle of Arran

**thá** – is, are, there is, there are

**cyimhn'** – memory, (but after a vowel, before a vowel it is **cyimhne**).

**ágam** – at-me

**gun robh** – that was, were, that there was, that there were

**mi** – I

**ann an Àrainn** – on Arran

Numbers:

**a h-yn** – one

**dá** – two

**trì** – three

**ceithir** – four

**cóig** – five

**sià** – six

**seachd** – seven

**ochd** – eight

**nyi** – nine

**deich** – ten

Pronouns

**mi** – I

**u, tu** – you singular, thou

**i** – she

**e** – he

**sinn** – we

**siybh** – you plurl

**ád** – they



# Blas Ghàidhlig Lios Mhóir

An artaigil agus na dealbhan Le Linden Alexander Pentecost (Article, photos and publishing by Linden Alexander Pentecost, published online August 2021, under the creative commons, attribution, non-commercial license). Published on archive.org by the author.

*This article gives an overview of Lismore Gaelic. I learned information on the dialect's phonology, from the Survey of the Gaelic Dialects of Scotland, School of Celtic Studies, Dublin Institute of Advanced Studies, edited by Cathair Ó Dochartaigh; written in short here as the SGDS. I then applied some of these phonemes from Lismore Gaelic in the SGDS, to a spelling based upon Standard Scottish Gaelic spelling. Note that in my Gaelic I almost always write with traditional spelling practices to more accurately show pronunciation, e.g. á, é, ó as well as à, è, ò.*

A native speaker from Uist gave this article a review and check, and I have made some grammatical changes so that the language is more natural. I extend my thanks to him, he wishes not to have his name included.



An dealbh: Eilean Musdile agus Lios Mór, ann An Linne Sheileach

Tha Lios Mór na eilean beag suidhichte ann An Linne Sheileach, faisg air an Eilean Mhuilleach, An Gearasdan agus an t-Òban. Gu mì-fhortanach, chan eil móran Gàidhlig ga bruidhinn san eilean an-diugh, ach tha ‘fhios agam gu bheil an dualchainnt ga bruidhinn fhathasd aig aon duine co-dhiù. ‘S e aon de dhualchainntean ‘Earra-Ghàidheal’ a th’ann an dualchainnt Lios Mhóir, ach, tha móran dhiofraichteann gu h-ionadail bho àite gu àit’ ann an Earra-Ghàidheal. Tha fuaimnean gu h-ionadail an Lios Mór nach eil an Ìle, san Eilean Mhuilleach no air

Tìr Mór. Tha an *Survey of the Gaelic Dialects of Scotland* aon de na stòrasan a-mhàin far ‘s urrainn dhuinn ionnsachadh mu Ghàidhlig Lios Mhóir. Mar eisimpleir, tha e sgrìobhte ann gu bheil [v] far a bheil [ʋ] sna h-Eileanan an Iar, agus mòran dhiofraichean eile cuideachd. Rinn mi liosta beag de fhaclan Lios

Mhóir, sgrìobhte le litrichean airson fuaimnean eigin a th’anns an *SGDS* a thaisbeanadh. Tha gach facal an-seo san *SGDS*. Thagh mi às an *SGDS* feadhainn de na fuaimnean àraidh a th’anns na faclan seo. Tha mi air dòigh-sgrìobhaidh a dhéanamh, stéidhichte air dòigh-sgrìobhaidh gun-tomhas na Gàidhlig, còmhla ri fuaimnean eigin às an *SGDS*. Tha mi air sgrìobhadh san dòigh seo ann an artaigil eile cuideachd: *Scottish Gaelic dialects and ancient languages in Scotland – Dualchainntean na Gàidhlig agus cànanan àrsaidh ann an Alba*. Mar a chì sinn, tha mòran de na fuaimreagan goirid anns an dualchainnt, far a bheil iad fada ann an dòigh-sgrìobhaidh bun-tomhas na Gàidhlig.

Dòigh-sgrìobhadh bun-tomhas na Gàidhlig

Dòigh-sgrìobhaidh Ghàidhlig Lios Mhóir

Beurla

talamh	<b>tavadh</b>	‘ground’
laogh	<b>vaogh</b>	‘calf’
làr	<b>vuar</b>	‘floor’
sùgh	<b>sough</b>	‘juice’
rìgh	<b>righ</b>	‘king’
ràmh	<b>ræmh</b>	‘oar’
snìomh	<b>sniadh</b>	‘spin’

Mar eisimpleir:

“Tha an laogh air an talamh”  
**Tha an vaogh air an tavadh**

Ainmean-àite Lios Mhóir

*Achnacroish* – Achadh na Croise, ‘field of the cross’

*Lismore* – Lios Mór, ‘big garden/enclosed area’

*Loch Linnhe (lower)* – An Linne Sheileach, ‘the salty pool/firth/flow’

## Cruthan-tìre, dualchainntean is cànanan: Àrd nam Murchan, Barraigh is Uibhist A Deas

An artaigil agus na dealbhan le Linden Alexander Pentecost.

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*This work was submitted as a third written assessment for Dundee University's Gaelic Intensive Course by Distance Learning, taken in 2021. After submitting the work, and it being marked, the assessment was returned to me with guidance by the teacher, Jason Bond, in the form of some word-choice corrections, syntax corrections with wording (for example regarding the placement of **umpa** in one sentence); and some genitive forms, (for example **fiosrachaidh** rather than **fiosrachadh** in certain instances). I have written in these corrections and included them in the published version. The original piece was marked 23/23. Note that the phonetic spelling [ɔ̃] for the special Barra sound was originally spelt this way in the book "The Dialect of Barra in the Outer Hebrides", by Carl Hj. Borgstrøm*



An dealbh: An cladach seunmhor ann an Àrd nam Murchan as t-earrach, faisg air a' bhaile Sanna. Nuair a ràinig sinn Àrd nam Murchan, chunnaic sinn sealladh den thìr àlainn, làn cumhachd is fiadhaich. Às déidh sin, thàinig sinn sìos a' bheinn, agus chaidh sinn a choiseachd air a' chladach. Choimhead sinn na dathan air a' mhuir, agus chuala sinn òran na gaoithe. Bha doimhneachd anns an adhar, eadar na beanntan garbh 's na tuinn ghlasa.

Tha gach dualchainnt 's gach cànan, àlainn is cudthromach; tha mi air an artaigil seo a sgrìobhadh airson nan tùsanach agus airson gach duine anns an t-saoghal mhór. Anns a' bhliadhna 2011, chaidh mi fhìn 's m'athar a dh'Àrd nam Murchan, dùthaich sheunach ann an Alba, far a bheil dualchainnt bheò-ghlacmhor ga bruidhinn fhathast, ach chan eil mòran sgrìobhte uimpe. Agus chan eil mòran fhiosrachaidh mu dhualchainntean na Gàidhlig air-loidhne. Agus, seo rudeigin eile; chan eil na dualchainntean furasta ri sgrìobhadh idir. Mar eisimpleir, cluinnidh sinn uaireannan [ɫ̥waʔə] airson **latha** ann an Lochaber 's ann an Àrd nam Murchan, ach ciamar a sgrìobheas sinn seo? Chan eil dòigh-sgrìobhaidh ann airson nan dualchainntean. Air an dòigh seo, tha na dualchainntean doirbh ri sgrìobhadh 's ri theagasg. Tha na dualchainntean is cànanan ag atharrachadh troimh na cruthan-tìre, agus tha gach cànan 's gach dualchainnt làn eachdraidh, agus làn fhiosrachaidh na tìre. Tha ceòl sònraichte, is fuaimean dùthchail aig gach dualchainnt; ach ciamar a chlàraicheas 's a theagaisgeas sinn na dualchainntean againn, dualchainntean làn fhiosrachaidh, làn ciùil 's làn eachdraidh?

Às déidh an turais a dh'Àrd nam Murchan, chaidh mi 's mo theaghlach dhan Òban air an trèan. Bha am foghar ann; bha an t-sìde caran fiadhaich, ach bha na làithean fada fhathast. Bha sgòthan stoirmeil os cionn na mara, ach, bha blàths sna sràidean, agus bha ceòl aoibhneach ga chluich á taigh-seinnse geal. Cha robh móran fhiosrachaidh a'm mu dhualchainntean na Gàidhlig; bha leabhar a'm mu Ghàidhlig Cataibh an Ear (East Sutherland Gaelic le Nancy C. Dorian), ach robh mi 'tuigsinn gun robh dualchainntean diofraichte gam bruidhinn ann an Alba air fad. Bha sinn a' dol a Bharraigh, eilean beag suidhichte gu deas air Uibhist a Deas, 's e Barraigh aon de na h-Eileanan an Iar, agus tha an dualchainnt thraidiseanta ga bruidhinn fhathast. Mus d' ràinig sinn Barraigh, bha beagan fios agam mu Ghàidhlig Leòdhais, agus a' bhliadh'n sin, thuir cuideigin rium gu bheil Gàidhlig Leòdhais 'neònach' ri chluinntinn. Tha mi fhìn 'creidsinn gu bheil i àlainn, agus dh'ionnsaich mi gu bheil a' Ghàidhlig diofraichte bho eilean gu eilean; agus air an dòigh seo, chan eil Gàidhlig Leòdhais glé annasach an coimeas ri dualchainntean eile anns na h-Eileanan an Iar. Tha Gàidhlig Leòdhais àraidh, inntinneach, diofraichte, ach tha mi a' creidsinn gu bheil sin fìor mu Ghàidhlig Bharraigh mar eisimpleir, agus mu Ghàidhlig Uibhist A Deas. Tha mi a' creidsinn gu bheil dualchainnt cheolmhor aca ann an Uibhist a Deas; ach chan eil i furasta dhomh ri thuigsinn. Ionnsaichidh mi i, nuair a bhios ùin' agam airson turais a dh'Uibhist!



An dealbh: a' Ghrian a' dol fodha 's na beanntan Bharraigh. Tha draoidheachd shìtheil ann, a' tighinn às na beanntan, às a' mhuir, agus às an adhar sìorraidh, mar chearcall ag uisgeachadh na tìre gu sìorraidh, 's e àite far a choinnicheas nèamh ris an talamh a th'ann am Barraigh. Uill, sin mar a tha mi fhìn a' faireachdainn.

Ràinig sinn Barraigh air a' bhàt'-aiseig, agus smaoinich mi mu thràth gun robh e na eilean rùnach. Fad na seachdainne, bhithinn a' siubhal is a' togail dhealbhan anns na beanntan draoidheil, no air na tràighean neo-shaoghalta. Bha an t-sìde ceòthach gu tric, ach is toil leam e seo; tha sìth ann an sìde mar sin, rudeigin neartmhor, àrsaidh is beò. Bidh an t-sìde ceòthach as t-samhradh ann am Barraigh, ach, tha móran sholais na gréine ann cuideachd, solas a' luisneachadh bhon adhar siarach, no solas sìtheil liath-dhearg, a' tighinn bhon ear sa mhadainn. Choinnich mi aon latha ri Màiri, boireannach choibhneil a tha a' fuireach faisg air Bàgh a' Chaisteil. Is e deagh sgrìobhadair a th'innte cuideachd! Dh'innis i fiosrachadh dhomh mun dualchainnt Bharraigh, agus bha i ag ràdh faclan rium, mar eisimpleir, thuir i **bàta** mar [pa:h̥t̪]. Tha an fhuaim seo [ɔ̃] neo-àbhaisteach, ach cluinnidh mi i aig deireadh facail far a bheil [ə] sa chumantas. Mar eisimpleir, bidh sinn ga cluinntinn sna faclan **duine** agus **oidhche** cuideachd. 'S e fuaim eadar [ə] is [ɔ̃] a th'innte [ɔ̃], agus tha i na fuaim gun bheum, mar [ə].

Tha seann eaglais suidhichte ann am Barraigh, faisg air Eòlaigearraidh, agus tha seann chlach suidhichte innte. Mórán bhliadhnaichean air ais, thàinig na lochlannaich a Bharraigh, agus rinn iad rùn-sgrìobhadh air a' chlach-sin, ach, gu mì-fhortanach chan eil a' chlach innte fhathast. Ach, tha a' chlach a' sealtainn gun robh cànan eile anns an eilean, còmhla ris a' Ghàidhlig. B'è *Norn* a bh'anns a' chànan seo, agus bha i ga bruidhinn ann an Arcaibh, Sealtainn agus ann àitichean eile timcheall air Alba, fiù 's na h-Eileanan an Iar agus Cataibh. Tha e inntinneach ri leughadh oir bhiodh -o àbhaisteach aig deiridhean nam faclan; a' bheil seo ceangailte ris an [ɔ] ann am Barraigh? Tha cuimhn' agam gun robh mi 'leughadh beagan bàrdachd, sgrìobhte anns an Norn Arcach, nuair a bha sinn ann am Barraigh. Agus shaoil mi gun robh sin 'faireachdainn nàdarra dhomh, bàrdachd sgrìobhte anns a' chànan eachdraidheil eile nan eilean.

Ach, tha àitichean eile ann am Barraigh, agus tha eachdraidh fhada aig an eilean. An robh cànan nas sine ann cuideachd? Dé'n seòrsa cànan a bhiodh aig a' mhuinntir, 6,000 bliadhna air ais, mar eisimpleir? An robh ceanglaichean ceilteach ann, agus cànan ceilteach ann cuideachd, is dòcha? An robh cànan eile ann, cànan diofraichte, cànan caillte? Chan eil na freagairtean againn, ach tha an fhios againn gun robh cultar diofraichte anns na h-eileanan anns an Linn an Umha. Tha àite àrsaidh ann an Uibhist a Deas, àite air a bheil Cladh Hallan mar ainm. Chan eil mi fhìn a' creidsinn gum b'è cultar ceilteach no lochnannach a bh'anns a chultar seo. B'è cultar àrsaidh a bh'ann, cultar neo-shaoghalta. Is dòcha gu bheil sgeulachdan is faclan ann a thàinig bhon cultar seo, ach tha sin doirbh ri dhearbhadh. Bha an cultar seo diofraichte agus inntinneach, air sgàth nam mumaidhean, mar eisimpleir. Tha an cultar àrsaidh seo nar eachdraidh cuideachd, mar chultaran àrsaidh eile, agus tha móran againn ri ionnsachadh umpa. Ach, tha 'fhios agam gum bi na cànanan 's na dualchainntean againn gar cuideachadh ri thuigsinn có às a tha sinn, agus có a th'annainn fhéin. Rachainn a dh'Uibhist a Deas an samhradh seo tighinn, ach, chan eil an dualchainnt agam! Bidh mi ga h-ionnsachadh nuair a bhios barrachd fhiosrachaidh agam! Tapadh leibh/móran taing/gu robh math agaibh.



An dealbh: bàt'-iasgaich beag, Uibhist A Deas

## Scottish Gaelic dialects and ancient languages in Scotland – Dualchainntean na Gàidhlig agus cànanan àrsaidh ann an Alba

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*Please note that I write SGDS as short for The Survey of the Gaelic Dialects of Scotland, School of Celtic Studies, Dublin Institute of Advanced Studies. This has now become an incredibly important resource for me in my understanding of Gaelic dialects in Scotland.*

Gaelic dialects have significant phonological and prosodic differences throughout Scotland. Even though the grammar and vocabulary are much the same, the underlying sound-structure of the different dialects, gives Gaelic much internal variation.

There is more research to do with regards to the origins of Gaelic. The Isle of Arran has examples of Ogham, arguably indicating an early Goidelic or Celtic presence. Gaelic, and other Modern Celtic languages, also have features that some have described as being non-typically Indo-European. These ancient ‘non-IE’ aspects of Gaelic seem to be present in Modern Celtic, but not in older Celtic languages like Primitive Irish. This creates a complicated question of how ‘Celtic’ and ‘non-Celtic’ seem to both connect to the origins of Gaelic. Scottish Gaelic is also connected to both Pictish and to Old Norse, but it is also possible that these modern Indo-European language districts were themselves born out of something earlier, which may have included early Celtic languages, and perhaps other languages. It is also not impossible that the later cultures and languages continued something of the much earlier cultures.

One such example is the distribution of certain words and their closeness to known Mesolithic sites, and to some extent, later prehistoric sites. One of these words, that is particularly linked to the ancient landscape, seems to appear in words like ‘barr’ and ‘burr’, in Gaelic these words developed a range of meanings, in other cases, they were spoken in Norse, as in the Isle of Barra, perhaps adopted at a later time. An example is **Dùn Bharpa** on the Isle of Barra, a chambered cairn. Another is the Mesolithic shell midden, named **Sithean Bhùraich Bharraich** on the Isle of Oronsay, I have talked about these words in Gaelic in this article on omniglot, *Pre-Celtic Elements in the Goidelic Languages*, available here:

<https://omniglot.com/language/articles/precelticelements.htm>

The Isle of Oronsay has several of these Mesolithic shell middens. Another Mesolithic site, on the Isle of Coll, is located at Fiskary Bay. Not far from the site is the island of Eilean Ornsay, sharing a similar name to Oronsay, again showing an older, unknown word with the Norse ending -ey meaning ‘island’. Might this indicate that the words of older languages were adopted into Gaelic and Norse? Is it also possible that some of these original cultures continued to an extent through Norse and Gaelic, hence why the Mesolithic site has a Norse name, Fiskary? Perhaps a similar thing was true for the Isle of Rùm. There is little information on the ancient inhabitants of this island, but we know at least that many of the mountains on the island bare Norse names, like they do on Barra. Could the Norse have been a continuation of the mobile Mesolithic culture, to some extent, whereas with Gaelic these ancient elements in language were fossilised differently?

Another thing of great interest is the abundance of ‘poll’ names on Tiree. In Modern Gaelic this translates generally to ‘mud’, but in place-names it seems to often refer specifically to intertidal or marshy areas that flood and have sediment. The distribution of these names on Tiree is somewhat consistent with a higher sea level, the names occurring close to two lakes, but with no mudflats there in the present time. However the lakes are separated from the Ocean by sand dunes, and during the Mesolithic time it’s quite possible that the sea connected through the lakes, effectively meaning Tiree would have looked more like several smaller islands. The word poll is found in Irish too for example, where it has a diverse range of meanings, as it does to an extent in Scotland, there are likely cognates like the Old English pōl, Welsh pwll, Breton poull. The word occurs in Cumbria as ‘poll’ or ‘pow’, whilst the Lofoten islands apparently have many ‘poll’ names, often describing seawater-filled basins which look lake-like, frequently fed by a narrow channel. Even though these related words have multiple meanings across Indo-European languages, on coastal Norway and in Scotland there seems to be rather specific meaning to this word, and despite being found in our modern Indo-European languages with diverse meanings, the specific, localised meanings of this word may indicate that this word originally, additionally, had specific meaning in other languages or dialects, distinct from the semantics of words and distribution of language which we have today.

It’s possible that Gaelic phonology has been in some way influenced by the languages of Hebridean prehistory. The specificity of certain phonemes is striking, perhaps indicating that these phonemes have a deep prehistoric presence on their respective islands. The language is by and large much the same, but certain things are completely different on the different islands, and have their own unknown patterns. One such example is the occasional similarity between St Kilda Gaelic and

Lismore Gaelic, despite that the two places are not close to each other. This similarity can be observed in that both dialects have what appears to be a form of [ɔ̃] in the Dialect Survey/ SGDS for the broad velarised l in places. In St Kilda this sound varies with [w], whereas on Lismore it varies with [v]. Another similarity I noticed in the SGDS is that in the word **nàmhaid** ‘enemy’, both St Kilda and Lismore have a palatal [g], we could write this word in Lismore as **nàmhaig**. From what I have seen recorded in the SGDS, this is only present on St Kilda, Lismore and with Informant 6 from North Lewis.

**laogh** – standard Scottish Gaelic spelling

**lög** – Arran Gaelic, (ö represents what may be [ø])

**vaogh** – Lismore Gaelic ([v] is marked in SGDS)

**ðaogh** – Southwest Mull Gaelic (ð is for the [ð] marked in SGDS)

**laogh** – Loch Duich dialect (the final **gh** here represents [k<sup>h</sup>] as recorded in the SGDS)

Meaning of word: ‘calf’

**bha an sluagh a’ dol dhachaidh** – standard Scottish Gaelic spelling

**bhwá an sluag a’ dol dáchaidh** – Arran Gaelic (á here represents [ɛ:], â is [ɛ])

**bha an svuagh a’ dov dhachaidh** – Lismore Gaelic

**bha an sduagh a’ doθ dhachaidh** – Southwest Mull Gaelic

Meaning of sentence: ‘the crowd was going home’

The information regarding the occurrence and circumstances of occurrence of [k<sup>h</sup>], [ð], [θ], [v] and [ɔ̃] in these words, was something sourced from the Scottish Gaelic Dialect Survey, which I have then tried to write and incorporate into Scottish Gaelic spelling. Note that these spellings do not show the precise phonology of any of these dialects as indicated in the SGDS. The information pertaining to the similarities between St Kilda and Lismore Gaelic is also owed to observations I made in the SGDS. The words I looked at in the SGDS are **laogh** and **sluagh**, and **dol**, although the writing of [θ], **θ** for Southwest Mull is from personal thoughts about the occurrence of the dental fricative sounds in this dialect, where [θ] seems common word-finally. I have been interested in the word **laogh** for some time, as I have previously heard about distinct pronunciations of this word on Ardnamurchan and on Harris. The full title of the dialect survey/SGDS is: *Survey of the Gaelic Dialects of Scotland*, School of Celtic Studies, Dublin Institute of Advanced Studies, released in several volumes, in this case volumes V and IV. Edited by Cathair Ó Dochartaigh. Loch Duich Gaelic refers to the speech of Informant 102 from close to Loch Duich. Lismore Gaelic phonetics is from Informant 68 of Lismore. Southwest Mull Gaelic refers to the speech of Informant 82

The information on Arran Gaelic was originally learned by me from the great book, *The Gaelic of Arran* by Nils M. Holmer, although I have learned more about the dialect since then, and my spelling of Arran Gaelic and of the other dialects represents what I have come to understand about them as a whole, as well as my best efforts in writing them. My spelling for Arran Gaelic was partially based upon the Gaelic Dialect Alphabet for Arran Gaelic, as employed by Cormac Ó Shuilleabháin, from the original alphabet by Ruairí Ó Conghaile.

I found out about the existence of the Fiskary Bay site, and the name Fiskary, from the paper *Fiskary Bay: a Mesolithic fishing camp on Coll 2007*, authors Steven Mithen, K. Wicks, J. Hill

My qualification in Scottish Gaelic is a certificate for the Dundee University’s Gaelic Intensive Course by Distance Learning, which I took 2021, after about fifteen years of being fascinated by the language and learning it on and off. Other articles by the author which may be relevant:

*.The Gaelic Dialect of Arran, Linden Alexander Pentecost 2019*

*.An introduction to Scottish Gaelic Dialects, Linden Alexander Pentecost, 2020*

*.Gaelic, and Ancient Language on Ardnamurchan and Rùm, Linden Alexander Pentecost, 2021 (published on omniglot)*

## The Manx Gaelic Language – Gailck/Gaelg Vanninagh

Published on archive.org by Linden Alexander Pentecost

Text, photos and publishing by myself, Linden Alexander Pentecost, the original work is a part of my 'Iethou' language project between 2008 and 2011. Much of this was written originally in 2009, with corrections by Rob Teare and Max Wheeler in 2020 such as mutations and word choices. Published originally January 27th 2020, later with corrections on 20<sup>th</sup> June 2020, and again June 2021



**Er y traie, Doolish** - on the beach, Douglas

Manx is the least-spoken of the three Goidelic or 'Gaelic' languages, that also includes Irish and Scottish Gaelic. From experience, not as many people are aware of Manx Gaelic; Irish and Scottish Gaelic are known internationally, particularly because large numbers of people in the USA, Canada, Australia and New Zealand, have Irish or Scottish ancestry, and Gaelic culture is known throughout the whole world, a culture that many want to remember, and find a place within, regardless of where they are living or from. This may also be said for the Irish and Scottish Gaelic languages, which with the help of new resources and apps, are gaining a wider international interest and speaker-base. Manx came from the same Gaelic culture and language, which was originally shared between Ireland, The Isle of Man and Scotland. But



where Ireland and Scotland had the Gaelic of the Bible, and the 'Classical Irish' language, to keep their written language similar, Manx was, until recently, a spoken language, and not a written language. It was spoken on just one island, and surrounded by a culture that was Norse-Gaelic; the Norse part survived on the mainland coast of Northern England, the Gaelic continued on the Isle of Man, remaining a separate development to Gaelic in Ireland and Scotland. Manx wasn't written down until more recently, where it was spelled using a spelling based upon Welsh and English.

I am not from the Isle of Man, but I used to live in a village that isn't far from the main ferry terminal on the mainland. I wondered sometimes, why this beautiful island and its important language, didn't receive much attention or discussion on the mainland. To people living on the Isle of Man, the Manx language is present all the time. But even though I could see it from the mainland, I've yet to meet a single person living in Northern England, who was learning Manx. I hope in the future there is more awareness about Manx Gaelic on the mainland too; after all, Gaelic was also a part of the traditional world of the Cumbrians.

One of the questions that admittedly does keep me up at night, is that, the mainland and the Isle of Man shared the same Norse-Gaelic culture; but why did the Norse part survive on the mainland, and the Gaelic part survived fully on the Isle of Man? There WAS Gaelic on the mainland too! There are Gaelic names throughout Northern England. In Cumbria there is a farm called Setmabanning, which could be **Sett Mo Bhanríghe** 'seat of my queen', in Norse-Gaelic. Another word is 'knock' coming from Gaelic 'cnoc' for 'hill', or 'knock' in Manx, as in Knockmurton in Western Cumbria, **Cnoc-Murton**.

Before this Gaelic element that came in the medieval times, Cumbria, Lancashire and the Isle of Man would have spoken Cumbric, an earlier Celtic language but belonging to the Brythonic branch along with Welsh, Cornish and Breton. Cumbric words include river-names like the Lune in Lancashire and the Derwent in Cumbria. Not far from the Isle of Man ferry terminal is Glasson Docks, Glasson is Cumbric and comes from the word **glâs** 'blue-green'. The Manx alphabet is given below. In this report I will not go into detail about the sounds and spelling of Manx, it is far too complex to explain here.

a b c d e f g h i j k l m n o p q r s t u v w y

.ch is as in 'loch', final ght is pronounced the same  
 .çh is like the 'ch' in 'cheese'  
 .b or bb can be pronounced 'v' between vowels  
 .d and dh are pronounced the same, t and th are pronounced the same  
 .d and t can be like the 'th' in 'there' between vowels  
 .d can sound like 'j' when slender  
 .sometimes n and m are pronounced 'dn' and 'bm', like **kione** 'kyodn'  
 .aa is like the 'e' in 'bet' but longer  
 .ee and oo are like in English  
 .ie and aie are like the English 'I' in the word 'I'  
 .y is often a schwa, e.g. yn/y 'the', ey is also a schwa at the end of a word

laa mie - good day  
*laa* - day, *mie* - good

kys t'ou? - how are you? (singular)  
*kys* - how, contracted from **kannys**, *t'ou* - contracted form of **ta oo**, **ta** - exists/is/are, **oo** - you (singular)

kys ta shiu? - how are you? (plural)  
*kys* - how, **ta** - exists/is/are, **shiu** - you (plural)

ta mee feer vie - I am very well  
*ta* - exists/is/are, *mee* - I, *feer* - very, *vie* - good, mutated from *mie*

cre shoh? - what is this?  
*cre* - what, *shoh* - this (doesn't require verb)

vel Gaelg ayd? - do you speak Manx?  
*vel* - is/are/exists (replaces **ta** in the interrogative), **Gaelg** - Gaelic/the Manx Language, **ayd** - at-you (singular)

ta Gaelg aym - I speak Manx

**ta** - exists/is/are, **Gaelg** - the Gaelic/Manx language, **aym**  
- at-me

**cha nel Gaelg aym** - I do not speak Manx

**cha nel** - is not, **cha** - not/negative particle, **nel** - form of **vel** used in negation, **cha nel** - exists not/is not/are not, **Gaelg** - the Gaelic/Manx language, **aym** - at-me.

**moghrey mie** - good morning

**moghrey** - morning (masculine noun), **mie** - good

**fastyr mie** - good afternoon

**fastyr** - afternoon (masculine noun), **mie** - good

**oie vie** - good night

**oie** - night (feminine noun), **vie** - good, mutated form of **mie** after feminine nouns



**Bayr ny Meainyn.** In the past few centuries rich deposits of lead and other minerals were mined on the Isle of Man. Much more ancient mining may have happened too.

Irish	Manx	Scottish Gaelic	English
<i>mé</i>	<i>mee</i>	<i>mí</i>	I
<i>tú</i>	<i>oo</i>	<i>thu</i>	you singular
<i>sé</i>	<i>eh</i>	<i>e</i>	he
<i>sí</i>	<i>ee</i>	<i>i</i>	she
<i>sinn/muid</i>	<i>shin</i>	<i>sinn</i>	we
<i>sibh</i>	<i>shiu</i>	<i>sibh</i>	you (plural)
<i>siad</i>	<i>ad</i>	<i>iad</i>	they

The pronouns in the Goidelic languages are nearly the same throughout. Manx and Scottish Gaelic use the old accusative pronouns as the normal genitive form, in Irish the accusative of *tú*, *sé* and *sí* are *thú*, *é* and *í*. The Manx pronunciation of *sibh* as **shiu** involves a sound change, where 'i' plus a semivowel creates 'u', the same occurs in Northern Scotland where *sibh* is also pronounced 'shoo'.

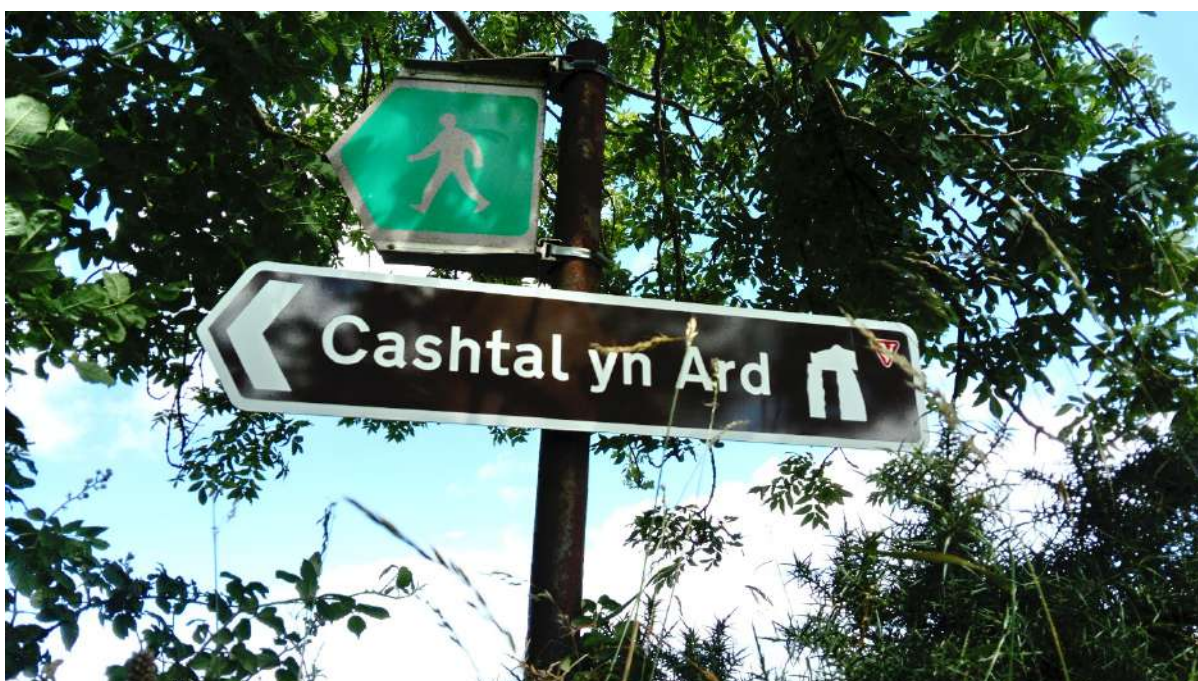


Photo above: Snaefell Mountain Railway - **Raad-Yiarn Sni Hull**



### *Cronk ny QueeYL*

In Scottish and Irish Gaelic the word for a hill is *cnoc*, in Manx the word is **cronk**, but **knock** is an older variant common in place-names



**Cashtal yn Ard** 'castle of the height' is a prehistoric burial chamber from the Neolithic period. Manx history is a curious mixture of Nordic and Celtic, with the previous peoples' monuments lying in the background.

cha ren ad shoh - they did not do this  
*cha* - negative particle, *ren* - did, *ad* - they, *shoh* - this

ta dooinney gobbraghey ayns Doolish - a man works in Douglas

*ta* - exists/is/are, *dooinney* - (a) man, *gobbraghey* - working/in the process of doing work (verb-noun of *obbyr* - work), *ayns* - in/at, *Doolish* - Douglas

ta mee goll neesht - I am going too

*ta* - exists/is/are, *mee* - I, *ta mee* - I exist/I am (as a continuous action related to thing/process described), *goll* - going/in the process of going, *neesht* - too/also

cha nel y balley aeg - the town is not young

*cha nel* - exists not/is not/are not, *yn/y* - definite article (the), *balley* - town or settlement, *y balley* - the town, *aeg* - young

cha row ad geaishtagh - they were not listening

*cha* - negative particle, *row* - negative and interrogative form of *va* - did exist/was/were, *ad* - they, *geaishtagh* - listening/in the process of listening, verb-noun of *eaisht* - listen

dooyrt mee dy beagh y laa mie - I said that the day would be good

*dooyrt* - said, *mee* - I, *dy* - particle, 'that', *beagh* - would exist/would be, conditional form of *bee* - to be, *y laa* - the day, *mie* - good

ta'n ven millish - the woman is sweet

*ta'n* - contracted form of *ta yn* - exists/is/are - the, *ben* - woman, *y ven* - the woman, *millish* - sweet

nee'm cheet veih'n traie - I will come from the beach

*nee* - will do, *nee'm* - I will do, *cheet* - come, *veih'n* - from the, *y traie* - the beach

ta my ghlare aalin - my language is beautiful

*ta* - exists/is/are, *my* - my, *ghlare* - language, mutated from *glare* - language, *aalin* - beautiful

craad ta shiu cummal? - where do you live?

*craad* - where (what-road), *ta* - exists/is/are, *shiu* - you (plural), *cummal* - in the process of living (verb-noun)

t'ad sy thie - they are in the house

*t'ad* - they are, contracted from *ta ad*, *sy* - in (used before definite singular nouns) 'in the', *thie* - house

ta ny crink er Ellan Vannin - the hills are on the Isle of Man

*ta* - exists/there is/there are, *ny* - plural form of the article 'the', *crink* - hills, plural of *cronk* - hill, *er* - on, *Ellan Vannin* - The Isle of Man, *ellan* - island, *Mannin* - Man (the island).

ta mee cummal ayns Mannin - I live on the Isle of Man

*ta mee* - I exist/'there is' me/I am, *cummal* - living, *ayns* - in/at, *Mannin* - (the Isle) of Man, the kingdom of Mannin

hed oo marish dty ghraih - you will go with your love

*hed* - will go, *oo* - you (singular), *marish* - together with, *dty* - your (singular), *ghraih* - mutated form of *graih* - love, *dty ghraih* - your love (singular)

hie mee dys Ellan Vannin as baatey lane aym - I went to the Isle of Man with a full boat

*hie* - went, *mee* - I, *gys* - to, towards, *Ellan Vannin* - (the) Isle of Man, *as* - and, *baatey* - (a) boat, *lane* - full, *aym* - at-me. Literally 'went I to Isle Mannin and boat full at-me'.

t'eh fliugh jiu ayns Ellan Vannin - it is wet today on the Isle of Man

*t'eh* - contracted from *ta eh* - he (it) is/exists/there is/are, *fliugh* - wet, *jiu* - today, *ayns* - in/at, *Ellan Vannin* - (the) Isle of Man

y dooinney va goll marym dys Doolish - the man who was going to Douglas with me

*y dooinney* - the man, *va* - (who) did exist/was/were, *goll* - in the process of going (verb-noun), *marym* - (together) with-me, *dys* - to, *Doolish* - Douglas

gura mie ayd son y vaatey! - thank you for the boat!  
**gura mie ayd** - thank you (to one person), **son** - for/for the sake of, **baatey** - boat (feminine noun), **vaatey** - form of **baatey** mutated because of prepositional phrase, but **baatey** may also be feminine, hence **baatey waagh**

ta mee goaill toshiaght nish - I am starting now  
**ta mee** - I exist/I am, **goaill** - taking, **toshiaght** - (a) starting/beginning, verb noun, **nish** - now.

va'n lioar mychione y Ghaelg - the book was about Manx  
**va'n** - existed/was/were + the, contracted from **va y(n)**, **lioar** - book, **mychione** - about, **Gaelg** - (Manx) Gaelic, **Y Ghaelg** - the Manx language

as bee oo cheet er y vaatey dys Doolish? - and will you be coming on the boat to Douglas?  
**as** - and, **bee** - be or will be, **oo** - you (singular), **cheet** - coming (verb-noun), **er** - on, **baatey** - boat, **y vaatey** - the boat, **dys** - to/towards, **Doolish** - Douglas

vel oo goll magh jiu? - are you going out today?  
**vel** - exists/is/are (interrogative of **ta**), **oo** - you singular, **goll** - going (verb-noun), **magh** - out, **jiu** - today

ta skeeal aym mychione Ellan Vannin - I have a story about the Isle of Man  
**ta** - exists/is/are, **skeeal** - (a) story, **aym** - at-me, **mychione** - about, **Ellan Vannin** - (the) Isle of Man

shoh my vaatey waagh - this is my beautiful boat  
**shoh** - this (is), **shoh** doesn't translate directly to 'this', as the word also carries the function of a verb and means 'here exists', **my vaatey** - my boat, **baatey** - boat, **bwaagh** - beautiful, mutated to **waagh** after a feminine noun

neemayd yn obbyr - we will do the work  
**neemayd** - we will do, **yn obbyr** - the work



nagh derrin eh stiagh ayns y vaatey? - would I not put it  
into the boat?

*nagh* - negative particle (interrogative), *derrin* - I would put, *eh* - he (it), *stiagh* - into, towards and in, *ayns* - in, *y vaatey* - the boat

ta my chione lane dy 'ysseree - my head is full of  
knowledge

*ta* - exists/is/are, *my chione* - my head, mutated from *kione* - head, *lane* - full, *dy* - of (of a thing), *fysseree* - knowledge, mutated to *'ysseree*

ta'n cronk heose - the hill is above

*ta'n* - contraction of *ta yn* - exists/is/are + the, *cronk* - hill, *heose* - up, above, upwards from speaker.

t'ee shooyl dys thie - she is walking to a house

*t'ee* - she/it is/exists, contraction of *ta ee*, *shooyl* - walking (verb-noun), *dys* - to, *thie* - house

craad ta'n eeast mooar? - where is the big fish?

*craad* - where, *ta'n* - is/are/exists the, *eeast* - fish, *mooar* - big

ta sleityn mooarey er Ellan Vannin - there are big  
mountains on the Isle of Man

*ta* - exists/is, in this context 'there is', 'there are', *sleityn* - mountains, plural of *slieau* - mountain, *mooarey* - big, plural of *mooar*, *er* - on, *Ellan Vannin* - (the) Isle of Man

s'laik lhiam Gaelg - I like Manx Gaelic

*s'laik lhiam* - I like, *s'* - is (copula 'to be'), *laik* - to like/the act of liking, *lhiam* - with-me, *Gaelg* - (Manx) Gaelic



**Failt erriu dys skylt Maghal** – Welcome to Maughold Village Parish. **Failt erriu** means literally ‘welcome on-you’ (plural). When arriving on the island you may be greeted with the phrase **Failt erriu dys Mannin**.

All pictures were taken by me (Linden Alexander Pentecost), the sentences and information were written from my own knowledge of learning Manx, but I received the help of two fluent speakers, Rob Teare and Max Wheeler to help me better understand how to write things as accurately as possible. More detailed information about Manx can be found on the “Gael-Hasht” site by Paul Rogers.

Manx language and folklore traditions – part one, written and published around the summer solstice 2021

Written by Linden Alexander Pentecost, published on archive.org

The Isle of Man is a fascinating place, with its own unique culture and language. When exploring the island, I found that speaking a little Manx helped me to feel and understand the landscape and history around me. Manx is a Goidelic Celtic language, related to an ancient Celtic language, called Primitive Irish; which is attested in a kind of writing known as Ogham. Several examples of this alphabet and language exist on the Isle of Man, attesting to how long Celtic languages have been here for. The Isle of Man also had contact with the Gaelic speaking communities in Wales and Northwestern England, and with those of Southern Scotland and Ireland too.

The Manx language gives itself to most of the names on the island, some of these names are not so common in spoken Manx. The word **knock** means ‘hill’, but in the spoken language, and outside of place-names, the word is **cronk**. The word **beinn** is used for some mountains, like many in Scotland and in Ireland. But in the spoken language, beyond place-names, the word for a mountain is **slieau**. Manx and the Isle of Man have a complex and ancient relationship to the peoples of Ireland and Scotland, which is reflected in the similarities and differences between the languages. Whilst Manx oral tradition maintains connections to those of Ireland and Scotland, the Manx traditions also have their differences. The name Man is both the native name to the island and its tribe, but also to a deity or god who inhabits or is connected to the island, Manannán Mac Lir. Irish mythology appears to have several ‘cycles’ of different deities and interpretations through different ancient cultures, in Irish tradition, Manannán Mac Lir is ‘Manannan son of Lir’ is also associated with several places in Ireland, and possibly the husband to the goddess Áine in some traditions, and in others he is married to the goddess Fand. Manannán Mac Lir is said to have a magical boat, and a horse called Enbarr, which means ‘one wave’. There are Welsh connections to the island, and a cognate of the god’s name in Welsh is *Manawydan Fab Llŷr*. On the Isle of Man, Manannán seems to have been associated with Midsummer’s Eve, and with making offerings of plants. The goddess Áine in Ireland, seems to be associated with Midsummer as well.

In some traditions, the god takes the form of a wheel, on the Isle of Man, he is sometimes said to have moved as though rolling with three legs. Might this be connected to the movement of the sun and how it changes in relation to different mountains throughout the year?

Unlike Scottish Gaelic and Irish, Manx has a spelling system that is not connected to that of Old Irish, Middle Irish and Classical Gaelic, Manx having remained as only a spoken language for a long time. The Primitive Irish language was written on the island, and the later Norse language, but the language of the people was not until much later. Manx also shares many cognates with English, for example **walkal** ‘a walk’, if I were to say **ta mee goaill walkal mygeayrt y balley**. It can be analysed like this: **ta** – be, is, are, exists, **mee** – I, **goaill** – taking, **walkal** – a walk, **mygeayrt** – around, **y balley** – the town. This word means more a ‘leisurely walk’. An ancient site on the Isle of Man is **Cashtal Yn Ard**, one could say **ren mee shooyl dys Cashtal yn Ard** – I had a walk to Cashtal yn Ard, literally **ren** – did, made, **mee** – I, **shooyl** – walking, **dys** – to, **Cashtal yn Ard** – castle of-the height. In Manx the verb comes before the subject, so **I am** and **we are** – **ta mee** and **ta shin**. Also, **ren mee** – I made, **ren shin** – we made. In the past tense, **ta** is **va**. For example, **va shin geeastagh faggys da Lancaster** – we were fishing near to Lancaster, **va** – was, were, there was, there were, **shin** – we, **geeastagh** – fishing (a verb-noun), **faggys da** – near to.

Skeel ny Marrey – The Story of the Sea, a short poem in Manx Gaelic, with grammatical analysis

Written and published by Linden Alexander Pentecost, published on archive.org by Linden Alexander Pentecost in October 2021, published from Finland originally, then re-uploaded from UK my home. This poem may be used in commercial publications or other publications without my permission, provided that I am accredited, provided also that this work is not altered.

Hie mee dys y traie as va'n emshyr braew agh geayeeagh  
 As va mooarane sollys aahoilshagh veih'n gheinnagh  
 Va'n reayrt lane daaghyn as lane diunid  
 As cheayll mee y gheay feddanagh harrish feaynid ny marrey

Nee spyrridyn çheet veih'n vooir  
 As bee dorraghys 'syn oie  
 Agh nee ny rollageyn çhyndaa ushtaghyn yn aer  
 As bee sollys ny greiney ayn reesht

I went to the beach and the weather was fine but windy  
 And there was a lot of light reflecting from the sand  
 The scene was full of colour and full of depth  
 And I heard the wind whistling across the expanse of the sea

The spirits will come from the sea  
 And there will be darkness in the night  
 But the stars will turn the waters of the sky  
 And the sunlight will be there again

*hie* – went, *mee* – I, *dys* – to, *y traie* – the beach, *as* – and, *va* – was, *va'n* – was the, *emshyr* – weather, *braew* – fine, *agh* – but, *geayeeagh* – windy, *va* – was, there was, *mooarane* – much, a lot, *sollys* – light, *aahoilshagh* – reflecting, *veih'n* – from the, *y gheinnagh* – the sand, *va'n reayrt* – the scene was, (was-the scene), *lane* – full, *daaghyn* – colours, colouration, *lane daaghyn* – full of colours, *diunid* – depth, *cheayll mee* – I heard (heard I), *cheayll* – heard, *y gheay* – the wind, *feddanagh* – whistling, *harrish* – across, over, *feaynid* – expanse, *ny marrey* – of the sea, showing the genitive of *moir* – sea, *nee* – will do, *spyrridyn* – spirits, *çheet* – coming, *veih'n* – from-the, *moir* – sea, mutated to *vooir* after *veih'n* – from-the, *bee* – there will be, *dorraghys* – darkness, *'syn oie* – in the night, *oie* – night, *agh* – but, *nee* – will do, *ny rollageyn* – the stars, *çhyndaa* – turn, *ushtaghyn* – waters, from *ushtey* – water, *ushtaghyn yn aer* – the waters of the sky, *as bee* – and there will be, *sollys* – light, *sollys ny greiney* – sunlight, light of the sun, *greiney* is the genitive of *grian* – sun, *ayn* – in (in there, in the location and time in question), *reesht* – again.

I hope this was interesting to read and may the cosmos bless you all.

## *A poem about Eskdale in Manx and in Revived Cumbric:*

### *Sollys Blah y Gheuree (warm light of the winter)*

Published by Linden Alexander Pentecost on archive.org in October 2020, then re-uploaded with corrections June 2021. A poem about Eskdale in Manx and in Revived Cumbric, titled Sollys Blah y Gheuree in Manx (warm light of the winter)



Photo above: *Dalo ó Ecleas Sant Catharín yn Nglen Esc* – photo of St Catherine's church in Eskdale

A short poem in Manx and in a form of revived Cumbric, a recreation of the language that would once have been spoken in West Cumbria and opposite the Isle of Man. This poem is about the valley of Eskdale in West Cumbria, as described on a winter's day. I hope that this may in some way become a cultural contribution to the valley and its folk, and also to trying to describe its beauty, appearance and form, through words in Celtic languages. There was also a Gaelic presence in West Cumbria too, and this once formed a part of the culture shared with that of Mannin; this is why I have chosen to write in Manx too.

Cumbric was the language close to Welsh that used to be spoken in parts of northern England and southern Scotland, a region that Welsh writers referred to as 'The Old North', Yr Hen Ogledd. Although no examples of the language have remained, it is possible to pick out bits from the words found in place names, we can then breathe new life to these words by re-establishing what we know of that common Brythonic language. In this sense, Cumbric has become a living language again. But each version of Cumbric is different, and I cannot claim that my version is accurate to the original language, although I hope it to be a relatively accurate reflection of it in certain parts.

'sy Ghaelg – in Manx Gaelic

*Va shin goll trooid Glion Esk  
 Laa dy row yn gheuree  
 Mee hene as my lught-thie  
 Va yn sniaghtey er dagh slieau  
 As va'n aer gloo as bane*

*Va yn Esk meen  
 Sheeoil as bing  
 Va ee gra ny focklyn  
 Trooid shee yn sniaghtey floagagh*

**va** – was, were, existed, there was or were, at a continuous point of time in the past

**shin** – we

**goll** – going, at the process of going, verb-noun

**trooid** – through

**glion** – valley

**laa** – a day

**dy** – that, which

**row** – was, like **va** (**dy row** is also an idiom in Modern Manx), pointed out to me by Max Wheeler

**yn, y** – the, singular definite article

**geurey** – winter, becomes **geuree** in the genitive singular

**mee** – I, me

**hene** – self

**as** – and

**my** – my

**lught-thie** – family

**yn sniaghtey** – the snow

**er** – on

**dagh** – every or each

**slieau** – mountain

**va'n** – **va** plus the definite article

**aer** – air, sky

**gloo** – thick (with obscuring weather, rain)

**bane** – white

**meen** - sweet

**sheeoil** - peaceful

**bing** – musical, sweet

**ee** – she (the river)

**gra**– saying (verb-noun)

**ny** – definite article, plural

**focklyn** – words, from **fockle** – a word

**shee** - peace

**floagagh** – falling (verb-noun) as in rain

yn Gömbroác (Brëthanac) – in Cumbric

*Eadd tán o losco  
Val staran becan  
Rüdd val plü'r robin  
Golou val flamou yr áléadd  
Tréa geadd gaiam*

*Is læddan glen Yr Esc  
Medd 's kyl yr afyn doual  
Tréa widd yr hindhadou  
Lé toual my vrëdd  
Em'yn tán rüdd o cönno  
Douón yny keadd  
Ó'n douúr do'r calan  
Nú ac val eadd*

**eadd** – was, existed at continuous point in past, Welsh *oedd*, *roedd*

**tán** – fire, Welsh *tân*

**o** – verbal particle, in the process of

**losco** – burn, infinitive and form used with verbal particle

**val** – as, like, Welsh *fel*

**staran** – a star

**becan** – small

**rüdd** – red, darker red

**plü** – feathers

**y robin** – the robin, but in this phrase with the definite article it means ‘of the robin’

**y, yr, yn** – ‘the’

**golou** – light, bright

**flamou** – flames, from **flám** – flame

**áléadd** – fire, hearth

**tréa** – through

**ceadd** – forest, mutated to **geadd** after **tréa**

**gaiam** – winter, but here ‘of winter’. The dotted m is a nasal v sound, or an m with pursed lips

**is** – is, it is

**læddan** – broad

**glen** – valley

**yr Esc** – (of) the Esk

**medd** – but

‘s – is, it is

**kyl** – narrow

**yr afyn** – the river

**toual** – quiet, mutated to **doual** after the feminine noun **afyn**

*widd* – forest, wood

*yr hindhadou* – (of) the old fathers

*lé* – a place

*my* – my

*brëdd* – mind, mutated to *vrëdd* after the word *my*

*ema* – there is, there are, here shortened to *em'* before the definite article

*cönno* – to burn, be alight

*douón* – deep

*yny* – in the

*ó'n* – from the, *ó* 'from' and the definite article *yn* before dentals, becomes *ó'n*

*douór* – water

*do'r* – to the, *do* followed by the definite article *y* or *yr*, becomes *do'r*

*nú* – now

*ac* - and

c and k - are always hard as in 'core'

f is like v except at the start of a word, it may also be w. The letter *ó* is a tighter w sound

dd - is a sound between a dental d, said with the tongue against top teeth, and the 'th' in 'there'

ea – sounds a little like the 'e' in 'bed' but longer

éa – a longer or more diphthongised version of the sound above

ou – an o followed by u

á, é, í, ó, ú – are long vowels

ë – a cross between the 'e' in 'wet' and the 'i' in 'tin'

ö – similar to the 'i' in 'bird' or like the 'u' in 'book', or like the 'o' in 'knot'

ü – similar to the 'i' in 'bird' but closer to the 'u' in 'june'

y – like the 'i' in 'tin' or like the 'u' in 'but'

ȳ – similar to ü but diphthongised and with pursed lips



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## Ancient language in Cumbria, and potentially new archaeological sites

Written and published by Linden Alexander Pentecost, in November 2021. Published online including on archive.org under the creative commons, non commercial, attribution no derivatives licence.

This article includes a brief description of two archaeological sites in the English county of Cumbria, the first we found around a year ago when visiting the county over winter, the second when visiting the following autumn.



Photo above: inscription on Norse-Gaelic or early Anglo-Gaelic style Christian cross, located at Beckermeth Church in West Cumbria; The meaning of the inscription is unknown, but I consider

Latin, Old English, Norse, or even Brittonic or Goidelic to be possibilities. Can anyone help to translate it?

## Background

Cumbria has a rich archaeological heritage, including many examples of Neolithic and Bronze Age sites. The aims of this project are to look at how the Neolithic to Bronze Age transition took place, and to compare this with potential linguistic evidence to try and gain a better picture of prehistoric language in Cumbria and in Britain as a whole.

I note here the importance of the Primitive Irish language, which may have been a continuation of the initial 'Celtic' cultures present in Ireland and in Britain; I personally believe that Celtic arrived, or rather, evolved, at roughly the same time in Ireland and in Britain, and we may be able to learn more about this by looking at the distribution of Ogham inscriptions, which despite being a Q-Celtic language, also pops up in inscriptions in P-Celtic areas. Regardless of whether or not a Celtic language is P-Celtic or Q-Celtic, it may be that at one time, the Celtic connection between these places was maintained not by a Brittonic language, but by Primitive Irish, because even in P-Celtic areas we sometimes find evidence of Q-Celtic in the form of Primitive Irish. Thus I wonder if the primary maintaining of Celtic language connections from the earliest periods was through Primitive Irish, perhaps a descendant of a 'standard Celtic language', and not through a P-Celtic language as has been often thought. It is perfectly possible in my opinion for there to have been P-Celtic languages, maintained in connection through a Q-Celtic standard, ritual and literary language, which came to be written as Ogham. I may also note that westward orientation of the Welsh and Cornish languages, which again, despite being P-Celtic, are orientated towards Ireland. It is further possible that this 'Primitive Irish' connection shows how Celtic connects these places, but that this ritual, Primitive Irish language, may itself not have been entirely Celtic or Indo-European, except through ritual and social tweaking of the languages to match Indo-European worldview and formulae of knowledge. Nevertheless, it can be said with some certainty, that what we identify as 'Celtic' in Ireland, Scotland, Cornwall, Wales, The Isle of Man, and Cumbria, is all in some way connected to the Primitive Irish language. Despite there being no evidence of Ogham in Cumbria, Lancashire or in Southwestern Scotland that I know of; all of these areas are multi-cultured, with Brittonic, Anglic, and Norse-Gael words and historical context; and West Cumbria and West Lancashire have a number of 'Goidelic' names, which may be a remnant of this maritime connection with Primitive Irish. The Isle of Man has many Primitive Irish inscriptions, and certainly we know that in more recent times, the Gaels of the Isle of Man had contact with those of Southern Scotland, and perhaps with Gaels or Norse-Gaels in Cumbria and in Lancashire.

Cumbria is not one of these central Celtic areas, Cumbria's Celtic-connections are arguably more peripheral, perhaps indicative that there were Celtic connections to Cumbria, including to its language, beliefs and culture, but that perhaps Cumbria itself was never Celtic-speaking per-se. We can compare this to a people who are in some way connected to a wider Celtic-speaking culture, but who are themselves not directly in that sphere of culture, this may also be why early Welsh writers refer to this region as The Old North, 'old' in this sense meaning perhaps, ancestrally connected to Welsh and to Brittonic, but not directly inside the sphere of these languages.

We know that the Bronze Age in Cumbria manifests as the appearance of certain styles of cairn and other monument, as well as changes in ritual and religion, or rather, it may instead indicate the appearance in archaeology of a culture that was previously present but then transformed in their activities, rather than the Bronze Age people being invaders. But certainly, this Bronze Age culture in Cumbria and the Bronze Age religious sites, would likely have shared strong connections to those

other Bronze Age, Celtic or pre-Celtic cultures and sites on the Isle of Man, Wales and elsewhere. We can equally say the same for Cumbria's Neolithic sites, although these sites are less consistently 'Celtic' in their associations, from personal research, and instead may show an earlier layer of culture and language, which in some way transformed into the more organised distribution of Bronze Age sites, which we may sometimes compare with the distribution of Celtic languages. It is notable for instance that there is little linguistic evidence to show a connection between Neolithic sites and Celtic languages, for example, vast areas of the Cumbric parts of Southern Scotland do not have an obvious Neolithic presence, but they do have an obvious Bronze-Age presence; which would in some way seem to demonstrate that Celtic languages, whether existing before the Bronze Age or not, seem to have a more consistent relationship to Bronze Age culture than to Neolithic culture; although at this stage the exact nature of these relationships is unreadable.



Above: the 'sacred mountain' of Stickle Pike, among the Dunnerdale Fells. I remember how joyous I was to round the corner to this small, but impressive mountain, and to wonder how Bronze Age people may have looked upon it. I ask kindly that people respect this peaceful and happy place. The ancient people of this place likely shared a connection to Primitive Irish speakers and were perhaps in some way connected to the establishment of later Gaelic links in Cumbria.

Stickle Pike, the Dunnerdale Fells:

The area around Stickle Pike is full of cairns, that, from my research, clearly align with certain features of the natural landscape, and perhaps equally importantly, with mineral veins and rock types to some degree. Although many of these cairns are previously known, the research of myself and my parents has focused upon this mountain, and we have found a number of, as far as I know, unreported cairns, which align up to the mountain. In the photo above, one can see the dark areas of rock which are of a different variety to the slate. There is also a kind of presumably natural

faultline, not visible in this photo, which a number of cairns appear to line up to, located close to and behind where this photo was taken. The dark areas of rock on the mountain may perhaps be rich in iron, this is our suggestion thus far, but more research is required, certainly these unusual rocks make a jingling or chiming noise when underfoot. This may have been some kind of important site to Bronze Age people, and we want to do further research to determine whether or not ancient mining took place here. There are iron and copper mines in the vicinity. There is also another possible ancient mining site around Coniston, which we have tried to look for, so far, we have found a number of possible sites, but we need professional archaeologists in the field of ancient mining to further look at this. Because we do not live in the Lake District, we cannot make frequent visits here, so research will appear and be furthered as and when the time is good.

Stickle Pike is a very prominent mountain, easily visible from many of the other ancient sites in the area, including the Giant's Grave to the southeast of here, where Stickle Pike appears like an anvil against the sky. Note that this Stickle Pike is the same mountain as the Pike O' Stickle, a large, and different sacred mountain located in the Langdale Pikes.



Above and overleaf, possible archaeological site in Borrowdale, central Lake District. This site appears to be a causeway-like wall that consists of stones of various size, including one large erratic-looking stone. The site is clearly associated with a small valley, and stream of water that appears to be partially under the soil, although I do not believe that this wall is entirely related the water in the sense of damming or diverting it. The wall that connects to this wall at a right angle, visible near to the woods, is evidently of a later period, and nearby brickwork and an old metal pipe indicates that this site may have been a water supply in recent years. This however, to my knowledge, would seem not to explain the large causeway-like structure, even in wall building it

would be unusual to construct a wall in this way, without the wall serving some kind of holy significance in relation to the landscape, in my opinion.

Photo below, intersection of the long wall to another, seemingly old wall, at right angle beneath the soil:



Photo below: large erratic-like stone located on the embankment



I hope that this was interesting to read, and again I ask kindly to please respect these places and the nature of the mountains and wild places, nature will be thankful.

## A poetic introduction to the Welsh language, and to North Wales - Linden Alexander Pentecost

Published on archive.org by the author. Text and photos and published by myself, Linden Alexander Pentecost, the original work is a part of my 'Iethou' language project between 2008 and 2011, published on the 20<sup>th</sup> June 2020, then re-uploaded to archive.org again June 2021

The sentences and explanations come from my own experience of learning to use Welsh, this was written mainly in 2009 with photos from 2009, and I wrote the poems in 2019. Josef Roberts checked through the text for me recently (2020) and made some corrections, including correct mutations and colloquial speech.



### Mynyddoedd Eryri

### The Mountains of Snowdonia

Welsh is one of the three Brythonic languages, the others are Cornish and Breton, they differ from the Goidelic 'Gaelic' languages Irish, Manx and Scottish Gaelic but all of the languages belong to the Celtic branch of Indo-European, which probably came to Britain in the centuries before the Roman occupation of Britain. The Welsh pronunciation here applies to North Welsh, the Welsh spoken around Snowdonia, which is today one of the strongholds of the Welsh language, and a place where it is common to hear Welsh wherever one goes. The examples used here follow the colloquial North-Welsh language, and sometimes this is different to 'formal' Welsh language. The Welsh here is very informal and may not always reflect more standard North Welsh.

The Welsh alphabet contains a few more letters than the English:

*a, b, c, ch, d, dd, e, f, ff, g, ng, h, i, j, l, ll, m, n, o, p, ph, r, rh, s, t, th, u, w, y*

There are seven vowels: *a, e, i, o, u, w, y*

They are pronounced as written, when in single syllabled words a vowel is long, e.g. tad - father, which has a similar 'a' sound to that in the word father. The letters e, i, and o are like the French é, the 'ee' in seen, and the aw sound in awe. U is a hard sound to pronounce, it is like 'ee' but with pursed lips. The vowel y has two sounds, on the first syllable of a word it is a schwa sound like the 'a' in about, whereas elsewhere it is like the 'i' in 'bin'. W is pronounced like the 'u' in 'put', with a Northern English accent and a more rounded mouth position, when long it is marked with a circumflex as  $\hat{w}$ .

Of the consonants, c is always hard as in 'cat', not as in 'circle', ch is a guttural sound like the German ch, but more guttural. Dd is like the 'th' in 'those'. F is a v, sometimes silent at the ends of

words, ff is the English f sound, ng is like the ng in song. Ll is the unique Welsh ll sound created by saying an 'l' whilst blowing air around the sides of the tongue. Ph is the same as the Welsh ff, r is rolled, rh is a breathed r, th is as in 'think'.

Welsh also has diphthongs which can look rather difficult.

Ae - sounds like a long a followed by e, ai - as in 'might', au - similar to the previous sound, but pronounced 'a' at the end of a word, aw - as in 'now'  
 ei - sounds like a schwa, followed by i, similar to the pronunciation of 'I' in some English accents. It can also sound like e + i, eu - sounds similar to ei, oe - as in 'soy', wy - like the 'u' in 'put' plus i.



Mynyddoedd Eryri, o'r Llŷn



The Mountains of Snowdonia, from the Lleyn

The Lleyn is one of the most Welsh speaking parts of Wales and a place close to my heart. It juts out as a rugged but flatter area of land from the Snowdonian upland which can be seen in the distance, with beautiful landscapes and views, and the sea here is crystal clear, the region is of interest to those keen on industrial archaeology and early Christianity (like myself). Welsh is strongest in three landscapes in Northwest Wales, including Snowdonia which is a high mountainous region, Anglesey the island north of Snowdonia which is much flatter, and the Lleyn Peninsula to the west of Snowdonia. Welsh is spoken throughout Wales even if it's most commonly heard in the northwest. The Lleyn is spelt Llŷn in Welsh, Anglesey is Ynys Môn, Snowdonia is Eryri, named after the eagles that were once common in the high mountains.

Parts of Anglesey, the Lleyn especially, and places like the Great Orme on the north coast remind me of Ireland. From Holyhead/**Caergybi** on Anglesey goes a ferry to Dublin, or *Baile Átha Cliath*, in Wales one will see **croeso** for welcome, and on the Irish side of the journey, *fáilte*. Although the two Celtic languages are related, they're still very different in some senses.



Noswaith oer wrth Llyn Padarn, Chwefror

A cold evening by Llyn Padarn, February

Like in French, Welsh nouns have two genders, but it isn't so easy to tell which nouns are masculine or feminine without consonant mutation. The definite article 'the' is **y** or **yr**.

**dyn** - a man, **y dyn** - the man, **y dyn da** - the good man

**benyw** - a woman, **y fenyw** - the woman, - **y fenyw dda** -  
the good woman

**môr** - sea, **y môr** - the sea, **y môr gwyntog** - the windy  
sea

**moel** - bald hill, **y foel** - the bald hill, **y foel  
wyntog** - the windy bald hill

After the definite article, feminine nouns mutate, so  
 b - f, c - g, d - dd, gw - w, m - f, p - ph, t - d  
 Welsh has different types of mutation depending upon  
 what is happening to the word.

Take the place-names Caernarfon, Bangor, Pwllheli,  
 Dolgellau, Llanfair, Malltraeth, Trawsfynydd. After  
 the preposition i - to, this is how they change:

**i Gaernarfon, i Fangor, i Bwllheli, i Ddolgellau, i  
 Lanfair, i Falltraeth, i Drawsfnnydd**

After the word a - and, they change differently

**a Chaernarfon, a Bangor, a Phwllheli, a Dolgellau, a  
 Llanfair, a Malltraeth, a Thrawsfynydd**

And after yn - in

**yn Nghaernarfon, ym Mangor, ym Mhwllheli, yn  
 Nolgellau, yn Llanfair, ym Malltraeth, yn Nrawsfynydd**

Some basic phrases in Welsh

**Sut mae** - hello, what's up, how's things

**Sut wyt ti?** - how are you? (to one person)

**Sut dach chi?** - how are you? (to several  
 people/formal)

**Lle dach chi'n byw?** - where do you live?

**Dwi'n byw yn...** - I live in...

**Pam oes 'na llawer o bysgod ar y gadair?** - why are  
 there a lot of fish on the chair?

**Pwy sy'n siopio rwan ar y stryd 'na?** - who's shopping  
 now on that street?

**Dwi wedi prynu siocled heddiw** - I have bought  
 chocolate today

**Dyma'r amgueddfa ddiwydianol** - here is the industrial museum

**Mae'r trê'n yn mynd i gopa'r mynydd** - the train is going to the top of the mountain

**Sut** - how, **wyt ti** - you are (singular), **dach chi** - you are (plural and formal), **ti** - you (singular), **chi** - you (plural), **lle** - a place, or meaning 'where?', **byw** - live, **dwi** - I am, **dwi'n** - I am in the process of, **pam** - why, **oes** - 'is there?' (does it exist?) - used in interrogative, **llawer** - a lot, **o** - of, **bysgod** - mutated form of **pysgod** - fish (plural), **ar** - on, **y gadair** - the chair, **cadair** - chair, **pwyl** - who, **sy** - is/to be, **pwyl sy** - who (is it that), **pwyl sy'n** - who is it that is in the process of, **siopio** - to shop, **rwan** - now, **y stry'd** - the street, **y stry'd 'na** - that street, **dwi** - I am, **wedi** - after (used in past tense), **prynu** - buy, **siocled** - chocolate, **heddiw** - today, **dyma** - here is, **dyma'r** - here is the, **amgueddfa** - museum f, **diwydianol** - industrial, **mae'r** - exists the/there is the/is the, **trê'n** - train, **mynd** - go, **yn mynd** - going/in the process of going, **i** - to, **copa** - summit, **i gopa** - to a summit, **mynydd** - mountain, **copa'r mynydd** - the summit of the mountain.

### Barddoniaeth - poetry

**Gwelodd yr aderyn dyffryn tawel** - the bird saw a quiet valley

**Ac es i i gopa'r hen fynydd** - and I went to the top of the old mountain

**O gwmpas lleoedd a chofion** - around places and memories

**Mae hi'n bwrw eira** - it is snowing

**Ar fynydd niwlog** - on a misty mountain

**Dyma'r lle tawel, llawn o gofion** - here is the quiet place, full of memories

**Caneuon Hên Llwythau Gwynedd** - songs of the old tribes of Gwynedd

**Gwyllo** means 'to see', **gwelodd** is the past tense third person singular form, **gwelodd fo** - he saw, **gwelodd hi** - she saw etc, **yr aderyn** means 'the bird'.

**Dyffryn** is a valley, **tawel** is quiet. **Ac** means 'and' before a vowel, otherwise it is **a**. **Es i** - I went, **i** - to, **gopa** (mutated from **copa** - summit), **'r** - definite article after a vowel, **hen** - old, **mynydd** - mountain, **hen fynydd** - old mountain.

**O gwmpas** - around, **lle** - place, **lleoedd** - places, **cofio** - to remember, **cofion** - memories, **a chofion** - and memories. **Mae hi'n bwrw** - she is throwing (used with rain and snow), **mae** - exists/is/are, **hi** - she, **'n** - in the process of, **bwrw** - throw, **eira** - snow. **Ar** - on, **niwlog** - misty. **Dyma** - here is, **llawn** - full, **o gofion** - of memories.



### Gaeaf ym Mharc Cenedlaethol Eryri

#### Winter in Snowdonia National Park

The Welsh numerals are similar to those in other Indo-European languages

**Un, dau, tri, pedwar, pump, chwech, saith, wyth, naw, deg**

The following noun does not become plural, e.g. **chwech ynys** - six islands, not **chwech ynysoedd**, **saith trê**n - seven trains, not 'saith trenau'.

The numbers after ten use the preposition **ar** - on.

**Un ar ddeg** - eleven, **deuddeg** - twelve, **tri ar ddeg** - thirteen, **pedwar ar ddeg** - fourteen, **pymtheg** - fifteen, **dau naw** - eighteen (two nines), **ugain** - twenty, **un ar hugain** - twenty one, **dau ar hugain** - twenty two.

**Mae gen i ddwy ffenestr** - I have two windows

**Mae dau ffermwr yn bwyta mewn tŷ** - two farmers are eating in a house.

Feminine nouns have different forms of the numbers two, three and four, where **dau**, **tri**, **pedwar** become **dwy**, **teir**, **pedair**. E.g. **dwy ffenestr** - two windows, **pedair noswaith** - four evenings, but **dau ffermwr** - two farmers, **pedwar dydd** - four days.

Possession in Welsh happens very differently to in English. **Mae gen i** means 'I have' in North Welsh, **mae** - exists, is or are, **gen** - with, **i** - I, so literally 'exists with me'. The pronoun **i** causes a mutation of the following noun.

**Mae gen i gi** - I have a dog, **ci** - dog

**Mae gen i lyfr** - I have a book, **llyfr** - book.

You may notice that Welsh has no word for 'a' or 'an', so **ci** and **llyfr** in themselves mean 'a dog' and 'a book'.

The word **mae** is used in the other sentences, it can be used to express any continuous present action. For example, **mae** - exists/is/are, **dau ffermwr** - two farmers, **mewn** - in (in a), **tŷ** - house.

The word **mae** serves as a verb to exist or to be, this can be to say that something exists with us, or with another person.

**Mae gen i dŷ** - I have a house, **tŷ** - house

**Mae gennych chi cymdeithas** - you plural have a society

But for the third person **mae** is also used to describe where something is located and what it is doing, this applies also to people.

**Mae hi mewn tref** - she is in a town (exists she in(a) town)

**Mae o yng Nghaerdydd** - he is in Cardiff (exists he in Cardiff)

The word **mae** is also used as an auxiliary verb to describe what something or somebody is doing. To complete this, we need the particle **yn** 'in', which serves the same function as the -in/ing ending on English verbs, e.g. doing, going etc.

**Mae cath yn siarad** - a cat is talking, **siarad** - speak, **yn siarad** - speaking

**Mae pysgotwyr yn darllenu** - fishermen are reading, **darllenu** - read, **yn darllenu** - reading.

This **yn** gets contracted to 'n after a vowel.

**Mae dyn yn dysgu** - a man is learning, **dysgu** - learn, **yn dysgu** - learning

**Mae ci'n cerdded** - a dog is walking, **cerdded** - walk, **yn cerdded** - walking

**Mae cymro'n bwyta** - a Welshman is eating, **cymro** - Welshman, **bwyta** - eat, **yn bwyta** - eating

For the third person pronouns **fo/o** - he, **hi** - she and **nhw** - they, **mae** is also used to express continuous present action, although in colloquial Welsh this is used much more commonly than in English. Welsh doesn't have a word for 'it' so the masculine and feminine pronouns are substituted.

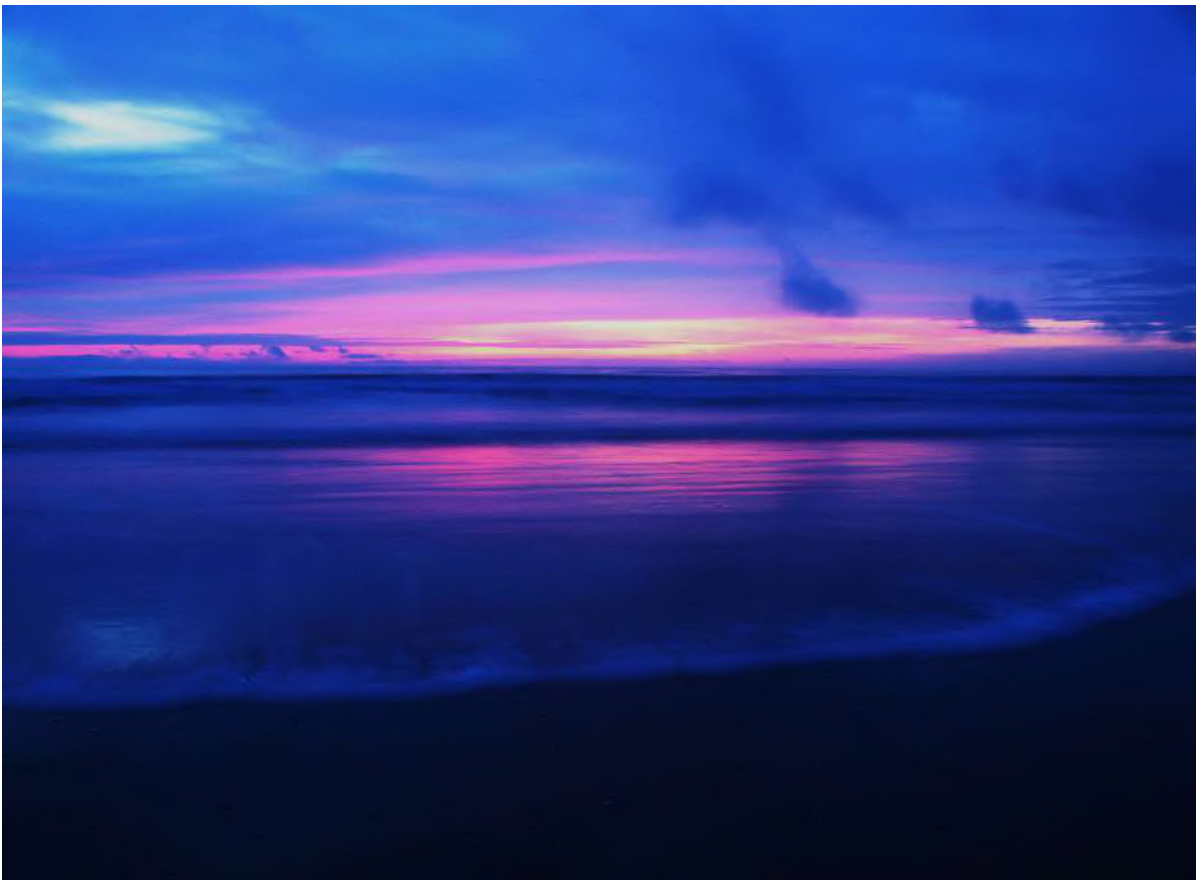
**Mae o'n siarad** - he is speaking, **mae hi'n cerdded** - she is walking, **mae hi'n bwrw glaw** - it is raining (she is throwing rain), **maent nhw'n darllenu llyfr** - they are reading a book, **mae hi'n gwyllo** - she is looking or seeing, **mae o'n gwneud** - he is doing or making.

**Dwi'n mynd** - I am going, **rwy't ti'n mynd** - you singular are going, **mae o'n mynd** - he is going, **mae hi'n mynd** - she is going, **dan ni'n mynd** - we are going, **dach chi'n mynd** - you lot are going, **maent nhw'n mynd** - they are going.

When talking about aspects rather than actions or states of existence, **ydy** or **yw** are used in sentences with the 'he' and 'she' pronouns.



**Cymraes dw i** - I am a Welsh woman, **cymraes wyt ti** -  
you are a Welsh woman, **cymro ydy o** - he is a  
Welshman, **cymraes ydy hi** - she is a Welsh woman.



**Traeth Abermaw, noswaith gaeaf dros y môr** - Barmouth  
Beach, a winter evening across the sea

**Barddoniaeth i Dduw** - Poetry for God/The Higher Good

**Traeth o fil synau** - Beach of a thousand sounds  
**o'r un sain y crëwr** - From the same/one sound of the  
 creator

**Pinc yn nŵr ac yn nefoedd** - Pink in water and in  
 heaven

**Y haul rhwng dŵr a nefoedd** - The sun between water  
 and skies

**Tonnau bach drwy nos gaeaf** - Small waves through a  
 winter night

**wybr dawel drwy symudiad y dŵr** - A quiet sky through  
 the movement of  
 water

*Traeth* - beach, *o* - of, *mil* - a thousand, *o fil* - of a thousand, *synau* - sounds, *o'r* - of the, *un* - one, *yr un* - the one or same, *sain* - sound, *y crëwr* - the creator, *sain y crëwr* - sound of the creator, *pinc* - pink, *yn nŵr* - in water, from *dŵr* - water, *ac* - and, *nefoedd* - heaven, *y haul* - the sun, but it's more formal to say *yr haul*, *rhwng* - between, *tonnau* - waves, *tonn* - wave, *bach* - small, *drwy* - through, *nos* - night, *gaeaf* - winter, *wybr* - sky f, *wybr dawel* - 'a' quiet/peaceful sky, *symuniad* - movement, *symuniad y dŵr* - (the) movement of the water.

Thank you and may God, or Allah, whatever good thing you believe in, your luck, bring you all good fortune. Feel free to adapt upon or share the poems, but please accredit me.

Below: the author in an old mine at Great Orme, June 2009.



Wales is known for its industrial history, old mines, railways. Some of the mines go even back to the Bronze Age era, such as the one I was in here at Great Orme. We don't know who the people were who mined here before the Celts, but they went to great lengths to mine here and at Parys Mountain on Anglesey. This is the earliest legacy to Wales' long history of mining, copper continued to be mined after the Celts arrived, and until recently. In Welsh, a copper mine - **gwaith copr**, **gwaith** means 'work', here a mine 'working'. The mines at Great Orme are truly worth the visit, at Parys Mountain you can also walk around on the surface and see the unusual, but intriguing landscape there. The mines at Great Orme can be visited through the visitor centre, if you go underground, the fascinating mines reminded me of a place where faeries or goblins would live. I like to believe that the faeries live there, known in Welsh as the **Tylwyth Teg**, or the Fair Tribe.

## Cornish language and heritage – part one

Written by Linden Alexander Pentecost June 21<sup>st</sup> 2021, published on archive.org

The Cornish language is a Brythonic language, related to Welsh and to Breton, and to the other dialects of Brythonic or British that would have been spoken in other parts of England. Those in the north west of England, and in southern Scotland, are sometimes called ‘Cumbric’, although we know very little about them, or how distinct they were as a dialect group. Likely, the original language whence we get Arthurian tradition and poets like Taliesin was close to Old Welsh and to Middle Welsh, which, even then, was perhaps rather distinct from the spoken Welsh language. To this day, ‘Literary Welsh’, and its bardic variants, maintain grammatical structures and vocabulary which is distinctly different from how Welsh is ordinarily spoken. The same may have been the case in Cornwall, because we have literature in Middle Cornish, perhaps indicating that this was indeed a language of literature and Bardic tradition, and then later on, the everyday spoken Cornish gets recorded, and this is generally seen as being a later variant or Western dialect of Cornish. Although, I personally believe it would be more accurate to say that ‘Late Cornish’ is the language of Western Cornwall, Middle Cornish was here too, but it may have had a more limited usage, and may not represent the native speech of this part of the county. Late Cornish was recorded extensively by Edward Llwyd; Henry Jenner later worked on Late Cornish, and published a book in 1904, titled: *A Handbook of The Cornish Language : Chiefly in its latest stages with some account of its history and literature.*

The Cornish in this book is one of the varieties I have somewhat learned, and it does well to represent the language of Western Cornwall, the focus in this article, so I am writing here with Jenner’s form of Cornish. One of my favourite words is **skiantoleth** – wisdom. I do feel a lot of wisdom and magic in the traditions of Cornwall, even though it is common to dissociate this from academic study, to truly understand our indigenous ancestors, and to continue their way of life I believe we should not dissociate it. For Cornish to thrive, we need more than academia, we need passion, love, creation, care and feeling. The magic in the Cornish language is expressed through its words, and through the oral histories, and through the landscape itself. The land, is **an tîr**, the circumflex accent over the **i**, indicates that this vowel is long, as in ‘seen’. The word **an** is the definite article, ‘the’. Another word related to Cornish tradition is **pestry** ‘magic’, and of course **pestriores** ‘witch’, and **pestrior** ‘wizard’. The definite article is also used in phrases to mean ‘of the’, for example **chÿ an stênor** – the tinner’s house, literally ‘house (of) the tinner’. Many of the mines were for tin, **stên**. A mine in West Cornwall is known as **bal**, although many mines bare the name **wheal** or **whêl** which is used for mine names, meaning ‘a work’. Here are some sample sentences I wrote, inspired by my visits to Cornwall.

**mÿ a vedn cwsa Kernûak** – I will speak Cornish, **mÿ** – I, **a vedn** – will, **cwsa** – speak, **Kernûak** – Cornish.

**nÿ a vedn môs dhe’n bal** – we will walk to the mine, **nÿ** – we, **a vedn** – will, **môs** – go, **dhe’n** – to the, **bal** – mine. ‘To the’ is **dhe an**, but this is shortened to **dhe’n**.

Many years ago, we did ‘walk’ to a mine, when visiting Cornwall in November, I haven’t been back as of yet. The mine is Levant Mine, located on the wild northern coast of the county. I remember going here in November, when the mist was about, and wondering into the working beam engine house, the warmth that it provided, a little shelter from the steep cliffs outside, where for the most part, the sea mist hung below, obscuring the sea. Inland, there are moors, which were golden purple with heather and autumn bracken, where it became visible in the mist.

*Cornish language and heritage, part two, giants in Cornwall* – **Written by Linden Alexander Pentecost, November 2021, published by Linden Alexander Pentecost on archive.org under the creative-commons, non-commercial, attribution no derivatives license.**

- In this second lesson, I wanted to talk a little more about Cornwall in general, the myths and legends and the importance of the language in the landscape. In the last lesson, I introduced Cornish as the form of late, or west Cornish, an interrelated group of Cornish varieties, and revived Cornish varieties, which most closely connect to the Cornwall just before the Industrial Revolution and the transformation from that Cornish speaking, early industrial time, into the modern time. However, Revived Cornish today tends to be written in the Standard Written Form, SWF, and it appears to be more standard to associate or write the SWF according to older, or more formal and less colloquial types of Cornish, something much closer to the language that would have been spoken and sung in medieval Cornwall. The earlier Cornish language may not have been actually ‘earlier’ than Late, Modern or West Cornish, that variety employed in the last lesson. Instead, the earlier language of playwriting may have been a formal variant or register of the Cornish language, more closely connected with that culture of bardic poetry and song that is shared between Wales, Cornwall, and which was once likely found in parts of England too. Although there most definitely was some kind of inter-Celtic religion, shared between the words and bardic poetry of the Celtic languages; it is often very difficult to translate this notion of an interrelated group of beliefs, to being any kind of pantheon or set of gods or deities in the way that we readily understand these terms. The possibility of common deities throughout Celtic languages, is indicated in certain cases, through the sacred language of the bards, and by virtue of how these forces, powers, or deities were described. But at least in Cornish, it appears that these ‘powers’ and this Celtic ‘pantheon’, whilst representing concepts of spiritual action in the Late Cornish language, did not entirely enter or exist in Late Cornish. For example, in Cornish legends there are as far as I am aware, no examples of what we might call common deities or a pantheon, unlike in the Middle Welsh Mabinogion, and in the Old Irish texts such as In Lebor Gabála Érenn The same words exist in Cornish, which are words referencing the power of certain gods in other languages at times; but in Cornish there appear to have been no group of ‘Celtic Gods’ that developed through the landscape and traditions in the same way. Instead, Cornish mythology places a great emphasis on giants, witches and upon ‘nature-spirits’. These deities are connected to the ‘fairy-faith’ ideas about spirituality, but they do not conform to a pantheon or common Celtic religions structure that is visible in the landscape beyond names. Giants are deities, arguably, in many cultures, deities and giants are more or less interchangeable, giants focus often on the divine aspects of oneness, being able to be in the smallest droplet of water, or as big as the highest mountain; giants in Cornish mythology seem intimately connected to the idea that the natural landscape is inhabited by ‘gods’ or ‘forces’. The primary difference between ‘giants’ and ‘gods’ is arguably, that gods often belong to a pantheon, have a particular role, they are often worshiped, distant, far, connected to this world but also distant from it, individual beyond this world, individual no matter where worshiped or honoured. This could well apply to ancient Celtic deities like Lugus, Taranis and Epona, who are without doubt ‘gods’ in this sense, of being identifiable with rituals, places, concepts and powers, across the Celtic speaking world. Giants in Cornish mythology are different, in that the giants in Celtic (or perhaps, para-Celtic, or pre-Celtic) traditions, rather than being ‘beyond’ the land, are as much creators of the land and in a sense the true, spiritual nature of the land. This means that even though the ‘giant’ is not the land as we see the land, the giant is still the force or power that is behind that area of land, and is its spirit. Unlike the deities in a pantheon for instance, the concept of ‘giants’ is different in that, giants were somehow seen as individually connected to the land, in individual, local, linguistically identifiable ways, thus giants are a lot more numerous, individual, and connected to and guardians of the land beneath our feet, and the nature around us and all life within it. ‘Deities’ in the stricter sense are different, in that they are in a sense a link between nature and divinity, something of the heavens in nature, working in nature, working in us; often deities are also described to us as more relatable, human in appearance, governing and guiding aspects of the world, connected to us through particular ideas, language and ritual; if we may call the Celtic languages harbours of more

deity-focused beliefs, then we can also say that at a more local level, the connections in language and spiritual meaning went far beyond the idea of a pantheon of deities, and in the case of Cornwall for instance, some of the ‘giants’ or ‘old deities’ may be older than the existence of Celtic or Indo-European language and religion. Another difference may have been in the relationship between deities and people, which may have been different from that people shared with giants. Throughout written history, people are often described as worshiping gods or praying to gods. ‘Giants’ or ‘Nature Spirits’ may not originally have been ‘*worshipped*’ in the way that we might commonly understand, because giants, unlike many depictions of deities, were not outside of or beyond this world in every sense, they manifested a particular thing within it, rather than a vaguer range of things. Giants, in stories, are very individual, they meet people, work with people sometimes, help people. They may be described as forces which may work with us in the land and in creation as a whole, and they are also individual, infinitely numerous, whilst also having a non-individualness and interconnectedness, shared across giant names and the landscapes. Their *idea* of individuality may be very different to our own, but they are not necessarily more, or less individual than us. One such famous place in Cornwall associated with giants, is Carn Brea, **Carn Bre** close to Illogan, Redruth and Camborne. There are many legends that associate this majestic, granite-topped hill with giants. The presence of many ancient sites in the area is also suggestive of ancient, perhaps para-Celtic or pre-Celtic rituals, which would have in no doubt blended with what we identify as being the more visible ‘Celtic’ traditions and words. Note that ‘giant’ does not have to mean physically giant person in these oral and written histories, although there have been reports of ‘real giants’, I will focus on the possible metaphorical meaning, about a kind of life force that is ‘within’ nature, and therefore appeared to people in dreams as big or as small as they wanted to appear, so I have been told. So in a way, a giant need not even be associated with a person of large stature, the same processes can be seen metaphorically in the way that mountains, forests, clouds are of great size and energy. Even though legends of giants are found far and wide, they do ‘seem’ more numerous in the Celtic-speaking parts of Britain (which, arguably could also be a sort of pre-Celtic or para-Celtic cultural substrate continuum which *became* or came together to be preserved in the form of *Celtic*). In some Indo-European languages (but arguably not in Cornish in the context of Cornwall), the giants were often later associated only with the destructive and undesirable parts of nature, with the ‘good’ aspects of nature, like fertility, knowledge and wisdom, being handed over to the pantheon of Gods. This may have been the case in Ireland and Wales, where the respective heroes, demi-gods and gods are often battling with giants; the same can be said in Greek mythology with regards to the Titans, with Norse mythology with regards to the jötnar, and from what little I know of the Narts in the Caucasus, the Narts were also often fighting giants. In other places, and in the Neolithic and other ancient landscapes of places like Cornwall, we see a different side, where giants seem associated with wisdom, and perhaps also with geometry, mathematics and astronomy. Whatever the truth, which we may never know, I hope that this lesson gives food for thought about Ancient Cornwall. I always try to encourage people to respect these old stories though and to respect the spiritual life in the land itself, to treat them kindly, however we may see them. I am a sort of Christian, but I feel that God, or The Great Mystery, created all life, and so I feel that all spirits, all nature, all manifestations of the forces of life and creation, are something I encourage us to show respect and kindness towards. Sometimes being kind is also about giving space and leaving things be though, and perhaps, some or many of these nature spirits don’t want to feel that we are being intrusive, and in any case, we may not be able to understand them and may feel scared, which is why it’s important sometimes that we let the answers come to us when it is the right thing for them and for us. I feel that we should always treat them with our respect and kindness, just as we should treat nature the same way; but, I feel that we cannot simply work them out, it is on their terms. If we are respectful, our worlds may come together again and nourish, and heal our worlds positively, but we have to let these things come to us, the only thing we can do most of the time I feel, is to be kind, appreciate and honour the land and the divine life within it, simply through being respectful, kind, caring, careful and intuitive. And for connecting to the land in this way, to Cornwall, the Cornish language is likely going to be very important to us.

Basic Late Cornish part one – by Linden Alexander Pentecost June 2021, written and published by myself, published on archive.org

This introduction to Late/West Cornish, employs the spelling as set out in the book *Tavas a ragadazow* by Richard Gendall. No part of this article comes or is taken from the book, this article only uses the same spelling choices as found in Richard Gendall's fantastic guidebook to Late Cornish, this is the spelling I have decided to write with here. Notes on spelling and pronunciation will be provided in more detail later. Note that the spelling used in these articles, is how Late or West Cornish was often traditionally spelt; many practices are similar to English spelling, like the sounds **ee** and **oo** as written in Cornish.

**pe hanow o che?** - what are you called? Singular

**pe hanow o why?** - what are you called? Plural

**tho ve creies...** - I am called...

The word **che** means 'you singular' or 'thou', the word **why** means 'you plural', pronounced similarly to how a person might pronounce 'why' in English, if speaking a Dublin accent. Cornish nouns are either masculine or feminine. The word for 'the' is **an**, for example, **an hêan** – the harbour. The adjective comes after the noun, e.g. **an hêan broaz** 'the big harbour'. The word for asking 'where' is **peleha**.

**peleha ma an hêan broaz?** - where is the big harbour?

**peleha ma an keaz?** - where is the cheese?

The word **ma** as well as being used for describing the location of something, is also used in the present continuous tense, this also appears with other verbs, like **ma an pesk a toaz than baya** – the fish is coming to the bay. The word **toaz** is mutated after **a**, the unmutated form of 'to come' in Cornish is **doaz**. The present continuous tense has special forms of 'to be' for the different persons:

<b>thera ve a toaz than baya</b>	–	I am coming to the bay
<b>thesta a toaz than baya</b>	-	thou art coming to the bay
<b>ma ev a toaz than baya</b>	-	he is coming to the bay
<b>ma hye a toaz than baya</b>	-	she is coming to the bay
<b>thera nye a toaz than baya</b>	-	we are coming to the bay
<b>thera why a toaz than baya</b>	-	you plural/polite are coming to the bay
<b>mowns a toaz than baya</b>	-	they are coming to the bay

**thera nye en Poreeah** – we are in St Ives

**thera ve en Porthtreath** – I am in Porttreath

The word **reeg** is used in the past tense, like **me reeg poonia war an treath** – I ran on the beach (I did run), or if I wrote: **me reeg kerras than hêan** – I walked to the harbour. This form of the verb is the same for all the pronouns, e.g. **nye reeg screffa en Kernuak** – we wrote (did writing) in Cornish.

## Basic Breton, part one

Written by Linden Alexander Pentecost July 2021, published on archive.org

This series of short articles will be written using standard Breton spelling, that which is used in education. Breton is a language of many dialects, some saying that these dialects are actually better described as a continuum of closely related languages. Modern Breton, as taught, often has a phonology which is heavily influenced by French; the lexical choices are also influenced by scholars over the past few centuries, who in earlier times have sometimes accidentally distanced ‘standard’ Breton, from the continuum of Brythonic dialects spoken in Brittany. The original native dialects of Breton are facing extinction, and not enough is being done to record and to properly understand their cultural and historical details. Standard Breton spelling does work however, to some degree in representing the continuum of spoken language. Like standard Scottish Gaelic spelling, this only allows for some variations. Some Breton dialects contain sound changes, and entire new meanings or words, that do not fit into the standard spelling of Breton today. The same can be said for Irish and for Scottish Gaelic. We will begin with some basic phrases:

**petra eo da anv ?** - what is your name? (singular)  
**petra eo hoc’h anv ?** - what is your name? (plural)  
 ... **eo ma anv** – my name is...  
**pelec’h emaout o chom ?** - where do you live? (singular)  
**pelec’h emaoc’h o chom ?** - where do you live? (plural)  
**e... emaon o chom** – I live in...

## Vocabulary:

**petra ?** - what? **eo** – is, **da** – thy/your singular, **anv** – name, **hoc’h** – your (plural), **ma** – my, **pelec’h ?** - where? **emaout** – you singular/informal are/exist (situational, in the present continuous), **o** – verbal particle (in the process of), **chom** – to live, living, **emaoc’h** – you plural/polite are/exist (situational, in the present continuous), **emaon** – I am/exist (situational, in the present continuous).

The rules around Breton word order can be complex. Another thing I have always found difficult with Breton, is the way that one requires several forms of the verb ‘to be’, depending on the context. Here we are looking at the situational, or present continuous forms. This is often comparable to where in English we would add -ing onto the end of a verb. But in Breton, this is indicated using a verbal particle, and the auxiliary of ‘to be’.

**emaon** – I am (situational, present continuous)  
**emaout** – thou art/you are (singular), (situational, present continuous)  
**emañ** – she or he is (situational, present continuous)  
**emaomp** – we are (situational, present continuous)  
**emaoc’h** – you are plural (situational, present continuous)  
**emaint** – they are (situational, present continuous)  
**emeur** – one is (situational, present continuous)

Examples with verbs: **emaon o vont** – I am going (right now), (**mont** – to go), **emaomp o vont** – we are going (right now), **emañ o vont** – he/she is going, (‘she’ is **hi**, ‘he’ is **eñ**, these can be added if necessary, e.g. **emañ-eñ** and **emañ-hi**), **emañ ar marc’h o vont e kêr** – the stallion is going to town, **ar marc’h** – the stallion, **kêr** – town,; **emaomp o vont d’ar stêr** – we are going to the river, **emañ o vont d’an draezhenn** – she/he is going to the beach; **stêr** – river, **traezhenn** – a beach, sand, mutated to **draezhenn** after **an** ‘the’.



Two poems to horsey goddesses Epona and Rhiannon in reconstructed Gallo-Brittonic and in Welsh

Written by Linden Alexander Pentecost, June 2021, published also on archive.org

When we talk of the Iron Age speakers of Celtic, we may often refer to the Continental Celtic languages, such as Gaulish and Celtiberian. These languages were grammatically more like Latin or Ancient Greek than any of the Celtic languages today are; this is because these classical, continental languages shared a more obvious, common Indo-European similarity to other classical Indo-European languages. Even though Latin is an Italic language, and Gaulish is a Celtic language, the grammar, words and even sometimes entire phrases, are comparable and similar enough to Latin. So despite Gaulish, and Latin, being from separate branches of Indo-European, they also formed a continuum and were neighbors of sorts. The same can be said for ancient Italic and Celtic in Iberia, for again, these early Italic and Celtic languages, despite being in their separate families, were also similar on many levels. Epona was a famous, widely revered goddess of the Gauls. She was the goddess of horses, and also served various other roles throughout the Gaulish ritual cycles of the year. Whether or not Epona was worshiped in Britain, is less sure. But, the Uffington Horse, an Iron Age site, shows the immense significance that horses had among the Iron Age Britons too, and they no doubt had an important cultural narrative, religious meaning and would have been prevalent in festivals. Britain may have had many languages during the Iron Age, but certainly the languages of the hill forts, and of the ‘elite’ really, was probably very like Gaulish; we know this because its vocabulary in place-names is comparable, and because we have the modern Brythonic languages, Welsh, Cornish and Breton, to help us understand what the ancestral Iron Age language may have been like. Edward Hatfield has done a lot of work in reconstructing this Gallo-Brittonic, or ‘Brittonic’ language, as well as him being an expert on Gaulish. Over the past twelve years or so, I have learned to speak and write what I can of Common-Brittonic, taught mostly by Edward and then from a smattering of personal experience and observation. Here is a poem I wrote to Epona, writing my own variant of Gallo-Brittonic.

<b>Teccâ Epona</b>	Pretty Epona
<b>Epona tîrî mârî</b>	Epona of the great land
<b>Epona trebâs war pennei</b>	Epona of the settlement on the hill
<b>Epona sowenos</b>	Epona of the Sun
<b>Sî esti karants do bitû</b>	She is a friend to the world
<b>Sî esti karants do tâtai</b>	She is a friend to the tribe
<b>En dânu ambaxtowirî</b>	In the valley of the farmer
<b>En dûnei et en tegei tâtâs</b>	In the fort and in the house of the tribe

This is written in an archaic form of language, which has for instance, the locative case. This reconstruction is not an accurate representation of the original Gallo-Brittonic dialects, but it is my attempt at getting as close to that speech as I may. In Welsh tradition, the goddess Rhiannon is a horse goddess, that shares some similarity with Epona. I wrote the following short poem to her, my translation is aesthetic rather than literal.

<b><i>Rhiannon o'r coed mawr</i></b>	Rhiannon from the great forest
<b><i>Rhiannon mewn gwynt yr haf</i></b>	Rhiannon in a summer's wind
<b><i>Mae hi'n rhedeg efo gwynt yr haf</i></b>	She is running with wind of the summer
<b><i>Mae'r dderwen fawr yn canu mewn gwynt</i></b>	The great oak sings in a wind
<b><i>Mae'r dderwen yn canu efo lleisiau'r derwyddon</i></b>	The oak is singing with the voices of the druids
<b><i>O Rhiannon wyllt a theg</i></b>	O wild and fair Rhiannon
<b><i>O Rhiannon y gwellt a'r nefoedd</i></b>	O Rhiannon of the grass and of the heavens

## From Scottish Gaelic, to Norwegian to Finnish, to ancient language in the North Atlantic

Written by Linden Alexander Pentecost Nov. 2021, released under the creative commons attribution no derivatives license, also published by Linden Alexander Pentecost online including on archive.org.

Scottish Gaelic shared contact with the Old Norse or 'Norn' language from the period of Norse settlement in Britain as a whole, and perhaps earlier than that. As I looked at in another article, *Scottish Gaelic dialects and ancient languages in Scotland – Dualchainntean na Gàidhlig agus cànanan àrsaidh ann an Alba*, the connection between the Gaelic language and the maritime Norse speaking culture, might possibly be continued on from an earlier cultural setting, where maritime culture interacted with the culture of the Scottish islands. In the article I look at how some of Western Scotland's Mesolithic sites are often found associated with Norse or 'para-Norse' or 'pre-Norse' place-names, depending on how exactly we define these; because the presence of Norse words does not automatically prove that the *whole* language they belong to was Norse; which could mean that Norse, and Gaelic, share words and features in common with language going back to the Mesolithic times.

I will talk firstly a little about Gaelic dialects again; Gaelic is much the same language across Scotland, a primary difference is in how phonetic units are arranged and pronounced. This can be very variable, and some dialects of Scottish Gaelic do contain rather unique sounds, that may not even have direct equivalents in other languages. This might help us to show also that at least some elements of Scottish Gaelic predate our dating of Celtic society by a long way, because the differences in how phonemes are arranged together may be due to underlying structures in language that haven't been totally understood yet, and this is more difficult perhaps because the Scottish Gaelic spelling system arranges these words, their etymology and word division in a particular way, which is often now how these words are spoken or pronounced together; whilst the Gaelic spelling system is very important I feel, I don't feel that we can progress easily with the study of ancient language in Scotland, if we only identify and study Gaelic according to the way it is written.

Rather than thinking about ancient Scotland in terms of Celtic and pre-Celtic, we could also think of ancient Scotland as having had a continuum of cultural influences, some of which were closer to being centrally Celtic. It may be that the more centrally Celtic cultures and language were connected through a belief or cultural system which was only partially represented in the *other* cultures of ancient Scotland, and after the arrival of Christianity, this centrally Celtic culture may have more readily adopted Christianity, and so it was a *Celtic* form of the ancient languages which came to be spoken across Scotland. No doubt the spiritual or religious interrelatedness of centrally Celtic cultures predated Christianity, but it may have been that originally the 'centrally Celtic culture' was less influential or intrusive as a whole, which might explain why the ancient Celtic language of this culture, Primitive Irish, was so vastly different to the modern Goidelic languages, the latter which

appear to show multiple grammatical and lexical layers, some of which are hard to identify as being purely Indo-European.

Could there have been pre-Celtic or non-Indo-European languages as well?

If Celtic languages and Indo-European languages were centrally linked to a spiritual, religious and cultural understanding, then it does indeed appear to me that some of the folklore, language and poetry in Gaelic is indeed *outside* of these centrally Indo-European themes. If we look at this in terms of cultural context, where Gaelic might have become the common language of all peoples, then it would make sense that the less-Celtic cultures could remain as localised aspects and cultural practices *within* Gaelic society and language; which brings us to some of the ancient chants and songs found within the Gaelic language, some of which may be in essence a part of another language spoken through Gaelic. I feel that some of these examples of language are very distinct from the *bardic* style of poetry that was both a pre-Christian and Christian Goidelic thing. Scottish mythology tells us that Scotland had multiple other forces or gods, many of which seem to not have parallels across Indo-European languages as a whole, take for example, the Blue Men of the Minch. Often ancient archaeological sites are associated with stories about these gods, which may in affect prove that the Gaels were well aware of other, ancient cultures, that were not 'their' culture now, but which were anciently and directly connected to the roots of their language and culture and land. Furthermore, it is even possible that *some* parts of these cultures and languages were continued through Gaelic culture until very recently, which would imply that using the word 'Celtic' to describe the Gaels and Gaelic would not be to accurately understand the full depth of Gaelic language and culture, beyond the parts which are centrally Celtic.

The ancient languages of Scotland could have been in some way Celtic, it is possible, it is possible that even in early times there was some form of Indo-European or Primitive Irish. But, the ancient languages may also have been para-Celtic, connected to Celtic and to Indo-European but not coming from Celtic or Indo-European. Or, the languages could have been pre-Celtic or pre-Indo-European. In the scenario I write of above, it would theoretically be possible for these possibilities to simultaneously hold some truth, across the continuum of different cultures and varieties of language in ancient Scotland. I must also take into account that we do not know how the ancient, or even ancient Celtic speakers identified themselves, and how they identified their creation and origin stories to different cultures; therefore, it may be that our idea of Celtic and Indo-European is an idea of interrelatedness that we have partially invented, based upon earlier connections in language, and further implemented through religious, linguistic and cultural identification. Say for example, if there were ancient connections between languages in ancient Europe, before Indo-European. If an Indo-European and centrally Celtic culture and language later appeared, and if people then identified with that through their beliefs, then it would make sense if the earlier relatedness between languages became re-organised and re-imagined as something according to later spiritual ideas; so there could have effectively been different processes rather than a single process which lead to the creation of Indo-European and of Celtic languages.

Furthermore, our theory of Indo-European language is centrally based in how ancient, written languages were grammatically closer to languages such as Latin, Sanskrit and Lithuanian, showing common patterns of Indo-European inflection. But this may not be enough evidence to show that the modern languages directly come from those languages, because, it could instead be that the noun declinations, gender and verb endings common to Indo-European languages, were also centrally related to religion and to a particular form of poetry and address. In this sense it would theoretically be possible to interchange an Indo-European language within a non-Indo-European language, simply by speaking the words in a particular poetic manner. Say if for example, the Primitive Irish word *maqqas* – ‘son’, was not only a Celtic word, but also belonged to an older language in Ireland, which may have been *maqq*. Family terms and numerals seem essential to the structure and spirituality of the centrally Indo-European world view, as to noun endings and the way language was used religiously and poetically. Say if some example, the words for ‘father’ and ‘God’ were very Indo-European, and extremely important within this structure. A non-Indo-European speaking person of Ireland may have known of the centrally Indo-European terms for ‘God’ and ‘father’, as well as knowing about their own deities in their culture. If for example, the non-Indo-European speaking person, was coming together at a festival, held in a place which was centrally Indo-European, and say if for example this person was going to address himself and be initiated into that druidic society, he might have taken the word *maqq*, and arranged it by adding the structure ending *-as*, and then by speaking about himself in relation to his father, *atir*, and to God, *deivas*. But, this individual may have been culturally part of a tribe who came to Ireland in the Mesolithic, and so, when he returns to his own settlement and performs a prayer there, he might speak some of the same words, but structure them differently according to his native language.

This is just a hypothetical example, but it helps to demonstrate I hope how Indo-European may not always be such an accurate way of classifying the entirety of our ancient languages in Europe. The example above also does not mean to say that the Indo-European structures are less old, because we can see in Irish how the Proto-Celtic genitive ending *-ī* was taken into the previous syllable, causing slenderisation, in Modern Irish *mac* – *mí*, in Primitive Irish: *maqqas* – *maqqī*. So it’s possible that Indo-European was always somehow connected to the languages of ancient Ireland, but certainly, at some point, perhaps with the arrival of Christianity, the centrally Indo-European and non-Indo-European forms seem to be largely replaced by the Goidelic languages, which, also with the help of Latin, emphasise a particular relatedness in language and culture. Many of the features in modern Irish, like the two genders, and the slenderisation, may also be related to, but not directly from Indo-European language, or they may show how Indo-European endings were employed according to somewhat equivalent indigenous grammar which already involved slenderisation.

The Shetlandic, *Shaetlann* language is very interesting to me. It is greatly more similar to North-Germanic languages in many respects, for the dialect is in some ways a Scots superstratum upon a substratum of Shetland Norn and ultimately Old Norse. However,

whilst I can talk of Old Norse and Shetland Norn as being distinctly North-Germanic languages, many of the words in the Shetland dialect may in fact have a different origin.

The reason I think this is because many of the words in the dialect, although often behaving similarly to North-Germanic words, do not appear standard within those languages. There is also the possibility that ancient language in Shetland was linked to Celtic or 'para-Celtic' languages, as at least some cognates can be said to exist between words from Shetland and those of Goidelic or Brythonic languages. Shaetlann is also very distinct from Orkney Scots, and similarly, Shetland Norn was distinct from Orkney Norn; and, the archaeological cultures on the two island groups appear to be quite different, or at least appear to have had their differences across the archaeological record. I've noticed that many of the words that appear in the dialects of Celtic or Germanic languages, appear not to have had their etymology or grammatical structure explained through the Indo-European grammar that we understand. Like the word *press* in English, from the Latin *pressi*. In the Shetland Islands, *pram* is to 'press' or 'straighten', and *peester* means 'to squeak'. In Finnish, the word to 'squeeze' or 'press' is **pusertaa**. Even in English, the words 'squeeze' and 'squeak' describe a similar kind of thing when looked at in terms of physics and how things are behaving, both of them refer to things being close together and touching. The Finnish, Shetlandic and Latin words might then also share a connection, despite that the sounds might be arranged differently, they may all relate back to the same behaviour in physical motion. So maybe not through direct contact, but in some way the concept or 'idea' of these words may be related.

In the Shetland Islands there are also legends of *Finnmen*, thought by some to have been Inuit who traveled to Shetland across the seas. Some connection between these *Finnmen* and Finland may be possible though, especially considering that Shetland Norn actually shares things in common with northwestern Norwegian at times, a part of Norway abounding in references to Sámi and Finnish people on the coastline, often the term Finn in this case is thought to refer to a Sámi person. Then there is also for example the island of Røst of Lofoten, where another island called Trenyken is associated with a legend about a culture of people, who I believe are very holy and enchanting in this legend. The name Trenyken is also interesting because the word *nyken* is a cognate to the Gaelic word *cnoc* meaning a hill, which is surprising considering that this word *knyk* is very rare and appears to be largely unheard of in North-Germanic languages. The stone age people of these islands also built stone houses, and in later times, they, or their descendants held sea caves as being sacred sites, something which seems very reminiscent of the sea caves of Western Scotland and their setting back in the Mesolithic period. Shetland and Lofoten were certainly in contact during the period of the Vikings and their magnificent runestones, but, were they also in contact earlier than this, thousands of years earlier? There is little to suggest that Finnmen and Finnish are words here that actually describe the Finnish language and Finland specifically, perhaps these sources refer to a culture that was more connected to the Sámi and who may have been in part ancestral to the Sámi. I visited the island of Røst not too long ago, and will do a write up about this in Gaelic, titled *Turas a Lofoten*. This information about Lofoten I learned from a friend there.

## Prehistoric Gaelic-speaking settlement in the Faroe Islands?

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I do not speak Faroese well, I can understand and read parts however, and have noticed some of the differences between Faroese and Icelandic and Norwegian. This is not to say that I am knowledgeable about the subject, but from having done some research, it seems that potential Gaelic names have been known about. The pronunciation of Faroese is distinctly different to that of Icelandic, in some ways it follows Western Norwegian pronunciation more, although, whilst sharing things in common with Western Norwegian dialects, and with Icelandic, Faroese also has its unique sounds, grammar and words. I have found that often, even longer words are often similar looking to the Icelandic versions of these etymologies, but they are pronounced usually very differently in Faroese. Furthermore, some of the shorter words are also different, for example the verb **tosa** in Faroese, meaning 'to speak', **eg dugi ikki at tosa Føroyskt** for example, "I cannot speak Faroese".

I have heard that before the speakers of Old Norse, there may have been Irish speaking monks living in Iceland and on the Faroe Islands. Although there is scant evidence of how or where exactly they may have lived, the Icelandic and Faroese languages, like the Norn language on the Shetland and Orkney Islands, all contain a number of loanwords or words connected to Old Irish and to Goidelic in general. I looked at a map of the Faroe Islands, and looked at the island of **Mykines**. This may be connected to the Old Irish *mucc-inis* – 'pig island', although I strongly believe that both of these words are not exactly from Indo-European, but were part of the first language structure in Goidelic-speaking areas, or what later became Goidelic-speaking, and perhaps elsewhere. This might imply that the pre-Norse language of the Faroe Islands was not exactly *Celtic*, but may instead have been a language that is easily confused with a Celtic language, because it may be deeply connected with the origins and structure of Gaelic. Essentially it could have been the language of Ireland and Scotland, Orkney, Shetland, and the Faroe Islands, from before the language in these areas became exclusively Indo-European. For a better explanation on these concepts, these other articles provide more detail:

.Scottish Gaelic dialects and ancient languages in Scotland – Dualchainntean na Gàidhlig agus cànanan àrsaidh ann an Alba

.From Scottish Gaelic, to Norwegian to Finnish, to ancient language in the North Atlantic

.Shetlandic and North-Caucasian, a connection?

I saw a mountain on Mykines, named **Knúkur**, which reminds me greatly of the Goidelic word *cnoc* – a hill, although in Scottish Gaelic and in Manx, the *cn* is pronounced as though *cr*, hence the word is spelled *cronk* in Manx. I then remembered a mountain I saw off the coast of the Lofoten Islands, named *Trenyken*, with *nyk* being likely a cognate to *cnoc*, although a dialectal Norwegian word based on *nok* for 'an angular thing' or 'hook' is also possible. It may also be possible that these two etymologies are in some sense related. The

Faroese example, **Knúkur** on **Mykines**, looks close to the Goidelic form, and to add further evidence to this, there is evidence of farming before the Norse period, see: *Cereal cultivation in Mykines, Faroe Islands AD 600 [oat, barley, avena, Hordeum]*. [1979] - Johansen J.; *Danmarks Geologiske Undersoegelse, Copenhagen*.

It has been said that the Goidelic elements in Icelandic and in Faroese, linguistically and culturally, come from two things, firstly, the presence of Irish speaking monks who cultivated cereals like barely, and who likely also fished, and secondly, because the Norsemen of this period reputedly took wives from Scotland and Ireland. But, whilst there is some more definite evidence for this, is it likely that the past was like this? I have wondered a third possibility, what if the maternal DNA sometimes, similar to that of Ireland and Scotland, did not come from Ireland and Scotland, but instead comes from a people who were already present in the Faroe Islands, undoubtedly connected through Celtic or pre-Celtic language to Scotland and to Ireland, but, perhaps not because the Norse brought them there. Perhaps they already were there. But evidence of this is yet to be found. Nevertheless, stories about priests, or Papae, and the evidence of this culture, does not necessarily mean that this culture was entirely Christian in origin, especially considering the ancient sacred sites of Shetland, which would likely have had priests and shamans.

Skellig Michael is a famous island off the coast of Southwestern Ireland, not far from the much larger Valentia Island. Skellig Michael is home to an ancient monastery, showing us an earlier idea of Christianity, where monks likely meditated in beehive-shaped huts, on a platform, far above the sea, the seabirds crying above the ocean, at full exposure to the skies and seas. The lack of any Ogham writing found on the island, may suggest that these people were not exactly the same culturally as others in what is now counties Cork and Kerry, this may have been purely in how they practiced religion, but it may have also been a deeper linguistic difference, especially when we consider that the name Skellig, whilst having an unproven etymology in Celtic, is similar to some place-names in the Faroe Islands, according to friends from the Faroe Islands who have mentioned this similarity. Furthermore, early Christianity is quite speculative, and furthermore, we may be talking about a culture, not just an early branch of Christianity, and there is to my knowledge, no strong evidence that women were not also among these people, which could be another reason why Faroese and Icelandic maternal DNA can appear similar to that of Ireland and Scotland.

Much of this is speculative, and as far as I know there is no evidence of earlier, pre-Christian settlement of the Faroe Islands and of Iceland. But that is not to say that such a culture definitely did not exist in the Faroe Islands or Iceland on places like **Mykines**. If these people were connected to the ancient people of Lofoten, then sea caves may have been important to them, but interested researchers would also have to take into account sea level changes. Perhaps looking for sites that would have formed beaches or bays during the past may be a good start. Research would be difficult due to the hazardous sea cliffs, fieldwork could however be concentrated on potential bay areas, and looking at sediment layers beneath the later soil. This is not to say that anything will be found, of course. But in any case, more evidence from around the 6<sup>th</sup> century will most certainly be in the landscape.

## The Finnish language and Finnish spiritual traditions, with comments on spirituality and language

By Linden Alexander Pentecost, published from Finland October 2021, re-uploaded later the same month from the UK my home. The photos and publishing are also by Linden Alexander Pentecost (myself), and I am publishing this on archive.org so that it is available freely to anyone who is interested. Published under the creative commons, attribution, non-commercial and no derivatives license.

Please note, this article can be considered a work of fiction. I believe in God/Allah, and I take indigenous perspectives seriously, but I have no evidence for my thoughts about the philosophy of language, and I urge my readers to read these parts as creative fiction rather than fact.



Photo above: a self portrait to show scale, inspecting a possible megalithic site at Kalkkikallio close to Vantaa in southern Finland. This site contains several caves and unusual rock formations, and although speculative, this is I believe the kind of place that could have been considered enchanting and especially holy in ancient times. The positioning of this rock is also reminiscent of megalithic structures, mysterious structures of unknown meaning. In more recent times the area has been decorated with graffiti. Very close to this



place is a hill containing the word *orm*, which is Swedish for a snake or serpent, the cognate in English is 'worm'. This may be significant because snakes were considered good luck in Finnish mythology, and they probably had a spiritual totemic meaning.

The English-speaking world has plenty of available information about the Norse mythology, that is the spiritual traditions that emanate from and are connected to the Scandinavian or 'North-Germanic' languages, such as Icelandic and Swedish. I feel that English-speakers often make the mistake of grouping Finland and Finnish traditions into these North-Germanic traditions. I have also heard people in England mistakenly say that Finnish is 'Slavic'.

The truth is that the Finnish language, traditions and culture are totally unique and different from those of the Indo-European languages. Finnish is a Uralic language, belonging to an entirely different major language family. And so perhaps accordingly, Finnish spiritual traditions are also unique and different from Germanic and Slavic traditions. We may often think of the Norse spirituality and vikings, with this idea of warriors, and warrior gods, and the fight of good and evil. Finnish spiritual traditions, are, in my opinion, not like this at all. Finnish traditions and 'Gods' are not war-like, there is no conflict or battle where one group of Gods are fighting against another group of Gods. There is conflict and a 'good versus evil' moral to Finnish mythology, but Finnish traditions and spirituality, are, in my opinion, more focused on nature, wisdom and enchantment. In fact Finnish does not have a pantheon of gods, and in many senses the Finnish 'gods' may also be described as being like wizards and witches. They are not controlling humans or telling humans what to do, they are more like wise people, watching over the earth and imparting their knowledge to us through nature itself, through music and through poetry. In fact, I would argue that there is such an inseparable link between these spiritual traditions and the language itself. Perhaps we often think of Gods and spirits as commanding nature through their orders and actions. But in my opinion, Finnish mythology places a particular focus on reality and creation being ordered through 'sound', music and language. One story in the Kalevala talks about Väinämöinen enchanting or singing the young Joukahainen into a bog, where Väinämöinen's words and poetry 'create' a change in reality, as though the words and music are somehow present and meaningful in the trees, stones, water and stars that lie all around us.

This concept is present I think across the entire planet, but Finnish mythology arguably retains this focus upon sound and music as a central theme. Having listened to Finnish folk music, and also Karelian folk music, I can say from personal experience that I have heard nothing like this in any other language. A friend of mine who is a music teacher, described the Finnish language in music, like this:

*"Finnish syllables seem to match the notes of the music in a way that is different to anything I have heard before. It's like the syllables can match the notes perfectly and harmoniously, allowing for huge changes in pitch and depth to be carried across a song".*

This is something quite amazing I think about Finnish and Karelian folk music, is that, there can be a person singing at a relatively low and monotonal pitch, and then suddenly, out of no-where, the entire vibrational resonance of the song is lifted higher and higher and higher, all whilst retaining the deeper vibrational quality. Listening to this type of music feels like enchantment to me, and it feels like the whole of nature around me is dancing and swaying and revolving to these enchanting sounds.

My personal beliefs about God and creation are not important here, but I feel I should mention them out of honesty. I am not really a pagan, I do not follow any 'tradition', and I do acknowledge an idea of a one true God, whether it be called 'God' or 'Allah', although I like Allah because in the Arabic language Allah is a unique word and sound to encompass this idea of a one true God and original creator. However, I also feel that indigenous traditions from throughout the world are not incompatible with the idea of an original, true God, which gave forth all of creation. I may not pray to other Gods, but I certainly feel that they exist, and inside, I feel that they are also a part of God's creation. The other Gods I feel, are like nature, perhaps even a sort of life-force that live in nature, and just as we are part of nature and creation, so are they. We don't have to worship them or give them the power to rule our lives, but we can still respect them and honour them just as we should honour all life on our beautiful earth.



Photo above: sacred petroglyph site located above the Kymijoki River in southern Finland; the site is named **Pakanavuori** 'pagan-mountain'.

Why is the Finnish language significant here?

Language and spirituality are inseparably linked. This is something we may have lost track of in modern society, where language is often visualised as a written thing, just communication, no different from a programming language.

But language is so much more than this. If programming languages are used to maintain the structure of a digital system, then perhaps spoken languages are the 'code' and structural basis to our mind's system. Imagine if, before we were human, we were in the spirit world. A place of total understanding and knowledge, and imagine if, when we became human, this intelligence, geometric structure and vibration, had to re-form, be re-structured, just as our evolution and consciousness have been repeatedly re-structured, so has our relationship to the natural world.

This is a truly vast subject which I alone cannot handle. But if we look into the world's traditions, we find a repeated idea, that the gods, or spirit, provide the basis to language. And language, throughout all the major world religions, is tremendously sacred. Like Arabic in the Quran, Hebrew in the Torah, Vedic Sanskrit in Hinduism, Primitive Irish to the early Gaels of Ireland and Britain, Proto-Norse to the early Germanic-speaking Scandinavians. All of these languages are far more than merely languages, in my opinion. They are geometric structure given by spirit. The Quran is believed by Muslims to be the literal words of God. According to my understanding of Noongar culture and language, language was 'dreamed' in the dreamtime, and is intimately connected to the spirit world and to creation. And of course, language is inseparable from music. And music is inseparable from vibration, geometry, and ultimately then to the very structural elements of matter and of the physical universe. Therefore it goes to say that, by saying the right words and sounds, we can again be in creation, and know the music of the spirit-world.

There is some truth perhaps in the idea, that there is both real, and not-real. This is not to say that our current reality and languages are not real, but rather, a lot of the time, they are not the 'original' real sound, and it is not so much a matter of what is real or not real in language, but of seeing how our current languages and consciousness are a disguised form of the original reality, structure and universe. Everything has a true name. Just as everything has a true purpose. And that includes every person, every living thing, every stone, every droplet of water, every cloud, every star. Each is valuable and loved, each is important. Each has a name or vibration. And perhaps the greatest and most beautiful mystery of language, is that our languages enable us to 'remember' where we come from. This may also have to do with water. Water distorts light and sound. And most life as we understand it, exists because of water. Aboriginal Australian culture talks about rainbow serpents, or a single rainbow serpent, who shapes the physical universe, and creates all life.

If there are 'original sounds', then perhaps, as these sounds and images were passed into water, they were distorted. Like in the story of the Tower of Babel, likely a Mesopotamian Ziggurat, which may have had water flowing from its sides. Water is the prism, like a crystal, distorting the original sounds and dimensions, as they create a kind of revolving, internal system, sometimes unaware of its connection to the original sounds of creation. And perhaps this describes both human language and human experience. We live in our own internal world, isolated, with our specialised languages that have developed from the original sounds, allowing these prisms to take on an infinite number of forms and unique expressions, just as humans, we are infinitely diverse and unique. But perhaps the really beautiful thing here, is that, our prism, our revolving mind, is not really isolated. The sounds we say, and the images we see, are not really just ours. They flow backwards through the waters of life, and they link us to all living things. To the earth, to the stars. And ultimately to God or Allah, or to whichever spiritual form people are connected to. It does not matter, the point is, that our true nature is spiritual. We are not really separate from the cosmos, nor from each other. We are not really alone. And perhaps, in all religions, all spiritual beliefs, the thing that matters most, is the knowledge that we are not really alone. Being alone is the experience of our body, of this temporary existence, but it is not our true nature, it is not who we really are. We are all droplets in the great Ocean, but nevertheless, we are the Ocean. Our existence has never been separate from it. I hope that by writing this, I help to encourage people to see that life is sacred. That all life is sacred, and that our world and universe is sacred. Going back to Noongar tradition again, from my understanding, the Rainbow Serpent created humans last. Why? Because we were the ones appointed to look after creation.

Let me just repeat this. We were appointed as guardians to creation and to life, and that is our responsibility and purpose, whether we like it or not. We can either treat nature as separate from us, and try to conquer her. Or, we can love her as we wish to be loved. We can feel lonely and serve only ourselves, or, we can serve kindness towards the whole of creation. We already know what we are supposed to do. Perhaps one great illusion of spirituality, in my opinion, is enlightenment. This idea that we have to constantly be somewhere else, be something better and more advanced. No, we do not. We already have all the life and beauty of creation flowing within us. This is what we have always been. All we need to do is to remember it. It is that simple. This I believe is the answer. It does not matter how we choose to be kind, or what we choose to be interested in. It only matters that we do what is asked of us by being kind to each other and to creation.

Some have also said that the Christian and Islamic religions are not peaceful. I would argue differently. When I have really come to understand them, I have come to see that the true, undistorted message is one of responsibility. We can either do what we think we want to do, or we can do what we are supposed to do. Human thought is flawed. We imagine sometimes, that being able to have anything we want, is true happiness. But no, I don't think it is. We could have everything in the world, and still not be happy. It is not a matter of

having everything we want. It is a matter of having what God or Allah wants for us. Which ironically, is the thing that we most truly want. How is this relevant to Finnish traditions and language? I think, because, the Finnish language preserves another part of this knowledge, thus far largely unknown to the wider world, and perhaps forgotten largely even in Finland. Perhaps close to the core of this knowledge, is the connection between sound, music and creation. Something, which, in my opinion, is continually expressed in Finnish mythology. Just as it is said that Christ will return, it is also said that Väinämöinen will return with his magical singing voice. Perhaps the return of Väinämöinen represents when we remember how to speak to nature, and remember that nature is always speaking through us. We are the voices and shapes of spirit, we have only forgotten it. Perhaps the return of Väinämöinen represents our remembering. The coming of a new time, when again we will realise that, we, the birds, the fishes, the trees, the wind and the stars, all speak the same language, are all a part of the same music.

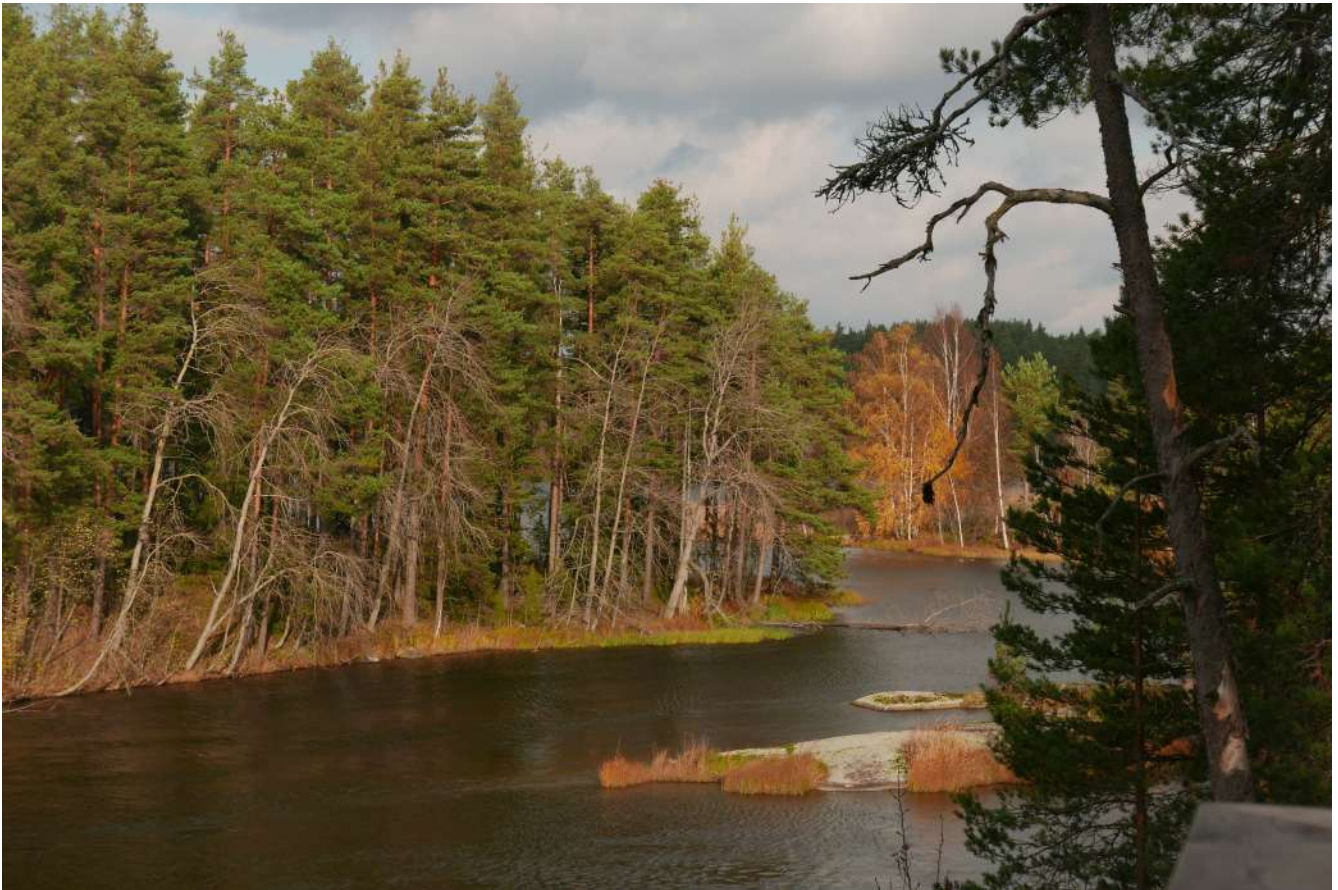


Photo above: the Kymijoki river, close to the ancient paintings

الله أعلم

God knows best. I wish kindness and hope to all who read this, amen.

## Shetlandic and North-Caucasian, a connection?

Written by Linden Alexander Pentecost, November 2021, published online including on archive.org. Published under the creative commons attribution non commercial no derivatives license.

The Shetland dialect is a dialect of the Scots language with a heavy Norn influence. However, could the language on Shetland in the ancient past also account for at least some of the words and features of the Shetlandic language? The history of Shetland as known, is that there was once a Pictish culture here, and then a Norse culture. The Pictish culture is often associated with the evidence of a Brythonic or P-Celtic language, and this may have been so in the case of the languages of the brochs and of Pictish culture centrally. But there seems to be little evidence of a Brythonic language in the Shetlandic language, which would be surprising if the pre-Norse language was a Celtic language.

The Shetlandic language does on the other hand have a large number of unique words, many of which are not found in the Orkney Islands to the south, despite the closeness of these island groups in terms of sharing a Norse culture and the Scots dialects which came here, however, the Orkney and Shetland Norn languages were not actually that alike, and the archaeological record shows that the two island groups have always been distinct culturally.

The Shetlandic words which are not obviously Scots, Norse or Celtic to me, seem to be often words which apply most readily to the land, to nature, to the most ordinary of actions and forms of address. I feel that these words are deeply rooted in the land, and in the mythology and nature of Shetland and its history. And even though the Pictish and Norse parts are important and identifiable parts of Scottish history, these words both apply to large areas of trade and culture, at least in the case of Shetland, I believe that a deeper cultural origin and history lies not in the Norse or Pictish parts of history and language, but in those other parts which we haven't yet studied in detail.

I would like to give the example of some words preserved in Shetlandic that do not, from my point of view, have a realistic or conceivable Indo-European origin, that I know of. These words show only examples of those beginning with f. These words come from the book: *An etymological glossary of the Shetland and Orkney dialect, with some derivations of names of places in Shetland*, by Thomas Edmondston. All of the words below/overleaf are those that are marked S in the dictionary for being from Shetland.

**farr** – a boat, Proto Afro-Asiatic \*bur- 'boat, ship' (shown in Egyptian and East Chadic branches)

**feivl** – snow falling in large flakes; I have no suggestions for the etymology of this word

**feyag** – close warm rain accompanied by wind. The ending -ag may be grammatically significant, perhaps a suffix of some kind, the first element may refer to the action or feeling?

**flann** – a gust of wind, Proto-North Caucasian \*ʎwəɬʔV - wind, to blow, Proto-North Caucasian \*Hʎwǝmā - wind, air

**fün** – fire, Proto North-Caucasian \*=HēwχV(n), perhaps also related to Proto Afro-Asiatic \*paḥm, Burma West Chadic wupm - 'coal'

These possible connections between Shetlandic and the North-Caucasian languages do not indicate I think that the ancient language of Shetland was either Afro-Asiatic or North-Caucasian. More likely it may indicate an unseen pattern of ancient language that connects Afro-Asiatic languages, Indo-European dialects and North-Caucasian languages, this tells us very little still about how such a connection may have existed.

The North-Caucasian and Afro-Asiatic proto language examples above are all from the StarLing database server by S. Starostin, the North-Caucasian etymologies were compiled by Sergei Starostin, and the Afro-Asiatic vocabularies were compiled by Alexander Militarev and Olga Stolbova.

## Orkney Norn - Orknejnynorn/Orknejmálið

Article and photos by Linden Alexander Pentecost, published by Linden Alexander Pentecost December 2020 on archive.org, then re-uploaded with corrections June 2021. Dedicated to all Orcadians and those with a respect and love for Orkney.



Above, the Bay of Skail in October, on the West Orkney Mainland, Orkney Nynorn: *Bu Skåla i oktober, Vestmainlandið, Orknejar.*

Norn was the main language of the Shetland and Orkney islands after the Vikings settled there, originally the people on these islands are thought to have been Picts speaking a P-Celtic language similar to Old Brittonic, there was at least some Old Irish spoken here too, by Christian monks who came from Ireland, and who may also have settled in the Faroe Islands and in Iceland; and in the Faroese and Icelandic languages are some words which derive from the Old Irish language. Some Old Irish words are also present in Orkney Norn. The Norse settled here towards the end of the first millennium AD, apparently occupying all of the islands and establishing their Old Norse language, these Vikings were explorers, and their arrival seems to have completely replaced the Brittonic Pictish and Old Irish languages on Orkney. A relic of these times of discovery can be found at Maeshowe, an elaborate Neolithic chambered cairn, early Viking visitors seem to have sheltered in this cairn, perhaps by breaking into it, although the roof was probably already damaged and open. They left their mark in runic writings on the walls, these particular runes use a slightly different version of the Younger Futhark alphabet, although I doubt that the Norsemen had been in Orkney long enough for it to have developed there. Certainly these rune forms are similar to some across the sea in Norway, which is where the settlers originally came from. This language was also the

same language to that spoken in Norway, The Faroe Islands and Icelandic, the Old West Norse language, slightly distinct from Old East Norse, which was spoken in Denmark and in Sweden. The West Norse on the Shetland and Orkney Islands, and in Caithness, would eventually develop into a distinct group of Norse dialects that came to be known as Norn, the Shetland dialects of Norn were the best recorded, and survived until the 19<sup>th</sup> century on the island of Foula off the west of Shetland.

The language in Orkney disappeared perhaps a century earlier, and is less-well documented, the neighbouring dialect of Caithness on the mainland seems to have been much the same as that of Orkney, but it is barely recorded. Although the modern Caithness dialect does contain a lot of words from Norn, as do the modern Orkney and Shetland dialects.

Nynorn is the modern, reconstructed language, named similarly to the Norwegian *Nynorsk* 'new Norwegian', thus *Nynorn* means 'new' Norn, Modern Norn. I am not the original creator of the Nynorn idea, but have worked with the creators on reconstructing the Orkney dialect of Nynorn, this was not possible without the help of the project's original creators, Andrei Melnikov and Dagfinn S. Højgaard.

*Hvað heitirðu/heitir þú?* - Icelandic  
*Hvussu eitur tú?* - Faroese  
*Hvat heitir tu?* - Greenlandic Nynorrøn  
*Hvat heder du?* - East Shetland Nynorn  
*Vat heter tu/þu?* - Orkney Nynorn  
*Kva heiter du?* - Norwegian Nynorsk  
*Vad heter du?* - Swedish  
*Hvad hedder du?* - Danish

English "what are you called?"

*fjord* – fjord, *dag* - day, *hus* – house, *sten* – stone, *vatn* – water, *kirka* – church, *våg* – bay, *veg* – road, *land* – land, *mainland* – mainland, *ljus/ljos* – light, *ej* – island, *nes* – headland, *stroum* – tidal flow, stream, *båt* – boat, *skip* – ship, *loch* – a lake, *skug* – forest, *strond* – beach, *norð* – north, *oust* – east

*sup* – south, *vest* – west, *vind* – wind, *sul* – sun, *sand* – sand, *mann* – a person, *hou* – hill, mound  
*fell* – mountain, *hund* – dog, *fisk* – fish, *våg* – bay,

Preposition words:

*til* – to, *frå* – from, *yver* – over, *i* – in, *viþ* – with, by, *under* – under, *å* - on

Adjectives:

*svart* – black, *vit* – white, *rouþ* – red, *stur* – big, *lang* – long, *blå* – blue, *orainsj* – orange

The Orkney Nynorn alphabet I have used

*a, b, ch, d, ð, e, f, g, h, hj, i, j, k, l, m, n, o, p, r, s, t, u, v, þ, ø, å*

ch is as in 'loch', e.g. *chimerige* – sky, heaven

hj may be the same sound as j, or a guttural ch as in 'loch'

ð – is a silent letter and included for etymological purposes

j – as in German or Swedish

r- rolled as in some registers of Scots

sj – as in 'ship'



v possibly /w/ in some places

þ – like the 'th' in 'this', in the Lord's prayer register it occurs initially, so when initial pronounced as in 'thing', but elsewhere as in 'this'

â, o – as in 'note'

ø – like the 'i' in 'bird'

i and y are pronounced the same [i], [i:]

*vat heter tu?* - what are you called?

*eg hete...* - I am called

*eg keme frå Orknejon, Katenesi, Supurlandi* – I come from the Orkney Islands, Caithness, Sutherland

*eg ir ur Orknejon* – I am from the Orkney Islands

*vat ir titt namn?* - what is your name?

*mitt namn ir...* - my name is...

*varleðes hever tu tað?* - how are you?

*eg heve tað gott takk, og vat við ter?* - I am well thanks, and what about with you?

*hever tu bát?* - do you have a boat?

*eg heve bát* – I have a boat

*vi hava bát* – we have a boat

Visible in the last example is how verbs conjugated for the plural in the present tense, often end with -a. Verb conjugation in Orkney Nynorn shows a difference between singular and plural forms, whereas in Modern standard Danish, Swedish and Norwegian, verbs are conjugated the same for all persons. Originally, like in other Indo-European languages, verbs in Old Norse were conjugated for all persons, most of the forms are in Modern Icelandic. In Icelandic

*ég er* – I am, *þú er* – thou art, you are singular, *hann er* – he is, *hún er* – she is, *við erum* – we are  
*þið eruð* – you are, plural, *þeir/þær/þau eru* – they are

Whereas in Norwegian (Nynorsk) *eg er, du er, han er, ho er, det er, me er, dokker/De er, dei er*

And in Orkney Norn:

*eg ir*

*tu ir*

*hann ir*

*hún ir*

*tað ir*

*vi ira*

*ira* is also used for 'you plural' and 'they' in Orkney Nynorn, but I don't feel confident to reconstruct or say what 'you plural' and 'they' are in Orkney Norn.

Following are some place-names.

*Skottland* – Scotland

*Brettland* – Wales and Cumbric Western England

*England* - England

*Sturbrittanin* – Great Britain

*Irland* – Ireland

*Island* – Iceland

*Superland* – Sutherland

*Katenes* – Caithness

*Þursá* – Thurso  
*Vik* – Wick  
*Loch Vatn* – Loch Watten  
*Hjetland* – Shetland  
*Lervik* – Lerwick  
*Orknejar* – Orkney Islands  
*Sub Ronaldsej* – South Ronaldsay  
*Norð Ronaldsej* – North Ronaldsay  
*Kirkevåg* – Kirkwall  
*Stroumej* – Stroma  
*Stroumnes* – Stromness  
*Stennes* – Stenness  
*Vesturej* – Westray  
*Sandey* – Sanday

Further reading:

Nynorn project original website: <https://nornlanguage.x10.mx/index.php?nynorn>

Norn language on omniglot; website by Simon Ager: <https://omniglot.com/writing/norn.htm>

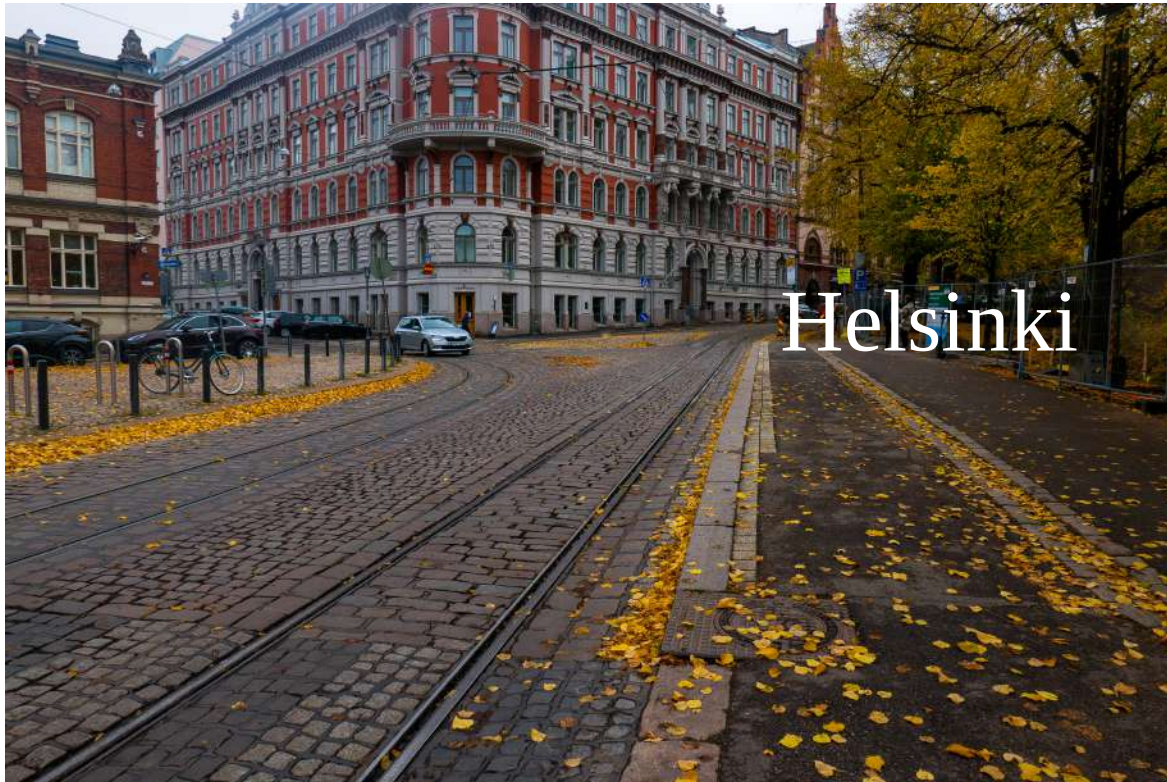
The Little Prince is also available in Nynorn, translated by Andrei Melnikov and Dagfinn S. Højgaard

These words are according to current reconstructions and I do not claim that they represent the original Orkney Norn language, they are I hope as accurate as possible to the aim of creating Nynorn, though. Note that my own reconstruction of Nynorn may differ from that used by the project's original creators. The photo below shows the Brough of Birsay, a small island off the west mainland, connected to the mainland at low tide. The old buildings in the photo show a settlement, originally used by the Picts, but then later by the Norse. The photo was taken on a windy October day back in 2008.



## A short discussion on languages in and around Helsinki

By Linden Alexander Pentecost, photo taken by Linden Alexander Pentecost and publishing by Linden Alexander Pentecost on archive.org October 2021, published under the creative commons, attribution, non-commercial and no derivatives license.



Picture above: autumn in Helsinki - *syksy Helsingissä - höst i Helsingfors*

The Helsinki region of Finland is known for having both Finnish and Swedish speakers. I do not understand much of the history of the Swedish language in Finland, but I had a conversation today with a woman in Helsinki, who told me that she rarely hears Swedish spoken. However, I have myself heard some people speaking Swedish recently, of course I have no idea whether or not they live in Helsinki. But what I have noticed is that the Helsinki way of speaking Swedish is quite unfamiliar to my ears, which are tuned to a Kiruna/Norrländ Swedish accent. Because Swedish and Finnish are such different languages, the prosodic systems of the languages are not at all alike, but, when hearing Finland Swedish spoken, I can hear sometimes that the Finnish prosodic structure is being used as the basis for the Swedish prosodic structure, which means that Swedish here sounds totally different to Swedish in Sweden, even if I can understand many of the words,

it is when the words are spoken in succession where the Finnish prosodic influence becomes very apparent.

To say that Helsinki Swedish is really different to Kiruna Swedish is maybe not true, it is the prosody and sounds in general which to me, make it less comprehensible at this moment. But the actual language is almost identical when looking at the grammar, parts of speech and lexicon. This is not the case for some of the older Nordic dialects in Finland, such as the Närpes dialect, which, although referred to as Swedish perhaps because of the Nordic connections to Sweden from Finland, may be a separate language to Swedish. Sadly I do not speak any of this dialect and only heard about it yesterday.

Today I also discussed a dialect of Finnish, the Rauma dialect. This is spoken in the west of Finland, and the woman who I spoke to can read this dialect. I have read and learned a little about it before, what I didn't realise is that it is quite uncommon to actually hear the Old Rauma dialect today. This dialect is defined by a unique localised vocabulary as well as initial consonant clusters, not normally found in Finnish. Helsinki also has its own dialect, there is the 'old' Helsinki dialect, which is again different from the way young people speak Finnish in Helsinki today. This person also told me that Finnish dialects are slowly leveling and that nowadays it is harder to guess where somebody is from from their dialect, in the past it was easier. Recently I have also met with speakers of Karelian, Russian and Lithuanian. Many of the people I have spoken to have grandparents who speak Karelian, and despite being said to be close to Finnish, from what I have been told, Karelian is often not mutually intelligible with Finnish. When we discussed other Finnic languages like Estonian, I was told that, many things are very similar in Estonian, but the range of meanings is different; also the way that people show politeness in Estonian is very different to how it is said in Finnish.

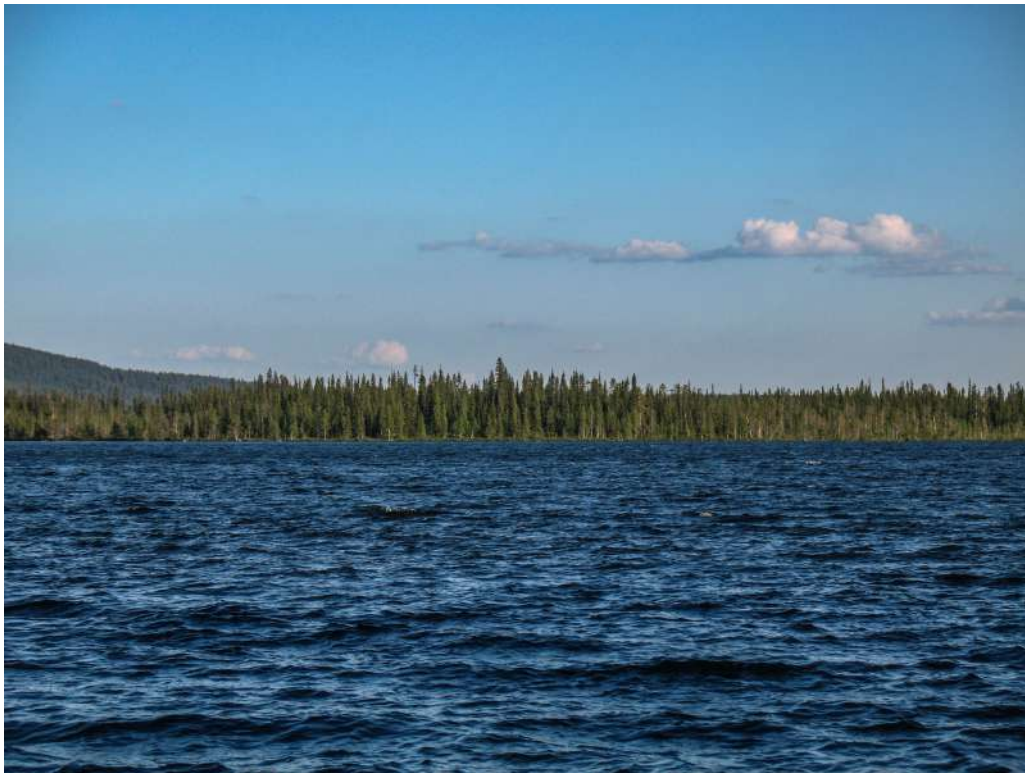
The connection between Baltic Indo-European languages and Finno-Baltic languages is very interesting, and there are cognates, like the Lithuanian word for a forest, **miškas**

compare Finnish **metsä**. I have met a fair few Russian speakers in Helsinki and in Finland in general, and in a sense the Russian language and Finnish have grown beside each other and have shared some connections from the beginning, for example, I was told that Finnic languages would have influenced the early development of the Russian language. And then also, other Finno-Baltic languages and Uralic languages in general can share phonetic similarities to Slavic languages and specifically to Russian. For example, Karelian is not related to Russian, but in some respects there are similar phonemes shared in the two languages which are not found in Finnish or Estonian. I discussed with another friend today about how Finnish is quite different from the other Finno-Baltic languages in its phonology and syllabic structure, he told me that it was more conservative than the others. And this is an interesting thing about Finnish, is that in some ways I think, it is almost identical to how Proto-Uralic may have been. Of course there are differences, and Finnish has for example changed or lost certain consonants that were in Proto-Uralic.

All information in this article came from personal observed experience and from conversations with people, who I am grateful to. Thank you, **paljon kiitoksia kaikille**.

## An Introduction to Finno-Baltic languages

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June 2021



Above: a familiar landscape across the lands where the Finno-Baltic languages are spoken, in this case, a lake in Northern Finland, not far from the border with Sweden, on the other side of which many speak Meänkieli. Landscapes such as this, also help to show the environment that was the home and world to the speakers of the first Finno-Baltic languages, much of the inherited Uralic vocabulary is about that relationship to the forest and to nature as a whole; these words are the building blocks that build the modern Finno-Baltic languages, where that closeness with the natural world continues to be spoken, just as the unspoilt nature continues.

It was only very recently, during lockdown in December 2020, when I decided to open my curiosity to Uralic languages, such as Estonian and Finnish, and others. Namely, those few Uralic languages which I have been in contact with in some way, except for Estonian because I have not been to Estonia before. I have been to Finland and to Northern Sweden before, but I only spoke in Swedish, the only Continental North-Germanic language which I have tried to learn so far. I knew only these five words in Finnish: *järvi* ‘lake’, *joki* ‘river’, *hissi* ‘lift’, *elämä* ‘life’ and *maa* ‘land’. When I travelled to Northern Sweden I also saw the words *järvi* and *joki*, thinking that they were Finnish, and knowing that they weren’t the Northern Sámi words, the indigenous language across much of Sápmi. I knew that they were not Northern Sámi words, because in Northern Sámi, ‘lake’ and ‘river’ are *jávri* and *johka*, which were, incidentally, the only words I knew in Northern Sámi, until about two weeks ago. I discovered that the words *järvi* and *joki* in Northern Sweden were from the Meänkieli language, a language closely related to Finnish. The only other word I knew in Northern Sámi, was the word *Sápmi*, which is the Northern Sámi name for the traditional lands of the Sámi, as recognised now. Originally, Sámi languages were spoken much further south as well.

The similarity between the Northern Sámi and Finnish words, demonstrates the close Uralic-heritage that these languages share, even though they are from different branches of the Uralic family. Whereas most languages spoken across Europe, belong to the Indo-European language family, the Uralic languages are a totally different family of languages, with their own unique origin and cultures. Most Uralic languages are spoken east of Finland, they include for example the Samoyedic languages and Ugric languages, of which Hungarian is possibly a member in Europe. The other Uralic languages outside of Russia include members of the Finno-Baltic and Sámi branches. The Finno-Baltic language includes Finnish and Estonian, as well as several other, closely-related Finno-Baltic languages, inland from the Gulf of Finland, including Ingrian, Karelian, Ludic and Veps. ‘Estonian’ also includes the South Estonian dialects, such as the Võro language and Seto language. ‘Finnish’ dialects in the wider sense, also includes the Meänkieli and Kven languages, the former being spoken in Northern Sweden, and the latter in Northern Norway. These are separate languages from Finnish, but in their heritage form a part of the Finnish *peräpohjola* dialects in the North of Finland. Finland has other important dialect groups, such as the eastern Savo dialects, and smaller dialects such as the southwestern Rauma dialect, *Raumangiäl*, a dialect that allows initial consonant clusters, *minä* ‘I’ and *sinä* ‘you singular’ become sometimes *mnää* and *snää*. These southwestern dialects may sometimes preserve the [θ] pronunciation, more common in older Finnish, so Modern Finnish *metsä* forest, would be *meþþä*, also writeable as *meθθä*. In Standard Finnish, the letters *b*, *d*, *f*, *g* are in some loanwords, but they are often not pronounced as the sounds they represent. The *g* only natively occurs in Standard Finnish after consonant gradation from *nk* to *ng*, *ng* is pronounced [ŋŋ], whereas *nk* is [ŋk]. The letter *d* in Finnish only natively occurs after consonant gradation of *t*, or where *d* exists in the full, original word-stem, but not in the nominative. An example is *vesi* – water, which is *veden* in the genitive. This also applies to more complex words that are formed of original word-stems, like *teollisuus* ‘industry’, *teollisuuden* ‘of the industry’. This is down to that there was originally a *d* but it became *s* in the nominative form of the stem. The *t* becomes *d* in consonant gradation, for example *löytää* ‘to find’, but *mä löydän* ‘I find’. Finnish has vowel harmony, so that the vowels *a*, *o*, *u* cannot occur in the same word as *ä*, *ö*, *y*. At least this is the case in the original grammar of the language, it applies to original root-stems and early words formed from them, and to any suffixes attached onto them. But in the modern language, new words have been formed that often incorporate words in a way that doesn’t match the traditional vowel-harmony. An example of how this is visible in root-stems and their suffixes, includes the nouns *kauppa* ‘shop’, and *metsä* ‘forest’. These words contain harmonised vowels from original stems, so do suffixes or ‘cases’, such as locative cases. ‘In the shop’ and ‘from the shop’ and ‘towards the shop’ make *kauppa* become *kaupassa*, *kaupasta* and *kaupaan*. Whereas ‘in the forest’, ‘from the forest’ and ‘towards the forest’ are *metsässä*, *metsästä* and *metsään*. The same process can be seen in verbs, such as when adding the suffix *-ko* which is interrogative. Such as *kirjoitan* – I write, *kirjoitanko?* Do I write? Whereas *ymmärrämme* – we understand, *ymmärrämmekö?* Do we understand? Double consonants, such as in *kauppa* are pronounced as two consonants, carried onto the syllables created by the vowels on either side. So *kauppa* sounds like *kaup-pa*. Below are some phrases in standard colloquial Finnish, *puhekieli*.

*mitä kuuluu?* - how are you?

*hyvää kiitos, entä sinulle?* - good thank you, and with you?

*mikä sun nimi on?* - what is your name? (in *kirjakieli*, ‘your (sing.) name’ is *sinun nimesi*)

*mun nimi on...* - my name is... (in *kirjakieli*, ‘my name’ is *minun nimeni*)

*puhutko suomea?* - do you speak Finnish?

*puhun vähän suomea* – I speak some Finnish

*mä rakastan sinua* – I love you (in *kirjakieli*, ‘I’ is *minä* instead of *mä*)

*hyvää päivää* – good day

The Estonian language is called *Eesti Keel*. Although close to, and somewhat mutually intelligible with Finnish, Estonian is different on a number of levels. Firstly, Standard Estonian, which is based

on the North Estonian dialects, does not have vowel-harmony, unlike Finnish. For example, the Estonian word *küsimus* ‘question’, shows the lack of vowel harmony as *ü* and *u* appear in the same word, the Estonian vowel *ü* is the same as the vowel *y* in Finnish. In Finnish the word ‘question’ is *kysymys* however, showing harmony with all three vowels. Finnish contains many Swedish loanwords, where Estonian has a higher number of loanwords from older German. Estonian words may not end with a vowel, where they would in Finnish, such as Estonian *keel* ‘language’, Finnish *kieli*. Many of the double vowels in Finnish become the same vowel in Estonian, as in Finnish *kieli* ‘language’, Estonian *keel*, Finnish *mies* ‘man’, Estonian *mees*, Finnish *Suomi* ‘Finland’, Estonian *Soome*. Many of the ‘n’s in Finnish are not in Estonian, Finnish *suomalainen* ‘Finnish’, Estonian *soomlane*.

The lower Finnish numbers are as follows:

<i>yksi</i> – one	<i>yksitoista</i> – eleven	<i>kaksikymmentäyksi</i> – twenty one
<i>kaksi</i> – two	<i>kaksitoista</i> – twelve	<i>kaksikymmentäkaksi</i> – twenty two
<i>kolme</i> – three	<i>kolmetoista</i> – thirteen	<i>kaksikymmentäkolme</i> – twenty three
<i>neljä</i> – four	<i>neljätoista</i> – fourteen	<i>kaksikymmentäneljä</i> – twenty four
<i>viisi</i> – five	<i>viisitoista</i> – fifteen	<i>kaksikymmentäviisi</i> – twenty five
<i>kuusi</i> – six	<i>kuusitoista</i> – sixteen	<i>kaksikymmentäkuusi</i> – twenty six
<i>seitsemän</i> – seven	<i>seitsemäntoista</i> – seventeen	etc
<i>kahdeksan</i> – eight	<i>kahdeksantoista</i> – eighteen	
<i>yhdeksän</i> – nine	<i>yhdeksäntoista</i> – nineteen	
<i>kymmenen</i> – ten	<i>kaksikymmentä</i> – twenty	

The first few numbers in Meänkieli are below to show comparison.

<i>yks</i> – one	<i>ykstoista</i> - eleven
<i>kaks</i> – two	<i>kakstoista</i> - twelve
<i>kolme</i> – three	<i>kolmetoista</i> - thirteen
<i>neljä</i> – four	<i>neljätoista</i> - fourteen
<i>viis</i> – five	<i>viistoista</i> - fifteen
<i>kuus</i> – six	<i>kuustoista</i> - sixteen
<i>seitsemän</i> – seven	<i>seitsemäntoista</i> - seventeen
<i>kaheksan</i> – eight	<i>kaheksantoista</i> - eighteen
<i>yheksän</i> – nine	<i>yheksäntoista</i> - nineteen
<i>kymmenen</i> – ten	<i>kakskymmentä</i> – twenty

And in Standard North Estonian below

<i>üks</i> – one	<i>üksteist</i> – eleven	<i>kakskümmend üks</i> – twenty one
<i>kaks</i> – two	<i>kaksteist</i> – twelve	<i>kakskümmend kaks</i> – twenty two
<i>kolm</i> – three	<i>kolmteist</i> – thirteen	<i>kakskümmend kolm</i> – twenty three
<i>neli</i> – four	<i>neliteist</i> – fourteen	<i>kakskümmend neli</i> – twenty four
<i>viis</i> – five	<i>viisteist</i> – fifteen	<i>kakskümmend viis</i> – twenty five
<i>kuus</i> – six	<i>kuusteist</i> – sixteen	<i>kakskümmend kuus</i> – twenty six
<i>seitse</i> – seven	<i>seitseteist</i> – seventeen	<i>kakskümmend seitse</i> – twenty seven
<i>kaheksa</i> – eight	<i>kaheksateist</i> – eighteen	<i>kakskümmend kaheksa</i> – twenty eight
<i>üheksa</i> – nine	<i>üheksateist</i> – nineteen	<i>kakskümmend üheksa</i> – twenty nine
<i>kümme</i> – ten	<i>kakskümmend</i> – twenty	<i>kolmkümmend</i> – thirty

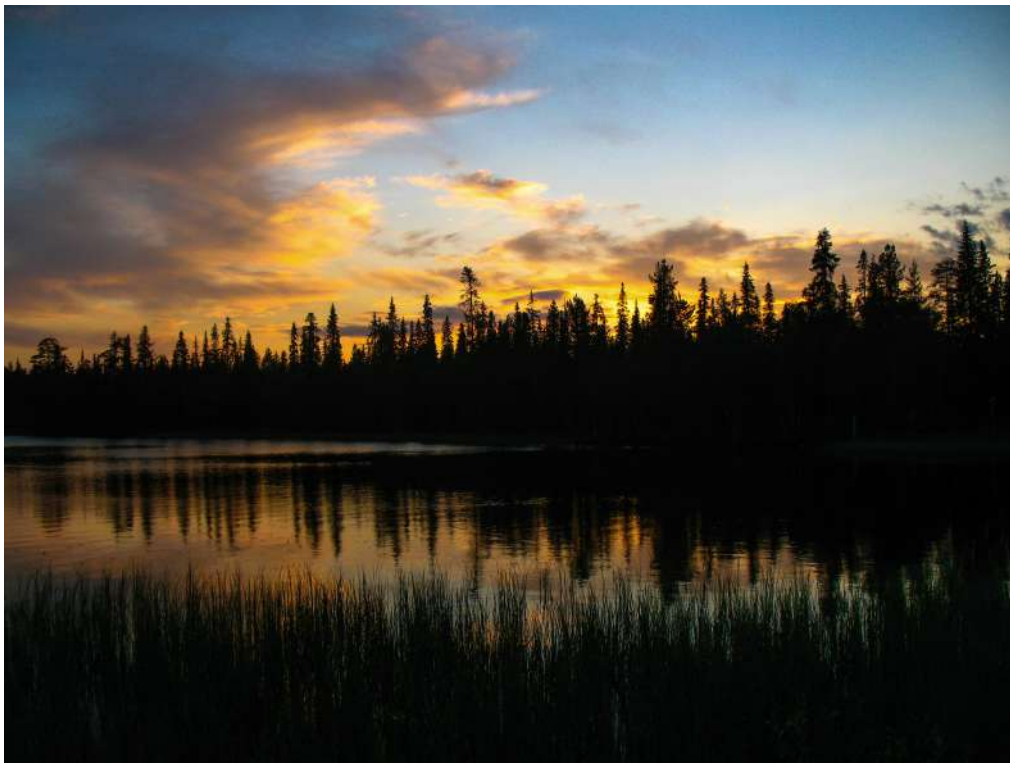
And in the Võro language below, a kind of South Estonian

<i>üts</i> – one	<i>ütstõist</i> – eleven
<i>kats</i> – two	<i>katstõist</i> - twelve
<i>kolm</i> – three	<i>kolmtõist</i> - thirteen
<i>neli</i> – four	<i>nelitõist</i> - fourteen
<i>viis</i> – five	<i>viistõist</i> - fifteen
<i>kuus</i> – six	<i>kuustõist</i> - sixteen
<i>säidse</i> – seven	<i>säidsetõist</i> - seventeen
<i>katõssa</i> – eight	<i>katõssatõist</i> - eighteen
<i>ütessä</i> – nine	<i>ütessätõist</i> - nineteen
<i>kümme</i> – ten	<i>katskümme</i> – twenty

And in the Veps language, a Finno-Baltic language spoken inland and to the east of the Gulf of Finland

<i>üks'</i> - one
<i>kaks'</i> - two
<i>koume</i> – three
<i>nel'l'</i> - four
<i>viž</i> – five
<i>kuz'</i> - six
<i>seičeme</i> – seven
<i>kahesa</i> – eight
<i>ühesa</i> – nine
<i>kümne</i> – ten

The Veps language above is native to a large area, and was the last Finnic language to be widely known about in linguistics, making it all the more fascinating to me. The Ludic language, *Lüüdikiel'* is a sort-of transitional language between Veps and Karelian, and distinctive in its own way. Karelian and Veps are traditionally spoken over large areas, and both languages have many dialects.





Above, a small lake near Kuusamo in Northern Finland, under the midnight sun at around 00:30 hours, typical of the type of lake and landscape visible across the Finno-Baltic speaking world.

<i>mäki</i> – hill or mountain	<i>metsä</i> – forest	- Basic Finnish Vocabulary
<i>kivi</i> – stone	<i>puu</i> - tree	
<i>jää</i> – ice	<i>talvi</i> - winter	
<i>vesi</i> – water	<i>kevät</i> - spring	
<i>järvi</i> – lake	<i>kesä</i> - summer	
<i>joki</i> – river	<i>syksy</i> – autumn	
<i>sade</i> – rain, precipitation	<i>kylmä</i> - cold	
<i>aurinko</i> – sun	<i>lämmin</i> – warm	
<i>tähti</i> – star	<i>maa</i> - earth	
<i>valo</i> – light	<i>juuri</i> - root	
<i>kuu</i> – moon	<i>lähde</i> – water spring	
<i>taivas</i> – sky	<i>hiekkä</i> - sand	
<i>maailmankaikkeus</i> – cosmos	<i>rauta</i> – iron	

The word *maailmankaikkeus* is a relatively modern Finnish word, coined by. It comes from the words *maailma* – ‘world’, which is in the genitive here, and *kaikkeus* ‘entirety, all-ness, everything’, related to *kaikki* ‘all’, thus ‘everything, wholeness? or entirety of the world’. The word *maailma* is an interesting word, which comes from *maa* ‘land, earth’ and *ilma* ‘air, sky’. The word *aurinko* came into *kirjakieli* Finnish, it was historically found in western dialects. The general Finnish word before *kirjakieli* was *päivä*. In standard Finnish, this means ‘day’, but the meaning of ‘sun’ is also understood. We can look at the Võro word *päiv* for ‘sun’; this word is of the same Proto-Finnic origin. The same word occurs in Northern Sámi as *beaivi* ‘sun or day’, some theorize this word was a common sun deity, who also encompassed the behaviour of sunlight and of the day.

One of the differences between standard Finnish and Meänkieli is that the *ts* in Standard Finnish is *tt* in Meänkieli. Such as *mettä* for *metsä*, *Ruotti* ‘Sweden’ for standard Finnish *Ruotsi*. The *d* is often missing, thus *meän* ‘our’, standard Finnish *meidän*, and *kaheksan* for standard Finnish *kahdeksan*. The pronouns may be combined with the following verb in some cases, such as *molen, solet, son, molema* ‘I am, you singular are, she/it/he is, we are’, which are Meänkieli equivalents to Standard Finnish *minä olen, sinä olet, se on* and *me olemme*. The pronouns in Meänkieli are also different: *mie, sie, hään, se, met, tet, het, net*, standard Finnish *minä, sinä, hän, se, me, te, he, ne*. Some Meänkieli dialects have adopted Sámi vocabulary, especially in place-names, such as *vaara* ‘mountain’, from Northern Sámi *várri* ‘mountain’, this is an ancient Uralic word, and it also seems to exist in Finnish as *vuori* ‘mountain’, I think probably the same etymology. Some of the place-names around Kiruna preserve this name element, the *Luossavaara* and *Kierunavaara* mountains, now sadly damaged by 19<sup>th</sup> century mining. These unique mountains have Meänkieli names, but the names themselves are originally Northern Sámi names. The dialect of Meänkieli near Kiruna is also different from the Meänkieli dialects closer to Finland.

Having different pronouns in Finnish dialects is common too, some areas have *miä* and *siä* for *minä, sinä*, perhaps most common it is to say *mä* and *sä*. The word *hän* ‘she, he’ is normally replaced by *se* ‘she, he, it’ in the spoken language. The colloquial Finnish language can vary quite a lot from *kirjakieli*, the written language as-spoken. In the written language, prepositions are usually used with the genitive, such as *talon lähellä* ‘near the house’, but in spoken Finnish it can be common to turn these into prepositions. The old dialect of Helsinki in one such dialect with pronounced vocabulary differences, like *arska* instead of *aurinko* for ‘sun’.

**The material in this paper was that which I have learned recently, or sometimes things provided to me by friends who are speakers of these languages, checked this work, and who I asked questions and learned from. The Veps numbers came from Wikipedia. I hope that this article provides an interesting if short introduction to some of the Finno-Baltic languages, and I also dedicate this to all speakers of these languages. Thank you. Paljon kiitoksia kaikille.**

## A basic description of five languages: Scottish Gaelic, Manx, Norwegian, Finnish and Nuxalk

*Written by Linden Alexander Pentecost, also published on archive.org by Linden Alexander Pentecost, October 2021, published from Finland originally, then re-uploaded from UK. This publication may be shared freely provided that it is not used to give a false impression about indigenous people; and also that I am accredited and that no changes are made. This may not be used commercially, except by members of the Nuxalk nation or of Nuxalk heritage, to whom I give special permission to use and share this article as they see fit. This is a brief, information-intensive introduction to five languages which I have a particular interest in. I hope it proves interesting for my readers.*

### Scottish Gaelic:

Scottish Gaelic is a Goidelic, Celtic language, and the indigenous language to most of mainland Scotland and to all of the Western Isles. The other Celtic languages in Scotland, were, respectively, Galloway Gaelic, Cumbric and Pictish, all of which share a relationship to what we today call Scottish Gaelic, the Goidelic language that has particular features that make it unique to the Scottish landscape, traditions and culture in on the islands and in the Highlands. Scottish Gaelic has typically a VSO word order, placing the verb first, something that is common in Celtic languages, certain Afro-Asiatic languages, and certain Salishan languages. For example **rinn mi móran obair** – I did a lot of work, **rinn** – did/made, **mi** – I, **móran** – a lot, **obair** – work. Or, for example, **théid mi a dh'Alba** – I will go to Scotland, **théid** – will go, **mi** – I, **a dh'Alba** – to Scotland. Or, **chan eil mi nam chadal** – I am not sleeping, **chan eil** – is not, are not, **mi** – I, **nam** – in my, **chadal** – sleeping, from **cadal** – sleeping. The form **eil** is perhaps related to similar words in Afro-Asiatic and Uralic languages meaning 'to be', and it does seem possible in my opinion that Scottish Gaelic shares some relationship to Uralic, Afro-Asiatic and Salishan, perhaps dating from a time before the language developed into its present form. Scottish Gaelic is placed within and inseparable from the ancient Caledonian forests, mountains, the islands and the seas of Western Scotland, and, no two languages can give the same meaning or description of a place, in my opinion. I also believe that languages are in a sense, cultural and metaphysical dna, connecting us to the land, the way it has shaped us, taught us, and the way we have lived there. The wisdom of the ancestors and of God's presence in nature, is in my view, spoken and lived through the language; with each language presenting us with a different part of the ancestral wisdom, not only flowing through our words as people, but further back than this, flowing through us from the land itself. I will talk more about this subject when I get onto the topic of the Nuxalk language.

### Manx:

Manx is another Goidelic language, close to Scottish Gaelic, but fundamentally different at its base phonology and prosody. The spelling is also markedly different, being closer to the spelling of English and Welsh. I believe that this is because the sounds and structure of Manx phonology does not share a common system with Old Irish, unlike Scottish Gaelic and Modern Irish, which both have a spelling that is based upon Classical Irish/Classical Gaelic, and ultimately upon Old Irish spelling. Manx shares phonology with the developments in the other modern Goidelic languages, but there is arguably no sound correspondence system that Manx shares with Old Irish, like Scottish Gaelic and Irish do. In fact, it may be that Manx Gaelic is connected through Celtic roots to Primitive Irish, present on the Isle of Man, without there being any direct

connection to Old Irish. This may also have to do with religion, as the standard systems of Old Irish and Classical Irish are both culturally specific to a particular kind of sacred language connected to both Gaelic Christianity and the bardic traditions, in my opinion. The Isle of Man shares spiritual traditions with the Goidelic languages, but less so with the bardic, Old Celtic and Christian Gaelic traditions that can be said to connect Old Irish, Irish and Scottish Gaelic. Manx also has developed its own lenition system that is different from the 'common' lenition system in Old Irish, Irish and Scottish Gaelic; even though this common lenition system is pronounced very differently across Irish and Scottish Gaelic dialects, and in Old Irish, there is consistency. For example, 'good' in Irish is written *maith*, and *math* in Scottish Gaelic. In Old Irish, the final -th was pronounced as a dental fricative, even though this is not the case in modern Irish and Scottish Gaelic, there is a correspondence in that the final consonant is still audible as [h] in some dialects of Irish and Scottish Gaelic. Manx is different however and seems to be outside of this system, as there is no [h] and the word is written **mie**. So it seems perhaps that, apart from early Celtic root words and connections, the other things shared with Manx and the other Goidelic languages are in a sense those linguistic and mythological aspects that exist outside of the typical Indo-European and Celtic scope of language formulation, philosophy, poetry and spirituality, note for instance that the Isle of Man has its name connected to the God Manannan Mac Lir, who is also mentioned in Scottish and Irish tradition, but this name and the God may be 'outside' of Indo-European and Celtic, only appearing in Indo-European through the Goidelic languages. Here is a random sentence in Manx, **ta mee ayns y thie nish agh nee'm goll magh jiu** – I am in the house now but I will go out today, **ta** – is, are, **mee** – I, **ayns** – in, **y thie** – the house, **nish** – now, **agh** – but, **nee'm** – I will do, from **nee** – will do, **goll** – go, going, **magh** – out, **jiu** – today.

Norwegian:

Norwegian is a language and also a common range of dialectal features shared between the Norse dialects within Norway, which can also vary rather a lot. Norwegian has between two and three genders depending on the register, the traditional language has masculine, feminine and neuter genders, the Bokmål written register may instead have a common gender and a neuter gender. There are many dialects in Norway, some of which are very distinct, for me personally I find that the Jæren/Jærsk dialect is particularly distinctive. Other dialects I have read about are the Sognefjord, Nordfjord, Trøndelag, Helgeland and Lofoten dialects, all of which display a wide range of both similarities and different features, owing to the way in which Norwegian people and communities have interacted via the sea and through the landscape over the past thousands of years. The precise age of the Indo-European dialects in Norway is unknown, but a friend and I have postulated that at least the basis of dialectal vocabulary may be very old, and may be 'para-Indo-European' rather than Indo-European as we currently understand it. This includes personal and interrogative pronouns. For example, the word for 'I' is **eg** in Nordfjord, **æ** in Narvik, and, interestingly, often **æg** in Jærsk, a dialect which in some respects shares things in common with Northern Norway. Having said that, these variations can be extremely local, so even though Narvik in Nordland has **æ**, the dialects of Lofoten opposite Narvik commonly have **e** rather than **æ**. Here is a short example sentence showing dialectal variation between standard written Bokmål and the Narvik dialect.

**Jeg vet ikke hvor mange fisker bor i elva** – Bokmål

**Æ vet'ke kor mange fesker bor i ælva** – Narvik dialect

'I do not know how many fish live in the river'

Finnish:

Finnish is to me a beautiful and fascinating language, and quite unlike any other language I have ever studied. I even find that Finnish is different and more archaic than other Finno-Baltic and Uralic languages in a lot of respects, having also studied a little Estonian, Võro, Karelian, Mari, Erzya and Northern Sámi. Although I do not mean in any sense that these languages are not deeply indigenous and ancient, I believe that they are, I am only saying that in terms of the Proto-Uralic structure, Finnish preserves this differently. Finnish is a highly agglutative language, making it possible to form new words from smaller words whilst still not confusing the meaning. An example of the agglutative nature of Finnish can be seen in my sample sentence here: **Tiedätkö missä kirjakauppa on?** - do you (singular) know where the bookshop is? From **tiedät** – you know (you singular, one person), **missä** – where (in-where, using a locative suffix), **kirjakauppa** – bookshop, from **kirja** – book, **kauppa** – shop, **on** – is.

Finnish also has a great deal of dialectal variation, as well as much difference between the general spoken language and the written language. In terms of dialects for example, the word for 'I' is **minä** in the written form, but commonly **mä** in the spoken language, where other dialects have **miä** for instance. The Rauma dialect in Western Finland has **mnää**, and some dialects elsewhere in Western Finland have **mää**.

Nuxalk:

Before writing about this indigenous language, I would like to give my respects to the Nuxalk people, to their land, and to their ancestors and spirits. I acknowledge that the Nuxalk are the rightful caretakers and owners of their language, and I mean in no way to claim that Nuxalk is my language. I am merely an enthusiast who has come to love their nation, language, culture and land.

Nuxalk is in its own branch of the Salish language family, a family of languages that is often considered a part of the Northwest Pacific Sprachbund, which includes several families of languages which often share similarities in phonology, grammar and to some extent vocabulary. I feel that Nuxalk is a beautiful and fascinating language, carrying the spirit and music of the land and the Nuxalk ancestors within it. I am not Nuxalk and it is not my right I feel to talk about Nuxalk culture and traditions, I write this only to share and expression my passion and interest in the language, in the hope that it will bring others joy and encourage a respect and care for the land, for the ancestors of the land and for the indigenous people of the world.

One feature of Nuxalk which makes it quite distinctive, is the lack of vowels, although vowels are common in Nuxalk, from my understanding they are not always primerly elements to a word, which at its basis is often a group of consonants. In this sense Nuxalk reminds me a little of some Afro-Asiatic languages, where the base meaning of a word consists of two or three consonants. Nuxalk and Salishan languages do not function in the same way as Afro-Asiatic languages, but there are some similarities, perhaps, I say speculatively, because of our common heritage as human beings. I do not, at all believe, that any elements in Nuxalk are from elsewhere, this is not what Nuxalk people have told me, and in any case I cannot comment on the history of the language. I have however been told by Nuxalk people, that their language and culture has been present in their land for a very very long time, and I trust this with all my heart.

I personally believe that any connections between Salishan languages, and for example, Afro-Asiatic and Celtic languages, are not due to direct connections in human history, but rather, they may instead have to do with how the cosmos has spoken, and given similar sounds and forms across nature, which different peoples have then learned. The northwest Pacific landscape does in many ways share things in common with the ancient woodlands and coastal landscapes of Scotland, Ireland and Scandinavia, and I wonder if, our ancestors in the cosmos, speak through nature and its different forms, thereby meaning that our languages may sometimes share things in common, not due to human interaction, but due to how the divine cosmos has expressed sound and vibration through nature in similar ways. Some examples of 'spirit cognates' between Nuxalk and other languages, in my speculative opinion, may include the word **smt** or **smnt** for 'mountain', similar to Scottish Gaelic *monadh* and the Basque word *mendi*. Although I do not speak Basque, this example was given to me by a friend from Mexico who speaks Basque. Another example is the Nuxalk word **sulut** which describes an inlet of the sea, a little like the word 'salt' in English, and *sàl* in Scottish Gaelic, which describes an area of salt water, also a little like the Arabic word سَيْل - *sayl* - 'flood', connected to a root meaning 'to flow'.

Nuxalk makes extensive use of reduplication in order to indicate that an action or thing appears or is repeated more than once. Reduplication combined with certain sounds can indicate a more specific meaning.. Reduplication is a fascinating process, and I wonder if reduplication is related to how our brain and consciousness recognises rhythm. This leads back to the subject of how I wonder, if language in a sense comes from the divine patterns and sounds of nature, that pre-date our human existence. But this is pure speculation of course. But, I do believe that everything, every mountain, every movement in nature, has a natural sound, a name, a song. And perhaps the reason why some Nuxalk words look familiar to me, is because the Nuxalk ancestors, and the Gaelic ancestors, both heard similar names and sounds in nature. Or rather perhaps, speculatively, the ancestors spoke the same sounds to them through nature.

Another word in Nuxalk which I really like, is **swlwlaax**, 'wave or ocean', which reminds me of the word 'swell' in English. Could this be another ancient word that was given by the ancestors and creators of life, present in the cosmos? Again, this is pure speculation, and I do not in any way mean to contradict what indigenous people say about their own culture and language, so please do not take my words as truth, I urge my readers instead to always listen to indigenous people and to what they say about their history and languages.

Another word which I really like, is the word **wlwlaalhi**, which as I understand refers to the action of raining. It looks similar to **swlwlaax** in my opinion, and this **s** in Nuxalk seems to have a meaning that may perhaps differentiate the two concepts. Very interestingly, looking at English and other Indo-European languages, one can see that [s] can sometimes also imply a sort of motion, for example, the English words 'well', as in 'water welling up from underground', and 'swell', where the presence of the [s] differentiates the meaning in how the water is behaving.

This is the end of my article. I hope that it is interesting and in some way helpful. May your ancestors bless you and guide you. I would like to give a special thanks to the Nuxalk people who have helped me to learn and practice their language, and for the friendships I have developed. May you be blessed.

# Explorations of God, language and spirituality, book one – expanded and third edition (second ebook edition)

By Linden Alexander Pentecost, from England. This book was published originally with changes as an ebook in the UK on January 16<sup>th</sup> 2022.

Published again on my [www.bookofdunbarra.co.uk](http://www.bookofdunbarra.co.uk) website in the UK, as a second ebook edition on June the 15<sup>th</sup>, 2022.

This book contains the following sections:

- .Jamaica
- .Celtic Cumbria
- .Gaelic Christianity
- .To the Outer Hebrides, Mannin and Kernow
- .The Story of Arthur and the cave
- .Nouns
- .Meaning within Scottish Gaelic words
- .Nouns in other languages
- .Sanskrit
- .The Trollstein, near Ballangen in Northern Norway
- .New ideas about the Langdale Axe industry

Note: the latter three articles are after the 'original publication release' section, which also has some editions and changes.



The photo above: a self portrait on a timer taken within a passage temple close to Malmö in Southern Sweden. These places are rather similar to the *hunebedden* in the Netherlands, and many similar monuments can be found in Denmark and down the North Sea Coast. They are also similar in design to places in Ireland such as the temples at Dowth, Knowth and Newgrange. Although these sites are generally referred to as 'passage graves', I don't personally think that this describes their true purpose. I feel instead that they are temples and shrines to ancestors and to gods.



**explorations of god.  
language and spirituality.  
book one**

**by linden alexander pentecost**

Cloud glitters over the autumn sky, aflame with the power of the sun.

I am just some guy from Britain, I have absolutely no idea where my ancestors are from, but, I guess Britain and perhaps a few other places. Although I do not know my own culture, I have found so much inspiration and wonder through learning, often just a little about other cultures



and languages. I hope to share this enthusiasm with the hope that more people are encouraged to find a connection to spirituality and nature with cultures and languages.



This is the first in a short series of books, consisting of articles, poems and words, about travel, language and finding God. I attach the idea of 'God' to no one people or language, I feel that, whatever it is, it is an encompassing force, present in all creation, all cultures and all people. This is a book about the relationship between God and language from my experience in various places I have visited. Book one places a particular focus on what I have learned from and through Celtic languages, but this book also relates to other languages to a lesser extent.

# Explorations of God, language and spirituality, book one (original publication release)

By Linden Alexander Pentecost, written and self-published in October 2021 from England, UK as a paperback, republished with small changes in January 2022 from England, UK as an ebook. I am also a resident of and was born in the UK.

Some of these posts were originally on my, now deleted blogs, Iwerjon and Voicesofthunder on wordpress. In addition to writing the body of the text and taking the cover photo and author photo, I also wrote the poems and language examples throughout this wee book. This book is written for my family, friends and for all others who it finds well.

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.Nouns

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The photos above is a self portrait from a timer, which shows myself, the author, exploring the Hunebed d27 in the Netherlands. This was a beautiful and magical summer morning some years ago, and the light beautifully illustrated the dimensions of the stones and the emerald light from the canopy above. Although no-body really understands the purpose or meaning of these sites, for myself they are a part of the spiritual landscape, and are also living places that I think we should respect.

## Introduction

This book is about no specific thing, other than sharing my love of language and perhaps drawing this in a sacred light. I found that my interest in languages was far from being simply a technical interest; more than that, they help me to understand and connect with the world around me, and in doing so help me to understand myself and others better. I feel that language is sacred and given by God somehow, or Allah, or however you interpret the divine creation around us. Although I often describe this force as 'God', I mean in no way to imply that me calling it such makes me more right or correct than others, rather this is just how I speak to it. In other languages and cultural settings I may speak to it differently. I also consider myself a Hindu, and I have practiced with people from other religions, including Islam, druidism; when I travel, I hold a respect for the local deities in my heart.

I have great respect for the traditions of indigenous peoples throughout the world, I also believe their deities to be real, and that their closeness to harmony can teach us again how to be in balance with our world. My writing is personal experience, mainly with influences from Christianity, Hinduism and druidism, or rather 'Welsh Neopaganism'. Some of what I have written here in relation to personal experience, and what I have wondered, is not to be taken as truth, take it as fiction if you like, because I honestly don't think that we can know the answers to some things, not accurately. I am much more certain about the accuracy of the languages however, but when it comes to my philosophical thoughts about language, all I can say is that there is the phrase in Arabic, الله أعلم, often translated as 'God knows best'.

I know that my thoughts and imagination are only a mirror of the creator's truth, so they can be seen as nothing more than an imaginery mirror. The only thing I truly know, is that a divine force and will for kindness exists in creation, and that sometimes perhaps it opens my imagination, even though I am always unable to know what is true. This applies even to how we generally classify languages, much of the time I think there simply isn't enough proof that a connection between things can be used to imagine the source or origin. الله أعلم

## Jamaica

Maybe in some kind of timeless, eternal sense, I listened to Abba when my dad took me to Jamaica, unaware that in seven years time my heart and feet would take me to Northern Europe in summer, to Sweden. The two places are so far from each other, but, the feeling of magic in nature and language, that I felt with Swedish, I also felt in Jamaica. Like in the Canary Islands, I had no knowledge really of the culture and history of Jamaica. I knew a little about Jamaican music and food, and it felt natural and relaxing to me. But I knew nothing about what God, religion and the world is in the diverse Jamaican culture. Nor did I know anything of the older indigenous people on these islands. I knew though that the people are nice. There is a kindness and desire to help and look after, humbleness and connection to the natural world, the lush forests, the ocean, beaches, and the clear rivers. And of course, the language I feel must reflect this reality and perception in the way that only it can. The language in Jamaica may be classed as some by English, as a variant of English, or a speech that is historically and currently connected to English. It can also be said that the language in Jamaica is sometimes much more distant from English, and that Jamaican Patois is a language in its own right, with varying degrees of connectedness and relatedness to English throughout history. I personally think that the latter is much more true, and I like seeing Patois written and spoken, it's beautiful. But I am not Jamaican and I don't think I have a right to describe their language, and I don't understand enough about it to be able to say anything really. But as with the essence of the music and culture, for me I can say that the the language feels intimately connected to the world, and the way that this land appeared and felt to me. There was an element of the first indigenous people, which I could feel. And an element of the sky, birds and music, which somehow reminded me of Abba and the forests of Sweden, and perhaps knowing somewhere, inside, that I would be going there. I remember the music of the Rio Grande in Jamaica, flowing like liquid crystal and roaring in the warm sun, the green trees glowing emerald and alive with the sound of birds. The Rio Grande flows down, a braided river meandering like a snake among the gentle grey pebbles, sometimes deeper, sometimes with deep pools, where men can stand on their bamboo rafts, over the deep, bright-turquoise, life-filled waters.

The valley brings up feelings which remind me of the song Shenandoah, there is a particular version of this song by Van Morrison and The Chieftains which comes to mind. Perhaps because of this version of the song, the song Shenandoah also reminds me of Ireland, of Killarney National Park, where the forests, rivers and mountains are also flowing with green tree light and the sounds of birds. What this song is about for me, is following the river home, the river takes us out into the cosmos, but ultimately takes us home too, which is love.

## Celtic Cumbria

I created a Brythonic name for a mountain: **Er Monidh Aiarn**, 'The Iron Mountain', I don't think there's anything too wrong with re-empowering a sacred mountain, using the Brythonic tongue. The mountain in question is Stickle Pike in Dunnerdale, England, and the Northern Brythonic language was that Celtic language close to Welsh, once spoken in places like Cumbria in England, and in Southern Scotland. I guess **Er Monidh Aiarn/Haiarn** could be called a poetic name. Stickle Pike is a small, pointy-shaped mountain in the Dunnerdale Fells, between The Lickle Valley and The Duddon Valley, in Western Cumbria.

The area is abounding in Celtic names, that could be interpreted as either Brythonic or Goidelic, often as both. Some of the words remaining around the Duddon Valley, with my Brythonic interpretation, include:

**brock** – badger, as in 'Brockbarrow Crag'

**pen** – a head, of which there are two named in the Duddon Valley area

**hesk** – sedge, as in ‘Hesk Fell’

**cumb** – a round hollow or valley, as in the mountain Black Combe

**dýfoc** – abounding in darkness, blackness, as in Devokewater, a nearby lake

Some of the names are definitely Brythonic, or P-Celtic, **pen** is the same in Welsh, but **cenn** in Old Irish, also **hesk** is ‘hesg’ in Welsh, but **seisc** in Old Irish. This is usually a reliable way to tell Goidelic and Brythonic apart, Goidelic languages kept the initial s. The same applies to the word **pen**, this is why the languages are sometimes divided into P-Celtic and Q-Celtic, the word **pen** is cognate to the Gaulish **pennon**, but outside of Celtic, the word appears absent in Indo-European languages. Because Gaulish and Brythonic are both P-Celtic, they use the form of this word with ‘p’. Whereas Irish as **ceann** and Manx has **kione**, from the Primitive/Ogham Irish **\*qenn-**, giving Old Irish **cenn**. (The Primitive Irish **q** here represents [k<sup>w</sup>]).

To make matters more confusing, Scottish Gaelic, Manx and Irish have the word **beinn** for ‘mountain’, and some think that this is a borrowing from the Brythonic word **\*penn-**. But, Cumbria has the word **benn** as well, which seems to have a different meaning to the Goidelic meaning. So in a way, Cumbria shows where the Goidelic and Brythonic languages almost seem to conjoin, at least with certain words. This again helps to show the close, and sometimes confusing relationship, between P-Celtic and Q-Celtic in Cumbria. And to add further to this mystery, the word may not even be of Indo-European origin anyway, so there could be much more to the history of this name.

Some of these names can also be interpreted as Goidelic, instead of **dýfoc** we could say **dúbhach**. Instead of **brock**, we could spell this word in Goidelic as **brocc**. There is sometimes very little difference between the Old Irish and ancient Brythonic pronunciations.

Not far from Dunnerdale, are the 'Kinmont' names. These names likely come from, or at least, were later spoken by Goidelic speakers. We can connect this name to an older Goidelic **Cenn Monaid**.

In terms of identifying the original culture of these Celtic speakers, we might look to archaeology, and even to some of the archaeological sites lying about Dunnerdale, The Duddon Valley, and the surrounding mountains and crags.

There is at least some connection between the Celtic languages, and the Bronze Age Atlantic cultures. These people may, or may not have spoken Celtic, but it is obvious that the Atlantic Bronze Age in some way provided the basis to the later Celtic Iron Age. So it's not unreasonable to look at the Bronze Age Cumbrian sites, as being ancestrally Celtic. Even if they didn't speak Celtic languages, they are certainly connected to the basis of Celtic culture in Western Britain. In Cumbria it is often hard to say whether a word is Brythonic, Goidelic, or both or neither. There is a Celtic element, but how it came about, and how exactly these people called themselves, is another matter entirely.

Furthermore, the sites in the Duddon Valley area have a western orientation, on the Irish Sea, close to the Isle of Man, Galloway in Scotland, and to Ireland, and to the once-Goidelic parts of Wales. The Atlantic Bronze Age in this part of Cumbria, and the subsequent Celtic speakers, may represent a founding Celtic culture, which would likely have had just as close links to Ireland and the Isle of Man, if not more so, than to Wales and mainland Britain.

Nevertheless, when the Celtic heritage of Cumbria has been discussed, it has been general practice to put the data into a Brythonic model. This model helps us to recreate, and re-live that culture, even by recreating the language to some degree. I think that writing in Cumbric, or using ancient, reconstructed Brythonic, helps to keep that connection alive, and to re-immense ourselves within it, creatively, giving it new life.

But in truth, the connection to Ireland, and to the wider, Ibero-Atlantic Celtic culture, was perhaps just as important, especially when referring to the



earliest appearance of Celtic language and culture in Western Britain. It is perhaps no coincidence, that the Isle of Man, has inscriptions written in so called Primitive Irish, Ogham language. I have wondered if Ogham Celtic/Primitive Irish is a continuation of that original Atlantic Celtic culture in Ireland and Britain. Despite Ogham Celtic being Q-Celtic, like modern Goidelic, we still find Ogham in Brythonic-speaking areas with a Western, Irish Sea orientation. There is even one example in central England, again, implying an ancestral importance in Ogham Celtic; and with Ogham Celtic perhaps providing a link between Brythonic-Celtic areas, and the wider, ancestral Atlantic-Celtic cultures. This might even be suggestive that Ogham Celtic/Primitive Irish, has been in Britain as long as Brythonic has.

So, who were these ancestral Celtic speakers? Likely they weren't purely 'Celtic', since no such thing exists. They were likely made up of a continuation of earlier tribes and peoples, who, undergoing social and cultural change, became the people we identify as Celts, due to their more recent re-connections in language and cultural formation.

The Bronze Age was a time of change, when the old, cultural and spiritual lines of heritage, became re-formed around new ideas and connections. One such change, was the abandonment of certain sacred sites from the Neolithic. In many cases, these sites were continued by people, and in some cases, megalithic architecture continued as a part of Bronze Age culture, albeit on a smaller scale.

## Gaelic Christianity

Tá an ghrian ag éirí  
 Tá solas na gréine i mo chroidhe  
 Tá Dia nam anam  
 Tá beatha is draoidheacht ann  
 Amen

The above poem I wrote in Donegal Ulster Irish. I was a Christian when I was younger, I then became more interested in paganism, before going back to an interest in Christianity again, whilst also coming to understand God differently. There are many Christians who find deep meaning and compassion through their religion.

As I was growing up and went to churches, I occasionally felt some kind of presence, something special and magical. I grew up mainly focused on the sciences, so my brain didn't understand how a God could really exist; although neither did I disregard it, I kind of assumed that God was there. Despite being very science-orientated, I had always felt a love and magic for particular places, songs and landscapes. And along with my mum, this was probably my main connection to the divine as a child: nature. Landscapes, mountains, lakes, the wind as it blows waves on water. All of these things had spirit and magic to me, although I could not explain it at the time, nor did I know that it was 'spiritual'.

Then when I was fifteen, I went to the Isle of Arran, off the coast of southwest Scotland. Arran or *Eilean Arainn* in Gaelic, is a wild and beautiful island; it is full of landscapes, colour, mountains of different shapes and figures. Small wooded glens where streams play soothing music, machair with long grasses, blowing in the wind, where ancient stones stand. These ancient stones were erected in the Neolithic, at Machrie Moor on Arran. When I visited the island, I still only saw spirituality through the perspective of the one God.

But I realised that, where I was having problems with my own Christian religion, as Christianity as a whole; when I went to the Isle of Arran, I was able to relate to Christianity, and to God, through the Gaelic culture and landscape. I will get more onto this topic of 'Gaelic Christianity' a little later.

What it was, was that when I was in those landscapes on Arran, and I felt them, and I felt how perfect the world is, I realised that it would be incredibly unfair if there wasn't *something*, especially as my instincts and intuition were telling me that that *something*, is indeed there.

I looked more to Christianity, trying to understand the different, sometimes wild theories about how the world could be only 5,000 years old. I would watch Christian videos online, taking on wisdom, feeling myself become closer to understanding whatever it was, and yet this did not feel like 'my religion'. It felt too formal, too detached, and it did not give me the answers that I wanted.

It wasn't until some time later, when I came to look at Gaelic traditions on fairies, that my belief in the supernatural and the divine went beyond doubt. I began to look at God, not through the perspective of what we see today, but to look at God as the ancient Irish Christians did.

A lot of the *Christian* elements in Irish spirituality probably pre-date Christianity, including the symbol of the cross, which is also found in 5,000 year old Neolithic monuments, for example.

But continuing on, the early Irish Christians would live in isolated places, on islands on lakes, or islands looking over the seas, living in beehive shaped buildings, where they most likely meditated upon God, listening and taking in the form of God through the wild, immensity of the nature around them.

This was an idea of God that I could relate to. It was not doctrine and specifics, it was individual, between myself and the whole cosmos, between myself and God.

When I have looked into Early Gaelic Christianity, I have wondered if the Christian and pagan elements can both be encompassed together. Even though Christianity as a whole is said to be a monotheistic religion, I personally believe that the early Irish Christians did not discount other forms of the divine, as it manifested through the intricately complex cycles of nature and creation that exist around us. This is perhaps the essence of the 'old traditions' and how they interact with the idea of a one God; for me, it is possible for there to be one God, and also an infinite number of other Gods or divine forms that are in their totality and individually, divine creator. I do completely respect all indigenous beliefs on this; I accept for example that many indigenous cultures do not have a single creator deity. But in my opinion this is not entirely what God represents, my idea of 'God' in this

sense is very compatible with indigenous beliefs, because 'God' to me, is the underlying 'love' in the cosmos, and this concept of good, kindness and love, is transferable across all beliefs and religions. That is what I think the essence of God is, love, kindness, something that exists above and beyond the behaviour and patterning of the cosmos as a whole; whilst also underlying it. This is at least what I believe.

I feel that the divine has an infinite number of forms and expressions, ancestors, deities, connected to the sky, and to the trees, the waters and seas. Another thing I imagine is that they are associated with the behaviour of the cosmos as a whole, and its intricacy, from the spiralling of galaxies to the growing roots from a tree.

## To the Outer Hebrides, Mannin and Kernow

Ten years ago I was in a house with family members, looking out of the window at the green fields and the sea. This might conjure an image of fields that is not what I am describing however; this view was in the Hebridean Islands of Scotland. The fields may be partially wild, wet with rain, ferns growing, rockiness, and crags. The sea is a colour that is perhaps indescribable, a vivid shining turquoise, a darker blue-green of no description. The sky too changes, and the wind blows, the clouds shine pink in sunrise, rolling over mountains from the sea. The skies are sometimes huge, allowing one's eyes to look into the distance, where the sea and sky seem to meet.

These islands are very special to me and to my family. Although I do not know where my ancestors are from, Northeast England, Wales somewhat, somewhere near Stockport, who knows. These islands are very special to me all the same. All places are, but this one, I feel I know somewhat. There are multiple layers of what we might term spiritual tradition on the islands. There are ancient sites, stone circles and houses that date to thousands of years ago. And then there is the later Christian religion, which, I feel can be anchored and together with those earlier traditions. Fundamentally, I feel

that something central to Gaelic Christianity and to the earlier peoples, was that the divine was visible in the nature around us. In the way it felt. And that is perhaps especially prominent in these islands. The mountains, feel alive to me. That can be interpreted in a pre-Christian sense, that the mountains are like ancient wizards of stone, watching over nature and the world. And it can also exist in a Gaelic Christian sense, I feel. In that all these marvels of nature are manifestation of a divine God or presence, the spirit who created the cosmos.

I have wondered if language is somehow quite connected to this two. The spirituality of the Western Isles, for me, always leads back to the language, and within the language, there are clues as to how the cosmos, spirits and the divine, have been referred to natively on these islands. The music of Gaelic Christianity is something unique in itself, the description, style, poetry, and sounds of the music, seem to transport me to a different perception of the world, and somehow, the divine becomes more visible through the wildness of nature. Gaelic does describe the world differently to English. For two languages that are spoken next to each other, Scottish Gaelic and English are fundamentally very, very different. Both are Indo-European languages, but English belongs to the Germanic branch of Indo-European, Scottish Gaelic belongs to the Celtic branch. Within Celtic there are two main families known now, Brythonic and Goidelic. Scottish Gaelic is a Goidelic language, like Irish and Manx.

Similarly to Russian, Irish and Scottish Gaelic have a sort of system of soft or hard consonants and vowels, where soft sounds are palatalised. For example, the l in **leam** is soft, and the l in **latha** is hard, or broad. Scottish Gaelic, like other Celtic languages, have consonant mutation. Initially and internally, for example, **muir** – sea, **anns a' mhuir** – in the sea. Changes in whether consonants or vowels are broad or slender, indicate the plural and genitive forms of nouns **each** – horse, **eich** – horses, **cat** – cat, **cait** – cats.

Word order in Scottish Gaelic is different to English, the verb generally comes first, the pronoun or noun follows. Such as, **chuala mi** – I heard, **chuala u** – you singular heard, **chuala sinn** – we heard, **chuala an duine** – the man heard, etc.

Another thing about Scottish Gaelic are the conjugated prepositions, which are focused very much on location and where an action is located. For

example, saying 'I have a cat' is **tha cat agam** literally 'there is a cat at-me, **agam** – at-me, **agad** – at-you singular, **aige** – at-him, **aice** – at-her, **againn** – at-us, **agaibh** – at-you plural, **aca** – at-them.

Manx Gaelic on the Isle of Man, Mannin, uses similar lenition processes to the Irish and Scottish Gaelic languages, although with Manx having a very different written form, the mutations are naturally written differently.

Furthermore, the lenition processes in Manx are arguably somewhat separate from the common Goidelic lenition system, because we can talk about secondary lenition in Manx, for example, where [s] becomes medially [ð], even though it is not written. Some Manx nouns are: **kayt** – cat, **baatey** – boat, **thie** – house. After the word for 'my', which in Manx is **my**, these words mutate: **my chayt** – my cat, **my vaatey** – my boat, **my hie** – my house

**ta baatey er y traie** – there is a boat on the beach

**ta my vaatey er y traie** – my boat is on the beach

**ta'n thie ayns Mannin** – the house is in The Isle of Man

**cha nel my hie ayns Mannin** – my house is not in the Isle of Man

Back to The Outer Hebrides again, I will recount this. When I looked across at the ocean, I saw that it was eternally beautiful. Wild, but somehow our source, like the rains of the sky, the tears of God perhaps. I remember when it rained outside, I read some things in different languages. I read from a book, *Gaelic words and expressions of South Uist and Eriskay, Collected by Fr.Allan MacDonald of Eriskay, edited by J.L.Campbell*, which a friend had leant me. Sat in a cozy room, with a cross hanging on the door, reading connections to God and spirit in the culture and traditions that are carried in the language and its dialects. I planned to find more out about Icelandic culture too, and, Gaelic Christianity may have been somehow present in early Iceland, and most definitely did at some point interact with Icelandic culture. This Norse culture was also connected to these islands, through the *Norrøn* language on these Western Isles, visible in many place-names like Sanday, from the *Norrøn Sandej* 'sand island'. I read too a little about Irish, Manx, Swedish, *Bondska*, *Trøndersk* and *Meänkieli*, which I shall get on to some other time.

Below are some examples of basic sentences in Scottish Gaelic

tha mi á Glaschu – I am from Glasgow

tha mi – I am

tha – am, is, are, there is, there are,

mi – I

á – from, out of

Glaschu – Glasgow

có ás a tha thu? – where are you from? (singular)

có ás – where from?

a – linking particle, that

tha thu – you are (singular)

thu – you

tha an leabhar agam – I have the book

tha – am, is, are, there is, there are

an leabhar – the book

an – definite article, the

leabhar – book

agam – at-me, a form of **aig** 'at'

bheil iasg agad? – do you (singular) have a fish?

bheil – replaces **tha** when asking questions

iasg – fish, a fish

agad – at-you (singular), a form of **aig** 'at'

tha mi a' seinn – I am singing

tha mi – I am

a' – translates similarly to the ending -ing on verbs in English

seinn – singing, sing

Slightly later on that year, myself, my grandfather, my dad, and my grandad's friend, went down to Cornwall for a week of exploring mining history, engines and other historical things. I remember it was raining and November in Truro. We went into a museum and saw an Egyptian display, and I remember feeling like I wanted to cry for some reason. Maybe because I fundamentally felt that this person did not want to be out on display like this. It was dark and raining outside, blustery but atmospheric and enchanting.

I found yet another book on the Cornish language, called *Bora Brav* by Polin Prys. From my own experience, travel, and visiting different expressions of nature and culture, have given me a greater feeling of connection to the world as a whole. And this often seems to coincide with feelings of the spiritual and heavenly. Cornwall's ancient past is full of mystery, and was not well recorded. But like Scotland, Wales and Western England, Gaelic Christianity was connected to Cornwall, as attested by Ogham inscriptions.

The island of Lundy further into the Bristol Channel may be another example of a place early Celtic Christianity was important. Like Parts of Scotland, Ireland, Wales and the Isle of Man, the coastline of Cornwall is alive with enchantment, lush nature and the wildness of the seas and the skies. For thousands of years people have built sacred monuments here, and in Celtic Christian times, stone churches of dramatic location were built among the granite, bracken and heather. Cornish belongs to the Brythonic branch of Celtic, rather than the Goidelic branch, as Scottish Gaelic does. But it shares with Scottish Gaelic many of the unique features that make it a Celtic language, some of them found widely across Europe and elsewhere, others are more specific to Celtic and other language families, like



conjugated prepositions for example. Cornish is known as **Kernowek**, or **An Yeth Kernowek** 'The Cornish Language'. Cornwall is known as **Kernow**.

We visited other places, including Chysauster, which takes its name from the Cornish word **chi** – 'house'. This place reminded me of the west of Ireland, and Southwest Scotland. And the atmosphere here was very special. The ancient stone houses, roofless, are nestled among bracken, heather and grass, upon a hillside where there was mist. Very few people were at Chysauster on that November day, but my relatives, a friend, and myself, and the haunting wind and mists from the sea. Another thing I remember from this particular trip was having a pint and playing pool with my grandad, and basically, I was absolutely dreadful. I mean, I wasn't just a bit off, I mean I was completely not good at all, which most amused my grandad. Now, here are some poems I wrote in Scottish Gaelic, with their English translation

You are magical and wild  
 Big waves coming from the depths  
 Mountains are rising  
 From the sea  
 Stormy but quiet  
 Ancestors standing on stars  
 The light of God from the west

Tha u draoidheil is fiadhaich  
 Tonntan móra 'tighinn ás an doimhneachd  
 Tha beanntan ag éirigh  
 Ás a' mhuir  
 Stoirmeil ach ciùin  
 Sinnsearan a' seasamh air rionnagan  
 Solas Dhé bhon iar

Rinn Dia bàrdachd nam beann  
 Rinn Dia na h-òrain shìorraidh  
 Rinn Dia fuaimnean nan aibhnichean  
 Rinn Dia seallaidhean na gréine  
 Rinn Dia sgeulachdan na mara

God did the poetry of the mountains  
 God made the eternal songs  
 God made the sounds of the rivers  
 God made the views of the sun  
 God made the stories of the sea

## The story of Arthur and the Cave

Across many parts of Wales and Cornwall, and what was Brythonic England, there are legends and stories that connect places to the name of Arthur.

This name translates to 'bear man', and it does make me wonder about these stories of Arthur about certain places, and the presence of bears in ancient Wales and elsewhere. Legends from several places, talk about a cave in which King Arthur sleeps. And that one day he will be awoken again, when the world needs him. I have wondered if this story is related to the bear as a sacred, ancient animal. I have wondered this, when I have looked across the mountains of North Wales, and seen the pink sun set golden on the light grey ancient, volcanic rocks, with green and mist in the valleys around, boulders and lakes and lush green trees.

The legends of King Arthur have surely been told in new forms and new ways, obscuring what the original meaning of the stories might mean. But it can be said that the presence of Arthurian legends and local place names might certainly imply a sacred connection between these sites and the original meaning and story of the Arthurian Brythonic tales. Perhaps we have to look even further back, before this history become 'Brythonic, Breton, Cornish and Welsh' as we know them. The Welsh word *arth*, 'bear' would be connected to a Common or Proto-Brittonic *\*artos*.

I have wondered if this word also shares a connection with the Basque word, *hartz*. It is known that the Basque language is very ancient, and may connect to times and memory that we have largely forgotten elsewhere in Europe. It is interesting for instance, that long ago, before the last Ice Age, people in Europe acknowledged bears as extremely sacred animals. I believe that the cave paintings of this time are also in some way connected

to this, and to the concept of going into darkness, like the winter, to then return from the womb of the earth. The bear is dangerous, but, bears also have great love. And perhaps this story is connected to that place in our hearts where we can meet nature and truly listen to her.

The Common-Brittonic word *\*widus* is perhaps originally from an Indo-European word to divide, perhaps connected to Welsh *gŵydd* 'presence', 'face', Older Brittonic *\*wéd-* 'to see, to know'. This is also close to a word, *gŵydd* - 'a loom', and *gwau* - 'to weave', and ultimately with *gŵydd* - 'trees', which in Welsh is most noticeably visible as a suffix in the spoken language we know today, in North Wales this can mean plough.

Could this in some way reflect a druidic understanding of trees, and the similarity between trees, weaving and knowledge, the similarity between the nervous system, weaving, trees and knowledge? The largest mountain in Wales is named *Yr Wyddfa* in Welsh, which can be interpreted as 'the grave place' or 'seeing place', or even 'place of knowledge', but that is speculation. In North Welsh tradition, *Yr Wyddfa* was the home to *Rhita Gawr*, a giant, who collected beards and made them into a cloak. He was then later slain by Arthur. Tentitively the idea of collecting beards or hairs could be connected to hair being associated with knowledge and wisdom in some cultures, and, hair grows a little bit like trees do, sort of. Does this story tell us of some kind of divine action, between the bear spirit, Arthur, and the giant, are both seasonally gods of the mountain, rather like after the night comes the day, with the giant representing the night, the stone, and the wisdom locked in the stars and the earth and water, and Arthur representing the illumination of that truth from within the mountain? In some of the stories about Arthur, he returns from the cave in our time of need. Perhaps this can be tentively interpreted as perhaps, in the future, we will feel more illuminated and understanding of our presence in the universe once again.

## Nouns

The concept of a noun does not seem to be the same in each language. This is a philosophical point which I feel to be unsanswerable, but I would like to talk about some examples of differences and similarities across languages. In Scottish Gaelic and in Manx Gaelic, nouns are either masculine or feminine. This is common in Indo-European languages. In the Goidelic languages, the gender can sometimes be recognised from the word stem, but often it is more noticeable by how that noun behaves with adjectives and the article. Feminine nouns have initial consonant mutation here, so **y baatey** – the boat, in Manx, **baatey** – a boat; **y ghrian** – the sun, **grian** – sun. The latter word is feminine and so the initial consonant mutates after the definite article **y**. The other spoken Celtic languages have similar initial consonant changes, like in Cornish, **menydh koth** – old mountain, **bro goth** – old land, the latter word is feminine, so the adjective **koth** undergoes mutation to **goth**. Nouns in the Goidelic branch of Celtic still have inflection or 'case', for example in Manx **y mooir** – the sea, **sollys ny marrey** – the light of the sea, in Scottish Gaelic **am muir**, and **solas na mara**. Common masculine nouns in the Goidelic languages have a process of slenderisation in the plural, for example in Scottish Gaelic **fear** – man, **fir** – men, or 'of a man', the genitive singular and nominative plural, **mac** – son, **mic** – sons or 'of the son', genitive singular and nominative plural.

### Nouns in Reconstructed Primitive Irish

𐌛𐌰𐌶𐌹𐌳	<b>benā</b> – woman
𐌛𐌰𐌶𐌹𐌳	<b>viras</b> – man
𐌛𐌰𐌶𐌹𐌳	<b>maqqas</b> – son
𐌛𐌰𐌶𐌹𐌳	<b>bardas</b> – poet, seer
𐌛𐌰𐌶𐌹𐌳	<b>tígas</b> – house

𐌸𐌹𐌺𐌿𐌸𐌹𐌺𐌿𐌸𐌹𐌺𐌿𐌸𐌹𐌺𐌿𐌸 **vliqas** – wet

𐌹𐌺𐌿𐌸𐌹𐌺𐌿𐌸 **mori** – sea

𐌸𐌹𐌺𐌿𐌸𐌹𐌺𐌿𐌸𐌹𐌺𐌿𐌸𐌹𐌺𐌿𐌸 **atiras** – father

𐌸𐌹𐌺𐌿𐌸𐌹𐌺𐌿𐌸 **cū** – dog

𐌸𐌹𐌺𐌿𐌸𐌹𐌺𐌿𐌸𐌹𐌺𐌿𐌸𐌹𐌺𐌿𐌸 **toutā** – tribe, nation

𐌹𐌺𐌿𐌸𐌹𐌺𐌿𐌸𐌹𐌺𐌿𐌸 **mātir** – mother

### Scottish Gaelic nouns

**am muir** – the sea      **a' bheinn** – the mountain      **a' ghrian** – the sun

**an tonn** – the wave      **an abhainn** – the river      **an t-òran** – the song

**Dia** – god      **an leabhar** – book      **an t-adhar** – the air, sky

**an t-uisge** – the water      **an fhìrinn** – the truth

### Manx Gaelic nouns

**y mooir** – the sea      **y beinn** – the mountain      **y ghrian** – the sun

**y tonn** – the wave      **yn awin** – the river      **yn arrane** – the song

**Jee** – God      **y lioar** – the book      **yn aer** – the air, sky

**yn ushtey** – the water      **y firrin** – the truth

## Meaning within Scottish Gaelic words

The following is a select list of Scottish Gaelic words, with comments on their meaning within. When pronunciation is given it is given in the Torridon dialect pronunciation.

**mi** – [mi], - 'I', the first person singular pronoun, I reconstruct this as Proto-Celtic *\*mi* or *\*mē*. Celtic languages are quite different from other Indo-European languages, which often use a form related to *\*mi* as the object form, Celtic on the other hand uses *\*mi* as the nominative form. Using a pronoun based on [m] for the first-person singular is not limited to Celtic nor to Indo-European. For example, Finnish has *minä* 'I'.

**draoidheachd** – [drwɪɪ̯xk] sorcery, bewitchment, magic. The primary root of this word is **draoidh** 'druid', 'seer', 'person with wizardry or scientific lore. This word **draoidh** means 'druid', 'philosopher', 'wizard', which comes from a Proto-Celtic concept which I reconstruct as *\*druwits* - 'person with sacred knowledge', 'druid'. More specifically, these words are talking about a form of knowledge that is connected to trees, and perhaps we can wonder if in this aspect of Celtic language and spirituality, knowledge was associated with trees. The initial **dr-** is connected to an Indo-European spiritual root meaning 'tree', **dr-** is cognate here to 'tree' in English. Even today, people who practice druidism will often meet in groves of trees.

**bàrdachd** – [pa:rɪ̯xk] poetry, a word sharing the same suffix as the word above, in this case cognate to the word 'bard', a Celtic and Proto-Celtic word to describe a poet or seer, in Scottish Gaelic it can mean someone who makes rhymes, poems and tells oral history. It could be reconstructed in Proto-Celtic as *\*bardos*. In ancient Anatolia, there used to be spoken the easternmost of the Celtic language, called Galatian. It was likely a language more or less identical with Gaulish, perhaps we can consider it a dialect of Gaulish. In this language the word *βαρδοί* – *bardoι* is recorded, 'bards, singers'. (reference: *Freeman, Philip (2001). The Galatian Language: A Comprehensive Survey of the Language of the Ancient Celts in Greco-Roman Asia Minor. Lewiston, New York: Mellen Press. ISBN 0-7734-7480-3.*)

**leughadh** – ‘reading’, ‘the act of reading’. Note that this word has a rather different pronunciation in Torridon/Wester Ross to elsewhere. The base word is **leugh** ‘read’, connected to Old Irish *légaid* ‘reading, studying out loud, recite’, and connected to Manx *lhaih*. The Latin word *legō* ‘I read, I gather, or I choose’. I have also wondered if this concept is related to *lukea* ‘to read’ in Finnish, probably originally encompassing the idea of ‘to count’, in some ways similar to the Latin semantics of ‘gather’, also found in other Finno-Baltic languages, like the Võro *lugõma*, and to words in other Uralic languages, like Erzya ловномс *lovnoms*.

**Sgitheanach** – this is the Gaelic name for the Island of Skye, located just adjacent to the mainland coastline of Wester Ross. The word ‘Skye’ and Gaelic **Sgitheanach** do bare some similarity to the words ‘Scotland’ and ‘Scythia’. Although any comment on this word is extremely speculative, I have not been able to find out enough about the Scythians to really look into this connection. The Scythian language is related to the living Ossetian languages of the Caucasus Mountains, but, the Scythians were a wide and diverse group of peoples, and I wonder if their originally language was really Indo-European. There is a connection between the Scythians and Indo-Iranian languages, but the evidence of the original Scythian language is lacking. It must have a connection to Indo-European, but whether Scythian is Indo-European or not, I am less convinced. The same applies to this name of the Isle of Skye, is it an Indo-European word, or is it somehow connected to something older, and to an older people? And furthermore, what is the meaning of this sacred word, that sits in the dark misty mountains of the Isle of Skye?

**giuthas** – Scots pine tree, older Gaelic *gius*, from reference: *An Etymological Dictionary of the Gaelic Language (1911)* by Alexander MacBain a word that may have possible cognates in Indo-European languages, but which may also be largely outside of Indo-European in its origins. The Scots pine was one of the first species of tree to colonise Scotland, where it remained in its wild forests. Torridon is famous for these ancient forests, and one can sit on the mountainside among the rugged pine trees, their leaves like castles of ancient green against the mountains and sky. Here one can smell the purifying scent of the pine in the air, where birds sing and make their home in the trees, and red deer and wild cats move among their branches and roots.

**mac** – son. In ancient Celtic culture, the concept of this word root had more meanings than ‘son’. It was also connected to the Gaulish God *Mapones*, of which I might reconstruct an early Primitive-Irish equivalent as *\*Maqones*. This deity appears to be one of youth and health, and in parts of the Celtic world this concept and deity were certainly very important. I wonder if the root word is connected also to the idea of inheritance and inheritance of tribal traditions and responsibility also. In the Gaelic world, **mac** is said in someone’s tribal, inherited name, perhaps this was also a form of ‘bardic name’. As in Scottish Gaelic, **Stiùbhard Mac Dhòmhnail** ‘Stewart MacDonald’, ‘Stewart son of Donald’. This root is also recorded in ceremonial language in Ogham inscriptions, recorded in the genitive as  $\text{f} \begin{smallmatrix} \text{|||||} \\ \text{|||||} \\ \text{|||||} \end{smallmatrix} \text{ maqqi}$ , the nominative was likely  $\text{f} \begin{smallmatrix} \text{|||||} \\ \text{|||||} \\ \text{|||||} \end{smallmatrix} \text{ maqqas}$ . An interesting question is, was Primitive Irish truly the ancestor to Modern Goidelic, or is it rather the link, more like ceremonial bardic language, between Modern Goidelic and Indo-European?

**sealladh** – [ʃaːlˠək], sight or view. Although this is speculative, I have wondered if this word is at all collected to Gaelic word **sùil** – ‘eye’, and to the Finnish word *silmä* – ‘eye’.

## Nouns in other languages

Nouns in Danish and in Swedish and the written form of Norwegian named Bokmål belong to either a common gender, from the older masculine and feminine genders, and the neuter gender. This is clear from the indefinite and definite articles for the nouns. For example, in Swedish **en fjärd** – an inlet of islands and basins from the Baltic sea, ‘fjord’, is of the common gender. The definite form ‘the fjord’ is **fjärden**. To say ‘a mountain’ is **ett fjäll**, which belongs to the neuter gender. The definite form is **fjället**, for instance, **de såg fjället från älven** – ‘they saw the mountain from the river’.

In Icelandic on the other hand, nouns have three genders, such as **maðurinn** – ‘the man’, **konan** – the woman, and **húsið** – the house, the ending is different for forming the definite form for each of the genders.



Another example is **hann er yndislegur** – he is wonderful, **hún er yndisleg** – she is wonderful, **það er yndislegt** – it is/that is wonderful.

In Russian, nouns are either masculine, feminine or neuter, this is often visible from the ending of a noun. For example, masculine nouns tend to end with a consonant, like **лес** 'forest'. Feminine nouns commonly end with **-а** or **-я**, such as **ланка** 'a female deer', whilst neuter nouns often end with another vowel, like **море** 'sea'. Within Russia there are many dialects, and the pronunciation of vowels especially is different in south, central and north west Russia. Northern Russian dialects also have an influence from Uralic languages. Finnic languages do not have gender at all. Russian has more noun declination than the Goidelic languages do, but Finnic languages have many more suffixes or 'cases' than Goidelic or Slavic. Nouns in Finnish behave quite differently, behaving with declination in instances where no distinction would be made in many other languages. For example, the noun **mäki** 'hill, mountain', this is the nominative form. The genitive is **mäen** – 'of the mountain'. My favourite Finnish word, is **elämä** – [elæmæ] – life, connected to the verb **elää** – 'to live, to be alive', which also derives the word **eläin** – 'animal'.

## ॐ दुं दुर्गायै नमः Sanskrit

The above is a mantra for a Hindu goddess, Durga, pronounced 'Om Dum Durgaye Namaha'. Somewhere in the background, I have felt a connection to these traditions across India. Although for me it is a vast subject. India being a land of so many cultures, languages and spiritual practices, deities and histories. Many of them are sometimes collectively referred to as Hinduism, although arguably I wonder if Hinduism is centrally connected to the Sanskrit language. I have a friend from Kerala, his native language is Malayalam, a Dravidian language, unrelated to Sanskrit and Hindi for instance. But the Hindu traditions in Malayalam are also connected with Sanskrit, and I have been unable to find out very much about other Malayalam traditions that are not related to Hinduism. This is indeed a very complex and extensive subject, and I feel that, perhaps for a speaker of English, this entire topic is only relatable from a distance. Through English I

can grasp a little of India's cultural history, languages and religion, but were I to speak Sanskrit, I would surely have a chance to understand its complexity in a more present way. At some point, I noticed the affect that certain Sanskrit mantras had upon me. The language of the Vedas is sometimes said to be impossible to translate at times, but nevertheless, I feel a love and protection, and 'truth', when I listen to them, even though I do not actually understand the words, other than a few, like शान्ति.

As well as Hinduism, there are of course other spiritual traditions and religions in India, some of which are very connected to Hinduism and to Sanskrit. Another of these religions that I am curious about is Sikhism, which in some senses is like the Abrahamic religions in that it mainly seems to recognise one divine force, god and creator. As I have mentioned previously, I do not personally think that 'one creator' and 'many creators' have to contradict each other, because I see this 'one creator' as also manifesting as one kindness; i.e. it does not matter in which culture or language, also, when we are being kind to animals and to nature as a whole, they are all the same concept of kindness and respect, and this I think is the essence of the 'one God'. I believe it is also possible for this divine creation to be intelligent and visible in any form it wants to as mirroring us and our own understanding of reality.

I had an experience once, when I got onto a bus, heading for a place in a forested and flat part of Norway. I was alone on the bus, except for the driver, and we ended up talking. He was a Sikh it turned out, and after what must have been three minutes, we began talking about God. And I told him that sometimes I had nightmares and had dreams where I was essentially being tormented by zombies. And he said to me, simply, something like *"These things scare you, but if you learn to meditate, you will lead your mind"*.

ੴ ਸਤਿ ਨਾਮੁ ਕਰਤਾ ਪੁਰਖੁ ਨਿਰਭਉ ਨਿਰਵੈਰੁ ਅਕਾਲ ਮੂਰਤਿ ਅਜੂਨੀ ਸੈਭੰ ਗੁਰ ਪ੍ਰਸਾਦਿ ॥

Articles by the author available online:

*.Pre-Celtic elements in the Goidelic languages* – available on omniglot.com

*.Blas Ghàidhlig Lios Mhóir* (A taste of Lismore Gaelic), available on academia.edu and at archive.org

*.Scottish Gaelic dialects and ancient languages in Scotland – Dualchainntean na Gàidhlig agus cànanan àrsaidh ann an Alba*, available on academia.edu and at archive.org

*.The Finnish Language and Finnish spiritual traditions, with comments on language and spirituality*, available at archive.org

*.A basic description of five languages: Scottish Gaelic, Manx, Norwegian, Finnish and Nuxalk*, available at archive.org

Travel is very special I feel, and the opportunity it gives us to change perception and to find unexpected changes and the meeting of new people. Recently I had an experience, where I was sat on a bus, and a man sat next to me. He later moved seats though, after realising that I was fidgeting around.

I wanted to say to him that he didn't have to move, so, when I got off of the bus, I said this to him, and it sparked a really nice and genuine conversation as we sat on a bench and became friends. Shortly afterwards, when walking across the large bus station, I found some Arabic writing on the ground, a small piece of paper which I just 'happened' to find. The paper detailed on the importance of being honest about one's feelings, and this process of being guided is why I feel drawn to write these books.

Below is a poem I wrote whilst traveling, :)

Leaving home, going home  
 I know there are angels  
 Around in the sky  
 They bring hope  
 From the silver sky  
 Thinking of them  
 The angels up high  
 Their smiles are like the crystals in the air

Their hair is like the silky auro sun  
 Their smile is my prayer brought on wings  
 To and from the blue horizon of my eternal soul

Amen

I hope that this short book has been enjoyable and given something to my readers. May you be blessed, تَوَكَّلْنَا عَلَى اللَّهِ

### The Trollstein, near Ballangen in Northern Norway

The word trollstein in Norwegian means 'troll stone'. There are many stones across Norway which are associated with trolls, or which are otherwise sacred. I am unsure how this stone got its name, because I do not know if trolls are something present in Sámi culture in the same way as they are in Norwegian language culture. Nevertheless, the Trollstein is a Sámi sacred site, and offerings were left here and continue to be left here today. When I visited, I left a small offering of tobacco if I remember correctly.

If I understand correctly, these sorts of Sámi sites are called a seida. From what little I know, I think these are natural places in the landscape, which are significant. I don't think that these places are more 'special' than the land as a whole, but perhaps maybe they are places where people interact with the spiritual in a different way. I really cannot comment on their exact meaning, but I don't feel it is entirely correct to say that seidas are 'more sacred' than Sápmi as a whole, perhaps they are more places where that relationship with the sacred is more focused and so it's experienced a little different. One can feel the energy of these places.

The picture below is not the Trollstein, it shows a possible propped-stone. These monuments are similar to megalithic dolmens in a sense, but I feel they are much more subtle and I wouldn't honestly know what the purpose of either of these structures is. This propped stone is located in the valley of the Pite River in Northern Sweden. In the lower parts of the valley, the language is Bondska, a North-Germanic language which is quite different to Swedish. Sámi people have lived here since ancient times, and there is a Sámi language unique to this valley and the mountains to the west, Pite Sámi. I am unsure how this monument connects to either the Sámi languages or the Bondska language. But these particular types of structures are known in inland areas of Norway, Sweden and Finland, so I assume they are in some way connected to the Sámis' world in ancient times. As we approached this place in the dense forests of the lower Pite Valley, and looked for it upon the side of a mountain, I saw an adder in the forest, swimming across the moss ahead of us. I felt almost that it was a kind of sign, a good sign. And we came to the place.



Above: the curious propped stone near the Pite Valley. The photo below shows the arrangement of the props.



Photo below: the Trollstein, which is not a dolmen structure or propped stone but is technically classified as an erratic.



The photo below shows another feature which is located close to the Trollstein. This feature is confusing geologically, it looks a little like a flow of limestone, and there are limestone caves on the hill above. However, its shape is very unusual, making it appear almost like a petrified stream, meandering its way through the woods. I was told that this site is entirely natural, but nevertheless it is very interesting. The rock formation in question can be seen on the lower right of the image below.



## New ideas about the Langdale Axe Industry

Written by Linden Alexander Pentecost, published online also on archive.org. Written and published in November 2021, released under the creative commons, attribution non commercial no derivatives license. Photos also taken and edited by Linden Alexander Pentecost.

Disclaimer: for obvious reasoning, I ask that no-body try to knock the stone at any of these sites to make sound, which are important archaeological sites. Any damage to these sites or other archaeological sites in Langdale will be observed and reported by the warden who often keeps an eye on them. Furthermore visiting these sites is a perilous task, and I do not encourage anyone to try and visit these sites, some are in highly unstable, steep, mountainous areas, where we all have to always be sure footed, delicate of movement and of balance, keeping in mind that the scree or rocks may move if not stable. In the future, archaeologists may chose to re-visit these sites. I ask that they be respectful, and try to keep in mind a respect for what these ancient people believed, and for their natural world.



Photo above: the dome-shaped mountaintop that forms the Pike O' Stickle



Great Langdale is a mountainous valley in the Lake District National Park, a national park situated in the central part of the island of Britain, in the north of what is now England. The geology of this region includes a lot of igneous rocks, allowing for the prominent shape and height of the mountains, the valley of Great Langdale is particularly impressive, the view to the west is dominated by the Langdale Pikes, a group of mountain peaks where hornstone was once found.

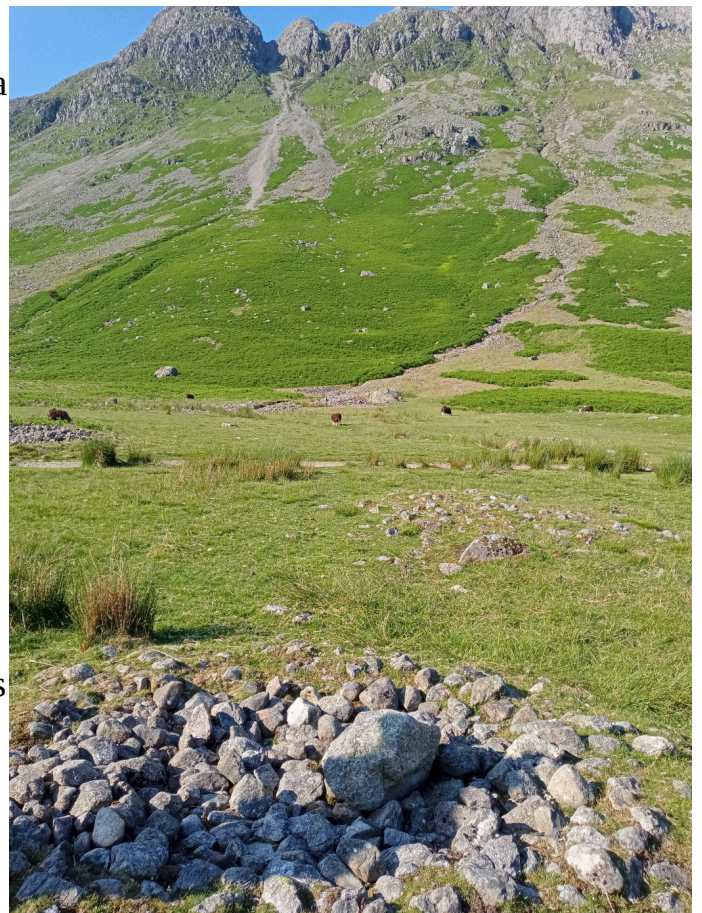
Photo on right: pieces of hornstone at one of the sites

During the Neolithic period, Langdale was the setting for a kind of axe industry. A particularly hard and crystalline form of hornstone was found around and below the buttress or dome-shaped crags that form the pikes. This was then processed to form axe heads, which were then distributed beyond Cumbria. Folklore tradition in England attaches a special significance



to flint arrowheads, meanwhile, axe heads have been found placed inside bogs or marshy areas. Looking at this industry from a purely practical point of view, hornstone axe heads were ideal for the cutting down of trees, which has taken place at various times on a large scale throughout British history. Farmers creating land to farm on, naturally would have had tools that were most suited to this task. But for this reason, among other reasons, the axe heads and the rock seem to have been sacred.

Photo on right: cairn-like stone arrangements, that seem, visually and metaphorically, synchronized with the shapes of mountains, the colours and patterns of nature, building a musical and danceful image of how these people may see their world and the spiritual to be interlinked



Within Great Langdale are two sites where rock art is visible, carved into stone. I believe it's possible that the rock art is in some way associated with the hornstone. This type of rock art, often includes cup and spirular marks. Many stone circles and ancient sites seem to hold a connection to a mystical concept of water, and I hypothesise that in some sense, spirular rock art in Britain may represent the form, lettering and shape of the water as it appears in springs from the ground and in fault lines. This water may however have been symbolic and ethereal as well as physical, unseen as well as seen. In a sense the rock art may be a map of the different springs, as their water and shape and symbol shape appeared to people, this aspect of water having shape and being given its own letters, words and legends. In some way, Neolithic people may have believed, that certain rocks and stones 'communicated' with the sky and waters in these locations, like letters in an alphabet, corresponding to their view of the cosmos, allowing the natural forms of the sunrise, mountains and waters, to be created again through the indigenous peoples.

The Pike O' Stickle has a pinecone or dome-shaped crag, where some of the hornstone has quarried, forming a small cave. I hypothesise that the cave functioned rather like a domed church, but on a much smaller scale. The silica and metals in the rock give individual pieces of the stone a very musical and charm-like sound, when tapped with another such stone. When people were quarrying here, the sound may have caused the hornstone to reflect the sound in a peculiar way, which was perhaps another reason why this rock is considered sacred by those people. In ancient times, the people of Britain likely had some form of animism, and may have believed that the rock and mountains, sky, trees and earth, are themselves forms and expressions of ancestors, the divine. They may have believed that the individual axeheads were also alive, perhaps considered an expression of the bones, minds and soul of their ancestors in the mountains, particularly as this rock is so majestic and sparkly in appearance.

The bell-shape of this mountain may be significant at a symbolic and metaphorical level. There is a legend found in parts of Britain, about a man who looks for King Arthur who is sleeping under a mountain, surrounded by his knights. In the stories, often the people entering the cave must duck down underneath a large bell, before entering the cave. In the story, the bell is often accidentally rung, causing Arthur to momentarily wake, until the wizard-like, Merlin-like figure of the legend, says to Arthur such as: "It is not yet time", after which the knights and Arthur go back to their patient dreaming. Could this 'chyming bell', as a symbol of Arthur's return, be connected to the symbolic context of the Langdale Pikes during the Neolithic era? If for example, people of the Neolithic recognised the uniqueness of bell-shaped rock formations, and knew that if they dug caves in them, it would create a particularly loud chyme sound? Even the sounds of natural springs in the rocks may have sounded slightly different! All I know, is that this site is a mystery to me, and I feel it will continue to mystify us for a good while. May God/The gods bless all who read this. And may you all take care.

The Celtic languages, those ancient, modern and revived

Written by Eric Gruffydd from Britain

Published on the 22<sup>nd</sup> of June 2022 and again with some changes  
on the 24<sup>th</sup> of June, in honour of the saints and ancestors

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Gruffydd and shows a stormy sky on Anglesey

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# Forward:

By Eric Gruffydd

This book consists of a collection of different articles, many of which were originally published online, pertaining to our indigenous Celtic languages and to uncovering their history, sharing information about them, and reviving them. I, Eric Gruffydd (Linden Alexander Pentecost), am the author of these articles, under different pseudonyms. I employed pseudonyms to protect myself from what can only be described as bullying from people who did not like that I was writing about these languages. Several of these articles have not been previously published. This will likely be the first of several such books, written and created to produce a permanent resource for all indigenous languages around the world. Note, that some of the conclusions about the Cumbric language, as talked about by the authors in this book, have since been questioned by them, including the assumption that the place-name Penhurrock in Cumbria 'proves' a grammatical feature. In fact, they have since discovered that the word 'hurrick', 'hurrock' is another word similar in meaning to 'currick'. Although this does not mean to say that the name Penhurrock, Pen-Hurroc definitely does *not* show evidence of Cumbric grammar.

Note also that in the article about Primitive Irish, the 'w' like sound does not display correctly, thus, when you see a square in the text, this is a slight 'w' sound as found after k, as in the word for 'son' which I would personally spell 'makkwos'. This error is due to that my computer could not cope with the level of Ogham that I was trying to type, and in this case I was trying to employ an Ogham character in the Latin writing of Primitive Irish. Note also that in the articles on 'Cumbric', 'Gospatrick' is accidentally given as a place-name, what the writer intended to say was 'Gosforth', which may or may not have a Cumbric etymology, although the first element may mean 'goose'. It is always possible that 'gos' and 'goose' are also somehow connected, but this seems unlikely. There are many references to the name 'Patrick' on this coastline however, and this small mistake could be taken as a kind of creative fiction.

## Dialects of South Wales

Eric Gruffydd

### Pembrokeshire Welsh sound changes

The Welsh dialects of Pembrokeshire are a good example of how South Welsh differs to North Welsh. Pembrokeshire also has its own unique words and qualities, some recent and others much older. One noticeable trait is the tendency of certain old borrowings to be preserved in the Pembrokeshire dialect.. It appears that the Brittonic *o-* before a nasal, became **-w-** in parts of South Wales, rather than a schwa **y** as in North Wales. However, in the modern dialect, the Welsh schwa **y** often becomes **i**, which appears to have passed onto some words which originally had **-w-** but not others. In some parts of Pembrokeshire, **mynydd** becomes **mwny**, in keeping with the original change from *-o-* to **w** before nasals.

Other sound changes include:

.The Welsh diphthong **aw** normally becomes **ow**, for example **llowen, nowr, owst** for **llawen, nawr, awst**.

.**h** can become silent in medial position, for example **eddi** for **heddiw**.

.Final **-dd** tends can be dropped, for example **miny** for **mynydd**.

.The Welsh diphthong **oe** is pronounced **we** or as a long **ô**. For example:

**wes llower o lifrwe in ir afon?** - are there a lot of books in the river?

In North Welsh, this sentence would be:

**oes llawer o lyfroedd yn yr afon?**

Other examples include **cwêd – coed** (forest), **we – oedd, dwê – ddoe** (yesterday), but **môl – moel**.

**.rh** sometimes becomes **r**, but is preserved in other words such as **rhai**.

Sample sentences:

**ma Eric in cerded i gewn i miny nowr** – Pembrokeshire Welsh  
**mae Eric yn cerdded i gefn y mynydd rwan** – North Welsh  
 'Eric is walking to the back of the mountain now'

**we'n i'n discu'r tafodiaith dwê** – Pembrokeshire Welsh  
**roeddwn i'n dysgu'r tafodiaith ddoe** – North Welsh  
 "I was learning the dialect yesterday"

**we'n nw'n clau'r tŷ mowr** – Pembrokeshire Welsh  
**roeddwn nhw'n glanhau'r tŷ mawr** – North Welsh  
 "they were cleaning the big house"

Gwenhwyseg

**Gwenhwyseg**, or '**y Wenhwyseg**' is spoken in Y Gwennwys in South East Wales. Gwenhwyseg shared features in common with the general 'South Welsh language', but also has significant changes which set it apart from other dialects.

Examples:

**côd** – **coed** – forest

**cäe** – **cae** – field

**catar** – **cadair** – throne

**caeth** - **cath** – cat

**ddi** – **hi** – she (in certain grammatical expressions)

**gweud** – **dweud** – to say

**gwitho** – **gweithio** – to work

**taed** – **tad** – father/dad

**reteg** – **rhedeg** – to run

**nenno – yn enw – 'in the name'**

**wi'n wara pêl-drôd – Gwenhwyseg**  
**dwi'n chwarae pêl-droed – North Welsh**  
 "I'm playing football"

**i chi'n îsha catar - Gwenhwyseg**  
**dach chi'n isio cadair – North Welsh**  
 "you lot want a chair"

**wi'n cerad i gäer - Gwenhwyseg**  
**roeddwn i'n cerdded i gaer – North Welsh**  
 "I am walking to the fort"

**wi'n sharad/wlîa'r iaith gymräeg - Gwenhwyseg**  
**dwi'n siarad yr iaith gymraeg – North Welsh**  
 "I'm speaking the Welsh language"

**wi weti bod yn dishcu'r iaith gymräeg - Gwenhwyseg**  
**dwi wedi bod yn dysgu'r iaith gymraeg – North Welsh**  
 "I have been learning the Welsh language"

Some of the differences in Gwenhwyseg are:

- .Welsh **-ell** becomes **-all**.
- .-**wy**- can become **-w**-m e.g. **eclws** for **eglwys**.
- .**rh** often becomes **r**
- .medial **b, d, g** are often devoiced to **p, t, c**.
- .**oe** tends to become **ô** as in Pembrokeshire (some words).



# Are there only three Brythonic Languages?

## An alternative classification of Brythonic Languages

Alexandra Dora

- . Proto-Brittonic and Gaulish: one language?
- . Gaulish identity between Britain and Gaul
  - . The Brittonic people and the Welsh
  - . The Batz-sur-Mer dialect of Breton
- . Modern Cornish – *Kernûak Nowedzha*
  - . Southwestern Brittonic
  - . The Gwentian Language

## Proto-Brittonic and Gaulish, one language?

Breton, Cornish and Welsh are thought to have originated in a language similar to the Gaulish Language in Continental Europe, known as Common Brittonic or Ancient British. We have little direct evidence of this Brittonic Language in England, that gave rise to Welsh and Cornish and Breton. The Bath 'curse tablet' is the only written example of Ancient British. The language is also known in place-names and in some personal names. Unusually, the place-names don't preserve much of the language's grammar, and seem to date to a time when quite ordinary nouns had more specific or even religious meanings. An example of an Ancient British word is *abonā* for a river, likely with the stress on the final syllable. This is the origin of the name Avon, the name of several rivers in England. This implies that the word had some more important meaning than just being any river, this may be reflected in the grammar of the word as the ending *-nā* is probably later, so 'a river of abounding water' or similar?

Modern Brythonic languages are very different from the Gaulish and Ancient British languages, and it often isn't possible to trace a development in Brythonic back to Gaulish. Similarly, a lot of the vocabulary isn't the same, whereas Gaulish tends towards IE roots similar to the Latin forms, such as *-cue/-pe* 'and', Brythonic has

developed many of these words, and even much of its verbal system separately to Gaulish.

The pronouns between Brythonic languages and Gaulish aren't completely consistent, particularly problematic is the word for 'he', Welsh *fe/fo*, Cornish *ev*, Breton *eñ*, although it is tempting to see a connection to English 'him', Swedisch *han* 'he', etc. There seem to have been some common developments between the Atlantic Megalithic cultures that both Celtic and Germanic languages came into contact with. This may be one such innovation that happened in both, but is absent from Gaulish.

There is certainly enough evidence, that people in Iron Age Britain, and perhaps even earlier, used a language like Gaulish. And this makes sense because of the vast trade networks which linked Gaul, and Central Europe, to the Atlantic. But, the

Britons, are always referred to as a separate people. That the Ancient British language was used at this time, doesn't necessarily show that it was the language of all the people in Britain. That would seem rather unlikely. Generally speaking, Iron Age British forts were located in certain valleys and ran along these valleys like floods through England towards the Atlantic. But this formal culture may not have penetrated every part of Britain.

When we talk of the Brittonic Languages having at some point taken over the whole of Britain and then suddenly disappearing, perhaps the evidence is showing us a scenario where the language of the elite, and of this 'central valley culture' is what changes, but it doesn't necessarily affect the entire population of Britain. The initial arrival of Brittonic Languages may not have extinguished other languages, and from this perspective it would seem that the Brittonic Languages could have been firmly established in Wales, Cornwall and Brittany, much more thoroughly than in other parts of England. When Latin came along, perhaps again, the language of the 'elite' was changed, but not of the everyday people, who spoke Celtic and possibly even Germanic or pre-Celtic languages. These gradually dissolved into or were replaced by Germanic, which then became more prominent after the Roman Empire, and after these central trade columns collapsed.

The sudden appearance of the Germanic peoples and languages may be due to this power struggle. There would have been many indigenous tribes and peoples in the British Isles, some of whom may have spoken earlier languages. Many of them would have had their lands stolen and influenced by this Gaulish-Latin trade root dynamic. After this began to break apart, it would make sense that the indigenous people tried to take back their lands and form their own kingdoms separately of the religious and cultural elite that came with Gaulish and Latin. This also questions whether or not the Vikings were truly invaders, Christianity caused a massive power centralization with wealth and with the Church, it probably upset and angered the indigenous people living in these areas who had had their traditional lifestyle and freedom of speech and religion taken away from them. It's possible that when we talk about Norse invaders, we are really talking about indigenous groups of people, who adopted a Germanic language and who tried to take back their own lands.

We could also use this to demonstrate why the Gaulish Language died out. A certain, very powerful culture with the use of metallurgy, existed throughout central Europe and seems to be strongly associated with both the Gaulish and later Slavic Languages. This original 'flow' of archaic Indo-European languages seems to somehow dissolve with the Roman Empire, and the Italic Languages to varying extents become more prominent. It's as though the culture we would class as 'Celtic' gets broken up and cut off. Nearly all of these areas move on to speak a language which isn't Celtic, the exceptions being Ireland, Britain and Brittany. The original culture of these 'Celtic' people, may have already diversified into other Indo-European groups, with Gaulish being used as the archaic register based upon 'PIE' used in the Mediterranean, hence the similarity in Greek, Gaulish and Latin in the inflectional system, which only survives fully in Greek.

## Gaulish Identity between Britain and Gaul

Some of the tribes recorded by Ptolemy in Britain, include the Belgae in the Southampton Area, the Parisi north of the Humber, and the Brigantes in Northern England, around the Pennines Mountain Range. We find the Belgae on the Continent too, and it is tempting to connect the name Parisi to 'Paris' and to the legendary Breton city of Kêr Ys. We have the well known 'Picts' in Scotland, but also the Pictones in Ancient Gaul, occupying approximately the area where the Batz-sur-Mer Breton dialect came to be spoken.

The Belgae may have already had their own, non-Celtic language, even though Gaulish most certainly served a function as well. The tribes linked between Britain and Gaul might have had Gaulish speaking rulers and a Gaulish speaking elite, but the daily language of the people in these districts was not necessarily Celtic. Certainly the Venetii and Pictones are found in Britain and around Brittany, but this is indicative of an early connection between Brittany and Britain via the Ocean, not of a connection between Gaul and Britain, nor indicative that the Belgae were a Gaulish tribe who invaded Britain.

We also have the Brigantes tribe in Ireland. Certainly, this group of people has associations and trade roots with Gaul, and no doubt Gaulish was used, but there is isn't any evidence of the Brigantes in Ireland ever speaking a Brittonic Language. We could also consider that the Brigantes in England and in Ireland were culturally similar and related, but either:

- 1) The language used between these cultures was only used by their leaders and not by everyday people, who had already adopted forms of Brittonic and Goidelic.

- 2) The similarity between Northern England and Eastern Ireland is much earlier, even if a kind of common Celtic was used in certain contexts, Celtic languages may never have been the original 'associated' with these people.

It has been suggested that Goidelic was brought to Ireland with the Brittonic Languages. This theory seems to hold little ground however, as the earliest Celtic language in Ireland is most certainly Q-Celtic, and not P-Celtic, and it seems to spread from the Southwest and not from the East (judging by the distribution of Ogham stones). There is also no sound evidence of a Brittonic Language ever being spoken in Ireland, there are isolated words found in Irish place-names which could have been borrowed from Brittonic, but it's equally plausible that they came from a pre-Brittonic language and were later incorporated into Brittonic, and to an extent into Goidelic.

One interesting piece of evidence, is that the Munster dialect of Irish and the NW Brittonic/Cumbric language (perhaps spoken by the Brigantes), seem to have both had stress on the final syllable, which often caused syncope. This is observable today in Munster Irish and in Cumbric place-names.

## The Brittonic people and the Welsh

Although it isn't often focused upon, the Breton languages take their name from the same etymology as 'Britain'. This has been linked to the Cruithne in Ireland and in Scotland, as theoretically the two words could be connected judging by the c/k/q versus p distinction found between Q-Celtic and P-Celtic.

However, these people might not have even spoken a Celtic Language originally. Certainly, over time, they seem to have adopted a language, from Brittany and into the heart of Scotland, which became the original 'Brittonic' language, and perhaps the ancestor to the Welsh and Cornish Languages too.

I make a clear distinction between *Brittonic* and *Welsh*. They are not completely equal or interchangeable. It is significant that the Breton language is called *Brezhoneg* or *Brehonek*, with various differences between dialects. It is also significant that Breton has such a wide variety of dialects and internal variations.

Breton is generally thought to have come from Britain, and there is ample evidence of people escaping Britain to Brittany during the rise of the Anglo-Saxons. But were these migrations enough to completely change the original language of Brittany? Personally, I doubt it very much. The Old Breton Language, and the Old Welsh language are very similar. In a sense these can

be taken as a kind of elite or high register form of the Brittonic Language, roughly equivalent to Gaulish in status but lacking its noun inflections.

The diversity of Breton dialects could imply that Brittonic diversified here earlier. This high register Brittonic (Old Breton, Old Welsh) was certainly used, but the local dialects of Breton may have already diverged by this point. Brittany has an ancient history with insular Britain and Ireland, rather than Breton being brought here from Britain, is it possible that 'Brittonic' languages were simply the Gaulish that developed on the Atlantic Peninsulas, and through the Atlantic Trade roots?

One important difference between Breton and Gaulish, is that Breton was and is spoken in a zone that has been for thousands of years, linked to Britain and Ireland through Mesolithic, Neolithic and Bronze Age trade and culture. This, may explain why Breton is a Brittonic Language, and not a dialect of Gaulish. Brittonic may not have invaded Brittany, or Wales or anywhere, it may have developed within an earlier Atlantic trade network, in a sense establishing it as the beginnings of 'Celtic' Europe, whereas the Gaulish Language may never have been so deeply established among the everyday people of a culture.

Similarly, the similarities between the Breton and Cornish languages, not found in Welsh, can be attributed to the common maritime culture that Brittany and Cornwall have been a part of for thousands of years, it doesn't necessarily prove that Breton and Cornish came from the same language, just that they developed similarity. I will go on shortly to look at the 'Southwestern Brittonic' language in Devon and in Somerset, and will bring evidence to show that this language may have been more like the extinct 'Cumbric' language than it was similar to Cornish or to Breton.

The Welsh identity is evidently not exchangeable with the British/Pretani identity of the Bretons and Brittonic speakers living in England. Welsh is distinct from the other P-Celtic Languages on a number of important grounds, this also applies to comparing Welsh with the Breton and Cornish Languages.

I have roughly come to define the 'Welsh group' as:

- . Development of initial *ll*
- . Development of initial *rh*
- . Old Brittonic *ê* often becomes *w* or *wy*
  - . *rc, rt – rch, rth*
- . Lenition of older *cc* and *tt* to *ch* and *th*
- . Lenition of older *d* to *dd*

The above sound changes are visible in both North and South Welsh dialects. These changes are sometimes observable in the Cumbric language, although often a different kind of mutation and lenition seems to take place in 'Northern

Brittonic'. In some ways, the Old North is very much connected to Welsh language and culture, hence the name Cumberland, originally Cumbreland, Welsh *Cymri*, and the name Wallace as historically applied to peoples in this region.

However, the extent to which Northern Brittonic was in the 'Welsh group' is questionable. It may have been that some areas spoke a Brittonic more like Welsh, and other areas did not. The same can actually be said for Wales, with the 'South Welsh' dialects and perhaps some of the Cumbric dialects being in a peripheral Welsh group, with the North Welsh dialects, particularly the dialect of Gwynedd acting as 'Central Welsh'.

Some of the defining features of Central Welsh include.

- . Voicing of medial stops
- . Proto-Celtic long *â* becomes *aw*
- . Development of /oi/ and similar sounds
- . Development of a schwa on the first syllable of multi-syllabic words
- . Tendency in spoken language towards present tense forms of 'to be' taking the prefix *d/da-* (possibly not directly related to central Welsh, but substrate influence or locally developed?).

The South Welsh dialects do not always fit into this, for example Pembrokeshire Welsh has *cwêd* or *cwêd* instead of the North Welsh *coed*. Pembrokeshire Welsh doesn't develop the schwa on the first syllable, so *mwni* or *mini* is used instead of North Welsh *mynydd*. Pembrokeshire Welsh doesn't develop *aw*, from long *â*, in Pembrokeshire Welsh *mwni mawr* 'big mountain', North Welsh *mynydd mawr*.

In this next section I will briefly look at three non-standard Brittonic languages of dialects, the Batz-sur-Mer Breton, Modern Cornish and Gwentian Welsh. I will then go on to talk briefly about Southwestern Brittonic.

## Batz-sur-Mer Breton

me	më	I
te	hi	thou
eñ	hañ	he
hi	ra, hia	she
ni	noñ	we
c'hwi	hui	you plural
int	dañ	they

The Batz-sur-Mer dialect is considered by some to be a fifth dialect of Breton, referred to as 'breton guérandais'. However, since no other dialects in the Guérande province have survived, it's difficult to tell if this was a language local to Batz-sur-Mer, or if in some ways it reflected Brittonic traits found across Guérande.

As can be seen from the pronoun comparison, the Batz-sur-Mer forms (second row) are quite different to the standard Breton forms. It is unknown if the pronoun *hi* comes from a confusion of *hui* and *te*, or if it shows mutation from *t* to *h*, which happens in Goidelic languages and 'indirectly' in some Breton dialects. The Vannetais pronouns in comparison are *me, te, ean, hi, ni, hui, ind/gi*.

Breizh	Brèrh	Brittany
karreg	garreik	rock
bremañ	beurmeñ, bërmañ	now
piv	pif	who
pelec'h	plèic'h	where
c'hoar	uèr	sister

The closest dialects to the Batz-Sur-Mer dialect are the Vannetais dialects of Breton, spoken around Mor-Bihan and inland. The dialect of Batz-sur-Mer however, sometimes reflects more closely Western Breton dialects in other ways.

## Modern Cornish – Kernûak Nowedzha/Cornôack Nowedga

Medieval Cornish	Modern Cornish	English
my, vy	me, ve	I
ty, jy	te, che	thou
ev	e, ev	he
hi	hei	she
ni	nei	we
whi	whei	you plural
i	andzhei	they

Modern Cornish is the Cornish that was most recently spoken in Cornwall, recorded from Western Cornwall in the 18<sup>th</sup> century by people such as Edward LLwyd. Modern Cornish is sometimes thought to have been more corrupt or influenced by English, but I have come to consider Modern Cornish, not as a less 'original' Cornish, but as a different Cornish altogether. Modern Cornish is significantly changed from the Tudor and Medieval types, which have mainly been the inspiration for the Standard Written Form. These changes are normally thought to be late influences and internal changes.

Something I have considered, is that their difference is one of dialect and 'register' and not one of age. Whereas older Cornish writing was usually more formal, Modern Cornish may represent the original spoken language of Western Cornwall. Modern Cornish shows does not combine pronouns with prepositions like older Cornish does, some things in the basic phonemes can be interpreted as an early split. The vowels and many of the sounds are different between the two types of Cornish, including the important difference between older Cornish *nn* and *mm*, but Modern Cornish *dn* and *bm/bb*. This pre-occlusion does not happen at the beginning of a word examples are *penn* – *pedn*, *lemmyn* – *lebmyrn/lebbyn*. The further change from *mb* to *bb* was not included in revived forms of Modern Cornish.

Sentences can be very different, older Cornish *mes yth esov vy ow kerdhes war an treth, dydh da* and Modern Cornish *byz therama kerraz war an trêth, dêdh dâ*. 'But I am walking on the beach, good day!'

So called 'Older Cornish', which may be 'East Cornish' in fact, is morphologically and phonetically closer to Old Welsh or 'Old Brittonic'. The oldest forms of this language show an even more archaic pronunciation, where the final -t hasn't become -s (or -z) as it did in Cornish. The older Cornish language was clearly more linked to the older Brittonic language in England. But was this due to age, or also due to Geography?

When Cornish was first written down, it would make sense that the written language and version of Cornish reflected an archaic, formal version of language, which may have been prominent in areas where links to this 'Older Brittonic Language and Culture' were most apparent, the culture that linked Cornwall to Devon and to Wales. This, possibly eastern Cornish, was not the same as the Brittonic language in Devon, this seems to be the case from place-name evidence. But it was certainly closer to the Brittonic language once there, than it was to the language in Western and rural Cornwall, parts where the 'Brittonic culture' had not been so central.

When this centrality of Brittonic culture began to disappear, so did the high register of the Cornish Language, the 'Cornish Brittonic Dialect', leaving the actual spoken language of Cornwall to take its place in the written record.



Theoretically, there is no sound proof or reason to conclude that Modern Cornish is just a modern form of the older language. The same can be said for Primitive Irish and Old Irish. They are two Q-Celtic Languages. But there is no direct evidence that one evolved from the other. They, like the different forms of Cornish, may have split off at roughly the same time.

Medieval Cornish	Modern Cornish	English
tas	tâz	father
peswar	padzhar	four
gwynsek	gwendzhak	windy
fordh	fordh/vorr	road
mos	moaz	go
lemmyn	lebmyrn, lebbyn	now
glas	glâz	blue
penn	pedn	head
genes	gena che	with you
chi	chei	house
hy	hei	she
morthol	morthol/morhol	hammer

Modern Cornish also shows the loss of dental fricatives dh and th, something that also occurred between Old Irish and Modern Irish.

## Southwestern Brittonic

Southwestern Brittonic is the proposed sub-classification of Brittonic that includes Cornish and Breton. I am of the view that such a sub family does not exist in such a strict way, with the similarities in Breton and Cornish coming from that the maritime culture in which both languages interacted, was connected since at least Neolithic times. The evidence for Brittonic in Southwestern England is inconclusive of a language that later evolved into Cornish and Breton. In fact this language seems to lack many of the changes that occurred in 'Southwestern Brittonic', in the sense of occurring in Breton and in Cornish.

Gloucestershire Nympsfield, SW Brittonic *nîmet*, *nîmp*- 'sacred grove'.

Nymet Rowland in Devon, Proto-Celtic *nemêton* 'sacred grove', Middle Breton *neved*. Old Irish *nemed*. Connected to Welsh *nef*, *nefoedd* – heaven. As we can see, the name Nymet doesn't suggest a special South-West Brittonic form, it shows the

same Brittonic root, but like often is the case in Cumbric, there is no sign of internal lenition. Reconstructed SW Brittonic *nîmet* with a possible later form *nîmêt*.

Dunchideock, Sw Brittonic *Dûn-Ceítoc*, *Dûn-Cídoc*, *Dun-Cídoc*, *Dûn-Ĉídoc* – ‘forested fort’, Welsh *Din Coed-og*, Cumbric/NW Brittonic: *\*Dûn Cêtoc*, *\*Dÿn Cêtoc*,

This place name is in itself enough to suggest, that Breton and Cornish did not come from a common ancestral language, but may have developed their similar characteristics because both Cornwall and Brittany were part of the same Atlantic trade roots, and part of the same ‘pre-Celtic’? culture.

If Southwestern Brittonic had given Cornish and Breton, we would expect the evidence of SW Brittonic in Devon to show the same changes that define Cornish and Breton, and yet they are mainly absent. This place-name shows that Proto-Celtic *û* did not even change into its Western Brittonic equivalent, in fact the Brittonic in Devon seems to have missed out on the changes that actually ‘define’ the Brittonic Languages of today.

We also see in the name *cídoc* ‘wooded’, that the vowel is more similar to /i/, which alongside long /e:/ forms is found in Cumbric, some examples of Northwestern Brittonic/Cumbric give *cîth* for forest, compare Scots/English ‘heath’. Whereas the Welsh, Cornish and Breton languages all have forms of this word that develop around a long or diphthongized /o/.

What this appears to show is that SW Brittonic was actually closer to Cumbric/NW Brittonic than it was to either Cornish or Breton, the archaisms of the phonemes in both varieties put SW Brittonic and NW Brittonic into a Central or Western Brittonic group that was spoken mainly in Western England, related to but separate from the Peninsula Brittonic Languages of Welsh, Cornish and Breton, and also distinct from the high register Gaulish/Brittonic.

Broadmayne, Dorset, contains SW Brittonic *mên* – stone, Welsh *maen*.

Winfrith Newburgh, South Dorset, SW Brittonic *Winn Frūd*, *Winn Frídh*, *Winn Fríth*, Welsh *gwyn* + *ffrwd*, ‘white stream’. In the Breton, Cornish and Welsh languages, the Proto-Brittonic initial *w-* gives *gw-*, this seems to be completely absent from SW Brittonic and doesn’t always seem to develop in NW Brittonic/Cumbric. Another example in Western Dorset is Winford, possibly from *Winn Frud* – *Winn Furd* with repositioning of consonants.

Cricket St Thomas in Somerset, SW Brittonic *Crūcet St Tomas*, with Brittonic genitive word order, *-et* is a diminutive suffix. *Crūg/crūc* is a burial mound or tumulus.

Dunkerton in Somerset, SW Brittonic *Dûn Cer(ec)*, or *Dûn Creic* – *Ceir(c)*, with a root similar to Welsh *craig* or *carreg* with possibly consonant repositioning.

West Pennard near Glastonbury, SW Brittonic *Penn Ard* or *Penn-Ghard* ‘high head’ or ‘field/farm head’. The first form seems more likely, *ard* would give *ardd* in Welsh, which again puts SW Brittonic outside of the changes of lenition.

Melchet Park, Hampshire, SW Brittonic *Mêl-Ceit*, *Mêl-Ĉeit*, 'bold hill forest', Welsh *Moel + Coed*, Cumbric *Mêl/Mail/Mal Cêt*.

Hampshire Andover, possibly from *onnâ* 'ash trees', a collective noun, Cornish *onn*, singulative *onnen* in Welsh *Onn Dŵr*, SW Brittonic *Ann Dôver* 'waters or water body of ash trees'.

## Brittonic elsewhere in Southern England

Chevening near Sevenoaks in Kent, possibly linked to Welsh *cefn* 'back', Cornish *keyn*, Breton *kein*, Brittonic *čeven*. Nearby Chatham may have a form of *čeit*. Lympne near the Kent Coast may contain *leim-*, *lím-*, *límp* 'elm', Welsh *llwyf* 'elms'.

It's notable that many of these 'Brittonic' words have very few forms in Indo-European languages, they may in fact be pre-Celtic words which survived in Celtic. The evidence we have of SW Brittonic suggests that a 'certain language' survived, but can we always identify this language with Brittonic, could some of these place-names show fossilized words that exist in Brittonic, but come from a different language?

## The Gwentian Language or dialect

Gwentian is the Welsh dialect that was once spoken in Southeastern Wales, the part of Wales which has perhaps the least survival of native Welsh dialects. Gwentian has quietly disappeared, although by classification it is in the 'Welsh Group' of Brittonic Languages, its position as a dialect of Welsh is questionable, considering that the North and South varieties in the Welsh group may have become separate quite early on. Many of the changes that took place across Welsh as a whole, seem incomplete or absent in Gwentian, and there is no evidence to suggest that Gwentian's important differences happened recently.

One very important difference is that in Gwentian, medial voiced stops are sometimes unvoiced. Something that existed in SW and NW Brittonic from place-name evidence. So already Gwentian's eastern position might have put it in some kind of dialect continuum with the 'Cumbric' or NW Brittonic language described from Herefordshire.

Some aspects of Gwentian are also found in other Southeastern or Southern dialects of Welsh, but Gwentian expands on these differences, which once had a level dialect

status that could be classed as a 'language', in the same way that South Estonian and Standard Estonian are both 'languages'. Whilst much has been spoken about the revival of Cornish, an important question I would like to ask, shouldn't we try to do the same for Gwentian?

Gwentian is not simply a variation of Modern Welsh or a set of predictable differences, it is a complete other 'dialect area', affectively a language in its own right by some definitions. As can be seen from the words below, the lenition processes of Welsh haven't taken place in Gwentian. Whilst Gwentian can be called part of the Welsh language on certain grounds and similarities, it certainly isn't the same Welsh as the language in North Wales, and taking into account a lack of lenition and possibly early divergence from North Welsh, perhaps Gwentian can indeed be called a language.

Gwentian contains the same letters as the Welsh alphabet, but with a few extra letters, including *sh* and *tsh*. Long vowels are written with a circumflex *â*, *ê*, *î*, *ô*, *û*, *w̃*, *ÿ*.

The letter combinations *äe* and *æ* are used for vowels unique to Gwentian, *ÿ* is the schwa sound that in standard Welsh is written *y*, but in Gwentian it is distinguished.

Gwentian has syncope, the place name *aber*, an estuary or conflux, is reduced to *br*, *Aberamen* is locally *Bramen*. Another example of syncope is in the word *cnel*, a canal, where the Latin word has had its vowel reduced.

Standard Welsh	Gwentian	English
afradu	bratu	to waste
symud, chwimio	wimlid	move
esgidiau	sgitsha	shoes
saeth	säeth	arrow
ieuanc	iefangc, ifangc	young
eglwys	eclws	church
cadno	canddo, catno	fox
coed	côd	forest
gweithio	gwïtho	to work
mis	mish	month
padell	patall	pan
chwarae	wara	play
cerdded	cerad	walk
rhywbeth	rwpath	something
casglu	clascu, clasgu	collect
yn enw'r	nenor	in the name of
maes	mäes	field
dweud	gweud	to say

Not all of the standard Welsh forms are the same as the colloquial North Welsh forms, where *chwimio* becomes *chwimiad*, and *dweud* is *deud*. South-Eastern Welsh commonly has initial hw rather than ch, this becomes w in Gwentian.

We can see from the table above that Gwentian (and South Welsh in general) lacks a lot of the diphthongs found in North Welsh. Some of these words show where the sounds *sh* and *tsh* appear. The word *bratu* shows perhaps an early divergence, where the vowel was dropped in Gwentian but the original consonant preserved.

## References

.Batz-Sur-Mer Breton: *Gildas Buron, Exposition La langue bretonne au pays de Guérande, Musée des Marais Salants de Batz-sur-Mer, octobre 2006*

.Modern Cornish: *A grammar of Modern Cornish – Wella Brown*

.SW Brittonic place-names were originally taken from <http://kep.notttingham.ac.uk/>, University of Nottingham - KEPN, Key to English place-names. Although I have interpreted these names often differently, the database provided my original list of Celtic names in SW England.

Gwentian: *Y Wenhwysseg: a Key To The Phonology Of The Gwentian Dialect. For The Use Of Teachers Of Welsh In Glamorgan and Monmouth Schools – John Griffith*

## Cumbric in Herefordshire?

Chris Johnson

The Cumbric alphabet used here is based on Joss Gospatrick's outline of Cumbric spelling and grammar:

*a, b, c, ch, d, dh, dd, e, ê, f, g, gh, h, i, ì, l, lh, ũ, thl, o, ò, p, r, s, t, th, u, v, w, w̃, y, ỹ*

The Cumbric alphabet I generally employ uses these letters for Eden Cumbric:

*a, b, c, ch, d, dh, ð, e, ē, f, g, gh, h, i, ì, l, lh, ũ, thl, o, ò, p, r, s, t, th, u, v, w, ɔ, y, ỹ*

The letter *ỹ* is used in this article to represent what was probably [y] or [ɣ]. My work mostly focuses on the Eden Valley Cumbric, which may have had a three way voiced dental distinction based on the more modern English dialects of the are, *d* [d], *dh* [ð] and *ð* [ɗ], Eden Cumbric may also have had nasal assimilation so that words like *penn* can be pronounced with an m, *pem* before *b* or *m*, evident from Cumbrian dialects and place-names. Sometimes the nasal disappears altogether, like in the local pronunciation of Penrith as Perrith. *W* is a short allophone of *ɔ* which is also used for initial w.

In this text, *dd* is used for where there would normally be *dh* to show [d] rather than [ð], which is written *dh*.

Herefordshire is an English county which borders Wales. The two have historically been separated by Offa's Dyke, a ditch running along the border between England and Wales. This monument was thought to be medieval, but some have suggested an earlier date, such as John Langdon's pre-Neolithic hypothesis.

The modern border with Wales does not correspond to the linguistic border between Brittonic and Germanic, and there are many Welsh place names in the south and west of the county.

This has been acknowledged for a long time, and Welsh was spoken in parts of the county into the 19<sup>th</sup> century. However, the Welsh language spoken in this period was probably almost identical to the Welsh spoken over the border. There would have been movement and communication between friends and families, and those who identified as 'Brittonic' or 'Welsh' would have kept their language, exposed to the same changes in the evolution of Welsh which took place on the other side of the border.

The Brittonic place-names in Herefordshire have always been referred to as Welsh or Brittonic (older place-names). Although place-name evidence shows similarity to the Cumbric language in Northern England and Southern Scotland.

It may be that there was an older variety of Welsh which survived here purely in place-names, but in some cases the differences between Herefordshire Welsh, and Welsh Welsh, are innovations which seem to have occurred uniquely or alongside Cumbric in the north. There could have been a dialect continuum, with some areas speaking a language more archaic than Welsh. Examples in Northern Herefordshire, such as Pencombe, *Penn Cumb*, show a

retention of earlier *-mb-*. Pencombe isn't far from the Malvern Hills, an area of Bronze Age activity with links to other Celtic speaking areas across Europe, including a possible link to the La Tène culture. Malvern is *Moel Fryn* in Welsh, coming from the earlier Herefordshire Welsh: *Moil Vrinn, Mal Vrinn*. This *oi* comes from Proto-Celtic *ay/ai*, and becomes *oe* in Welsh, although when the English version of this name appeared, this change appears not to have taken place.

The phonology of one language is sometimes obscured by that of another, so that place-name evidence cannot be relied upon entirely. On the other hand, these place-names often show how people of these areas pronounced their own names, so it's likely that some of these 'English' influences on Herefordshire Welsh were already present in the phonemes used by local people, and it is unlikely that many of these changes can be accounted for by English phonology. One such example is the pronunciation of Welsh *w* as 'o'. This also occurs in North-Western England, and appears to have been a feature of Cumbric.

Welsh was spoken in Archenfield until the 19<sup>th</sup> century. This area roughly corresponds to a part of the Welsh kingdom of *Ergyng*. In the very south western areas of Herefordshire there are examples of place-names which represent a language more or less identical to Modern Welsh. This south-western area of the county, including the Golden Valley or *Dyffryn Aur*, has a long history of Brythonic history, with archaeological sites similar to those found in Wales going as far back as the Neolithic era.

## Place-names and sound changes

.Aber Dour, Welsh: *aber dŵr*, Herefordshire Welsh/Cumbric: *aber dor/dovr* [dɔ:r], also Aberdough, later spelt Aberdew, Welsh *aber du*, Herefordshire Cumbric: *aber dŷv*. This may present an earlier pronunciation of Cumbric *ĵ* as *u*. Only 18km south of Hereford is the parish of Dulas. This shows an 'u' pronunciation of Cumbric *duv*. This was originally spelt Dyvleis.

The river Bacho was recorded in Welsh as *Bachwy*, although the meaning of this word is unknown. It may demonstrate that in Herefordshire, Welsh *-wy-* yielded 'o'. This is not totally unexpected, in South Wales this sound often becomes *w*, and it is not impossible that this *w* became indistinguishable from [u] in other positions, becoming 'o'.

The River Monnow is *Mynwy* in Welsh, possibly meaning 'fast water'. Herefordshire Welsh/Cumbric: *Monnou*.

Welsh *-wy-* often comes from Proto-Celtic *ē*, although this change appears not to have fully taken place in Herefordshire. Latin *-ē-* also became *-wy-* in Welsh, for example the Welsh word for Church: *eglwys*. But one example with the word 'Eccles', as well as the place-name 'Esk', shows that this change didn't fully take place, at least not in the area of the Monnow river. This change does appear to take place later in Herefordshire, and again 'u' appears as 'o'. So we have the form 'egloys'.

.Another example of this 'o' pronunciation can be found in the name Cae Beddow. The Welsh equivalent is probably *cae bedw*, meaning 'birch grove field'. Herefordshire Welsh/Cumbric: *cae bedo*. Camdore, is another example with *dor*. This translates as 'crooked water', *Camb Dor*. Camdore is near Bagwylydiart, not far from the border with Wales.

.Avenbury/Aweneburi could show Welsh *afon* with an unusual vowel change before the nasal.

The word ‘aven’ is sometimes used for burial mounds, perhaps showing influence from Welsh *awen*, referring to inspiration or life-force.

.Welsh *ae* from older *-ag* seems to be pronounced [e:]. For example Welsh *blaen* in ‘the Blane’, although in the older spelling Carycraaddock, *ae* appears as [a]. The word *caer* appears with both a [e] and [a] pronunciation across Cumbric. It may be that this is a dialectal variation, or that these two words once had totally separate meanings. Carey may be another example. Kaercroddock is another spelling, indicating [e:] or a similar sound but this could come from the definite article being taken into the previous syllable, Herefordshire Cumbric: *Caer y Caradoc*. The pronunciations Craddock and Croddock, show syncope which is also found in Cumbric.

This occurred when the accent was still on the last syllable of a word, something which appears to have been kept in Cumbric and Herefordshire Welsh. The general rule about syncope is that it doesn’t occur on the first syllable, although between a liquid and another consonant syncope seems frequent. In this example, the syncope could have been influenced by the syllable of the ‘car’ element. The word *gar-* also appears in numerous place-names, and some of these examples may not come from Welsh *caer*.

The [a] pronunciation in *caer* might demonstrate that [e] becomes [a] before *r*, also in Cumbric. A possible example is the Herefordshire dialect word ‘dar’, which is a stick used for measurement. This may further demonstrate alterations in pronunciation before liquids if this is related to the word *derw* (oak).

.Welsh *aw* appears absent when having come from earlier *ā*. In the medieval Welsh of Herefordshire, and in Cumbric, this sound became a long ‘o’.

.The personal name ‘Mouroc’ probably corresponds to Welsh *Meurig*, showing that Latin *au* became *ou* and not *eu*. The use of *-oc* in this saint’s name is also curious.

.Near Maes Coed and The Blane, is Llanveynoe. This name was originally recorded as Blaynleny, Blanlenye, Blenlevenny and Blan Levenny. In Welsh this would be *blaen llyfniad*. It seems that even on the Welsh border, *e* did not necessarily become a schwa. The absence of *-iad* in the plural is something also found in Cumbric, for example in the name ‘Levens’ in South Cumbria. Later place names show that the medial *v* has become silent, something also visible in certain dialects of Cumbric and Welsh. The pronunciation of *cefn* as *cewn* is found in parts of South Wales.

.The king’s name Clodock, is *Clydog* in Welsh has been applied to another place-name in the South West of the county. This shows that the local pronunciation probably preserved an older pronunciation, although I am uncertain of its exact etymology. If the river Monnow/*afon Mynwy* is an example of Brittonic *o*, this may indicate this sound did not become a schwa in Herefordshire Welsh. In all likelihood the schwa did exist, but may have been an allophone of older *e* and *o* rather than being the only pronunciation.

.The name Llanigon, Welsh *Llan Eigion*, indicates a pronunciation similar to general South Welsh. The *i* is missing in *-ion* and the diphthong *ei* is [i] or [ɪ]. The name Llandevelok is *Llan Dyfaeloc* in Welsh, Herefordshire Welsh/Cumbric: *thLan Develoc*.

.The name Riddox may be related to Welsh *rhudd* + *-og* which would mean ‘reddish’. The



word might also appear in Cumbria as 'Penruddock', Cumbric *Penn Rudhoc*, *Penn Ruddoc*, but here: *Ryddoc*. The change from [ð] to [d] may have been down to English influence, or it could be that [d] and [ð] were allophones at this period. The place names across Herefordshire with the -yard element are believed to come from *gardh*. It may be that *dh* was interchangeable with *dd* in certain positions.

.Llanwonog is *Llan Gwenog* in Welsh. In Welsh, *gwenog* means 'smiling'. The topographical meaning in the Herefordshire dialect, perhaps translates as 'radiant', the root word being *gwen* (white, shining, bright).

#### Words attested in Herefordshire Cumbric:

*alt* - a slope

*barr* - summit (*Nant-y-Barr*)

*cae* - a field, plural: *caeou*?

*coit*, *cwoit* - forest, appears often as *coed*, but as 'Quoit' in a place-name near Dulas, and Trescoyte, where the Tres- element could be linked to Welsh *traws* (across), e.g. *Trawsfynydd*, although the *c* shows no mutation. Herefordshire Cumbric: *tres coit*?

*cumb* - a hollow between two hills, appears as 'Cum' or *cwm* in most examples, with the *b* only preserved in a few examples.

*Eisc* - e.g. *Nant-yr-Eisc* near the River Monnow. This word appears in Irish as *iasc*, meaning 'fish', deriving from the hypothetical Proto-Celtic *φēskos*. Long *ē* in Proto-Celtic, typically yields *wy* in Welsh, although the Brittonic meaning of this word was different to the Goidelic. 'Esk' usually appears as a River Name, possibly referring to a Goddess of water, or a Goddess of water-life, rather than to 'fishes'. In the Brittonic languages, the general word for 'fish' comes from a Latin loanword. The River Esk, is *Ŵysg* in Welsh. This demonstrates two pronunciations which have evolved with the respective sound changes of two Brittonic dialects.

*ecleis* - church, e.g. Llan Egloys, recorded in the 1500s near the Abbey of Dore, although appearing in earlier names as 'Eccles'.

Welsh *ynys* 'island' appears in Pontenyws, probably the same as Welsh *pont-yr-ynys*. The final vowels in this word may have been influenced by the definite article or have undergone

*gardd*, *gardh* - a garden, e.g. Penyard. Penyard is near Ross on Wye, the [d] pronunciation perhaps came through English influence of the word 'yard'.

*gwrlot* - meadow, e.g. Pen-y-Wrlod in the south of Herefordshire. The exact etymology of this word is unknown, but it appears in South Welsh as *gwyrlod/gwrlod*, plural :*gwrlodydd/gwrlodi*.

*thlan*, *lan* - an enclosure or sacred area of land, later referring to a church. It's possible that the *lh* pronunciation was later than in Wales, and 'fl', 'tl' or 'thl' are often substituted in

place-names. *thLancithlou* is an example right on the Welsh border, *Llancillo*, showing that the -o pronunciation as opposed to Welsh -*au* in the plural, was widespread.

*penn* - head, e.g. Pen Helleck/Hollock near Llanwarne. This place-name may contain a pre-Celtic word. In Herefordshire, *o* doesn't always become *e* before *l* as it did in Welsh. This place name could also be from *Penn-Helioc* meaning 'salty hill', although this seems unlikely. Penebecdoc is a recorded name from the Archenfield area, perhaps *Pen-y-Becdoc*. *Byg-* appears in Welsh, in *bygwith*, *bygthiaid* and refers to something menacing or threatening. *Becdoc* could translate then as 'menacing'. Pentelow is perhaps *Penn Tellou*, Welsh *Pen Tyllau*. The word 'peon' may be a related word.

*pit* - a word of unknown meaning which appears in place-names, it is unlikely that it shares any relation to the Pitt- place-names found in Scotland. It may simply be an English borrowing, or a word which has been totally obscured by spelling.

*pont* - a bridge, e.g. *Pont-y-Mwdy*. The word *Mwdy* is unclear. It may be related to Welsh *mwydyn*, meaning 'worm'. It may be that the -*n* has become silent, or that the word is somehow related to the *mwy-* element, but the etymology is not clear. It may alternatively be an English borrowing of 'muddy'. Another example is *Pont-y-Pina* near the Golden Valley. This area appears to have later influences from Welsh too, hence the pronunciation of *pinau*.

*perton* - perhaps a boundary, related to Welsh *parth*.

*trev* - a village. Attested as *Penydree* in a place-name near Clodock. The [i] pronunciation may be English influence, or may represent a feature of the dialect.

## Evidence of continuity

There does appear to be noticeable patterns of distribution across the region. The Malvern Hills do not contain many Celtic place-names, but were likely occupied by Brittonic speakers in the past. Brittonic probably died here, along with the local clan system. But Brittonic may have once been used between the Malvern Hills and the Welsh border. The upland area of Pencombe is of particular interest. The names 'Dur' and 'Du' also occur here, as opposed to having the 'o' sound found in the south of the county. Avenmore is not far from here either, showing a possible vowel change before nasals. The form 'avan' also appears in Lanavan

Dinmore, Herefordshire Cumbric: *Din Mowr*, is located on the river Lugg. Dinmore means 'large fort', so perhaps it isn't too much of a stretch to say that Brittonic arrived in Herefordshire, spreading up the river valleys with a military or at least centralized Brittonic speaking culture. Although Dinmore is surrounded by Anglo-Saxon place-names, there is an iron age encampment on Dinmore Hill, which could easily be described as a 'big fort'.

From here, the River Lugg continues north, then west towards Powys. The word *mowr* indicates that Brittonic was probably used here after the Iron Age and into the medieval period. At this time, the -*mb-* pronunciation had not become -*m-*, as evidenced by various 'Combe' place-names towards the Powys border, such as Combe Moor *Cumb Mowr*. There are other names in this region which suggest a Brittonic origin, such as Belgate - *Bolgh/Belgh/Belg coit cēt*. and Ballsgate. This 'gate' element may have been an earlier pronunciation of *coit*. This region is also a treasure trove of hill forts, for example those of

Croft Ambrey and Wapley Hill. A later priory and mote and bailey castle can also be found near the village of Lingen.

It appears that the Brittonic language may have spread into this area up river valleys. These Iron Age people probably took hold of vantage points, building fortifications or adapting structures already in situation, although to what extent Brittonic survived in these regions is uncertain. It appears to have become extinct fairly quickly in the Malvern area, although a medieval dialect of Brittonic may have been adopted in some upland areas. To the west, the Brittonic language seems to have gained ground in the fertile valleys of the Lugg and Arrow rivers. The Leominster district itself is largely Saxon, but in a north-westerly direction from Dinmore, over Upper Hill and towards Dilwyn, there seems to have been a continuity of Brittonic. This area contains many place-names showing an ‘o’ pronunciation, for example Dorstone, examples of *Ecleis* appears in an older pronunciation as ‘Eccles’, e.g. Eccles Alley. Brittonic place names continue towards Combe Moor, but seem less numerous to the east of Weobley and upper areas of the River Arrow. In the upland areas to the south of Weobley, are the place-names Eccles Green and Devereux. Eccles, again represents an earlier period of Brittonic, before the ‘e’ had become *wy* in Welsh. Devereux also shows an archaic pronunciation of *djv*.

Although the area covered so far shows a Brittonic dialect, already distinct from Old Welsh, a number of these sound changes have also survived in Southern Herefordshire, in areas where Welsh survived for much longer. Right next to Herefordshire, is a hill known as Dinedor, originally used for the hill fort which looks over Hereford. This comes from *din y dor*, meaning ‘fort of water’. Place-names such as Belmont, near Hereford, may indicate that the pronunciation of vowels before liquids was closer to that of Welsh. Elsewhere in Herefordshire there is variation, with Welsh *moel* appearing as ‘mal’, when we might expect ‘mel’; and with *bolgh/belg* appearing as ‘bel’ or ‘ball’.

To the south, Saxon place names become replaced by increasingly more Welsh place names, although the pronunciation of Welsh *aw* as *ou* and of *w* as ‘o’ appear to go as far as the Welsh border, certainly in the South-West, with names such as Abbey Dore, Cayo (*caeou*), Coed More *coit*, *coid mōr*. The area to the east of the Dore, and south-east of Hereford, seems to show a language indistinguishable from Welsh. For example, Dewchurch and Dewsall just south of Herefordshire. Names like ‘Duffryn’, ‘Cwm’ and ‘Maes’ show a clear influence of modern Welsh in the Abbey Dore area, but this area also contains names elements which are not typical to Welsh.

### Possible pre-Celtic connections

The Brittonic presence in Herefordshire may be a more recent indicator of continuity going back thousands of years. The river Lugg is probably named after *Lugus*, a Celtic deity. He is also a character in Scandinavian mythology, but there he goes under the name Odin. The name Luggofre may show Iron Age to medieval continuity. ‘ofre’ seems related to the Welsh word *offeren*, meaning ‘mass’. The original meaning might have been used for making offerings to the gods, such as metal and other important items, making it closer to the original Latin verb. Luggofre would then mean ‘Lugg’s offering place’.

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*The place-names of Herefordshire, their origin and development, The Rev. A. T. Bannister,*

*M.A*

*An Introduction to the Cumbric sounds and grammar -*

<https://www.scribd.com/document/390053413/An-introduction-to-the-Cumbric-sounds-and-grammar>

The work above by Joss Gospatrick is part of a new research project into Cumbric which began in 2012. He helps shed new light upon Cumbric and demonstrates that it existed as a separate entity to Old Welsh, showing for instance that Cumbric may have marked the genitive case with lenition, the name Penhurrock in Cumbria coming from ***Penn Churroc*** with lenition of the noun.

## Examples of Cumbric and Celtic place-names

Chris Johnson

Northern England and Southern Scotland contain place-names from several languages, including Old English and Old Norse. Earlier names, particularly the names of ancient sites, forts, rivers and visible landscape features are Brythonic. There are also later Gaelic elements, far more common in Scotland, and some words appear to show a shared connection between Cumbric and Gaelic which we may identify as Pictish, or a southern variant of Pictish. The first place-names are classified within small regions to show how Cumbric differed and the intermixing of Gaelic vocabulary. Joss Gospatrick made initial place-name lists in August 2015, we have worked on this from his help. This article was first published on June 11<sup>th</sup> 2019.

### Bardon Mill area

Penpeugh, Carrsgate, Tow How, Plenmellor. *e* pronunciation of *ae*, initial devoicing before liquids *bl-/pl-*. No lenition of *t*. The devoicing is a feature of Pictish. Identified words: *penn* – head, possibly *cêt* in -gate – forest. Tow is probably a variant of *toll*, Welsh *twill*.

### Gilsland, Greenhead

Mains Rigg, Blenkinsopp, Glenwhistle, Redpeth Farm, Wain Rigg, Nanny Bell's Hill, The Curricks, Peat Gate. This area shows no initial devoicing; many of the local place-names are unclear, some looking Goidelic, others having associations with nearby ancient sites. Cumbric elements include *maen* – stone, as *mên*, *blaen* or *blen* – summit, *wân* related to Welsh *gwaun*, showing archaic phonology one would expect from Pictish and not Cumbric, meaning moor or heath, perhaps a bog in Cumbric, also found in Wansfell in The Lake District. Often it seems that Cumbric *gw* did not develop from the older initial *w*. *Nani* or *nannet* related to Welsh *nant*, *curric* – a circle or group of stones.

### Braithwaite Forest

Crammond's Hill, Glendue, Curricks, Guy's Middle. The first place-name is definitely Cumbric, and the term 'currick' is a local dialect word but may indicate older connections to specific places. Both Glendue and Guy's Middle may partly consist of Goidelic words, Guy may be related to Irish *gaoth* 'wind'. Crammond may show a *mond* variation of *monidh*. The spelling Glendue suggests a pronunciation similar to the Goidelic.

### Greyfell Area

Crew Crag, Maggot's Pike, Cammock Rigg. Cammock shows the *-mb-* as *-mm-*. *Magot* is perhaps a variation of *meget* – a wet place.

### Brampton and Hadrian's Wall North

Kirkcambeck, Lees Hill, Rinnion Hills, Lanercost, Breconhill Holme, Torties, Desoglin, Triermain Castle, Comberay, Baggal, Carnetley. Retention of *-mb-*. Contains *lis*, *rind/rinn* showing the plural *rinnion*, *comber* – a river conflux, Lanercost contains *lan-er-* showing the definite article,

### Northumbria

Bellcrag, Gauwin's Pike, Camstone, Claver Hill, Nanny's Hill, near Gowany Knowe, Popplehill, Brock Hill, Burn Divot, Moneyrees, Divot might be related to Welsh as *du* + *-et* 'blackish, black-like'. No retention of *-mb-*. Includes *broc* – *broch* – badger, *moni* – mountain, possible a form of Welsh *pobl* from the Latin, showing devoicing before a liquid as in Plenmellor nearby.

### Currock and Pennines

Talkin, Cleskett, Curdif, Tortie, Castle Currock, Tarnmonath, Albyfield, Cumrew Fell, Cardunneth Pike, Garth Marr. *Tal* – forehead, considered by some researchers to be a Semitic loanword into Welsh and Cumbric.

### W Tynedale

Banno Crag, Catless stone circle, Pittland Hills, Catreen, Dinley Hill, Comogan Farm, Meny Side, Carrsburn, Laverick. Possibly contains a plural *bannow*.

### Allendale

Curricks, Catton, Dinnetley, Nubbock.

### North of Hexham

Caverton, Divethill (variant of 'Divot?'), Comb Hills.

### Slayley

Beldon, Pennypie, Derwent, Pithouse Fell, Colpitts, Neddy's Well. The pitt element may refer to mining or may be Pictish or early Cumbric.

### Annan

Glenwhappen, Glenbreck, Pedderie Dod, Neth Hill, Glencotho, Talla Moss and Reservoir.

### Near Moffat/Carrifran

Garelet Hill, Carlavin, Dinlaw, Carrifran, Midlaw Linn, Polmoody Burn, Dow Linn, Henderland, Carson's Cleugh, Etrick. Carrifran is from *Caer-y-Vran* with *v* becoming *f* before the liquid. Polmoody shows *poll* – a pool or stream, Welsh *pwll*, plus Muddy, a similar

word is found in a Herefordshire Cumbric place-name indicating that *mud* might have existed in Cumbric.

### Vindolanda area

Barcombe, near Longstone. To the north lies: Nanny's Hill, Kingscrag Gate, King Wanless. This region shows retention of *-mb-*. Containing *barr*, *nannet* and *wân*.

### Immediately north of Carlisle

Cargo Rigg, Caldew River, Cummersdale, Durdar, Coomera near Cotehill, Cardewlees, Low Whinnow, Torkin, Hoskethill. No retention of *-mb-*, *-uv* possibly [y] or [ʉ].

### Eden river, east of Carlisle

Cumwhinton, Linstock. No retention of *-mb-*.

### Solway Firth area:

River Linn, Lynefoot, Garriestown, Arthuret House.

## Southeastern and southern Scotland

***Barr-Penn-Ald*** - Barpennald, the 'bar' element may be from Gaelic, but the rest of the name is probably from *penn ald*, as a variant of *penn alt* 'head of the slope'. This possibly shows a voicing of certain consonants after liquids.

***Blan Tir***, Blantyre, Lanarkshire. Variation of ***Blaen Tir***. This is thought to come from *\*blagnos* 'summit', but the sound changes for *-agC* are not completely understood. Old Welsh *blain*, Cornish *blyn* and Breton *blein*. Padel, CPNE suggests a relationship with Welsh *blen*, which means 'hollow', but the Cumbric place-names closely match the Welsh *blaen* meaning 'summit'. In Scotland this word appears as 'blan', but as 'blen' to the south.

***Carn Dinys***, Cairndinnis in Lothian, Scotland, but not far from the border. In Welsh this would be *carn dinas*. This is an example of vowel changes in Cumbric, where the stress may have remained on the final syllable, meaning that Welsh *dinas* was pronounced ***dinys*** in Cumbric. The Welsh word *galanas* also appears as Cumbric ***galnys***.

***Crumb-Land*** – Crumblands near Edinburgh, (crooked area/twisted area). The ***b*** was probably a mispronunciation by Cumbric speakers. This word is quite obscure and might come from PIE *\*grū-mo-* meaning 'fragment, crumb', with the Cumbric meaning being a pile of rubbish or stones. But this could also be a non Indo-European word (Welsh: *crwm*). This

word also appears in a Southwestern Brythonic place-name.

**Ecleis Breth** – Eglesbreth ‘Falkirk’ perhaps a variant of **ecleis braith**, ‘spotted, speckled church, perhaps having a meaning of ‘seen, visible, obvious’ in Cumbric, which is similar to the Old Irish *braithid*, meaning ‘spies, notices, points out’. The word **ecleis** shows that at least on the final syllable, a sound similar to Welsh *-wy-* did not evolve.

Erring Burn, Lothian. Possibly Cumbric **erryn, arian**. This could be linked to the Welsh word *arian* ‘silver’, perhaps originally meaning to shine, or to be bright. This is thought to come from Proto-Celtic *\*argantom* ‘silver, shining’, but may related to a pre-Indo-European word of the same meaning, which gave us the word ‘Erin’ for ‘Ireland’, as well as the word ‘iron’. In Proto-Welsh, this might be reconstructed as *\*argant*. This might mean that *-ar* became *-er* in this Cumbric dialect, and again shows a vowel *y* in the last syllable of the word. In Wigtownshire is the place-name Pularyan, showing that in this area the word normally appearing as **poll** or **pow** had a variant of [u], as well as the initial *-ar* as opposed to *-er*. The vowel change appears not to have taken place either.

Megget Water, in Selkirkshire, possibly linked to Welsh *mign* ‘bog’, plural: *mignoedd*. This might imply a Cumbric equivalent of the Welsh plural *-oedd*. The word **meg** would seem to mean ‘wet’ or ‘damp’, plus a suffix. Perhaps **meget** meant ‘boggy, damp stream’.

**Minit Eidyn** is an original name for a mountain near Edinburgh, presumably King Arthur’s Seat. This word shows that even in Medieval times, Welsh speakers recognized this pronunciation as *i* and not *y*. If the final consonant was a dental fricative, one might expect the spelling *mynydd*, indicating that this word was pronounced with a final ‘d’ or ‘t’ originally.

Molendinar Burn, near Glasgow. May contain **molyn, molen** ‘mill’.

Moniefoot Hill, Linlithgow. Linlithgow lies to the west of Edinburgh, and this place-name seems to show the Cumbric equivalent of the Welsh *mynydd*, without the dental fricative. Another example is Monynut near Oldhamstocks. Cumbric: **moni**.

**Nowi Drev** – Niddrie near Edinburgh, possibly a variant of **nowidh drev** meaning ‘New Town’. This was originally recorded as ‘Nodref’ and ‘Nudref’. This might demonstrate that in the area around Edinburgh, Cumbric **ow** (Welsh *ew*) was not pronounced as a diphthong. This place-name doesn’t tell us whether the original form was **nowidh drev** or **nowi drev**. It is interesting that Scottish Gaelic uses **nuadh** showing the final d, whereas Irish and other appearances in Indo-European do not have a final d. This can also apply to the forms **monadh, moni** and **minit**, which seems to show different forms of the same word in different Indo-European dialects.

Presmennan in East Lothian, Scotland, originally recorded as ‘Presmunet’. This shows a variation of **monidh** ‘ridge, upland moor or pasture’, here it appears that the **o** before the nasal did drop to form a schwa as it did in Welsh *mynydd*, and that the original [j] from Brittonic *monios* did not disappear, or become [ð]. The [t] pronunciation may have come from a form more similar to *mynydd* being borrowed, and the final *-dd* being pronounced differently.



The following words were given by Joss Gospatrick and were discussed by myself and Richard Edwards in his article on Gallowegian Gaelic and Cumbric.

[https://www.academia.edu/38215140/Galloway\\_Gaelic\\_and\\_Old\\_Welsh](https://www.academia.edu/38215140/Galloway_Gaelic_and_Old_Welsh)

## Pennines North & East Cumbria

Brinns, Shap, probably related to Welsh *bryn* 'hill', Cumbric *brinn*. Appears to be a later Cumbric word.

The River Lowther, near Penrith, appears to show a Celtic word found in Gaulish but not in Welsh nor in Cornish. It comes from a root to wash or bathe. It appears in Irish as *lothar*, Proto Brittonic *\*lāuatro*. Lowther was written with a 'd' originally, but it seems that the *d* in this position had a tendency to become a dental fricative. Local Cumbric: *lowadher*. It is notable that the English dialect of Penrith distinguishes three voiced dental sounds. When the Penrith dialect of Cumbric is more understood, the phonemes will be represented more accordingly. But *dh* will serve in Standard Written Cumbric.

*Mal Vre Stang* – Mallerstang, *mal vre*, variant of *mêl vre*– 'bald moor', *stang* is a Norse loanword meaning 'staff', with the Old West Norse equivalent *stongr*. Mallerstang may mean 'Staff of the empty/bald moorland'.

Mindrum, Northumberland. This is a word similar to Welsh *mynydd* appearing as *mini*. It shows a similar vowel change before *n* to the Dumfriesshire forms of this word, but it is unclear whether it was originally *mind drum* or *mini drum*. If the latter, then the final vowel must have been barely audible.

Pant Foot, Ingleton. *Pant* is common in Welsh, meaning the bottom of a valley.

Tarnmonath Fell, on the Cumbrian side of the Pennines. This place-name is curious for having the form *monadh*, *monath*. Could this have been Gaelic influence on the region, or was this a local pronunciation? Despite the Welsh final *-dd* being absent from the Cumbric form in many examples, Scottish Gaelic has borrowed the word *monadh* from what was probably a P-Celtic dialect. This may have occurred at a time when the dental fricative was in use, or the lenition may have occurred in Gaelic. This was originally adopted into Gaelic as *monid*, *moned*.

*Trus* - Truss Gap, Shap; probably a variant of *drus* probably meant 'door, entrance, pass'. This place name shows evidence of devoicing before a liquid. Trusmadoor in Ireby is another example, Cumbric *trusma* 'entrance place'. This is less likely than *trus* being a variant of Welsh *traws* 'across', e.g. Trawsfynydd in Gwynedd. I would not expect *u* in the Cumbric form of *traws*, which does appear to exist elsewhere and without *u*. The Semantics also make

less sense as *traws* here, *-ma* 'place' (also appears as *va*, *vy*) wouldn't really fit with *traws*. The original meaning of *trus* as a pass or wide entrance can be seen in the Welsh place-name *Drws-y-Coed*.

## West and central Cumbria

Bannel Head, near Kentmere, perhaps Cumbric *bann* plus *le* – place, indicating a rearrangement of the vowel around the liquid.

*Blen Car Arthur*, variant of *Blaen Caer Arthur* - Blencathra, (summit of Arthur's abode) older: Blencarthure. I found out many years ago whilst speaking to a historian that Blencathra is a location of 'Arthur's sleeping army', a story told throughout Western Britain about King Arthur and his knights, sleeping beneath a mountain. I had originally come across the Blencathra legend and then began to research similar legends about Snowdon in Gwynedd. Another is set at Alderley Edge in Cheshire. An alternative is that 'Blencathra' could be related to the Welsh *blaen cadair*, for 'top of the throne, summit of the throne', but the Cumbric intervocalic *t* doesn't seem to change to a dental fricative. I think that the *Blaen Caer Arthur* etymology is probably more likely, owing to the local legend which must surely have originated at a time when the area was Cumbric speaking, and when people thought of Arthur as a mythical saviour.

Duddon (valley), possibly 'black deepness/depth'. The river Duddon opens onto the coast of West Cumbria, and the names 'Duddon' and 'Dunnerdale' are quite hard to interpret etymologically. Most people agree that the *du* element is from the Cumbric word for 'black, dark'.

Erin Crag, Coniston Old Man. The old name for part of the mountain, Erin Crag, might contain a form of Welsh *arian*, which in this case may be related to the Irish word Éire, if there is a connection between these Indo-European etymologies and the Bronze Age copper and gold mining industry which went from Southwestern Ireland to Wales, Alderley Edge and Cornwall. Coniston is a historic copper mining region, and Erin Crag might prove as a potential place for evidence of ancient mining.

Kinmont, Corney Fell, possibly from *cinn monet*. This shows the word for 'mountain ridge, upland for grazing', as well as 'kin' meaning 'head, summit'. The Cumbric form *cinn* shows a vowel change from the original Gaelic *cenn*, although the precise origin of the Cumbric form is disputed. It may be linked to Welsh *cefn*.

Levens, near Milnthorpe. The etymology of this word is very obscure, but it may be linked to PIE *\*sli* 'to smooth off, make something level'. Place-names in Wales, originally *llyvyn*, then *llyfn* (plural: *llyfniad*) appear to be the same as the Cumbric form. There is some evidence that Cumbric and Pictish sometimes retained initial *s-*, an example from West Cumbria is Sleven.

Mabbin Hall, near Levens. This area has ancient history, including Beaker burials and a possible Iron Age fort. This place-name is medieval, and probably shows a different Cumbric form of Welsh *maban*, in this Cumbric dialect: *mabyn*.

Moricambe – on the Solway Firth, Cumbric *môricamb* – sea bend, the retention of the final vowel in *môr* may be a very unusual archaism.

Pengennet – two names, one appearing in Dunnerdale and another in the Kentmere Valley, appears linked to the name Kent, as in The River Kent, this root probably comes from the Cumbric *Penn Gennet* – head of the Kent, *Cennet* may contain the suffix *-et* acting as a genitive, from *cenn*, meaning head or summit, or connected to Brittonic *cant-* - a border.

*Ros Wragedh*, Raswraget in Cumbria, originally Roswrageth, might be linked to Welsh *rhos/rhôs wragedd*. Welsh *gwragedd* is the plural of *graig* ‘woman’. This may have meant ‘moor of women’. The interchanging between the dental fricative and t is unusual.

## Lancashire

.Bryn Hill, Lancashire. Originally ‘brunn’, Cumbric *brinn* 'hill'.

.*Carn y Mail*, *Carn y Mail*, 'cairn of the moor'; Carnemal near Wiggon, also spelled Carmyle. This is another example of a Cumbric place-name, where Welsh *oe* isn't pronounced ‘e’ as it is in most of the Cumbric region. The original vowel in this name is uncertain, perhaps it was an ‘a’ with slight diphthongisation, perhaps [əi].

## Pennines South

Parwich, Derbyshire. This was originally recorded as Peuerwich. The first element might be related to Welsh *pefr* ‘bright’, indicating that medial 'v' sounds became assimilated into diphthongs or released as [w]. Peffer in Scotland is another example, but shows [f] occurring before *r*. Peover in Cheshire, earlier Peuere is another example.

*Penn Crÿc*, *Penn Crig*, Penkrige, Staffordshire originally recorded as Pencric. The northern variant would be *Penn Cruc*.

All place-names came from ordinance survey and older maps of the regions in question.

More information on the Cumbric used here can be found in this document

<https://www.scribd.com/document/390053413/An-introduction-to-the-Cumbric-sounds-and-grammar>

## An introduction to the Cumbric sounds and grammar

Joss Gospatrick

The phonology of Cumbric isn't exactly clear, we can only make educated guesses at the phonemes of Cumbric, based upon modern pronunciation and recorded pronunciation in place-names.

Attempts to revive Cumbric are underway, including Cumbraek by Neil Whalley and an ongoing reconstruction of the Cumbric spoken in the Eden Valley, both of which have a more specific set of phonemes. Early forms of Northern P-Celtic (including Pictish) are written in a different spelling.

I developed a standard Cumbric orthography for writing place-names and other words with their different dialectal variations. The spelling is partially based on how these place-names were written down, but also with influence from previous versions of Cumbric. The exact phonemes are not completely understood at this time, but the following is worth noting.

Cumbric appears to have dental fricative sounds where Welsh does not, at least in some areas.

Cumbric also has stops rather than fricatives, for example in the place-name Penruddock, Cumbric *Penn Ruddoc*, where Welsh would have *rhudd* rather than *rudd* (if this is the correct etymology). I use *dd* to donate where Welsh would have a dental fricative, but Cumbric has a 'd'. The letters *dh* represent the voiced dental fricative [ð] in Cumbric, e.g. *cêdh* 'forest'.

*ow* represents what was probably [o:], [ɔ:] and [ɔʊ]. *ō* is used to write the sound in areas with no diphthongisation, e.g. Cumbria. When this sound, or a variation appears when forming the plural or when being comparable to Welsh *eu* it is written *-ou*, because it may have been pronounced differently in certain positions. *ow* is also used to write a form of the Brittonic *au*, e.g. *lowadher. ei* represents what was probably a long [e:], which may have had other allophones, e.g. *ecleis* 'church'. Both of these sounds may have diphthongised in some areas, or may previously have been diphthongs.

*u* is used for what is presumed to be [u], but which may have had [ʊ] as a short allophone. This sound was susceptible to changes and doesn't have this pronunciation in the modern Brythonic languages. As far as Cumbric is concerned, the [u] pronunciation seems to survive in the north where i-affection is often less evident. The sound without i-affection was written *w* in Middle Welsh, the Middle Welsh *u* being pronounced [u]/[u:] and normally coming from a Proto-Celtic *ou* and *oi*, except in words such as *du* 'black' and in various Latin loanwords, where [y] and fell together with [u].

In Modern Welsh, *i* is pronounced [ɪ] or [i:] depending on length. In the north, *y* and *u* are pronounced [ɨ] or [i:] depending on length, and in the south these are pronounced [ɪ] when short and [i:] when long. The [ɨ] in Middle Welsh typically evolved from *i* in Ancient British, for example *monnios - mynydd*. It appears that this final *-dd* didn't always appear in Cumbric, leaving the final syllable open e.g. *moni*, where there is no reason to suggest that the final vowel was [ɨ]. The letter *y* is used when another vowel has undergone spirantisation in the final syllable of a word, e.g. *galnys* for Welsh *galanas*. In a position like this, the pronunciation of Cumbric *y* may have been [ɨ] or [ɪ]. This sound may also have always been pronounced [ɪ] in southern Cumbric areas where today's English dialects have a preference for [ɪ] over [i], leaving forms like *monydh* possible. The same

may have also happened to *u*, making *ty* and *brynn* possible variations of *ti* ‘thou’ and *brinn*.

The letter *y* is also used to mark vowel changes to a word where necessary, for example *dyvoc/devoc* ‘dark’, but *duv* ‘black’, e.g. Glendevon near Kirkliston. It appears that *-uv* can change to *-ev* or *-iv*. Glendowlin near Penrith, preserves an [o] pronunciation. More examples of pronunciation differences, can be seen in the nearly identical place-names of: Pardivan, Pardovan and Parduvine. On its own, *y* stands for the definite article, which can also appear as *yr*, *yn* and *yl*.

This sound or a similar sound evolved in Welsh from Proto-Brythonic *u*, which became [y] when affected by internal or final i-affection and then presumably became [i] in Middle Welsh, written *y*. In Northern P-Celtic, i-affection is often lacking, and this vowel change seems less simple. It appears that the sound change [u] to [y], to [i] may not have occurred in Cumbric, so *y* is not used to spell this word in Cumbric, which I spell *brinn*. Although a form of this word does occur as *brinn*, this vowel is one northern variant and may have had allophones, including [i] and [ɪ], but spelt *i*. The original pronunciation of this vowel may have been [ø], [œ] (in Pictish areas) or [y] or [ɛ] (rarely). Although the original sound is not known, [ø] may be written as *ϋ*.

The letter *ȳ* is used to represent a vowel between [y], [ɣ] and [i]. This occurred with i-affection as a variant of *u*. In Cumbric, this pronunciation appears to have been dialectal rather than being the norm. For example *dȳv*, *crȳc* as variants of *duv* and *cruc*. *ȳ* is generally used when transcribing southern dialects, whereas [ʊ] occurs as a modern Cumbrian realisation of a long [u], which is transcribed *y*. E.g. *dȳv*, *crȳc*.

I-affection also caused the Proto-Brythonic *o* to become [y] or [ø], written as *ȳ* and *ϋ* for those that prefer that rendering of the pronunciation. I normally use *o* because i-affection often doesn't occur. For example *mȳnidh* and *Cȳmbri* are the forms *monidh* and *Combri* after i-affection. This vowel seems to have become a sound like [i] or [ɪ] in some words, but in other words this may have become [ʊ], written *ȳ*, or [u], written *u*. The original sound changes may have occurred in different areas before spreading into the Cumbric area as the language spread there.

*ê* represents what was probably a sound between [eɪ] and [ɜ:], possibly occurring as a short [e] or [ɜ]/[ɛ] in some positions. When this vowel occurs as a diphthong between [äɪ] and [aɪ], it is written *ai*.

The letters *thl* are used to spell the Welsh *ll* sound, although this only seems to occur in a couple of place-names, e.g. Trailflat, Cumbric: *trev yl thlat*. *ll* is used to represent [ɬ], which can disappear to become [w], often seen in place names with ‘pol’ or ‘pow’, *poll*. The Cumbric *gh* is used to represent a voiced *ch*, or it may be silent. *lh* is used to represent the voiceless [ɬ] sound which may have evolved in Cumbric, e.g. *lhann* for *lann*. *thl* may also be written *fl* for those who see that as a valid, later pronunciation.

*ch* was probably pronounced [ɬ] when initially occurring as *chw*, but was pronounced [x] elsewhere.

Brythonic *-ag* plus another consonant, tends to become *ae* in Welsh. In Cumbric, the original sound with the muted *-g* may have been pronounced as a diphthong in some areas where this sound change first occurred. Across most of the Cumbric region this appears to have been pronounced [ɛ:], [ɛ:] or [eɪ], perhaps owing to an early preference for [e] rather than [a] in some positions in Cumbric, particularly when occurring as a long vowel in single syllabled words which hadn't come

from *ā*, e.g. Welsh *tân*, but Cumbric may have had *ten*, *tin*. This can be spelt *ae* or *e* depending on the pronunciation chosen to be represented. This sound almost always becomes [a] or [æ] before *r*, except in parts of Scotland. For example *caer* as *car* in Cumbria. In parts of Scotland, this sound becomes *a* in other positions, but it is not known how general this was; e.g. *blan* in Scotland with *blen* in England, originally *blaen*.

Although little can be said about Cumbric grammar, there are remnants in place-names and possibly in the local dialects of English. Cumbric seems to have had at least three definite articles across a wide area, with *yn* before *t* and perhaps other dentals, and with *yr* and *y* as variants, with *yr* always coming before vowels and sometimes before consonants. For example *yn tir* 'the land' (reconstructed noun). A fourth form, *yl*, appears near Carlisle and seems to occur before *thl*. The pronunciation of the definite article seems to have varied upon its position and perhaps differed across regions. Cumbric has evidence of lenition of adjectives after feminine nouns, also found in other modern Celtic languages, and lenition after adjectives, for example *cul gêdh* 'narrow forest', showing the mutation from *c* to *g*. The mutations in Cumbric are less clear than those in other Brythonic languages, some place-names such as Glaskeith showing no lenition at all.

Lenition in Cumbric sometimes occurs in unexpected places, for example in Cardrona, Cumbric *Car/Cair Dronou*. Two extremely interesting place-names are Carhullan and Penhurrock. The etymology of both places is unclear, but they make sense if the second element has undergone aspirate mutation, Cumbric *Car Chul Lann* and *Penn Churroc*. It is speculative but remotely possible that the aspirate mutation is an indication of the genitive, *Car Chul Lann* meaning 'farm of the narrow land' and *Penn Churroc* 'head/top of the 'Curr'. The *curr* may be some type of rounded stone fortification or religious site, referring to the stone avenue at Penhurrock, with the *-oc* suffix making this 'of the curr'. This is unlikely to be related to the Welsh word *corwgl*, from *corwg*, as the Cumbric phonetics don't match up, a relationship to the Irish word *curach* 'boat' is also unlikely, there is no water nearby to the site and the stones don't form the shape of a boat.

The place-name Plentridoc (Borthwick, Midlothian) may be Cumbric *blaen/blen/plen tridoc* 'third summit', although in Welsh this would be *blaen trydydd*. This might be another example of no equivalent of *-ydd* in Cumbric, in this case the possessive ending *-oc* seems to have been used, Proto-Celtic *tritiyos*.

Bardennoch near Carsphairn may contain *danoc* meaning something like 'toothed', another example of *-oc* and showing a change in the pronunciation of *a* before a nasal.

*-an* appears to have been a nominal or locative suffix, perhaps to describe a collective area of something. E.g. Louran Burn near Minigaff, Glasson Docks near Lancaster may contain a related but separate suffix, *glas* 'blue, grey', *glasson* 'of greyness', it is unlikely that this suffix was a diminutive.

A possible remnant of the Cumbric verb might exist in the Cumbrian dialect, where pronouns are often attached to their respective verbs, e.g. *aaz* 'I am', *dusta* 'do you'.

This research was conducted alone and the ideas are quite different to what other writers have said

about the subject, but there are some fantastic resources for learning about Cumbric and getting an idea of how it might have worked.

References:

- Language and history in early Britain - Kenneth Jackson, Reading this book helped me to initially understand how Cumbric and Pictish phonology might work, I have made my own conclusions on many things but this work is a good foundation for any research concerning ancient Brythonic languages.
- The Brittonic language in the Old North - Scottish place-names society, by Alan G. James. - this is the most up to date guide to Brittonic place-name elements in Northern Britain, excluding Pictland. I made great use of this resource to double check place-names.

## Galloway Gaelic and Old Welsh in Southwestern Scotland

This work was based on my unpublished work *An Gháedhelig*. The Cumbric/Old Welsh vocabulary was provided to me by Josh Gospatrick Wilson, a pioneering researcher with 10 years experience in studying medieval Welsh. Josh has kindly given me permission to include some of his unpublished work here.

Scotland has three native languages, English, Scots and Gaelic. English and Scots are more widely spoken, but Gaelic is an older language that was once used across most, if not all of Scotland. Gaelic was never a uniform language, and was spoken quite differently from place to place. Today Gaelic is spoken in the Hebrides, particularly on the Western Isles. The most Gaelic speaking place in Scotland is the Isle of Lewis, where around 90% speak the language in some places.

Gaelic was once spoken across Southern Scotland, including south of Edinburgh even and what is now Ayrshire and Dumfries and Galloway. When Gaelic came to Scotland from Ireland, it seemed to replace the dialects of northern Welsh in England and Scotland, called Pictish north of the Forth and Cumbric between central Scotland and North Wales. The Perthshire Gaelic dialect and the Galloway Gaelic dialect were spoken where Pictish and Cumbric names are quite common. Both dialects have various archaicisms that are shared with Irish but not Hebridean Scottish Gaelic, which suggests some of the earliest Gaels in Scotland settled in Perthshire and Galloway.

Like the Hebridean Gaels, the Gaels in Galloway formed part of a joint kingdom with the Norwegians. When Welsh became extinct in Galloway, the Gaelic and Old Norwegian languages were both used. There may have been some intermixing of the languages as many Old Norwegian place-names have a Gaelic word order. The Northumbrian dialect of Old Anglo-Saxon seems to have been established in the region as well. Further research will be needed to determine where Gaelic might have survived the longest in Galloway and if there were dialects.

Galloway Gaelic is written slightly differently to Scottish Gaelic, it's spelling is more based upon the classical Gaelic spelling that was the basis of the Scottish and Irish Gaelic spelling systems. Galloway Gaelic has been spelled **Gáedhelig**. Scottish Gaelic spelling has been changed to make it more distinct from Irish, when Galloway Gaelic seems to have been sometimes closer to Irish. The Galloway Gaelic broad **ch** seems to vary with /xw/ and /w/ in initial position, in examples like Glenwhilly and Altiwhat, Galloway Gaelic **Gleann Choille** and **Allt na Chat**. Sanquhar shows a /w/ sound after the c, Galloway Gaelic **Seann Caithair\***.

Galloway Gaelic **ch** seems to become silent between vowels, Mahaar near Kirkcolm, Galloway Gaelic **Machair**, Clayshant near Stranraer, Galloway Gaelic **Clach Seant**, Barhullion near Stranraer, Galloway Gaelic **Barr Chuileann**, and Auchencloy, Galloway Gaelic **Achadh na Cloiche**.

On Arran the broad mh between vowels would sometimes revert back to m. There is some evidence for this in Galloway Gaelic, the place-name Wamphray, perhaps Galloway Gaelic **Uamh Phraimh**.



Compare Wampool, the name of a river and estuary which is nearby in North Cumbria. Galloway Gaelic **uamh** may have had a broader meaning than in Irish and Scottish Gaelic. If the word **deanma** is the verbal noun of **déan**, then it would add further evidence to this theory, and **diamain** from Òran Bagraidh if this is the same as Scottish Gaelic *diomhain*.

Broad **bh** and **mh** seems to become /w/ between vowels, also found in some Scottish and Irish Gaelic dialects, the place-name Craigslouan, Galloway Gaelic **Craig Sleamhan**.

The song Òran Bagraidh might show initial devoicing in Galloway Gaelic, **fa** may translate as **bha**, in the phrase, **fa tu deanma**, Scottish Gaelic: *bha thu a' dèanamh?* The words **teasmailt** and **teanmaidh** may show this sound change, **teasmailt** may have the meaning of 'good beef' or similar. One place-name shows /t/ or /tʃ/ in **deas**.

Galloway Gaelic **a** and **á** to might show a change to /ɛ/ and /ɛː/. Examples of this vowel change can be seen in the Ulster dialects of Irish, and in some Scottish Gaelic dialects, Arran in particular. This is noticeable in Clayshant and Drumbain near Kirkcowan, Galloway Gaelic **Clach Seant** and **Drum Bán**.

As in parts of Ulster and Northern Scotland, /a/ can become /o/. This might have happened in Galloway Gaelic in some of the place-names: Adderhole near Penninghame, Galloway Gaelic **Eadar Ghabhal**; Auchendolly near Castle Douglas, **Achadh an Dealg**, Auchnabony, Galloway Gaelic **Achadh na Banibh**. But this sound change has insufficient evidence, as Adderhole and Auchendolly may have alternate etymologies.

The place-name Ben Yellery from **beinn iolaire**, shows /jɛ/ or /jɛː/ as the pronunciation of **io**, but with a semivowel at the beginning of a word. The place-name Bargrennan, may show an [ɛ] pronunciation of **ia**, Galloway Gaelic **Barr Grianain**.

Galloway Gaelic **ú** can be pronounced as a long 'o', for example Drumdow, **Drum Dúbh**. Allandoo near Leswalt shows a more common pronunciation, Galloway Gaelic: **Oileán Dúbh**.

Manx can differ from Scottish and Irish Gaelic, in words such as aeg 'young', Irish: *óg*, Scottish Gaelic: *òg*. A similar, but different change appears to have taken place around Stranraer. Hence, the pronunciation of **srón** as 'Stran-'. Another example, is the mysterious place-name from just south of Stranraer, Pont Port-na-Mony-a-koane, Galloway Gaelic: **Pont Port na Monaidh an Choin**, appears to show the [oɛː] pronunciation arising from **o**. The words 'pont' and 'Mony' were originally Old Welsh words.

The surviving example of Galloway Gaelic, Òran Bagraidh has numerous examples of how Galloway Gaelic differed in grammar. Galloway Gaelic **ní** is used instead of *cha/chan*, the normal method of negation in Scottish Gaelic, Manx and Ulster Irish. This puts Galloway Gaelic closer to the Irish of Leinster, on the other side of the Irish Sea, than it puts it to Manx, Ulster Irish or Scottish Gaelic. Galloway Gaelic uses **muid** instead of *sinn*. *Sinn* is used throughout Scotland, and in certain parts of Ireland. But **muid** in Galloway Gaelic makes it closer to Leinster Irish, than to Manx, Ulster Irish or Scottish Gaelic.

In the last stanza of the song, the form **do bhí** is used. This form is never used in modern Scottish Gaelic, but can be considered as an archaic feature of Gaelic. This is also found in older Irish Gaelic. The form **inn san** appears, where Scottish Gaelic would have *anns an*. **San** may be used with possessive pronouns, for example **san do dail**, which may show a Norwegian loanword. The form **dom** 'to me' appears, common in Irish, but nearly always lenited to *dhomh* in Scottish Gaelic.

The Old Welsh and Galloway Gaelic languages share common territory in Dumfries and Galloway, and in the most northern parts of Cumbria where there are a number of place-names which are Gaelic or include Gaelic words: Kirkbride, Balladoyle and Dundraw. There are also examples of lochs, like Moorthwaite Lough.

### Old Welsh in Dumfries and Galloway

Older names in Southwestern Scotland come from the Old Welsh language, known also as Cumbric. Old Welsh might be more accurate for the Dumfries and Galloway place-names, which can show more phonological similarity to Welsh than Old Welsh place-names in Northern England and Southeastern Scotland.

**Barr Grug** - Bargrug, Kirkcudbrightshire, meaning 'top of the hillock/cairn'. Normally in Cumbric, the final /g/ in Welsh appears as -c, but in this region at least the Cumbric pronunciation more closely follows the Welsh.

**Blan-y-Veird** - Blanyvaird, Wigtownshire, a variation of **blaen y veirdh** 'summit of the bards', showing the 'a' pronunciation of Welsh blaen. An example of a 'blen' pronunciation appears near Kilbucho to the northeast.

**Din Widdvy** - Dinwiddie, probably a variation of **Din Weidhva**. The Welsh equivalent would be Din Wyddfa, meaning 'fort of the tomb, tumulus'. The word wyddfa is a mutation of gwyddfa, linked to the Welsh gŵydd 'presence', Old Irish 'fiad'. It probably comes from the Proto Celtic /we:dos/. The graveyard of a local clan is famous in this area, adding evidence to the theory of this name meaning 'fort/village of the burial mound'.

**Loch Maben** - Lochmaben in Dumfries and Galloway, just over the border into Scotland. The word mab means 'son' in Welsh, but is linked to the Gaulish god Mapones. **Maben** uses the diminutive suffix /o:no/ 'great', in Welsh 'maban'. Cumbric has 'e' before 'n', demonstrating how Cumbric pronunciation differed from Welsh in the treatment of vowels on the final syllable, although in other Cumbric areas one would expect **mabyn**.

Cumbric names are more numerous in Cumbria

**Glenn Redin** – Glenridding, 'valley of bracken', Welsh: glyn rhedyn. Cumbric **redin** comes from the Proto-Celtic /ratina:/.

**Cum Dyvoc** - Cumdivock in Cumbria, probably meaning 'dark valley' and a variant of **cumb duvoc**. The 'mb' is not preserved here, but the pronunciation of **duvoc** is interesting. In Welsh, this would be cwm du-og, but in Cumbric the intervocalic **v** seems to have been preserved. Whilst **duv** seems normally to have an [u] sound. This word may be from a personal name, Dubaccos, or it

could have meant 'dark, blackish' in Cumbric.

**Hêl Velin** or **Hel Velin/Velyn** – Helvellyn, perhaps 'yellow, golden nail', Welsh: hoel felyn 'yellow nail'. The 'nail' element might refer to Striding Edge, perhaps **melyn** in Cumbric originally had the meaning of 'bright, sunlit, honey colored'.

**Sceidhou/Sciddou** - Mount Skiddaw, near Blencathra in the Lake District. This word probably comes from Ancient British /sge:don/ 'shoulder', the form here is plural and similar to the Welsh ysgwyddau.

R. Edwards, undergraduate student of Gaelic studies, Glasgow 2013.

## Notes on the Gaelic dialects of St Kilda – part one

Seumas MacAlasdair and the St Kilda Gaelic Project, September 2020.

Reconstructed St Kilda Gaelic is written in a version of the Gaelic Dialect Alphabet, created and developed by Ruairí Ó Conghaile for writing Goidelic languages with their native pronunciation. This is more likely to reflect the more ‘indigenous’ qualities of Gaelic, if we assume that the modern and classical languages use the Old Irish based spelling as a *defined reference form* upon which to ground the dialects in written language. Unfortunately standard Gaelic spelling does not allow for finely defined phonemes and their interplay in the phonology and grammar to be represented. Rather than Gaelic actually evolving from Old Irish, me and my colleagues are considering an alternative approach, which we can call the ‘theory of assimilation’. This means that Gaelic was likely originally a group of indigenous languages that are pre-Celtic, but then these indigenous language elements became gradually incorporated into a Celtic IE formulaic system, initially through Primitive Irish.

Of these ancient linguistic elements of the St Kilda dialects, we find the so-called W-language. The W-language is the name we use to describe a possible area of visible substrate influence upon Gaelic dialects where the broad l can often become /w/. L becoming W is not altogether unusual across languages, Polish, Estuary English and Cumbric are such examples. X But in Scottish Gaelic these sound changes and others, suggest to us that original inhabitants of western Scotland had quite a different system of liquid and nasal sounds to those represented by Gaelic. In addition, some of these sounds are unique to Scottish Gaelic. St Kilda has been inhabited for a long time. This L to /w/ change is seen from St Kilda to Harris, to the small isles and to Lochaber and parts of Argyll. This roughly corresponds to an area of Mesolithic activity, especially around the island of Rhum, which in the Mesolithic time seems to have been well known for its sacred rocks. Even during the formation of Scotland, this particular area remained neither under Norse or Gaelic control. As much as this area is a part of Gaelic, this demonstrates perhaps that the people of this area also kept a pre-Gaelic identity and language to some degree.

St Kilda’s indigenous history survived until recent times, with Christianity and thus the organisation of the indigenous languages into Gaelic, not taking place fully. Macauley (1764) says that there were five druidic alters on the island! Of course calling these alters druidic relates to the assumption that the indigenous Gaels were descended from the historical continental Celts and their druidism, but as we will explore in later articles, these Celtic elements only make up quite a small number of the traditions, it is rather that some of these traditions in common created the people we know as the Celts, but the traditions themselves are older. There is no evidence of a Mesolithic presence in St Kilda thus far, but that’s perhaps because the islands’ history and our understanding of them have sadly vanished from our current consciousness. We do hope that we can gain back some of that ancestral wisdom and knowledge.

To firstly describe the Gaelic, the quality of vowels and guttural consonants is the common set found in Scottish Gaelic, from Perthshire to the Outer Hebrides. So in a lot of ways, a word on St Kilda doesn't sound so different to a word on Harris or Uist. But there are major differences in the way that the indigenous people of St Kilda said certain sounds. We have already talked about the broad l becoming /w/. This can be demonstrated using the following sounds. Some notes on the dialect spelling are as follows.

.Slender consonants are written with a bar above them, the  $\text{ɸ}$  is like the Spanish ll,  $\text{ɾ}$  is a St Kilda form of the slender r, the  $\text{ɥ}$  is like the 'u' in 'put', and  $\text{ɛ}$  is a schwa or unstressed vowel, and  $\text{é}$  is the typical long ao sound found in much of Scotland.

**làidir** – 'strong' becomes **wáid̄ɸ** or **ɥáiḡɾ** in our reconstructed examples. As is visible, not only does the broad l become a w, but the slender r changes to a 'll' sound, and the slender d can become a slender g. Another example is **iḡɾ** or **id̄ɸ** for **idir**.

Other examples of the broad l to w change include the word **làmh** for a hand, which on St Kilda becomes **wáy** or **ɥáy**. The word **laogh** for a calf becomes **wégh** or **ɥégh**.

Example: **ha é wáid̄ɸ** written in the standard as **tha e làidir** – he is strong.

This is only a small introduction to our project. We hope to work on other Gaelic dialects in Scotland, and to find out more about St Kilda's indigenous heritage, in the hope that we can bring it back in some way. Our research was done with the help of native Gaelic speakers who have some knowledge of St Kilda Gaelic, and through consulting the following two sources:

*Notes on the past of the Gaelic Dialect of St Kilda – Richard Coates 1988*

*Survey of the Gaelic Dialects of Scotland, questionnaire materials collected for the Linguistic Survey of Scotland, edited by Cathair Ó Dochartaigh.*

These resources are helping us to reconstruct the St Kilda Gaelic language and they are both incredibly useful, but the forms we use are often reconstructed differently to the data available because of reverting the sounds to their natural St Kilda form, or through correction and giving examples.

Other works that employ the Gaelic dialect alphabet:

*The Gaelic of Arran and Galloway by Cormac Ó Shuilleabháin*

*The Gaelic dialect alphabet -with special attention to Munster Irish by Ruairí Ó Conghaile.*

## Celtiberian

Joss Gospatrick

Celtiberian is an extinct Celtic language, once spoken in modern day Spain. Over 2,000 years ago, the Ebro river divided the Celtiberians from the non Indo-European speaking tribes. They occupied a region of inland Iberia where rivers like the Tagus and Júcar rivers flow from their upland sources. The Celtiberian people have sometimes been identified as ‘Celtic’, and their language was certainly Celtic. But these people were not the same culture as the ‘Celtic’ cultures in Gaul, in Britain nor in Ireland.

Celtiberian has been extinct for over 2,000 years, but is attested from various inscriptions in the 2<sup>nd</sup> to 1<sup>st</sup> centuries BC. Celtiberian is not especially similar to the modern day Celtic languages, its grammar is closer to that of Latin, Sanskrit or other literary Indo-European languages which date from that period.

Celtiberian was closely related to Gaulish, spoken to the north in modern France, and to the Proto-Brythonic language of Britain.

‘this man’

Irish: **an fear seo**

Welsh: **y gwr hwn**

Celtiberian: **so uiros**

## Pronunciation

The pronunciation of Celtiberian is quite straightforward. In the Celtiberian Script used to write the language there is no distinction between voiced and unvoiced stops. So **k**, **p**, **t** are written with the same characters as **g**, **b** and **d**. In the Latin rendering of Celtiberian, this distinction is made, but distinction is not made between vowel length. However this is shown where necessary using the International Phonetic Alphabet (IPA). The IPA marks long vowels using a colon, for example **tu** [tu:] ‘you’ (singular).

**a** - as in the Spanish word *baño* but sometimes longer [a], [a:].

**e** - a pure vowel sound, as in the Spanish *e*, sometimes longer [e], [e:].

**i** - as in ‘seen’, with long or short length, [i], [i:].

**o** - a pure vowel sound as in Spanish [o], [o:].

**u** - a pure vowel sound, as in *uno* [u], [u:].

### Diphthongs

**ai** - as in 'like' [ai].

**au** - similar to the German *au*, [au].

**ei** - similar to the vowel in 'same' [ei].

**oi** - as in 'soya', [oi].

**ou** - an 'o' followed by a 'u' [ou].

### Consonants

**b** - as in English [b].

**d** - as in English [d].

**g** - as in 'good'.

**gu** - as in 'Gwen' [g<sup>w</sup>].

**k** - as in English 'king' [k].

**ku** - as in 'queen' [k<sup>w</sup>].

**l** - as in English [l].

**m** - as in 'moment' [m].

**n** - as in 'near' [n].

**r** - rolled as in Spanish [r].

**s** - as in 'same' [s].

**t** - as in English [t].

**z** - [ð], [z] this often comes from an earlier **d** but its pronunciation is uncertain. This happens in intervocalic position and also to final **t**. This may have been pronounced like the 'th' in this, or may at least have come from a stage where an original **d** had this pronunciation before becoming **z**.

I have decided to use the traditional transcription of Celtiberian here.

Notes:

**-ks** could have become [xs] as a variant of [s], and along with changes to **d** and **t** represents early lenition in the Celtic languages, although not in line with the changes which evolved in those insular and coastal dialects. For example *retukenos* [rextukenos], [rextugenos], [rektukenos].

The Proto-Indo-European form *\*nm-* becomes **-lm**. This is unique to Celtiberian, for example *melmanzos* 'gifted with mind', Primitive Irish *\*menm-* 'mind'.

Final **-m** in the genitive plural forms of nouns does not become **-n** as it does in some other Celtic languages, for example *bezom uirum* 'the men's mine'.

There is some debate on the exact pronunciation of Celtiberian, because the Celtiberian script combines vowels and consonants together, as do the other ancient Iberian scripts. For example, the letter used for **t** can be altered slightly to spell *ta*, *ti*, *to* etc, rather than a separate vowel being

needed. De Bernado Stempel's interpretation is that words such as *otanaum* may have mute vowels, this word may be pronounced [odnaum] for instance. This interpretation is not accepted by everybody however.

Celtiberian does not mark vowel length, and the vowels *i* and *u* may have sometimes represented [j] and [w] in certain positions, for example *uiros*.

### Basic words:

*klounia* - meadow (f), *okris* - mountain (m) *kentis* 'family, male clan lineage', *bezom* - mine? (n), *arkatobezom* - silver mine? , *ueizos* - 'witness, seer', *-kue* - and, e.g. *kentisum tuateroskue* - 'of the family and of the daughter', *terba* - 'town, settlement', *sues* - six, *aila* - 'stone building', *ku* - dog *eni* - in, *bouitos* - cattle road (m), *toutam* - settlement, *tirikantam* - third, *toutam tirikantam kentizum* - 'the third settlement of the family/clan', *kantom* - hundred, *\*loukios* - 'bright, light', *entara* - within, *\*entera okrim* - 'within the mountain', *kar* - friendship, love, *uentanaka kar* - 'friendship of Ventana', *neretos* - strength, *\*mailos* - bald, *ue* - or, *ne* - not (negative particle), *nekue* - nor, *koloutios* - hearer, listener, *ueramos* - 'highest person', *konsklitom* - to be coined, *\*litanos* - broad, great, *kuezontikum* - asker, seeker, knower, *Lugus* - a deity.

Celtiberian also has numerous prefixes which can be attached to other words. For example *ambi-* 'around', *es-* 'out of', *us-* 'above'.

*bezom okrei* - a mine at the mountain, *okrei* is the locative form of *okris*.  
*bezom eni okrei* - a mine in a mountain. *Eni* 'in' specifies the meaning. *Eni* may also occur as a postposition, or it may be attached to a noun as in *eniokrei* 'in the mountain',

Celtiberian nouns are either masculine, feminine or neuter. The gender of a noun doesn't necessarily define how it is declined in the various different cases, this depends on the particular noun stem. For example *uiros* 'man' is an -o stem noun, and is masculine. -o stem nouns are usually masculine.

*uiros* - man, nominative case, used as a subject  
*uirom* - accusative, 'to the man', when *uiros* is the object rather than the subject.  
*uiro* - genitive 'of the man'. This form is quite unusual for Celtic languages, Proto-Brythonic would have had *uirī*.  
*uirui* - dative [uiru:i], when *uiros* is the indirect object. Similar to the function performed by the English word 'by' or phrase 'by means of'.  
*uiruz* - ablative case, and *uirei* in the locative. The locative case is used for saying what is in, or at a place or other noun, and hasn't been recorded in other Celtic languages. *Uiriu* is a possible instrumental form.

### Demonstrative pronouns



Demonstrative pronouns include *so*, *sa* and *soz* meaning ‘this’ in the masculine, feminine and neuter forms. In the plural these are *sos*, *sas* and *soizos*. For example, *so uiros* ‘this man’, *sa klounia* ‘this field’, *soz bezom* ‘this mine’. The forms *to*, *tas* may also have been demonstrative pronouns attached to nouns, the form *taskue* is also seen. A form based on *sto-/sta-* may have also existed.

### Texts

The following is an example of a Celtiberian text:

*eni orosei uta tigino tiatunei erekaias to luguei araianom komeimu eni orosei ekueisuikue  
okris olokas togias sistat luguei*

Æ lot of Celtic inscriptions are dedicated to different deities, in this case to Lugus/Lugh. It translates as:

*Eni orosei* - ‘in Orosis’, *uta* - ‘and, also’, *tigino* - ‘of the Tigonos river’, *tiatunei* - ‘in the surroundings’, *erekaias* - ‘the fields, acres’, *to Luguei* - ‘to Lugus’, *araianom* - ‘bright’, *komeimu* - ‘we dedicate’, *eni orosei* - ‘in Orosis’, *ekueisuikue* - ‘and in Equeiso’, *okris* - ‘the hills’, *olokas* - ‘the food gardens’, *togias* - ‘the houses’, - *sistat* - ‘are dedicated’, *luguei* ‘in Lugh, to Lugh’.

This text translates roughly as: “In Orosis and in the surroundings of the Tigonos river, we divinely dedicate the fields to Lugus, in Orosis and in Equeiso the hills, farms and houses are dedicated to Lugus”. Lugh was one of the most important deities to the Celtic speaking peoples.

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## Introduction to Primitive Irish and Gaelic dialects

Joss Gospatrick

### Examples of Proto-Celtic – Proto-Irish - Irish

\**makkwos* – \**maccwoh* - **mac**

\**wiros* – \**wiroh* - **fear**

\**wlatis* – \**wlatih* - **flath**

\**koxsâ* – \**koxsâ* **cos**

\**enter* – \**enter* - **eadar**

\**wlikwos* – \**wlicwoh* – **fliuch**

\**yawankos* – \**yowancoh* – **óg**

### The same words in Primitive Irish:

*macc*□*ah*

*wirah*

*wlatih*

*koxsa*

*eíter*

*wlicuh/vlicuh/wlic*□*uh*

*jo wáñcah*

### original Proto Celtic o-stem examples

*wirah*– man

nominative	<i>wirah</i>	<i>wirí</i>
accusative		
genitive	<i>wirí</i>	<i>wiran</i>
dative	<i>wirú</i>	<i>wirab'</i>
vocative	<i>wir(e)</i>	<i>wirúh</i>
instrumental	<i>wirú?</i>	?
locative	<i>wirei?</i>	?

*macc*□*ah* – son

nominative	<i>macc</i> □ <i>ah</i>	<i>macc</i> □ <i>í</i>
accusative		
genitive	<i>macc</i> □ <i>í</i>	<i>macc</i> □ <i>an</i>
dative	<i>macc</i> □ <i>ú</i>	<i>macc</i> □ <i>ab'</i>

vocative	<i>macc□e/i</i>	<i>macc□úh</i>
instrumental	<i>macc□ú?</i>	?
locative	<i>macc□ei?</i>	?

**broccah** – badger

nominative	<i>broccah</i>	<i>broccí</i>
accusative		
genitive	<i>broccí</i>	<i>broccan</i>
dative	<i>broccú</i>	<i>broccab’</i>
vocative	<i>brocce</i>	<i>broccúh</i>
instrumental	<i>broccú*</i>	
locative	<i>broccei*</i>	

**súlih** - i-stem noun

nominative	<i>súlih</i>	<i>súlih</i>
accusative		
genitive	<i>súleih</i>	<i>súlom</i>
dative	<i>súlei/súlé</i>	<i>súlibah</i>
vocative	<i>súli</i>	
instrumental	<i>súli</i>	<i>súlibih</i>
locative	<i>súli</i>	

. Note: some of the above examples are not certain.

**awih** – descendent. **tírah** – land. **Luguh** – Lugus (deity). **cattuh** – battle. **c□rimítir** – priest. **srutah** – stream. **anm C□atricsi** – the name of Patrick. **wlic□uh** - wet. **ad tixtat’** – to possess. **bundah** – bottom. **letah** – side. **ad beret’** – to carry **wissuh** – knowledge, Irish: **fios**. **atír** – father. **ceñtom** – first. **ad g□anát’** – to wound, Old Irish: **gonaid**. **brátír** – brother. **caicah** – blind, **ai** is perhaps somewhere between [e:] and [ai]. **ad stá** - to stand (later became **tá**). **widuh** – wood, Irish: **fiodh**. **iscawa, escawa** – bog. **ad c□iho** – to see. **werga** - anger, Old Irish: **ferg**, modern Irish: **fearg**. **woh’ssamuh**, – relief, Irish: **faoiseamh**. **díadcor’** – difficult, Irish: **deacair**. **gaitah** – wind, Irish: **gaoth**. **ad woglañhmañ** - to learn, Irish: **foghlaim**. **alíah** – other, Irish: **eile**. **wroicah** – heather, Irish: **fraoch**, Old Irish: **fróec, froíć**. **ad gabit’** – to give, Irish: **gabh**. **ad delwát’** - to form, to shape, Irish: **dealbh** (a photo, image). **ad márat’** - to make larger, increase. **ad ríma** – to number. **coldah** – forest.

Examples of Ogham Irish inscriptions with their Primitive Irish form:

.....

ANM COLMAN AILITHIR

***anm Colman ailahtírah***

'The name Colman, a/the pilgrim

The word 'ALITHIR' appears in Old Irish as *ailitre*. This word basically means 'other-land-er', it appears in Scottish Gaelic as **eilthir**. This inscription is from Maumanorig in County Kerry, and appears to show the beginning of lenition.

.....

LIE LUGNAEDON MACCI MENEUEH

***lieh Lug'naidon Maccí Menueh***

the stone of Lugnaedon, son of Limenueh

This stone was found on Inchagoill Island, off County Galway.

.....

SVAQQUCI MAQI QICI

***s'waccí uci maccí c'íci***

... son of...

The Primitive Irish language evolved into Old Irish, although nobody is sure how exactly because the Primitive Irish language is so different and more archaic than the Old Irish which appeared shortly afterwards. One possibility is that Primitive Irish was already an archaic language when the Ogham texts were written on stone, the colloquial form of the language may have already been Old Irish.

Old Irish became Middle Irish, which eventually became the basis of Classical Gaelic, the written register which became the basis of written Irish and Scottish Gaelic.

Irish and Scottish Gaelic are very close languages but differ in some important features. Both Irish and Scottish Gaelic also have dialects which can be quite different to one another, sometimes people have suggested that if Gaelic originally considered one language, has been divided into Irish, Manx and Scottish Gaelic, then why aren't the Ulster Irish, Argyle Gaelic and Northern Gaelic dialects also separate languages? The main dialect areas are discussed below.

Irish Gaelic is divided into three main dialects, those of Ulster, Connaught and Munster. Irish dialects preserve features from classical Gaelic which have disappeared in Manx and Scottish Gaelic, including a much more inflected system of verbs with many different tenses. These inflections are found all over Ireland but many parts of the older classical language are only used in more archaic or literate speech, the only dialects to really have these features as still a part of the everyday language are the Munster dialects. This is why Munster Irish was historically considered the more proper form of Irish, this is of course completely subjective and carries no truth because all dialects of Irish have diverged differently and Munster Irish phonology is equally as divergent from the classical language.

Munster Irish has what can definitely be described as palatal d and t whereas other dialects, especially Ulster, more often turn these sounds into something identical to the English 'j' and

‘ch’ sounds, but this is not from English influence. Munster Irish often misses out syllables meaning that certain vowels are dropped, the dialects of Munster are in some ways more guttural in their preservation of the [x] sound.

Connaught Irish is spoken in Western Ireland and isn't so different to the standard form of Irish and both dialects seem to have either come from the same period or circumstances as the common spoken Irish in Western Ireland. Connaught Irish also has numerous sound changes, the dialects in Connemara are one of the main concentrations of Connaught Irish speakers but they are actually quite different from the standard language, with unusual sound changes and a fast rhythm of speech which can make them difficult to understand for other speakers who are not exposed to these dialects.

Ulster Irish is fundamentally quite different from other speech registers of Irish and some have described it as being a related language, definitely Irish but different in the way that South Estonian has a somewhat different history and environment to Standard Estonian. Ulster Irish is phonologically very different and often lacks the guttural sound [x] and has developed new vowel and consonant sounds not found elsewhere in Ireland. Ulster Irish is archaic in other ways and carries more syllables in many of its words making it similar to the classical Gaelic language.

Eastern dialects of Irish are now mainly extinct, but there was an East Ulster Irish which was different to the West Ulster dialects that are still spoken by many. Some of the Eastern dialects to the south had other unique things about them although they were perhaps closest to Munster Irish, with some dialects sharing features with Connaught Irish.

Manx Gaelic was never written down and evolved separately, grammatically it is closer to Scottish Gaelic and this probably originates in the medieval Norse-Gaels culture which Modern Scottish Gaelic dialects have also been influenced by. Manx is also divergent from this dialect group and is unusual for having further internal lenition and sounds such as [z]. It is also written in a spelling based on English and Welsh spelling practices rather than a spelling based on classical Gaelic.

In Scotland it is less easy to clearly separate one dialect from another, instead this will be described as dialect traits, since there are few areas in Scotland which have all the traits of one region and are isolated from other dialects. For example, Eastern Gaelic dialects have features that set them apart, but many of these are also shared with Northern Gaelic dialects, but in other ways Northern Gaelic can be more similar to Western Gaelic, so it is difficult to determine a dialect area and instead it is easier to talk about features or traits which are more concentrated in some areas than in others. Argyle Gaelic is actually several dialect traits which differ quite a lot depending on the part of Argyle. A few examples of ‘isolated’ dialects include the Arran subdialect of Argyle Gaelic, the Gaelic of St. Kilda, the Gaelic of Western Sutherland and the related, but different dialect of Brora and Golspie in East Sutherland, although in Eastern Sutherland a lot of dialect features seem to come together so that there is no single Eastern Sutherland Gaelic for that entire region, some of the dialects outside Brora and Golspie are more connected to Western dialects.

Argyle dialects often turn the long à sound into an è, this is frequently heard on Arran. Eastern dialects are more archaic in some ways but frequently drop syllables at the ends of words like **samhradh**. Northern dialects frequently change long a into long o, written **å** in some places, as well as cutting the final vowel off words. Western dialects are the only Scottish Gaelic dialects to have really remained spoken, they can further be divided up into sub dialects. The dialects of the Inner Hebrides are mutually intelligible but they diverge, for example the broad l sound on the Isle of Eigg. Dialects in the Outer Hebrides tend to be more similar to one another, except for the Lewis dialect which includes a large number of all Gaelic speakers. Lewis Gaelic is mutually intelligible with other Hebridean dialects but it is surprisingly different from the others with a more noticeable “Scandinavian” accent.

I myself am no expert in Gaelic dialects but a working knowledge of them was necessary to be able to work on Primitive Irish, I want to thank all those native speakers who have helped to explain the dialects to me and having devoted many hours of conversation to this.

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## A Celtic vocabulary comparison

By Eric Gruffydd

<b>English</b>	<b>Irish</b>	<b>Manx</b>	<b>Welsh</b>
person	<i>duine</i>	<i>dooiney</i>	<i>dyn</i>
woman	<i>bean</i>	<i>ben</i>	<i>benw</i>
man	<i>fear</i>	<i>fer</i>	<i>gŵr</i>
dog	<i>madra</i>	<i>moddey</i>	<i>ci</i>
fish	<i>iasc</i>	<i>eeast</i>	<i>pysgod</i>
water	<i>uisce</i>	<i>ushtey</i>	<i>dŵr</i>
forest	<i>coille</i>	<i>colhey</i>	<i>coed</i>
tree	<i>crann</i>	<i>billey</i>	<i>coeden</i>
house	<i>teach</i>	<i>thie</i>	<i>tŷ</i>
black	<i>dubh</i>	<i>dhoo</i>	<i>du</i>
white	<i>bán</i>	<i>bwaan</i>	<i>gwyn</i>
yellow	<i>buí</i>	<i>buigh</i>	<i>melyn</i>
green	<i>uaine</i>	<i>eayney</i>	<i>gwyrdd</i>
mountain	<i>beinn, sliabh</i>	<i>beinn, slieaw</i>	<i>mynydd</i>
heart	<i>croí</i>	<i>cree</i>	<i>calon</i>
summer	<i>samhradh</i>	<i>sourey</i>	<i>haf</i>
winter	<i>geamhradh</i>	<i>geurey</i>	<i>gaiaf</i>
day	<i>lá</i>	<i>laa</i>	<i>dydd</i>
morning	<i>maidin</i>	<i>moghrey</i>	<i>bore</i>
night	<i>oíche</i>	<i>oie</i>	<i>nos</i>

We can see from this list, that the Proto-Celtic concepts of woman, man, the family unit are more or less the same. This also applies to the word for house, so from this we can imply that to find Proto-Celtic in the archaeological record we'd need to find common house structures. The seasons of summer and winter are also based on the same words, so we can assume that the passing of the seasons was perhaps the same and connected to common religion. Apart from this, most of the commonly used vocabulary in the two language groups is different, this even includes important geological

features such as mountains. This would seem unlikely without a significant influence from substrate languages. The word *mynydd* in Welsh occurs in Pictish, in some Irish place-names, Scottish Gaelic, Welsh, Cornish and Breton. It occurs in Italic languages as well. But this word doesn't occur in Manx or Irish as a standard word for mountain. We can write *big mountain* in various modern Celtic languages.

*menydh bras* – Cornish

*mwny mowr* – Southwest Welsh

*mynydd mawr* – North and standard Welsh

*minit mour* – Cumbric

*monadh mòr* – Scottish Gaelic

*sliabh mór* - Irish

The Proto-Welsh or Cumbric variant can be reconstructed as *mönid mâr*

## Was Gaelic ever spoken in Lancashire?

By Joss Gospatrick

In the Middle Ages, Irish Christianity brought the faith to the Anglo-Saxons. But the people of Ireland were also deeply connected to their Celtic speaking neighbors across the sea. The 'Cumbri' in Wales and the English part of the Irish Sea coast spoke related Brythonic dialects, in England they were replaced by Old English and Old Norse, which is when this area became England. But Gaelic also had a foothold in this part of England, its memory still visible in some of our place-names.

Gaelic was spoken on the Isle of Man and in Galloway in Scotland, neither of them are far from the coast of northwest England. Gaelic speaking people were moving between Ireland and the Isle of Man, and also between Ireland, and directly or not, to England. This coincided with the



emergence of Christianity in the Anglo-Saxon kingdom of Northumbria. But certainly a lot of this cultural diffusion could have happened directly between Ireland (and the Isle of Man) and the west coast of north England.

Lancashire covers the southern part of this coastline in England, Cumbria covers the northern part. In Cumbria there are Gaelic names here and there, like Setmabanning farm near the village of Threlkeld. The west coast of Cumbria has a long history of trade with Galloway in Scotland and the Isle of Man. In more recent centuries this involved the smuggling of alcohol and other goods. Later in the medieval period, after the Anglo-Saxons were being Christianized by Irish missionaries, the Norse people were also being Christianized in Cumbria and Lancashire. This led to the 'Norse-Gael' culture. Although the Norse settlers in Cumbria spoke mainly Old West Norse, the people of Irish descent would have spoken Gaelic, and I wonder if the Gaelic had a more substantial presence in those places where the two cultures had originally come into contact.

We see on the west coast of Cumbria and in the region of Lancashire around Lancaster there are several inscribed crosses that clearly have both Norse and Gaelic Christian figures. There are quite a number of places in these areas that contain the name 'Patrick'. Of course Patrick himself has historical links to this region of England. Like 'Gospatrick', which in Cumbric means 'servant of Patrick'. Or Preston Patrick near Lancaster, which is coined from both Old English and Gaelic 'priest-town (of) Patrick'.

There is a Gaelic name on the west coast of Cumbria, a place called Knockmurton. Which in old Manx Gaelic would also be Knock Murton, 'hill (of) Murton' and Cronk Murton in modern Manx. The saint who gave her name to St Bees on the west coast of Cumbria also came from Ireland, and the name Bees itself comes from the Irish bees.

But did the Gaelic always go after a generation or so, or could it have survived in some places? Having spent a lot of time in the Fylde, particularly around Skippool it was only recently that I noticed there were certain Gaelic-sounding names in the area.

## Reconstructing The Norn of Caithness part one: vowels

Jeanette Harris

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I have been a researcher of Germanic and Sino-Tibetan languages for the last ten years. A native of Wick in Caithness, my attention turned to the Caithness dialect and the Norn language that preceded it. For my interest in Germanic languages, I had decided to focus on Yola, Ulster and Lowland Scots, and Norn. I also speak Faroese, Danish, Yola and modern Shetlandic - *Shaetlann*. This is the first of several publications I have readied to be published on Caithness, Orkney and Shetland Norn. I will also be sharing my research on the Yola Language, Scots, and the Blue Hmong Language.

All of the Caithness Norn samples and comparisons to Old Norse, and sometimes Norwegian, come from "The Third Norn Dialect - That of Caithness" (The Viking Congress, Lerwick, 1950) - Per Thorsen. That is to say that the Caithness Norn words I have selected for this article, are those collected in Per Thorsen's work, as are the comparisons he uses in Old Norse and Norwegian. However, I have developed my own spelling for Caithness Norn, so the Caithness Norn words do not look the same. The personal conclusions I have reached and my analysis of Caithness Norn phonology are all my own work. For the next articles I plan to look at direct evidence from place-names and the words in Caithness dialect books, many Norse words were not included in Per Thorsen's article.

### Introduction

Caithness is the most northeasterly of Scotland's mainland regions, taking its name from a Celtic speaking people called the Catti, who may have spoken non-Celtic dialects before becoming Celticized. Caithness, Orkney and Shetland make up the Norse part of Scotland. Although Scotland as a whole became a part of the wider Norse society, Norse culture was most active and present at a local level in the three aforementioned places. A type of Norn was spoken in the Outer Hebrides too, but the Norn language here was confined to certain groups of people, the majority of communities in the Outer Hebrides seem to have had Gaelic as their main language.

This was not so in Caithness, Orkney and Shetland. Early Gaelic found its way to Orkney, where previously a kind of P-Celtic functioned as the prestige language. But Gaelic was never greatly established here, and the recorded history of these islands since then shows that Norn was the local language of these islands. The Norse in the Hebrides underwent some simplification of noun-endings and phonology, but it didn't diverge to the extent that Norn developed in Shetland, Orkney and Caithness.

The Shetland dialects of Norn were the best recorded. While there are a substantial number of Orkney Norn words present in the Orkney Scots dialect, there is only one text, the Lord's Prayer, which gives an example of spoken Orkney Norn. This poem uses a phonology which is quite different to what has been recorded of Orkney Norn elsewhere.

The Norn in Caithness is only recorded in words and grammatical borrowings into Caithness Scots, making it difficult to determine much about the language. From what can be observed, Caithness and Orkney Norn share much more in common than either of them do with the Shetland dialects. Orkney Norn seems to have had different dialects, some contrasting palatals and diphthongs, internal lenition and initial sound changes, like *þ*- for *t*-.

Caithness Norn and Orkney Norn may have made a dialect continuum. In Caithness, I have observed that Norse place-names in Caithness may fall into a Northern or Pentland Firth area, and an eastern area around Lybster. Along the coast the two areas are linked. Inland Caithness where there was upland agriculture, more crofting, the language was Gaelic. The Gaelic and Norse speaking people may have carried these lifestyle traditions on from long before either became established exactly as they are today. Caithness Norn shows some evidence of dialects being present too, there may be a contrast between a variation between *þ*- for *t*- like there was on Orkney, as well as changes in the realization of vowels, such as *aa*, *á*, *ò*, and *ì* and *ai*, and *y* and *ỳ*.

The written Caithness Norn here not based closely on other Scandinavian alphabets, Caithness Norn had rather different phonemes to most Norse dialects. Long vowels follow Scottish Gaelic by being marked with a grave accent, except *aa* which may be pronounced /o:/. *y* is always a long vowel, and pronounced the same as *ì*, *ỳ* is pronounced similarly or the same as *ai*. Orkney and Caithness Norn seem to have had variants of Old Norse *ei*. In Old East Norse this sound was *æi*. Orkney seems to have had *è*, *ì*, *ei* and *ai* as variants, Caithness Norn shows *ei* and *ai*. *È* in Orkney may not have always been a pure vowel /e:/ but with similar variation to this sound in Scottish Gaelic.

Most types of Norn show different forms of internal and sometimes initial lenition. In Foula Norn, this is remarkably similar to initial consonant mutation in Celtic Languages. Old Norse *barn* becomes /wadn/, written *bhadn* in one spelling of Foula Norn (word originally from the Hildina Ballad). Lenition more commonly affects *g* and *t* in Orkney and Caithness Norn, Old Norse final *t* became *ð* in Icelandic. In Norn it was more common for an internal *t* to become /ð/. Normally the orthographic Old Norse *ð* is deleted in Norn, or may harden. The Caithness and Orkney dialects do preserve this sound to an extent though. This is in part dialectal, but there may also be other factors that come into play to determine why this sound stays at times. In Caithness Norn, *þ* is the voiceless sound, whereas *þ̂* represents the voiced sound. The vowels *ä* and *ö* represent /æ/ and /ø/, these sounds aren't distinct phonemes in Caithness Norn, but may be written as allophones. They are mainly included for the sake of completeness.

a, aa, á, b, d, e, è, f, g, h, i, ì, j, k, l, m, n, o, ò, p, r, s, t, u, ù, v, w, hw, y, ỳ, þ, þ̂, ä, ö

The precise realization of these sounds has yet to be completely decided upon or given a pronunciation guide, but apart from the sounds explained above, most are self explanatory. Note that *hw* occurs only at the beginning of words, *hwat*, *hwar*, *hwal*, *hwit* etc.

Norn used articles that were attached onto the end of the noun as in most other Scandinavian languages. The exception is Jutlandic. Evidence shows that later Norn in Shetland used *da* as the definite article, as in modern day Shaetlann. Although easily attributed to being a Scots borrowing, it may have been an innovation in Norn. 'Da' is related to 'det' in Norwegian, Swedish and Danish, as the modern continental languages uses a standalone definite article when adjectives are used.

Below are a list of some of the sound changes between Old Norse and Caithness Norn, focusing on vowels here. Note that Caithness Norn may not have had its birth in the Old Norse period, but instead in the Proto-Norse period.

Old Norse	Caithness Norn
a	a
á	aa or u, e.g. aave – spoon net, <i>háfr</i> . In Orkney this sound becomes ò.
á	á /wa/-/ua/, initial syllables after consonant e.g. <i>skári</i> – skár, or skòr. In this case <i>skári</i> has two meanings in Old Norse, becoming skòri with the meaning ‘young gull’ and skár with the meaning ‘swath in mowing’, Norwegian <i>skåre</i> .
á especially when followed by another vowel or silent consonant in monosyllabic words	ey or è e.g. <i>rá</i> – rey/rè, <i>gráði</i> – slight breeze, Caithness grey or grè.
já	Sometimes ò as in <i>gjá</i> – gjò, this may not be vowel breaking as this word, Gaelic <i>geodha</i> seems neither inherently Norse nor Gaelic.
e	e sometimes ì in monosyllabic words which lose -r, <i>þefr</i> – tif, ‘scent’ perhaps þif also. Another variant is feff, some words in Caithness Norn may have such different variants because these words are originally from other languages, and original and more ‘Norseified’ versions have survived.
é	Often è, as in <i>flèta</i> or flèt, from <i>flétta</i> – plait.
eg	Commonly ai, <i>veggr</i> – wall, Caithness waig.
i	i
í	ai or ì, especially in words that lose their ending, <i>skítr</i> – skait, originally skít.
í	Shortened in monosyllabic words, <i>vík</i> – wik.
íg	ai – ey e.g. <i>kvíger</i> – heifer, <i>kweyag/kwaiag</i> . -ag is a suffix borrowed from Gaelic, or may be only present in words which come from a substrate.
ó	Commonly becomes ì or i in monosyllabic words, before n or generally, <i>lón</i> – lin, <i>bróðr</i> – briþer.
jó	No evidence of vowel breaking with ó, ó becomes commonly ì <i>brjósk</i> – bìrsk, perhaps as <i>börsk</i> with an allophone.
u	Becomes e in un-stressed syllables, <i>hömull</i> – ammel, elsewhere likely u.
ú	Preserved and written ù, <i>skrúf</i> – skrù, <i>brúk</i> – brük.
y	Becomes u, possibly /ʌ/, <i>klyfberi</i> – kluber. This does not happen on Orkney. Icelandic <i>drynja</i> , Danish <i>drøne</i> , Caithness <i>drùnji</i> . The Icelandic verb takes ‘u’ in conjunction due to umlaut, in Caithness u or ù seems the general

	pronunciation where Icelandic might have y. Scots has 'drune', all from Proto-Germanic *drunjaną, showing that rather than a sound change, the Caithness Norn and Scots preserve the original Proto-Germanic vowel.
ý	ÿ - Norwegian <i>nygle</i> - nyl, <i>skýla</i> - protect, Caithness skýl - shelter or shade, <i>klýpa</i> - pinch, Caithness klÿp - scratch with nails.
au	oa or ou, <i>naust</i> - boatshed, Caithness noast - boat landing place, <i>ausa</i> - bail out water, Caithness ous. In Orkney this sound was generally ou.
ei	May become ai, <i>þeisti</i> - black guillemot, Caithness taist. Or ei, <i>veita</i> - watercourse from mill, Caithness Norn weit.
ey	Preserved, written ae, <i>gleypa</i> - swallow, <i>glaep</i> - gulp, seize, swallow.
jǫ	Vowel breaking didn't always occur in the local Caithness Norn, a trend inherited from Proto-Norse or Proto-Germanic and preserved in different ways in West Norse. E.g. ON <i>mjǫlkvi</i> - milt of a fish, Caithness maak.

Apocope was common in Orkney and Caithness Norn, it may have been the normal pronunciation to have apocope on nouns and verbs in much of Caithness and Orkney, with the more central Norse areas using a more Old-Norse like pronunciation. Apocope is the norm in the Jutlandic language of Western Denmark.

To my knowledge, no-body has yet commented on the archaic phonology of Norn in Caithness and Orkney. West Shetland Norn shows a clear correspondence to the Old West Norse language, particularly to developments in Faroese and Icelandic. Orkney and Caithness Norn on the other hand, seem to have inherited their phonology in part from a Proto-Norse or Proto-Germanic stage. It might be possible that Proto-Germanic was being partly used on both sides of the North Sea, even before the much later Viking colonization of Britain. This might therefore mean, that some of the North-Germanic languages around the North-Sea came from original homeland distribution centers of Proto-Germanic or Proto-Norse. The same can likely be said for the original Eastern Norse languages, like Jamtlandic and Finland-Swedish. It is noteworthy that Iron Age burial grounds appear in Finland during the Proto-Norse period, and often these sites lie in areas which are Finland-Swedish speaking. It might be possible to find evidence of a pre-Viking Norse influence in Caithness and Orkney archaeological sites.

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All of the Caithness Norn words used in this article were taken from Per Thorsen's *The Third Norn Dialect - That of Caithness* (The Viking Congress, Lerwick, 1950).

All discussion on Orkney and Caithness Norn traits come from personal observations.

## Minority North Germanic languages in Sweden – copyright Sven Isaksen

Swedish is one of the Nordic or North Germanic languages, as the national language of Sweden shares a close relationship to standard Danish, Riksdansk and to the variety of Norwegian known as Østnorsk which came from the formal 'Danish' used in Norway, but not to the traditional dialects of Norse in Norway. Standard Swedish shares a closer link to the standard Danish and Østnorsk languages than it does to the so called dialects of Swedish in Sweden. For the Nordic languages, the close political ties between the three countries have had more influence in the formation of the standard languages than the local dialects spoken outside of urban areas.

It is very difficult to draw any conclusive dialect maps of Scandinavia, whether or not Danish, Østnorsk and Swedish are separate languages, or variations of a Scandinavian standard to suite short distances in geography between the most urbanized areas of these countries, having little to do with the traditional dialect make up which divides different districts. In this article attention will be drawn to three unofficial languages in Sweden which share typical Swedish features of Norse with Swedish, but which can't realistically be called dialects of standard Swedish.

Some of the differences between dialects or languages in Scandinavia can be looked at in the comparison of sample sentences, here “I am not a man” is translated into several Norse dialects.

### West Scandinavian (Insular)

**eg er ikke mænnj** - Shetlandic Mainland Nynorn

**jag jar ikke mann** - Foula Shetland Nynorn

**eg eri ikki ein maður** – Faroese

**ég er ekki maður** – Icelandic

**jaaji ari iki inni maaq** – Greenlandicized Danish (not a west Norse dialect, local Greenlandic Danish pronunciation provided by a Greenlandic speaker who has studied how Danish words are adopted into Greenlandic, this was probably never a true dialect and had a status similar to Russenorsk in Norway).

The insular languages are most similar to Old Norse. Icelandic is perhaps the most archaic Nordic language, it had four grammatical cases and nearly its entire vocabulary is based off the Old Norse lexicon, but it isn't pronounced like the Old Norse dialects were spoken outside

of Iceland, even if it has largely stayed unchanged in other ways. There are no strongly defined traditional Icelandic dialects like there are on the continent, the dialects in Iceland are few and often spread over large areas. A common difference today between the Reykjavik region and elsewhere is that hv is pronounced /xv/ and not /kv/.

Faroese also takes its vocabulary mainly from the Old West Norse lexicon, but it has taken slightly more influence from other languages than Icelandic, particularly when words were adopted from Danish. Faroese only has 3 cases instead of 4, but its grammar is very similar to Old Norse grammar. Faroese is also pronounced completely differently to Old West Norse, like Icelandic it has changed over the centuries, making the pronunciation even more different from Old Norse than Icelandic but with totally different sound changes. Despite the Faroe Island's small size, the differences in dialect are equal to or greater than the differences found in Icelandic.

Nynorn is a form of revived Norn found at <http://nornlanguage.x10.mx/>. This was an Old West Norse dialect like Faroese and Icelandic spoken in Orkney and Shetland from about 900 AD to the 19th century in some isolated places. These are two island archipelagos to the north of Scotland, according to this site the dialect was similar to Icelandic in some respects like its four grammatical cases. In other ways it was more like Norwegian and Danish.

### West Scandinavian (Norway)

**eg er ikkje ein mann** - Nynorsk, similar to many dialects in West Norway (and elsewhere)

**eg e isje ein mann** – Stavangersk

**eg er isje ein mann** – Bergen

**eg e ekje en mann** – Sognefjord

### Northern Western Norwegian

**i e kje ein mann** – Sunndal, Nordmøre

**e e itj æn kar** - Rindal

**e e kje æn kar** – Surnadal

In many parts of Western Norway, like in Bergen and Sunnmøre, the diphthong ei is pronounced /æi/, but this is not so in Stavanger.

## Trøndersk Norwegian

**æ e itj en mainn** - Trondheim

**e e ittj en mainn** - Verdal

**æ e itj ein mainn** - Straumen

**e er it nå mann** - Rognes

## Northern Norwegian

**e e ikkj en majnn** – Salten dialekt, Bodø

**æ e kkje en majnn** – Tromsø

## South and Southeastern Norwegian

**eg e ikkje ein mann** - Northern Telemark

**jæi ær ække en mann** - Oslo dialect

**jæ ærnte en mann** - Sarpsborg

**je ær ette en mann** - Swedish border (South)

## Central Scandinavian/Standard Nordic

**jag är inte en man** – Swedish, in more old fashioned formal speech **jag är icke en man.**

**jeg er ikke en mand** – Danish

**jeg er ikke en mann** - Norwegian Bokmål and Standard Østnorsk

**jeg er ikke en mand** - Gøtumål Danish (Faroe Islands)

## South Central Scandinavian:

**jâ e ønte ín mań** – Bornholmsk



**jaj ær ig en mænd** - colloquial Danish

### Jutlandic (Southwest Peninsulan Scandinavian)

**æ e it en man** – South Jutlantic (west)

**a e it en man** - South Jutlandic (east)

### Dalecarlian

**ig ir ite ien kall** – Elfdalian

### Bothnian languages (Northern Baltic)

**I ger int n man** – Nordsjö Bondska

**I ger int n kaer** – Skellefteå Bondska

**je ger int'n kaar** – Burträsk Bondska

**ja jer int n' kear** – Lycksele Bondska

**je jär ät kjarn** - Kalix Bondska

## Bothnian/Bondska

The Bothnian Languages are a unique group of languages or dialects in the northern Baltic region. The languages seem to have formed an early Norse dialect long before they developed regional differences and were influenced by Swedish. The original language was an early kind of Germanic, it may have once had similarity to the Gutnish language in the southern Baltic, both languages are typical for using *jer* or *jär* instead of *är* or *er* in other Norse dialects.

The Bothnian languages are divided into eastern and western groups, the eastern branch may include many of the Finlandsvenska dialects in Finland, with the exception of some like Närpesiska which are certainly Eastern Bothnian and in the same dialect group but were already their own dialect or language from an early point in time, the other Finlandsvenska dialects and the Estlandsvenska dialects to the south are slightly different. The eastern Bothnian dialects include the dialects of Malax and other parts of Eastern Bothnia on the Baltic coastline of Finland.

The Westrobothnian, or Bondska languages form the western branch in the northwest Baltic. Several major valleys run inland from the Baltic, along great rivers like the Luleälven and Piteälven valleys. The inland areas of Swedish Lappland were historically the territory of Sámi and likely Finnish speaking people, but the coastal region has long been culturally isolated from the people inland and from other Norse speakers, except those that trade was maintained with in Eastern Bothnia and in other parts of the Baltic. These northern Nordic dialects were isolated from the Swedish language but they share similarity with some of the neighbouring dialects such as Jämtlandic in the south, itself related to the Trøndersk and northern dialects of Norway which all form a sort of sprachbund, even if the language in these areas is increasingly influenced by the standard form of language on both sides of the border.

Bondska has several dialects, a small sentence like “I am not” can be used to show this variation.

**I ger int** – Skellefte mål (Skellefteå)

**I jär et** – Pitebondska/Pitemål

**jö jer ånt** – Lulemål

**djög djer ånt** - Koikul Bondska (similar to Lulemål or a sub dialect)

**je jär ät** – Kalixmål

The Pitemål dialect of Bondska is spoken from the Piteå Skärgård on the Baltic Coast and follows the Pite Valley inland as far as ancient Scandinavian settlement reached. In the upper parts of the valley is another, probably more ancient indigenous language, Pite Sámi. Like Dutch and German, Bothnian *s* develops into a 'sh' sound before other consonants, written *sch*. The phonology is unlike Swedish phonology, the Swedish sh sound does not exist in this language, and there are far more diphthongs than there are in Swedish. Apocope, the loss of the final vowel in a word is something that Bondska shares with many of the northern Nordic languages.

The dative case is used commonly in Bondska, there is variation between the singular and plural forms of a conjuncted verb, and the addition of pronouns being attached to nouns to specify their purpose, none of which are in Swedish. The capital L is a retroflex flap or Swedish “tjock l”.

**gu´da** – good day

**vo häjt dö?** - what are you called?

**I häjt...** – I am called...

**vöre ha dö ne?** - how are you?

**I hav´e bra, og vöre jär´e vä dä?** - I am good, and how is it with you?

**voda jär dö?** - where are you from?

**I jär bårte/bårta...** - I am from (e/a ending depends on gender of place)

**kan dö tåLa BoNschka/PijtmåLe/SchWänschka?** - can you speak Bondska/Pitemål/Swedish?

**I tåLa et BoNschka** – I don't speak Bondska

**I kan tåLa PijtmåLe, män I kan et tåLa KuLismåLe** – I can speak Pitemål, but I cannot speak Kalixmål.

English	Swedish	Pite Bondska
I	jag	I
you singular	du	dö
he	han	han
she	hon	hon
it	det/den	hä
we	vi	vä
you plural	ni	jä
they	dom	döm
what?	vad?	vo?
how?	hur?	vöre?
from where?	varifrån?	voda?

Swedish language	Svenska	schWänschka
to travel	att resa	å räjs
language	språk (mål)	måL
but	men	män

Pitebondska has dialects within itself, some speakers do not use the sch sound commonly, others replace v with w in some words, like *wo* for *vo*.

In the present Bondska has influenced the local dialects of Swedish. The city of Kiruna has its own northern variant of standard Swedish, that has adopted words from the local Meänkieli and Sámi languages, but also an influence from Bondska as people moved inland to Kiruna from the coast. The Kiruna dialect is not a traditional Bondska dialect though, **jag är inte** would be rendered **jag är int**.

## Dalecarlian

Dalecarlian is a group of languages or dialects in Dalarna. This region of Sweden is very rural, the mountainous area was quite isolated until relatively recently. This meant the dialects of the Dalecarlian or Dalmål language were different to even the dialects on the borders to Dalarna. Dalecarlian was the last language to use runes as a more common writing system, together with its unique runic alphabet it shares other things in common with old Nordic languages. Archaic features include the four case system used in Icelandic and Old Norse, even though Dalecarlian isn't close to Old Norse today and underwent changes not found in Icelandic or in other Nordic dialects.

Dalecarlian has one officially recognized standard, Elfdalian. Dialects are normally named after their valley, Elfdalian in Älvdal, Orsamål in the Orsa district etc.

English	Old West Norse	Swedish	Elfdalian	Orsamål
I	ek	jag	ig	ik
do	gera	göra	djärå	djerå
speak	tala	tala	tålå	tålå
house	hús	hus	aus	aus

The Elfdalian *ð* is /ð/, like the English 'th' in 'there'. The consonants *dj* and *tj* are either /dʒ/ and /tʃ/ or /dz/ and /ts/. Nasal vowels have a tail under them.

English	Swedish	Elfdalian
you singular	du	du
he	han	an
she	hon	å
it	det/den	eð
we	vi	wið
you plural	ni	ið
they	dom	dier
I have	jag har	ig ar
ice	is	ais
here	här	jär
I believe	jag tror	ig truor
no	nej	näi
say	säga	saia
over	över	yvyr
milk	mjök	mjotje
is done	är gjort	ir gart
again	igen	atte
I shall	jag skall	ig al
a man	en man	ien kall
not	inte	ite
at home	hemma	iema
give	ge	djävä
be	vara	wårå
a/an	en/ett	ien/ie/iet

Like in Icelandic and Faroese the verbs are conjuncted for more persons.

English	Icelandic	Swedish	Elfdalian
I am	ég er	jag är	ig ir
you are singular	þú er	du är	du ir
he is	han er	han är	an ir
she is	hún er	hon är	å ir
it is	það er	det/den är	eð ir
we are	við erum	vi är	wið irum
you are plural	þið erið	ni är	ið irið
they are	þeir/þær/þau eru	dom är	dier irå

## Gutnish

Gutnish is another lesser known Nordic language which has been classed as a Swedish dialect. The island of Gotland was very important in the medieval era and had its own distinct dialect from early. The dialect has some things in common with Bothnian, both are spoken in the Baltic Sea area and might have come from a common group of dialects, but Gutnish is distinct from Bothnian and still preserves a lot of the Old Norse dialect, although the modern language has been influenced quite a lot by Swedish. There are also several different dialects of Gutnish, some more influenced by Swedish than others.

Gutnish, like Setesdalsk in Norway, uses acute accents on vowels to represent where long vowels have become diphthongs. The language is not too difficult to pronounce for English speakers. Note that k and g are always hard sounds, and not softened as they are in Swedish. The Swedish 'sh' sound is a modern addition to the language. ó represents [ou], í comes from Old Gutnish long i, becoming /ei/ or /æi/ in the modern dialects, but today it has mainly merged with ei which came from Old Gutnish long e. ý represents öy in Swedish based orthography..

**hvaim jest dú?** - who are you?

**ja jer ann mann** - I am a man

**dú jest ann mann** – you are a man

**ja jer inte ann mann** – I'm not a man

**ja haitar Svain** - I'm called Sven

**hvarlains har ír det?** - how are you?

**sjóen jer stúrar** - the sea is big

**húset jer stúrt** - the house is big

**ja gikk forbí býn** - I went past the town

**óe bat jer pa sjóen meid di andre** - our boat is on the sea with the others

**sjóen blaist grýnar, u ja fór yvar vatnet** – the sea became green, and I went over the water

**u ja sag ann mann** – and I saw a man

**ja skraiv** – I wrote

### Further reading

The information in all my articles comes from information that I have personally recorded and researched, but I should like to thank all those friends who have helped me with corrections and extra details. More information about Elfdalian can be found in the book *Introduktion till Älvdalska* by Gunnar Nyström och Yair Sapir.

## The Pite dialect of the Bondska or Westrobothnian language, Sven Isaksen

Pite Bondska is a dialect of the Bondska or Westrobothnian dialect group, the Bondska dialects spoken along the Pite älv valley are called Pitebondska or Pitemål. To the south the closely related Skelleftemål dialects are spoken, actually several distinct dialects of Bondska. Pite Bondska has several thousand speakers, older speakers of the language speak variants of the traditional language, modern speakers speak it with Swedish influence or speak a form of Swedish influenced by Pite Bondska.

Bondska is not a Swedish dialect, a dialect of Norse within Sweden but not a Swedish dialect. The Bondska language has no official regional or minority status in Sweden, probably because minority non-standard Nordic languages have been treated as dialects of their respective national language and not treated as traditional dialects of Scandinavian which were around before the standard languages existed. Bondska is a traditional Nordic dialect group that shares a lot in common with its neighbour East Bothnian on the other side of the Baltic. Bondska borders other Scandinavian dialect groups like Jamtlandic and Northern Norwegian, Jamtlandic especially is sometimes similar to Bondska.

Pite Bondska has internal variations between different areas and also depending on the speaker. The digraph tj can sound like sch for some speakers, there is also a tendency for some people to write j at the start of a word as dj, more pronounced by some speakers than others. The s becomes sch commonly in this dialect, usually before another consonant. Where this happens can vary from one speaker to another. The same happens with w and v.

First phrases:

**vo häjt dö?** - what are you called?

**I häjt...** - I am called...

**I jär än kWiinn** – I am a woman

**I jär än kar** – I am a man

**vöre jär e vä dä?** - how are you?

**vöre ha dö ne?** - how are you?

**tack dö, hä jär fint vä mä** – I am good, thanks



## Pronouns

I (pronounced 'ee') means 'I'

dö means 'you singular'.

Here are some of the other pronouns.

PijtmåLe	English
I	I
dö, duuw	you (singular)
han	he
hon	she
hä	it
vä	we
jä	you (plural)
döm	they

Unlike Swedish and Norwegian, Pitemål has different verb forms in the plural.

**I jär** – I am

**hä jär** – it is

**skåogen jär** – the forest is

**naggän jär** – someone is

And in the plural våra is used, similarly I ha (or *I hav*) – I have, but vä håva – we have.

**jä våra** – you lot are

**döm våra et** – they are not

**I jär än kar å döm våra ine skåogen** (older dative form *skåogom*) – I am a man and they are in the forest.

## Basic words

djåoLa – the soil or farmland

handa – the hand

båoLe – the table

ka:rn – the man

åoL – word

sWårt – black or dark

bLöut - wet

And in examples.

**handa men jär et opa båoLe** – my hand is not on the table

**skåogen jär sWårt å båoLe jär ine skåogen** – The forest is dark, and the table is in the forest

**hä jär mört ine skåogen å båoLe jär dä:r** – it is dark in the forest and the table is there

## Prepositions

åt (stan) – to, towards

del - to

dellbax - back

vä - with

uuwt – out of

åtvä – beside

åte - beside

opa, ope – on, upon, in

ine – in

måot – towards

förbij – past

djunning - through

milla – between

bake - behind

ötan – without

ötaför – outside

om – about

kregom – around

bakerom/bakera - behind

We have also been introduced to the dative case, still used by many speakers of Pitemål. This involves adding -om to the ending of a noun (when masculine).

än skåog – a forest

skåogen – the forest

skåogom – forest (dative)

han dråog åt skåogom - he went to the forest to stay

Masculine nouns, take the definite ending of -en, -n.

Feminine nouns, take -a

Neuter nouns, take -e

skåog – skåogen

hand - handa

åoL - åoLe

## Interrogative pronouns

vo? - what?

vors? - where?

voda? - from where?

vöre – how?

## Samples

**I jär än kar å i joobb/arbäjt ine skåogen** – I am a man and I work in the forest

**vors kan I joobb ikWeel?** - where can I work this evening?

**voda kãm dö?** - where do you come from?

**I kan vijs dä vöre vä pråta** – I can show you how we speak

**vo ha dö vä´dä?** - what did you bring?

**vä nögges tjööp så mötje** – we must buy so much

**jä vaL håva e gott nojár, I ha tjöft mötje i`sta:n** – good New Year to you, I have bought much in town

**kWinna var ötaför** – the woman was outside

**hä tåo än dag å räjs åt Finland** – it took one day to travel to Finland

**nö sko I skrijv åt dä** – now I shall write to you

**vo häjt hundn den?** - what is your dog called?

**hä jär tjent övär Norrland** – It is well known over Norrland.

**I djick åt Piijt** – I went (walked) to Piteå

**jä våra väLkömnen åt Piijt** – you lot are welcome to Piteå

**hä var åolovLit å bruut opp tjista** – it was not okay to break the box  
**sko I gå uut?** - shall I go out?  
**ha dö vöre åt sta:n?** - have you been in the city?  
**hundn jär nåjd ine huse** – the dog is content in the house  
**sko vä fåLe hundn åt sta:n?**- shall we follow the dog to the town?  
**hä jär et gott å tjöör vä ijsn opa vägen** – it is not good to drive with ice on the road  
**I ha köme häjm** – I have come home  
**först fåor I åt Pijjt** – I went to Piteå first  
**I sko läsa båoka** – I shall read the book  
**vors sko I gräva?** – where should I dig? (gråw is used also)  
**båoka jen jär bra** – this book is good.  
**kompisn men jär göudat öta å fiisk** - my friend is good at fishing (crazy about fishing)  
**I tåLa båara boNschka** – I speak only Bondska  
**I ha et vöre ötomhuus ida** – I have not been outside today  
**vå håva tåLase vä opa schWäNska ida** – we have spoken together in Swedish today  
**voda kåm tåge jena?** – where did this train come from?  
**häjn jär et men** – this is not mine  
**kan dö sääjj/övärsätte hädden opa PijtmåLe?** - Can you translate this into Pitemål?  
**I ha vöre ine skåogen ida män nö sko vä skrijv opa PijtmåLe** – I have been in the forest today but now we will write in the Pite language  
**I väjt att vä fåor förbij stan jena** – I know that we went past this town.  
**nö sko vä betåLa** – now we should pay  
**dö ha då än dojre stäjn, jär´e granitn?** - you really have an expensive stone, is it granite?  
**bråorn jär dena** – there is the brother/the brother is there  
**stäjna våra naggerst addärsch** - the stones are somewhere else  
**I bö et höv å djiva båoka åt dä** – I don't have to give you the book  
**han jär båårt ida** – he is away today  
**han sko fåå än noj bi:l** – he is going to get a new car  
**I sko fåra del skåogs**– I shall go to the forest  
**I kan tåLa PijtmåLe** – I can speak Pitemål  
**hä var jena igår**– it was here yesterday  
**I ha djåRt hä** – I have done it

**ka:rn sko lär sä PijtmåLe sedda** – the man is going to learn Pitemål later

**döm kona et tåLa måLe** – they cannot speak the language

Pitemål, as well as other Westro-Bothnian dialects, has apocope, the loss of final vowels. This also occurs in much of Northern Norway. For example I häjt (I am called), standard Swedish: jag heter. Often pronounced with two vowels which are both pronounced as separate vowels and not as a long vowel, hääjht and rääjhs. The future tense is most often expressed using the forms of 'shall' and 'will'.

## Verbs

dö tjööp – you buy

dö tjöft – you bought

dö ha tjöft – you have bought.

I waaL – I become

I wart – I became

han jär – he is

han var – he washan ha vöre – he has been

## Further reading

Corrections were made to my Pite Bondska work by Brith F. and Tommy Oscarsson. The book Pitemålet: ållt mila åagg å ööx by Gun Lidström is an extensive dictionary of the Pite dialect as a traditional local language.

# A small English to Swedish, to Lule Bondska or Lule Westrobothnian wordlist and phrase-list – Sven Isaksen

Lulemål or Lulebondska is one of the more northern varieties of Bondska, it has some of the most unique phonological variations, unique from Pitemål, Skelleftemål and Kalixmål. It is often quite hard even for other speakers of Bondska to understand. In Lulemål the Old Norse long a remains, pa ‘on’, Swedish på, fa ‘get’, Swedish få. The Lule language has unusual examples of diphthongisation and differs considerably from other Bondska dialects.

English	Swedish	Lule Bondska
at, by	vid	atve
he wrote	han skrev	hån skreiv
old	gammal	gåmal
today	i dag	idä
Sweden	Sverige	Swärje
what?	vad?	bo/vo?
our language	språket vårt	maLe veort
I can	jag kan	jö kän
self	själv	sjöLv
her	hennes	henarSch
his	hans	hånsch
say	säga	seeg
yesterday	i går	igar
I	jag	jö
you (singular)	du	do/dö
he	han	hån
she	hon	ho
it (neuter)	det	he
we	vi	ve
you (plural)	ni	je
they	de (dom)	dom
I bought	jag köpte	jö tjöopt
I had read the book	jag hade läst boken	jö häadd lest beoka
in Swedish	på Svenska	pa swäänSk
how much?	hur mycket?	huri mitji?
welcome	välkommen	veLkumin
he went past	han gick förbi	hån djikk förböy

what did you think about?	vad tänkte du på?	bo täänkt do pa?
I know	jag vet	jö veit
I heard	jag hörde	jö hoord
the language	språket (målet)	maLe
I have	jag har	jö hä
I have written the book	jag har skrivit boken	jö hä skrivi beoka
the town	byen	böyn
or	eller	el
big	stor	steor
suggestion	förslag	föschLäg
out	ut	eot
not	inte	ånt
has done	har gjort	hä djårt
I am called	jag heter	jö heit
a man	en man	in kar
the place	platsen	pLätsn
I want to have/will have	jag vill ha	jö vil håva
speak	tala	tåLa
in	i	ini
at night	på natten	pa nåtta
the water	vatnet	vättne
he shall help...	han ska hjälpa...	hån sko jöLp...
the evening	kvällen	kweLn
you were outside the house	du var utanför huset	do vär eotaför heose
do	göra	djera

There are differences in the Lule Bondska diphthongs across different parts of the valley, even in the quite localized lower area of the valley, the diphthong eo in steor can also be öo, stöör, with other variants of this diphthong such as åo in ståor spoken not far away. Long vowels can vary from one district to another, like *höörd* instead of hoord. There are differences in the way some speakers use v and w, or where the sch sound develops.

Another dialect spoken to the north of the main Lule Bondska area is the Koikul dialect. The Koikul dialect was spoken far to the north, subsequently some Meänkieli and Sámi words have entered the dialect.

English	Swedish	Koikul Bondska
I	jag	djög
I am	jag är	djög djer
I do	jag gör	djög djeer
I was	jag var	djög vää
I shall go/walk out	jag ska gå ut	djög sko gää iot
you (singular)	du	diou
what is it?	vad är det?	vo djer he?
what are you doing?	vad gör du?	vo djeer diou?
who are you?	vem är du?	vom jer diou?



who is he?	vem är han?	vom jer hänn?
a table	ett bord	i baoL
she knows	hon vet	ho vejt
she has been	hon har varit	ho hää vuuri
to	till	dil
big	stor	schaor
not	inte	ånt
long	lång	lääk

## Further reading

More can be found out about the Koikul dialect at this website <http://www.koikul.se>, I was lucky to learn some of the dialect from some of its remaining speakers. It is difficult to find resources on the other Lule dialects without going there and learning from the people who speak it, but there is one dictionary Ordbok över lulemålet : på grundval av dialekten i Antnäs by, Nederluleå socken by Jan-Olov Nyström.

Northern Norwegian, an introduction by Claus Torfinn - published on 21st June 2019.

Northern Norwegian refers generally to the dialects spoken in the three northernmost counties of Norway, Nordland, Troms and Finnmark.

The Finnmark and East Troms dialects are a slightly different situation as these areas were only settled by Norwegian speakers in relatively recent times. Thus the Norwegian spoken here blends typically Northern Norwegian traits with the southern dialects which were brought here by incomers. In Finnmark the spoken language is close to the written form Bokmål, as Finnmark was traditionally Sami and Kven speaking. The Uralic phonology of these languages has in some way influenced the spoken-Bokmål language, so that in Finnmark some speakers do not use aspirated sounds in initial k, p and t.

Traditional Northern Norwegian, found in Nordland and most of Troms, is a unique dialect group with roots back to the first Norse speaking settlers in this region, historically known as Helgeland or Hålogaland.

The distribution of this dialect group is roughly consistent with the coastal settlement of Old Norse speakers, so that Northern Norwegian is typically more 'West' Norwegian than East Norwegian. This includes the preservation of diphthongs and the pronoun *eg* for *I*.

Despite this, the region known as Hålogaland was historically quite separate from other Norse-speaking districts, perhaps owing to the older inhabitants of this region who were famous for their cave paintings and maritime culture. This early culture appears to have been separate from the Sami cultures, and old Sami legends talk about the coming together of two cultures in Northern Scandinavia in ancient times. (*gamle historier fra Helgeland* - Arne Aronsen, pg 34).

Precisely what influence the language of these people or the Sami language had on Northern Norwegian has not been researched yet. A folklorist from Troms, Inger Johansson has examined and listed some of these early words.

The languages in Northern Scandinavia belong to three groups in two major families of languages.

-North Germanic - includes the standard Norwegian and Swedish languages with a localised pronunciation. We can further add to this the Northern Norwegian dialects, particularly those of Helgeland and Salten districts, which are different enough from

spoken Norwegian Bokmål to be classed as 'Norwegian' in terms of the standard, spoken Bokmål language.

Furthermore the Baltic is home to two other North-Germanic language or dialect groups referred to as Eastern Bothnian in Finland and Westrobothnian in Sweden.

Westrobothnian is now being more accepted as a language in its own right, and even within the different dialects of Westrobothnian, mutual intelligibility can be low, meaning that Westrobothnian may in fact be several, closely related languages.

-Sami - the Sami languages are the older, indigenous Uralic languages in Northern Europe. They were once spoken across most of mainland Scandinavia, including the South of Finland and the South of Norway. Their precise relationship with the Finno-Baltic languages is hotly disputed, although sometimes the most common nouns and verbs are very similar in both language groups. On the other hand, Sami languages are very different to Finno-Baltic, their system of consonant graduation has more variables, they have dual number in pronouns and verbs, but they lack the number of suffixes or "noun cases" found in Finno-Baltic. This has led some to suggest that Sami languages can be closer to Indo-European in some respects.

The Sami languages spoken in Northern Scandinavia include the Pite, Lule, Northern, Inari and Skolt Sami languages. Others are spoken to the South and to the east in Russia. Historically there were also two other Sami languages spoken in Finland

-Finno-Baltic - this is another family of Uralic languages which includes Finnish, Estonian and Karelian. The original homeland of these languages seems to have been around St. Petersburg in Russia where the greatest variety of Finno-Baltic languages is seen.

Finnish also has many dialects, including the differing Savonian dialects in the East of the country and the Peräpohjola dialects in the North of Finland, which stretch beyond the boundaries of Finland to form the Meänkieli language in Northern Sweden, and the Kven language in Troms and Finnmark. Although the Kvens and Meänkieli speakers are usually considered to be recent immigrants to these parts, Kven people themselves state that the Finnish language has been here for much longer, some records pointing to the presence of Finns in these regions from at least a thousand years ago. (*On the Kvens of Troms, Geir Oscarsson*).

- Typical Northern Norwegian traits
- The dialect of Nesna in Helgeland
- The dialects of Salten in Nordland
- Some etymologies with Sami or other origins

## Typical Northern Norwegian traits

Northern Norwegian dialects are typically defined by their apocope, falling pitch accent across a sentence, and palatalisation. None of these things are in themselves unique to Northern Norwegian, the dialects in Trøndelag to the south share many of these features in their language, but they are not Northern Norwegian.

Northern Norwegian begins at the southern point of Nordland, where the dialects here are sometimes classed as Trøndersk dialects. Dialects in Helgeland do not necessarily have apocope, in some areas verb infinitives end with *-æ*, e.g. *veræ*, *etæ*.

The apocope means that, to different degrees the final vowel is dropped. This occurs commonly in verbs

*å være/vera* becomes *å vær/ver*

*å kaste* becomes *å kast*

*å tenke* becomes *å tænk*

*å kjøre* becomes *å kjør*

The vowel in these verbs often takes a special circumflex tone that is found in some parts of Scandinavia. Apocope also occurs elsewhere.

*husan* - husene - the houses

*fjellan* - fjellene - the mountains

*skogan* - skogene - the forests

The degree of apocope depends upon the individual dialect, and in areas where it is common, it depends upon how rural the dialect is and how much an individual's speech has been influenced by spoken Bokmål. It is common in the urban dialects of Northern Norway to hear people use apocope only in certain parts of a sentence depending upon emphasis.

The pitch accent in Northern Norwegian tends to decrease in tone along a sentence. This is also found in Western Norway, but not in Eastern Norway including the Oslo dialect where the tone rises along the sentence. Rural and traditional dialects also use the circumflex tone on words which have apocope, often written with a circumflex accent, so 'to be' normally *å være* can be written *å vêr*, *kunne* can be written *kûnnj*.

Palatalisation is common in Northern Norwegian, as well as in Trøndersk and in Western Norwegian. Where palatalisation occurs can be localised from one dialect to another.

*mannj* - mann - man

*lannj* - land - land

*dennj* - den - it

Palatalisation sometimes only occurs for certain consonants like *n* and *l*, but it is also common for many consonants to have palatal or "slender" forms, often occurring in sequence. The Salten dialects for instance commonly palatalise *d* and *t*, similarly to the soft sounds in Russian or the slender consonants in Irish.

Various changes to vowels happen in Northern Norwegian, which is again localised and dependent upon an individual region. Perhaps most common are the changes from *e* and *i* to *æ* and *e*.

å *tænk* - å tenke - to think

*vænn* - venn - friend

å *læs* - å lese - to read

*sæng* - seng - bed

*omkreng* - omkring - around

*tell* - til - to

*fesk* - fisk - fish

*venn'* - vinden - the wind

Interrogative pronouns in Northern Norwegian are similar to those in West Norwegian. This involves a change from older *hv* to *k*, where spoken Bokmål has *v*. Others believe that the *k* pronunciation is preserved from the original Indo-European.

*ka, ke* - hva - what

*kor* - hvor - where

*kem, kæm* - hvem - who

*koffør, koffår* - hvorfor - why

*katti* - når - when

*kordan* - hvordan - how

The personal pronouns of Northern Norwegian are typically similar to those of West Norwegian, but in some parts, particularly Northern Nordland and Troms there is a tendency to have *æ*, *mæ*, *dæ* as standard, instead of *eg*, *meg*, *deg*.

*æ, æg, e, eg* - jeg/eg - I

*du* - du - you

*hannj, hanj, hån* - han - he

*ho, hu* - hun/ho - she  
*det, dæ* - det - it  
*vi* - vi/me - we  
*dokker, dåkker, dåkke, dogger* - dere - plural you  
*di, dem, dæm* - de - they

### Examples

*Æ ha læst bøkane*  
 Jeg har lest bøkene  
 I have read the books

*Hannj e ikkje min vænn*  
 Han er ikke min venn  
 He is not my friend

*Ka sa dem?*  
 Hva sa de?  
 What did they say?

*Ska dem reis tell Finlannj?*  
 Skal de reise til Finland?  
 Will they travel to Finland?

*Ka heit du?*  
 Hva heter du?  
 What is your name?

Note: In Northern Norwegian the soft *k* and *kj* sound in spoken Bokmål is more commonly replaced by a sound that can be similar or identical to the English "ch" in "chin".

Note: the diphthong *ei* in Northern Norwegian is typically pronounced as written and is not the *æi* sound found in spoken Bokmål, where *jeg reiser* is pronounced as though *jæi ræiser*.

## The Nesna Dialect

The dialect of Nesna in Helgeland has been extensively documented in the book *Ord fra gamle Nesna* by Torstein Sørensen. The dialects of Helgeland can often be quite different to the standard spoken Bokmål and Nynorsk Norwegian languages, I therefore consider Northern Norwegian to be a separate North-Germanic or Norwegian language.

The Nesna dialect sometimes lacks the long *a* to *å* change that is typical in Norwegian, the sound is also preserved as *a* in the Luleå dialects of Westrobothnian.

*ga* - gå - go  
*lae* - låve - barn  
*bannj* - bånd - band

Voiceless stops frequently become voiced in intervocalic or final positioning.

*iddje, ittje, tje* - ikke - not  
*seddan* - sittende - sitting  
*brugg* - bruke - use

In some places the pronoun *jeg/eg* is preserved as the Old Norse form *ek*, e.g. *Ek e iddje* - jeg er ikke/eg er ikkje - I am not.

There are other vowel changes that occur in the Nesna dialects, such as *slæpp* for *slippe*, *ø* can sometimes become *y* as in:

*sjy* - sjø - sea  
*sny* - snø - snow

Sometimes the opposite is true in words such as

*sjøt* - skyte - shoot  
*skøL* - skylle - pour or wash

## The dialect of Salten

The Salten dialect is the larger dialect group or 'language' around the Saltfjorden in Nordland, this lies north of the Saltfjellet mountain range, which isolates the Salten

dialect from the Helgeland dialects. The Salten dialect also includes the urban dialects of Fauske and Bodø, the Bodø dialect being more influenced by regional Northern Norwegian, so that the first person singular pronoun is *æ* instead of *e*, and *ikkje* is used instead of *ikkj*.

The Salten dialect features extensive apocope which can extend to a wider variety of words than in other Northern Norwegian dialects, such as the use of *ikkj* for *ikke/ikkje* and *mang* for *mange*. The definite forms of neuter gendered nouns also undergo apocope, so that *huset*, *fjellet*, *landet* become *hus*, *fjell*, *lannj*. Here the second tone, tonem 2 is used on the long vowel with apocope.

Unlike in other Norwegian dialects 'he' can be *hån* in Salten, and also in a few other places in Nordland. The same exists in some dialects of the Westrobothnian languages. The pronouns are as follows.

*é* - jeg  
*du* - du  
*hån* - han  
*ho* - hun  
*da* - det

*é e ikkj mannj så du såg mæ jakken på*  
 Jeg er ikke mannen som du så med jakken på  
 I am not the man who you saw with the jacket on

The final *-m* can disappear, e.g. *så* for *som* and *jønno* for *gjennom*.

## Ancient etymologies of Northern Norwegian

Inger Johansson, a Sami from Mo-i-Rana, has been researching the early Lofoten and Helgeland people, and will release more information later in 2019. These ancient seafarers left an archaeological legacy in the form of cave art, such as those at Refsvikshula and Trenyken in Lofoten, a cave painting culture which later spread down Helgeland. The name Trenyken itself means "three hills", the word being *knuk*, which is actually a Gaelic word or a pre-Gaelic word. Place-names beginning with *Bal* in Western Norway tend to occur in areas where mining was practiced, e.g. Ballangen, and Ballstad near 'Gravdal' (mine, or grave valley). The meaning isn't known but may be compared to *bal* in the Cornish language, 'mine', or an alternative etymology linked to Norwegian *poll*, a saltwater lake joined to the sea by a narrow channel.



Her research indicates that the Sami languages and Northern Norwegian dialects can be used to trace the origins of these people back to the early Uralic and Atlantic Ocean sailors. The two words from the Nesna dialect below demonstrate how a substratum seems to exist between Uralic, Germanic and Afro-Asiatic languages. In the word *fLakk*, we can see how the consonants *F-L-K* are represented as *H(A)LAK* and *FAL* in Afro-Asiatic, and as *LAK* or *W(A)LAK* in Northern Europe. For Afro-Asiatic languages the combination *FLK* may have been difficult to pronounce, where we have interchanges between *F* and *H*, also found in Gaelic, such is the interchange between *W* and *F* found in Celtic.

*fLakk* - to travel around, traceable to Proto-Atlantic *hlak*, to go or to drive or *fal* - to go, Proto-Uralic *jakka* - to go, Finnish *lähte* - to go away, and *valka* - to go down, English *walk*.

*bræms* - insect, traceable to Proto-Atlantic *bar* or *ramm* a type of insect, Sami *orbmes*, Finnish *virma*, Norwegian *orm*.

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## Dialektene på Værøya og Røstlandet

Presentasjon over typiske språktrekk fra Værøya, og en liten ordliste for Røstdialekten.

Henrik Olav Kverndal

Dialektene som snakkes vest i Lofoten, på Værøya og Røst, er typiske nordnorske dialekter, og likner andre dialekter i Lofotenøyene. Nordnorsk inkluderer dialektene nord for Trøndelag, i Nordland, Troms og Finnmark. Man kan videre dele dialektene inn i to kategorier: tradisjonelle dialekter med sine røtter i gammelnorsk, og moderne dialekter fra en blanding av tradisjonelle dialekter og talespråk som påvirkes av bokmål og dansk.

De tradisjonelle dialektområdene i Nord-Norge består av Helgeland, Rana, Salten, Ofoten og Sør-Troms. Dialektene i indre- og nord- Troms pleier å være mindre tradisjonell. Finnmark, Troms og Nordland var tradisjonelt bebodd av samer, og i noen områder har ingen norsk dialekt blitt etablert før relativt nylig.

### Værøydialekten

Værøya er ei lita øy som ligger vest for Moskenesøya og øst for de mindre øyene som kalles Røst. Disse øyene inkluderer Røstlandet og mange mindre øyer.

Jeg reiste til Værøya i 2019 for å studere dialekten som snakkes i dag. Jeg snakket med både yngre og eldre folk for å finne ut hvordan talemålet på øya endres gjennom ulike generasjoner. Jeg har fant at yngre folk mindre sannsynlig vil bruke palatalisering. Tradisjonell palatalisering brukes på Værøya som i hele Lofoten, i ord som: jente – **jenjtje/jeintje**, mann – **mannj**, alle – **allje/ajlle**, hann – **hannj**, den – **dænnj**. Som oftest i nordnorsk har Værøydialekten ofte forandret vokalene **e** og **i** til **æ** og **e**. For eks. gjennom – **jænnom/ijønna**, omkring – **omkreng**, sikker – **sekker**, men ikke i 'jeg', 'meg', osv. som uttales **e**, **me**, mens i andre deler av Lofoten og Ofoten høres **æ(g)**, **mæ(g)**, **sæ(g)**. Personlige pronomene er: **e**, **du**, **hannj**, **ho**, **de/da**, **dennj/dænnj**, **vi**, **dokker**, **di**. Til og med yngre folk sier **di** oftest og ikke **dem** eller **dæm** som brukes ofte i nord Nordland. Værøya har en spesiell r-lyd som skrives **ř** i denne artikkelen, lyden uttales lik [z] men mot [r] med palatalisering, for eks. rart – **řart**, jeg har vært – **e ha vorř**, høgår – **høgårř**, et bord – **ett borř**, men bordet – **borřà**. Den doble r-lyden uttales annerledes, en litt lengre lyd eller kanskje en annen lyd.

Værøydialekten bruker preposisjoner **te/tell** – til, **onnje** – under, 'hva' uttales **ka** eller **ke**, for eks. 'hva skal jeg si' – **kesk'e sei**, 'ikke' uttales **itje**, skrives **ikje** med det samme lydet i **kjerke**

– kirke, for eks. **e førstå ikje** – jeg forstår ikke. Apokope brukes i mange verb: å elske – **å ælsk**, å komme – **å komm**, å reise – **å reis**. Partsippspenning har ofte -en og bruker 'være' i stedet for 'ha', f eks. jeg har kommet – **e e kommen**. (**e kommer** i presens).

Etter samtaler med lokale folk fant jeg noen ord som finns spesielt på Væråya, jeg vet ikke om noen av dem brukes i andre steder i Nord Norge, for eks **ølenning** – vinden fra øst, **muta** – ta fisk fra havet, **kop** – å ikke gjøre noe, som i resten av Lofoten, også **kuppræve** – et reve som står over havet, lune - puffin, **sjiittfisk** – 'lykke til med fising', **sjesj** – se her.

## Dialekten på Røstlandet

Man vet ikke den opprinnelige betydningen av røst eller röst i skandinaviske språk, men i stedsnavn rundt kysten refererer navnet til de sterke havstrømmene omkring Røst og vest Lofoten, som kalles Moskenesstraumen. Dialektene på Værøya og Røst ligner hverandre, og kan kalles for to typer av den samme dialekt; men dialekten på Røst er mer tradisjonell i sitt ordforråd og uvanlige fraser som brukes på øya. Typonymi på Røstlandet og på de nærliggende øyene er også veldig interessant. Der finner vi stedsnavn som Trenyken, ei øy som består av tre, bratte fjell som stiger opp av havet og sees fra Røstlandet. Navnet Trenyken betyr 'tre fjell' fra det gammelnorske ordet 'knúkr', som ikke finns som et tradisjonelt germansk ord, men som fantes i Skotland og på Færøyene. Vi kan snakke om det gamle folket som kom til Lofoten for over ti tusen år siden. De bygde steinhus. Noen av disse ordene kan være deres, for eks. kokkelur.

Noen ord som brukes i dagligtale på Røstlandet: **a** – av, **bi** - bli/blir, **vart** – ble, **vorre** – vært, **sei** – sier, **slutj** – slutte.

**alam** – kopplam

**blubblubb** – makrell i tomat, brukes bare av barne som gikk i Røst barnehagen, sannsynligvis er ordet ikke gammelt.

**kjerrgårn** – kirkegården, **kjersjka** – kirke.

**fær på sjyen** – dra på havet/sjøen.

**gaura** – underbukse (også finnes i Vesterålen)

**da bi likar i mårra** – det blir bedre i morgen.

**blekkstilla** el. **klenke stilla** – vindstille og flatt hav.

**feshempa** - en liten ulkelignende fisk i grunt vann.

**hosslæstan** – ullsokka.

**i krern** – i kroken eller i hjørnet for eks. **vask godt i krern**

**i støytan** – innimellom/av og til.

**jabbadu** - fisk og potet, oppvarma.

**kalbøtan** – bak knærne

**kokkelur** – sneglehus, Engelsk 'cockle', gammel engelsk 'sæcocc', Fransk coquille, Grekisk konkhúlē - muligens ikke indoeuropeisk.

**koppspya** – brennmanet, kanskje med det tradisjonelle ordet **kupp**.

**kopptua** - oppvaskkluten

**korslægg** - gå svinger på skøyter (skeisa)

**kneppsenna** – senestrekk

**kukent** – vanskelig, for eks. **da e så kukent å kom tell stede**

**krompus** – brukt om ravn

**ondt i skoilten** – ondt i hovet, kanskje relatert til Engelsk 'skull', kanskje ikke et indoeuropeisk ord.

**mask** – matavfall

**sasspon** - hullsleiv

**seing** - måketype

**septintank** – septiktank

**sjettotta** – gryttidlig

**sleik** - langkost

**storsjya** – når det er høyest tidevann

**småsjya** – når det er minst forskjell mellom høyvann og låvann

**tangspræll** - tangsprell

**tennaur** – trepigga stingsild

**punnje** – opp under

**rottstokk** – en som er lat

**vindburan** – vinduene

**unnjekom** – en sau som er et år gammel

Takk til folket på Værøya og Røstlandet for at dere hjalp meg til å forstå dialektene deres og for samlingen av ord. Publisert 18 April 2020 av Henrik Olav Kverndal, publisert og skrevet av Henrik Olav Kverndal.

## Uralic Languages in Northern Europe – Juri Michaelsen

The North-Germanic languages are spoken throughout Scandinavia and the Baltic, but as one goes east, the historic language becomes Uralic. Uralic languages are not related to the Scandinavian languages. North-Germanic languages are closer to languages like Urdu and Persian than they are to the Uralic languages, which represent another huge family of languages, extending from the Urals in Russia towards the Baltic and south. Hungarian is the only Uralic language in Europe that is spoken outside of this area, but Hungarian is not very similar to the Finnic and Sámi languages in Northern Europe.

There are two sub branches of Uralic spoken in Northern Europe, the Finnic languages and the Sámi languages. The people who spoke Finnic languages were historically distinguished from the Sámi, the Finnic speakers had agriculture and the Sámi retained an indigenous hunter gatherer lifestyle. The Finnic languages may have spread over areas which were originally Sámi speaking, but nobody is sure which language family is earlier or if they both appeared at around the same time. The Sámi languages were originally spoken in Southern Finland, to Northern Finland, Northwestern Russia, across Lapland, and down Norway and Sweden nearly as far south as Oslo. The Sámi languages slowly retreated with the expansion of Scandinavian dialects. Today there are nine living Sámi languages, from south to north, Southern Sámi, Ume Sámi, Pite Sámi, Lule Sámi, then across Sweden and Finland to Lake Inari, where there is Inari Sámi and Skolt Sámi. East in Russia is Ter Sámi, Akkala Sámi and Kildin Sámi.

The Kemi Sámi people lived in southern Lapland and south of the Sámi speakers in Finland today. They lived around Kuusamo, and north towards Lake Inari. Lake Inari lies in the area where the Northern, Inari, Skolt and Kemi Sámi languages once converged. The Kemi Sámi language was native to a large area of Northern Finland and is more similar to Finnish than the other Sámi languages are.

English	Northern Sámi	Kemi Sámi	Finnish
I	mun, mon	mun	minä, mä
you (sing)	don	tun	sinä, sä
your (sing)	du	tu	sinun
lake	jávri	javre	järvi
spruce	guossa	koasa	kuusi
day	beaivi	päivä	päivää
father	áhčči	äätj	isä
but	muhto	mutto	mutta
power	fápmu	vuojme	voimakas

A comparison of some of the living Sámi languages can be seen when the numbers are compared.

English	Finnish	Southern Sámi	Pite Sámi	Northern Sámi	Inari Sámi	Skolt Sámi
one	yksi	akte	akttá	okta	ohtâ	õhtt
two	kaksi	göökte	guoktte	guokte	kyehti	kuáhht
three	kolme	golme	gálbmá	golbma	kulmâ	koumm
four	neljä	nieljje	nállje	njeallje	nelji	nellj
five	viisi	vijhte	vihtta	vihtta	vittâ	viit
six	kuusi	govhte	guhtta	guhhta	kuttâ	kutt
seven	seitsemän	tjihjtje	gietjav	čieža	čiččâm	čiččâm
eight	kahdeksan	gaektsie	gáktse	gávcci	käävci	kääu'c
nine	yhdeksän	uktsie	ákkse	ovcci	oovce	ááu'c
ten	kymmenen	luhkie	lågev	logi	love	låái

The Finnic languages were concentrated around St Petersburg and spread north into Karelia, and then west into Finland and north to Northern Sweden and Northern Norway. These dialects or languages are quite close to one another but Karelian and Finnish are phonetically different. Finnic languages were spoken inland in the St Petersburg region, and south, then west in Estonia and eastern Latvia where the Livonian language still has some speakers and is being revived.

English	Livonian	Estonian	Livvi Karelian	Finnish
language	kēļ	keel	kieli	kieli
man	mīez	mees	mies	mies
woman	nai	naine	naine, akka	nainen
child	lāpš	laps	lapsi	lapsi
water	vež	vesi	vezi, veži	vesi
forest	mōtsā	metsa	meččā	metsä
railway	rōdariek	raudtee	raududorogu, mašindorogu	rautatie
house	kuodā	maja	pertti	talo
tree	pū	puu	puu	puu
river	jo'ug	jōgi	jogi	joki
lake	jōra	järv	järvi	järvi
light	va'l	valgus	valo	valo
day	pāva	päev	päivy	päivää
night	īe	öö	yö	yö
bird	lind	lind	lindu	lintu
cat	kaš	kass	kaži	kissa
wolf	suž	hunt	hukku	susi
bear	okš	kandma	kondii	karhu

Some of these words are found in neighbouring Indo-European languages, the Latvian word for forest is *mežs*, like the Finnic words. These are mostly early Germanic and Balto-Slavic loanwords in the Finnic languages.

## The Cardigan Irish numbers

by Linden Pentecost, July 2022

I originally discussed this subject recently in my short book ... but I wanted to talk a little more about it because I think it is a curious and interesting subject. Lately I have been reading about Welsh folklore, and Dutch, or rather Zeelandic folklore, and have looked at these stories of towns and entire landscapes that are not beneath the waves. In Lancashire such a legend talks about Kilgrimol, this is a village that is now lost to the sea, or which was perhaps inundated by the sea and which later filled with sediment, so, it could be on land, as this area, like much of the Netherlands, has undergone large sea level changes, and the reclaiming of land from the sea. The name Kilgrimol has been interpreted as being Norse, from something like Ketilgrimol, but I personally have wondered if Ketil and Goidelic cill 'church, sacred place', are somehow related. Ketil is connected to water and the emergence of water, as in a spring, and whilst cill probably has a different etymology, the concept is rather similar in that, some sacred places 'give forth' the eternal waters of life. This perhaps helps to demonstrate why it's confusing to try and discuss exactly how Norse and Goidelic connect to the ancient world of the Atlantic Ocean, before the current landscape and sea levels became as they are to us.

There are Welsh legends about Cantre'r Gwaelod, a land beneath the waves in Cardigan Bay. If one looks at sea depth charts of Cardigan Bay it becomes quite clear that the water here is pretty shallow for a fair distance out to sea, and that the idea that this was once land, is quite frankly an assured reality rather than just a legend.

These parts of Western Wales, including the Llŷn Peninsula, do have historic, although confusing to interpret connections with Ireland, with the early Irish Christians and with the Irish language and 'Ogham', although it is difficult to see anything concrete in how these connections occurred in what we call time. A theory I have put forward several times, is that what we interpret as being 'Celtic' might not always be 'Celtic' in the Indo-European terms we have used to define the Celtic languages.

When we look at the Basque and Iberian languages, numbers are shared, but the languages are not related. I have wondered if perhaps a similar thing is visible in ancient England with the 'Celtic' sheep-counting numbers, and in Cardiganshire with the Goidelic-numbers.

I shall imagine for example, that perhaps five thousand years ago, when farming was already very present around the Atlantic Sea, that there was cultural contact between and knowledge shared between Ireland and what is now the flooded landscape of Cardigan Bay, between Pembrokeshire and the Llŷn Peninsula. The language on the coast of ancient Wales may not have been Goidelic or Celtic, but it may have shared a connection to those languages through certain sacred, bardic and indigenous principles, like numbers, and farming.

And I postulate that the 'Cardigan Irish numbers' are perhaps representative of something like this. These numbers are not widely known about or discussed, even within the community of Celtic linguistics I have never seen them discussed online. In fact this whole aspect of Welsh history and the connection with Ireland, whilst spoken of and referred to in relation to the Neolithic, Bronze Age, Iron Age and Christian periods, is not widely elaborated on. David Thomas was the original person to collect these numbers, publishing them as 'An old system of numeration found in South Cardiganshire'. The following examples of the numbers were compiled by David Greene by examining the article by David Thomas, I think they will prove interesting to many, they are from the article *The Irish Numerals of Cardiganshire*, Greene, David. *Studia Celtica; Cardiff Vol. 10, (Jan 1, 1975): 305*. The Cardigan Irish numbers are written in bold, followed by the Manx and Irish form of the word. These are for example: **în**, **ên**, Manx *nane*, Irish *aon* – 'one', **tô**, **dô**, **dôr**, Manx *jees*, Irish *dá*, *dó* – 'two', **târ**, **câr**, Manx *tree*, Irish *trí* – 'three'.

I think it is interesting that the 'r' seems considered connected to the numerals, but not necessary for distinguishing the numbers two and three, what does distinguish them is a voiced distinction, where we can see that the unvoiced sound has a tendency to become [k]. Thus perhaps the numbers were distinguished through a different grammatical process to that generally seen in the interconnectedness of Celtic languages.



## Donegal Irish dialects

Linden Alexander Pentecost, early July 2022

The Irish of County Donegal or Tír Chonaill consists of dialects of Ulster Irish, this diverse range of Irish dialects were historically spoken all across Ulster, and specific 'East Ulster' and 'West Ulster' subdialects of Ulster Irish can be identified. Although this is itself a simplification, as the Irish of Antrim in East Ulster was still pretty different to the Irish of Dundalk area in County Louth, also in East Ulster. The Irish of County Cavan, **Condaidh an Chabháin** is also a West Ulster dialect area, but it is very distinct in prosody and phonology from the Donegal West Ulster dialects, and often it is Donegal Irish specifically that we refer to when referring to Ulster Irish these days, because Donegal is the only county in Ulster where Irish still remains spoken by a large percentage of people in certain areas.

Donegal Irish is also not one dialect, but a range of dialects across the diverse landscapes of Donegal, with its inland mountain ranges and complex coastal inlets and peninsulas. Some of the traditional Donegal dialects sounded more like Tyrone Irish to say the Irish of Gweedore and Inis Thoraigh that both lie at the western side of Donegal. Within the west of Donegal there are also differences, Inis Thoraigh Irish does not sound like Gweedore Irish to me, they are distinct. And the Irish of say Fál Charrach and Gweebarra Bay also have their distinctions. Further east are the Rosguill and Inishowen Peninsulas, both of which also have their traditional distinct varieties of Irish.

In my recent book, *local and native languages – book one, language on the Furness Peninsula and other topics of language* I wrote some paragraphs in Ulster Irish, and I found this quite difficult for me because I find it a difficult language, I often employed older spellings of Irish, as the older spelling of Irish does often allow for Ulster Irish to be written more easily.

## A note about the ancient places:

Linden Alexander Pentecost, early July 2022

When it comes to the ancient places and the spiritual traditions associated with them, I think it is important that we don't approach this subject with minds full of assumption. I feel that there is a lot we have to learn, and that we must always be respectful.

In the West of Europe, many of our ancient sacred sites were visited by archaeologists over a hundred years ago, who often seem not to have regarded these sites as being the sacred places that they are.

I don't feel that we understand our ancient cultures enough to be allowed to really understand them, if we are ever granted that access by the spiritual beings of those places. So rather than focusing on categories and the 'masks' that we attach to different ancient cultures, I think it far more important that we observe, allow ourselves to learn, and at the same time, do not move too fast. Many of these places are linked to 'sound' and 'light'. But sound and light can also be misunderstood and we may even deceive ourselves with it. Indigenous cultures around the world teach this kind of knowledge so that people understand how to relate to it. But in places where those ancient cultures may be little mentioned or understood, this is much harder.

The most important thing I want to say with regards to these ancient, sacred places, is that I have been to some sacred places and felt clearly that it was not right for me to be there, and so I left. Our body is great at picking up these kind of 'vibes', and I think it important that we always trust our instincts. Many of the ancient places that have been rediscovered with archaeology, are also 'haunted' places, situated on especially powerful points in the landscape, where communication with the spirit world may be more potent. I do not believe that these ancient people have truly 'gone', at all. I think that they are very much still there.

But they are not generally in our sense of the 'present' and perhaps therefore we do not generally see them. I do not think that they are in the past or future either, but they are there I believe.

But to say that these spirits are purely the continuation of those ancient peoples may in itself not be accurate. It may be that, whatever we are seeing, was always connected to those people, but, is that part of them

not visible to us, not in our present moment, and in that sense these beings are equally 'gods' that existed before those people as well.

This is confusing to try and explain, and I do not claim that I really understand it. These are just my thoughts. My main point is that what we may be seeing ancient people, and gods, simultaneously, as a part of the same spiritual forces. We, in the 'now' do not generally identify ourselves as being gods, and for good reason, we are not 'gods'. But taken outside of the present 'now' mind that we see and know around us, perhaps we are in a sense 'gods' in our greater connectedness to the world around us, those parts of our soul which cannot be accessed by our conscious mind or ego. I do not believe these parts of our being are the same thing as our divine 'spirit', I think it is instead more connected to our body, our body being created by the land and by nature, and therefore is in a sense an 'extension' of those forces and ancestors behind nature.

So perhaps, maybe, from my point of view, those ancient people never disappeared, only their form in our 'now' is no-longer visible, but their greater spiritual form outside of our 'now' is very much still there. And on one hand it could be said that this 'came' from those people, but on the other hand it could be said that those people 'came' from those forces and gods.

Just as on one hand, the spirit world, the rocks, mountains and lakes, can be said to reflect our souls and minds. But on the other hand, perhaps it is our minds that reflect the spirit of the mountains and lakes. I feel personally that both are true. But, I'm not an expert, and I cannot say what is true about this, nor do I understand it properly.

I ask kindly that people always respect these places and the spirit world, and that I think it is better if we leave a place if our gut feeling or instinct is telling us not to be there. Nature and spirituality are beautiful in my opinion, but to properly appreciate that beauty we need to listen to what it's really telling us and teaching us. An aspect of being close to nature and in tune with nature again, and of spending time in nature, is also realising that some parts of nature are not our 'domain', and that we are essentially in the house or in the abode of an ancestor.

I hope this was helpful, may the cosmos keep us safe always.

## An introduction to the Goidelic languages

Written by Linden Alexander Pentecost in around July 2009, thus, some of my ideas about the history of Goidelic languages have changed since I wrote this. I nevertheless hope that it is helpful.

Officially speaking, there are three Goidelic languages: Irish, Scottish and Manx. The ancestry of these three languages lies in Old Irish, and before that in Primitive Irish, which comes from the Celtic branch of Indo-European languages, including The Germanic, Italic and Slavic groups. Over 60,000 people speak Scottish Gaelic, in Ireland the number is less certain although it is known to be a huge amount more than that of Scottish Gaelic. Manx, on the Isle of Man, is now spoken by over 1,000 people, and is a revived language, whose last original native speaker died a number of decades ago.

The Goidelic cultures, built up around the Gaelic languages, are world-famous, and has many of its routes in Pre-Celtic times. No-one can easily define exactly who the Celts where, in the case of Ireland, the Celtic speaking peoples were thought to have come from Iberia. The ancient Neolithic sites of Ireland and Scotland are also considered to be part of Celtic history, although these were built by a different people; they have likely been incorporated into the Gaelic cultures, which are



very rich, having with it aspects of Indo-European culture, others probably Pre-Indo-European, and of course the influence of Christianity. The Modern Celtic languages are linked with all three aspects, having a number of attested Pre-Celtic words, and a noticeable influence from Latin.

(Picture/**An Pictiúir**): **Crann i bPáirc Náisiúnta Chill Airne**, tree in Killarney National Park

When compared to the Brythonic languages, the Goidelic languages are more inflected, records of Old Irish show that it had a complex case,

number and verbal system, rather like Old Norse, Latin or Latvian. Originally, Irish was written in the Ogham alphabet. The origin of this fascinating alphabet is unknown, some believe it to have originated in Pre-Celtic Ireland, although there appear to be no records of any Pre-Celtic inscriptions in Ireland. In Scotland it was used to write Pictish, one variety of which was believed to be non Indo-European.

At the present time, the languages are written in only the Latin alphabet, this is largely the same for Irish and for Scottish Gaelic:

**a, b, c, d, e, f, g, h, i, l, m, n, o, p, r, s, t, u** (v). Irish uses 'v' in a number of loan words, e.g. **vóta** – vote (n).

Vowels in Irish are marked with a 'fada' (long) acute accent: **á é í ó ú**, this usually means the vowel sound is longer.

Scottish Gaelic never uses 'v', and the standard form uses the grave, rather than the acute accent, although á é and ó are still used by many. **à è ì ò ù** are the long vowels in Scottish Gaelic.

Consonants in Gaelic which undergo lenition, are written with a 'h' behind them: **bh, ch, dh, fh, gh, mh, ph, sh, th**. Their pronunciations vary greatly depending on the region, for example 'dh' in the word Samhradh is pronounced /g/ on Arran, but is often silent in other parts of Scotland.

Manx Gaelic uses an orthography very much based on English, with a few elements from Welsh also in place:

**a, b, c, d, e, f, g, h, i, j, k, l, m, n, o, p, q, r, s, t, u, v, w, y**

Manx has some interesting phonological aspects which the other two Gaelic languages don't often possess, for example the use of /ð/.

Where Irish and Scottish Gaelic would have 'bh' Manx uses 'v' for /v/. E.g. Scottish Gaelic **bha** – 'was', Manx **va**, Scottish Gaelic **bha mi a' dèanamh** – 'I was doing', Manx **va mee jannoo**.

Within Irish there are also three to four main dialects, corresponding to the traditional provinces of the country: Ulster, Leinster, Munster and

Connaught. The subject comes after the verb in Irish. In Munster Irish, special verb conjugations have been innovated which means that in some senses Munster Irish is more inflectional in this way, although these alternative forms are also found in certain registers and speech formalities of other dialects, e.g. **tá mé** 'I am' is often **táim** in Munster, **tiocfaidh mé** 'I will come' is **tiocfad** – I will come. This is also noticeable in the past tense in Munster Irish, for example **bhí mé** 'I was' and **bhí tú** – 'thou were' would often be **bhíos** and **bhís** in Munster Irish. Some of these innovations are quite irregular and must be learned one by one.

Standard Irish verb 'tuig' – to understand

**tuigim** – I understand

**tuigeann tú** – you understand

**tuigeann sé** – he understands

**tuigeann sí** – she understands

**tuigimid** – we understand

**tuigeann sibh** – you lot understand

**tuigeann siad** – they understand

And past tense of póg (to kiss)

**phóg mé** – I kissed

**phóg tú** – you kissed (singular)

**phóg sé** – he kissed

**phóg sí** – she kissed

**phógamar** – we kissed

**phóg sibh** – you plural kissed

**phóg siad** – they kissed

Scottish Gaelic does not really conjugate verbs into a present tense, as the form used for the present tense is the same as it is for the future tense. However these past tense forms in Scottish Gaelic are more or less essentially the same as those in Irish. The pronouns are also a little different.

**phòg mi** – I kissed

**phòg thu** – you singular kissed

**phòg e** – he kissed

**phòg i** – she kissed

**phòg sinn** – we kissed

**phòg sibh** – you plural kissed

**phòg iad** – they kissed

The Gaels had much in common with other Indo-European speakers in terms of the ancient religious culture, which was nature connected like that of every other indigenous people. The link to Celtic spirituality is somewhat hidden, in symbols for example, in ancient religious sites and in fairylore, although reconstructionism has been applied to a large extent in some cases to revive Celtic spirituality in its bardic, druidic and shamanic aspects. 'Fairylore' is a name sometimes applied to these religious beliefs, or the 'fairy faith', although some say that these ancestors in Scotland do not like the term 'fairy' for describing them specifically. The word 'fairy' is itself from the French language and did originally refer to the 'faerie realm', that magical realm that could also be found in the nature around us. The Celtic languages have Gods expressing lore within them, these are Gods, the forces of whom run through the landscape, and there are various names for them across Celtic cultures. These various Gods who were seen to occupy the landscape, were in themselves sparks of light, connected to the 'Great Spirit' or 'God' at least in my opinion.

The languages do preserve a lot of names for spirits in the landscape, and particular names for particular spiritual realms. This has already been covered in many other books.

## Dutch and other Germanic languages

Linden Alexander Pentecost, July 2022

The Dutch language is one of my favourite Germanic languages. My other favourites include Danish, Sognemål, Pitemål and Ulster English. But anyway, I will hope to include a little about these in this article, and relate that to Dutch.

Dutch is quite closely related to English, and sometimes this is so much so that a sentence in Dutch and in English can be etymologically identical, and the sentences can sound very similar. This only applies to certain expressions of the English and Dutch grammar and vocabulary layers however, and in some ways I do feel that the relatedness between English and Dutch, and between English and Frisian, is a little overstated.

However, many Dutch words and phrases are similar to the English. Some examples of nouns of this category are listed below: The Dutch words are in bold.

**huis** - house

**zee** – sea

**steen** – stone

**boek** – book

**vliet** – *fleet*

**water** – water

**boot** – boat

**tuin** – garden

**vriend** – friend

Of these above words, **boek** and **boot** sound pretty similar to their English equivalents. The word **tuin** has a slightly different meaning to the English word 'town', but both of these words share a similar etymological meaning, connected to the Celtic words for 'fort' or 'enclosure', such as the Irish word *dún* and Welsh *din* and in Gallo-Brittonic, something like *dûnom*. The vowel represented by **ui** in Dutch is written in the international phonetic alphabet as [œy], and is a common sound in Dutch. This [œy] is quite similar to how this etymological sound unit is pronounced in Ulster English, frequently as [ey], as in *house*, *town*, [heys], [teyn].



In some senses, Dutch parallels certain dialects of English more than others, and interestingly this in some ways includes the dialects of the West Country and the Yola language and Ulster English, often more so than it does dialects in Eastern England. An example being that there is alternation in Dutch between voiced and unvoiced sounds, for example **zee** and **zeven** can be pronounced in Dutch with either an initial [s] or an initial [z]. This [z] pronunciation is also found in the Yola language and in some of the westcountry dialects of English, where traditionally they said *zea*, *zeven* et cetera. The same variation occurs in Cornish and in certain dialects of Munster Irish, but this is as consonant mutation, for example, in parts of Munster *an suíonn sé ag an mbord?* Could be written as *an zsuíonn sé ag an mbord?*

Although it is difficult to identify the Celtic influences that exist in Dutch and in English dialects, the Celtic languages do give us clues into the ancient landscapes of these regions.

The word **vliet** in Dutch, has a direct cognate in English, namely the word *fleet*. I don't really hear people say this word, but that's probably because it refers to a localised land feature. There are many 'fleets' on the southern coast of England, such as the Fleet Lagoon. It essentially refers to a stretch of water, and is only found in certain localities in England. In Holland it is far more common, and the wider usage of **vliet** in Holland helps to explain the wider descriptiveness of what this word represents in the landscape.

This includes for example **Haringvliet**, a fleet which was formed by flooding, but which is now a freshwater lake.

An interesting and possibly-ancient word connected to land-drainage in Holland is **polder** – 'reclaimed land', I feel that this word may be connected to the word *poll* in Norway and in Scotland (when referring to a tidal pooling area), but I need to give more thought to the semantics of this word and of other words like it.