Abstracts

Celtic languages and cultures in contact

Quimper campus
University of Western Brittany

Thursday, 21 June 2018

Session 1 – 9:30-11:00, Early contacts & exchanges (Chair: Jean Le Dû)

9:30-10:00  Patrick Galliou (University of Western Brittany): Between East and West: Armorica and the European Iron Age

Far from being a cul de sac on the westernmost periphery of Europe, the Armorican peninsula was fully involved, during the Bronze and Iron Ages, in the cultural mutations occurring in western and continental communities, integrating them and developing new technological and artistic expressions.

10:00-10:30  Nadine Pellen (Roscoff): Les foyers de la mucoviscidose en Bretagne: des origines insulaires (britanniques et irlandaises)?

La génétique, associée à la généalogie, permet de tracter l’histoire biologique des êtres vivants. Elles décrivent les chemins par lesquels le patrimoine génétique collectif a été transmis au fil des générations. Ce travail de reconstruction n’a rien de novateur dans la méthode. La généalogie existe depuis très longtemps, l’une des nouveautés est d’éclairer la situation de ces généalogies par la biologie moléculaire, une donnée rare dans le contexte de données historiques. On a alors ce lien entre des connaissances très modernes, techniques avec le passé des individus, l’histoire des populations.
En nous appuyant sur une étude menée sur la fréquence et de la répartition des mutations de la mucoviscidose en Bretagne nous verrons en quoi la génétique peut apporter un nouvel éclairage sur les problématiques liées aux contacts entre les populations installées des deux côtés de la Manche.

*The Sources of Cystic Fibrosis in Brittany: Brittonic and Irish Insular Origins?*

Genetics, combined with genealogy, allows researchers to trace the biological history of human beings. They describe the paths by which our collective genetic heritage has been transmitted from generation to generation. There is nothing novel methodologically-speaking in this work of reconstruction. Indeed, genealogy has existed for a very long time, but one of the novelties today which sheds additional light on the genealogies is molecular biology, a field which is not sufficiently exploited when studying historical data. This combines very modern scientific knowledge, techniques regarding the past of individuals and the history of populations.

Basing our study on research carried out on the frequency and the spread of cystic fibrosis mutations in Brittany, we shall see how genetics can offer new insights into the questions about the contacts between populations on both sides of the Channel.

10:30-11:00  **Tanguy Solliec (PhD candidate, Brest): Linguistic geography as a window onto the past: From current phonetic variation in Breton to early medieval Brittany**

For a long time in Breton studies, the importance of a Gaulish substrate on the actual Breton language had been discussed from various standpoints and positions across the decennials (Loth 1883, Falc’hun 1962, Fleuriot 1981, van Doorn 2016). The respective influence of the Gaulish on one hand and of the Brittonic element brought to Western Armorica upon contemporary Breton is still under debate. Since the textual and linguistic sources are very scarce, it is hard to propose a definite and clear answer. Various textual sources allow us to reassess the vitality of the Gaulish language at the time of Breton migrations in V-VIth centuries.

We would like to contribute to this debate with a computational analysis of Breton dialectal data contained in the *Nouvel Atlas Linguistique de la Basse-Bretagne* (Le Dû 2001). Our method, called dialectometry, aims to evaluate a linguistic distance between the different locations investigated for this linguistic atlas. The results we have obtained offer a view onto the linguistic past of Brittany.
Contrary to the position of Kenneth Jackson (1961), a synchronic approach of linguistic variation has led us to observe geographical patterns, which reflect such historical phenomena. Our findings as displayed in the following map show a clear configuration in the distribution of the linguistic similarity in the Breton-speaking Brittany. The division is made on a North-western and South-eastern axis. Furthermore, alongside with our dialectometrical approach, this view matches also with specific linguistic facts.

Moreover, recent finding in population genetics do converge with these conclusions and contribute therefore to bring a little light into the so-called Dark-Ages and assume a methodological contribution when direct sources are lacking.

**Session 2 – 11:15-12:45, Comparative Celtic linguistics (Chair: Tatyana Mikhailova)**

11:15-11:45  **Jean Le Dû (University of Western Brittany):** *The Celtic element in Gallo-roman dialect areas.*

The history of the French language was initially marked by Celtomania, which saw Celtic roots everywhere. When this doctrine was discredited and discarded in the XIXth century, the role of the Germanic superstrate became hypertrophied, the more so that Breton, long considered a direct descendant of the native Gaulish, was ranked in the same period as an alien language imported from Great Britain into the Armorican peninsula.

Relying on modern geolinguistics, I compare ALF (*Atlas Linguistique de la France*) maps with Breton ones, using the data recorded in Le Roux’s *Atlas Linguistique de la Basse-Bretagne* and Le Dû’s *Nouvel Atlas Linguistique de la Basse-Bretagne*. I shall try to show that several of these maps reveal the presence of ALF data whose origin is clearly Celtic and not Germanic.

The study of the *Atlas Linguarum Europae* and of the *Atlas Linguistique Roman* has shown that borders between languages and even language families are not waterproof. It is high time to develop such comparisons to bring about a new vision of the history of languages.

11:45-12:15  **Till Vogt (PhD candidate, Leipzig):** *Breton and Lower Sorbian word order in translations of the Gospel of Luke*

The paper proposed presents a comparative analysis of the syntax in the earliest known Lower Sorbian and Breton translations of the New Testament.
The earliest preserved translation into Breton is ‘Testamant Nevez hon aotrou Jézuz-Krist’, accomplished by Yann Frañsez Vari ar Gonideg in 1827. However, correspondence between the Société nationale des antiquaires de France and the British and Foreign Bible Society from the 19th century indicates that there were even earlier Breton translations of parts of the Bible. As for Ar Gonidec’s translation, the correspondence between him and his Welsh mentors, Rev. Thomas Price and Rev. David Jones, shows that Ar Gonidec translated mainly from a Latin version. In addition, he utilized the French translation of Louis-Isaac Lemaistre de Sacy from 1667.

The earliest known translation of the New Testament into a dialect of Lower Sorbian, now extinct, is a manuscript entitled ‘Nowý Zakon’ and completed by the Protestant clergyman Miklawš Jakubica in 1548. Comparisons with Czech and Polish Bible translations of his time suggest that he tried to create a Sorbian standard language based on his own Lower Sorbian dialect, Upper Sorbian, Czech and Polish.

The second and most recent Lower Sorbian New Testament, ‘Nowy Testament naschogo Knēsa Jesom Kristussa’, was produced by Johann Gottlieb Fabricius (Jan Bogumił Fabricius) in 1709. His work is of major interest here because he was born into a German family in Schwerin an der Warthe (today Skwierzyna in Poland) and learnt Lower Sorbian later when he became a minister in Lower Lusatia. Fabricius’ translation shows an intense syntactical influence of German.

Given the linguistic context described above, syntactic influences on the Breton and Lower Sorbian translations by their contact languages are analyzed.

References


JAKUBICA, MIKŁAWSH: Nowý Zakon. Manuscript, 1548.


12:15-12:45 **Sabine Asmus & Eduard Werner (Leipzig University):** *Aspect—a linguistic category in insular Celtic and Slavic? The case of Sorbian and Welsh*

The category of aspect is a popular research topic, whose usefulness has been explored with regard to various languages. A classical approach to this category is normally the assumption that aspect should be seen as the depiction of an act(ion) as a whole (perfective) or as a duration (imperfective) (cf. Isačenko, 1954/60). This seems to be prototypically encoded in Slavic, most apparently in Russian, predominantly the by prefixation of verbs (in which the perfective ones are normally seen as marked), but most clearly by suffixation. Such suffixation triggers pairs of verbs, as for instance in

*On otkryval okno, no ne otkryl.*

He opened _ip_ window, but not opened _p_

He tried to open the window, but did not manage.

Looking at Upper Sorbian, the concept of aspect can be identified, but does not seem to be fully grammaticalised as is explained in detail by Werner (2003, 2013)

When looking at Welsh, the concept of aspect seems to be difficult to identify within a verb-based framework altogether. When, however, opting for the concept of aspectuality, a more universally applicable system takes shape. Defining aspectuality as the cognitive domain referring to a time structure of situations, allows to include aspect, lexical aspect (Aktionssart) and verb semantics (Verbalcharakter) as subconcepts, which may be encoded differently, like in the following Welsh examples:

*Yr wyf yn canu* ‘I am singing’  *Yr wyf wedi canu* ‘I have sung’
*Yr wyf ar fin canu* ‘I am about to sing’  *Yr wyf newydd ganu* ‘I have just (finished singing)/sung’
*Yr wyf heb ganu* ‘I have not sung/I did not sing (did not even start singing)’
*Yr wyf wedi hen ganu* ‘I have long sung’ and many others.

This system will be explained in further detail and parallels shown in non-Indo-European languages.
References


Session 3 – 13:45-15:45, Irish medieval literary tradition (Chair: Elena Parina)

13:45-14:05 Cameron Wachowich (PhD candidate, Toronto): Orosius Insularis: Notes on the transmission and reception of the Historiae adversus Paganos in Ireland and England

Paulus Orosius (c. 375—post 418) is most commonly remembered as the author of Historiarum adversus Paganos Libri VII (‘Seven Books of History against the Pagans’ hereafter Historiae), a masterpiece of late-antique universalist history in which he chronicled in Latin the succession of world empires that culminated in his own Christian Rome. During the European Middle Ages, his work is known to have circulated extremely widely in Europe and beyond and his themes and methodology were imitated in historical writing from Scandinavia to Ethiopia. I intend to present in this paper some highlights from a larger study of the transmission of his work and its influence on the conception of history among the Celtic- and English-speaking populations of the Early Middle Ages. The aims of this paper will be twofold: first, I will survey the evidence for the direct transmission of the Historiae both in Ireland and in Irish-influenced centres on the Continent and I will present a brief catalogue of instances of potential Orosian influence in several major Irish historical works, including various annals, Sex Aetates Mundi and Lebor Gabála Érenn. While the influence of writers such as Eusebius upon these works is well known, a comprehensive discussion of the influence of Orosius has hitherto been lacking. Second, I shall
turn my attention to England. The presence of Orosius's work in England is evidenced most prominently by an abridged Old-English translation or, rather, adaptation of the *Historiae*. This so-called Old-English Orosius, which was attributed until recently to Alfred the Great, diverges from Orosius's Latin text frequently and significantly. A great many details seem to be drawn from other classical works of history and, on this account, the text has been seen as the product of considerable English learning and erudition. The Old-English Orosius has been the subject of a recent extensive study by Malcolm Godden, who argues convincingly that these divergences from the Latin source are to be attributed to the use of a single Latin exemplar that was heavily glossed with material from other sources. Godden posits a Frisian provenance for this glossed exemplar. I intend to demonstrate that many of the divergences in the Old-English text have close analogues in Irish material. Among others, a particularly vivid comparison may be drawn between the biography of Alexander the Great in the Old-English Orosius and the Irish *Scéla Alaxándair*. I will interrogate the possibility that the Old-English text is thus not the product of transmission from Germanic-speaking communities on the continent, but rather owes its origins to the Irish, whether directly from Ireland or via Irish-influenced centres in Britain or on the Continent.

14:05-14:25  Mikhail Kiselev (PhD candidate, Moscow): Some notes on searching for the origins of Apgitir Chrábaid

In my PhD thesis (assumed title: *Apgitir chrábaid* in the context of the religious and philosophical aspect of the intellectual culture of the Irish monasticism of the 6th-8th centuries) I am going to develop research line that was set by V. Hull, P. Ó Néill, W. Follett and other researchers, who did previously bring the *Apgitir chrábaid*, an Old Irish monastic wisdom tract written circa the 7th-8th centuries, into the picture.

My thesis is about developing an approximate list of authentic sources that could have had influence upon author/authors or compiler/compiler of the *Apgitir chrábaid*. Notably, T. O’Loughlin made such list for Adomnán’s *De Locis Sanctis*.

It seems to be especially profitable to identify the influence of the Christian scriptures on *Apgitir chrábaid* from the Old Testament (Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, the Book of Wisdom, and Sirach), as well as from the New Testament (Epistles), and ideas of Continental monastic wisdom tradition, from Spain—Isidore of Seville, from Gaul—John Cassian. In my opinion, such influence could be found in two possible ways: in undirected or concealed quotations, because there are not direct quotes or ones provided with the source in *Apgitir chrábaid*, and in the references and allusions on used texts.

In my paper I would like to present a brief account of first results in my research.
14:25-14:45  **Ksenia Kudenko (PhD candidate, Derry): Possible manuscript source and some contextual considerations for Tochmarc Momera**

The Middle Irish tale *Tochmarc Moméra (TM)*, one of the origin legends of the Munster royal dynasty the Eóganachta, has only one extant manuscript witness, Yellow Book of Lecan (TCD MS 1318, cols. 341-343.30). The manuscript which contains *TM* (cols. 281-344) was penned by Murchadh Ó Cuindlis, student of Giolla Íosa Mac Fir Bhisigh, “for himself” in east Ormond (Co. Tipperary) in the years 1398-99. In this paper, I will propose my theory that *TM* might once have been part of the twelfth-century Book of Leinster (LL), based on Aed mac Críithmainn’s reference to this tale in the genealogical tract he copied in this codex, and on the fact that the scribes of Mac Fir Bhisigh school had access to LL at the end of the fourteenth century. I will also briefly analyse the context in which *TM* is found in Murchadh’s manuscript, and will describe a thematic cluster the tale belongs to.

14:45-15:05  **Tatiana Shingurova (PhD candidate, Aberdeen): The druid Mog Ruith and St Molaga: Two heroes of Munster**

Mog Ruith, “the god of druidry”, is a controversial figure in medieval Irish tradition. Medieval Irish apocrypha describe him as the greatest sinner of Ireland – the disciple of Simon Magus and the murderer of John the Baptist. However, in medieval Munster, he was known as the powerful druid and the splendid descendant of Fergus mac Róich, a truly “noble” ancestor for many of the local saints.

*Corpus Genealogiarum Sanctorum Hiberniae* mentions him as an ancestor of St Molaga, the mighty Irish saint, whose ecclesiastical activity was known far beyond Ireland. According to his Life—*Betha Molaga*, he was born in Liathmuine in the territory of Fir Maige Féne people. There he possessed his chief church of Áth Cros, however because of the neglect of the local king, Cuanu mac Cailchine, it was destroyed by druids. Because of this insult, Molaga left his home and set out on a journey, visiting Ulster, Connacht, Scotland and Wales, during which he performed many miracles. In the end, after a visit of women from Fir Maige, who bears their breasts, appealing to him, St Molaga agreed to return to his people.

The attribution to Mog Ruith’s race was not considered harmful for St Molaga’s reputation. On the contrary, in *Betha Molaga*, the hagiographer includes Mog Ruith’s biography as part of the text. Similarly to Mog Ruith, St Molaga is granted the support of the local community in exchange for his services as an intermediary between them and the supernatural. He dissuades a certain king from retirement and saves the Corco Baiscinn people from the
plague. Finally, he becomes the king’s spiritual advisor; this could again be compared with Mog Ruith, who is mentioned as the chief druid of Fiacha Muillethan—the legendary king of Munster.

Mog Ruith and Molaga—one a heathen, the other a Christian saint, are both represented as the patrons of their people. Their case is a very remarkable example of the gradual replacement of legendary hero by local saints. Considering the texts dedicated to Mog Ruith and Simon Magus, genealogies and *Betha Molaga*, this paper will analyze how the old “heathen” cults were used and re-used in Celtic lands (particularly in Ireland) as well as how these cults had been recast and reimagined as Christian ones.

### Session 4 – 15:45-17:30, Stories of the sea (Chair: Maxim Fomin)

15:45-16:05  **Criostóir Mac Cárthaigh (UCD):** *Irish maritime narratives in communal context*

The study considers the value of personal experience legends—‘memorates’—as effective actualisations of belief, in contrast to more stylized, complex legend forms, such as the migratory legend. While the migratory legend may to some reflect general belief concepts, the memorate is deeply rooted in time and place in a way that the former is not. The degree of social realism exhibited in both genres, and their relative source value as cultural historical documents are explored in this presentation. In addressing these issues, the mode in which a legend narrative is transmitted—by whom and in what circumstances—its individual creative elements, and the cultural context in which it is framed, are key issues.

The study draws on a sample of several hundred supernatural legends recorded in the Gaeltacht (Gaelic-speaking) district of Corca Dhuibhne, County Kerry in the first half of the twentieth century by field workers of the Irish Folklore Commission. It spans a broad spectrum of oral texts, ranging from personal accounts of supranormal experiences to distinctive legend types of a local or migratory character. The study is conducted with reference to the socio-economic and cultural context of storytelling and folk belief in a mixed farming-fishing community at the turn of the twentieth century.

16:05-16:25  **Séamus Mac Mathúna (Ulster University):** *Remarks on the nature and content of a corpus of Modern Irish and Scottish Gaelic maritime memorates*

This paper will analyse and assess material contained in a corpus of maritime memorates,
or stories of the sea, collected in Ireland and Scotland, in the late nineteenth and twentieth centuries. It is based on the Ulster University research project ‘Stories of the Sea: A Typological Study of Maritime Memorates in Modern Irish and Scottish Gaelic Folklore Traditions’, funded by the UK Arts and Humanities Research Council, and aims to add to previous published studies on this subject, including Fomin and Mac Mathúna, 2010-, 2015, 2016.

16:25-16:45  **Yann Riou (ISEN, Brest): Toponymie nautique de Basse-Bretagne, un patrimoine fragile**

Contraires à la toponymie terrestre, globalement sauve au début du XIXème siècle par l'élaboration du cadastre napoléonien, la toponymie nautique constitue un patrimoine fragile, car essentiellement présent dans les mémoires des usagers de la mer et du domaine maritime.

Des enquêtes de terrain, dans un but de révision des noms portés sur les cartes marines, ont été diligentées de façon officielle sur les côtes de Basse-Bretagne à partir de 1948 et jusqu'à la fin des années 60. Quelques décennies plus tard, des chercheurs de l'Ecole d'Onomastique Léonarde sont eux aussi allés sur le terrain, avec une méthode et une ambition différentes.

Yann Riou, après un rappel historique, comparera les méthodes utilisées et les perspectives d'exploitation de ces travaux.

**The Maritime Toponymy of Western Brittany: a Fragile Heritage**

Contrary to the study of the Breton terrestrial toponomy, which was largely conserved at the beginning of the 19th century thanks to the Napoleonic Cadastre, the legacy of maritime toponomy is fragile because it has essentially been preserved in the memories of those who have made their livings on the sea or in related domains. With a view to collecting the names indicated on nautical maps, field work began on the coast of Western Brittany in 1948 and continued until the end of the 1960s. A few decades later, researchers belonging to the “Onomastic School of Léon” also began fieldwork with different objectives and methodologies. After presenting the historical background of this research, Yann Riou will compare the different methods that have been used and perspectives for exploiting this research.
16:45-17:05  **Gregory R. Darwin (PhD candidate, Harvard):** *Scandinavian and Scottish seals: Gaelic and Norse tradition in the Scottish multiforms of a migratory legend*

The continuing impact of centuries of prolonged contact between speakers of Celtic and Scandinavian languages is to be seen in the shared verbal culture of their descendants, especially beliefs and narratives of the supernatural. Legends of the fairies, water-horses, changelings, the restless dead, and merfolk form an important part of the storytelling repertoire of Ireland, Scotland, Iceland, and Scandinavia.

One of the most popular stories in Irish folk tradition, identified by Reidar Christiansen as ML 4080 ‘The Seal Woman’ is well attested all throughout this area. It details the marriage between a human male and a supernatural seal-woman or mermaid, after the man steals a magical object which allows her to travel underwater from her. Eventually, she discovers this object again, and returns to the sea, leaving her husband and any children on land.

As part of the preparation of a doctoral dissertation on this legend, I am presently engaged in archival research at a number of locations, including the National Folklore Collection in Dublin and the archive of the School of Scottish Studies in Edinburgh, and working on a catalogue and atlas of this legend. In this presentation, I will focus on versions of ML 4080 which were collected in Scotland. Looking at Scotland as a ‘contact zone’ between Gaelic and Norse communities, I will discuss the typical forms of the legend throughout Scotland, the presence and distribution of motifs typical of Norse or Gaelic tradition, and the ways in which the legend has been adapted to specifically Scottish contexts. I will also discuss other Scottish traditions concerning seal-people and merfolk, and how they relate to similar oral traditions found in Ireland and Scandinavia. Finally, I will discuss some of the ways Gaelic and Norse traditions may have been disseminated throughout Scotland, and the possible role of Scotland in transmitting ML 4080 from Ireland to Scandinavia.

**Friday, 22 June 2018**

**Session 5—9:00-10:30, Middle Welsh texts and contexts (Chair: Gary German)**

9:00-9:30  **Nely van Seventer (University of Aberystwyth):** *Sibli revisited: textual relationships between the Welsh Tiburtina in the Red and White Books, and Peniarth 14*

In the Celto-Slavica Colloquium before last in Bangor I gave a talk on the editorial strategies used in the translation of the Latin Sibylla Tiburtina into Middle Welsh. This paper may be
seen as a ‘sequel’ to that one, although there is no need to have seen the first episode in order to understand the second.

The Tiburtina is a text with roots in antiquity, and in its final, Latin form (the text was translated from Greek into Latin around the year 1000) it was copied and read all over the Medieval West. The Sibyl was an important figure in Medieval culture; the church father Lactantius wrote extensively on the topic, and he was quoted by Isidore of Seville. Augustine, in his City of God, places in her supposedly pre-Christian mouth a prophecy about the Last Judgment, and another about the Passion of Christ.

In Middle Welsh, we have two different, independent translations of this text. One survives in two of the most famous manuscripts in the Welsh language, namely the White Book of Rhydderch (ca. 1350) and the Red Book of Hergest (end of the fourteenth century), and the other in MS. Peniarth 14 (second half of the thirteenth century). They form part of the large collection of translated Middle Welsh texts, witnesses of a medieval Welsh culture in contact and dialogue with the cultures surrounding it.

In this paper, I want to introduce you to Sibli Ddoeth, the Wise Sibyl, in both her Welsh incarnations, and expand on the differences between these texts, and their similarities. In the end, I will shed some light on the textual relationship between Red and White Book Sibyl, and the Peniarth 14 one.

9:30-10:00  
Elena Parina (Institute of Linguistics, Moscow/Philipps University of Marburg): Linguistic profile of Hystoria Adrian ac Ipotis

Hystoria Adrian ac Ipotis is a short Middle Welsh text found in Oxford, Jesus College MS. 119 (Llyfr Ancr Llanddewi Brefi, the Book of the Anchorite, 1346) and some other medieval and Early Modern manuscripts (NLW MS. Peniarth 15 (c 1400), NLW MS. Llanstephan 27 (The Red Book of Talgarth, c 1400)—see Williams 1960/1962:259, Luft et al. 2013). This is a Welsh version of a highly popular dialogue on faith between the emperor Hadrian and the ‘wise child’ Epictetus, which is found in the Middle Ages in Latin and also in numerous vernaculars across Europe. Prof. Hildegard Tristram studied one of the motives of the text, the homo octipartitus in Irish and Old English literature (Tristram 1975). Interestingly, there are other Celtic-English connections since the Welsh version is the only text in the Book of the Anchorite for which a Middle English, and not a Latin source has been suggested (Suchier 1910; Williams 1960/1962:272). The Middle English dialogue Ypitis (see Shuffleton 2008, Gardiner-Scott 1991) is indeed very similar to the Middle Welsh text in the Book of the Anchorite, although all the existing witnesses of the ME poem are later than 1346, the date of the Welsh manuscript. The textual transmission of the text is so vast that we cannot
undertake a search for the exact source of the Welsh text to prove or disprove this theory with traditional philological methods. On the other hand, a linguistic approach can help to address this issue: it is possible to compare this text to the other texts of the Book of the Anchorite in relation to the frequency of several features that can possibly be markers of translations from Latin. Among such features are certain constructions of relative clauses, derivatives with suffix -edic in the plural, agreement between plural noun and adjective and between plural subject and finite verb. There are certainly caveats to such a procedure: first, there is a significant variation in the presence of such features within the texts which are definitely translations from Latin, since Welsh translators used different strategies in constructing their texts. And secondly, related to the first, is the fact that we sometimes find phenomena that are similar to Latin constructions in passages that lack corresponding constructions in the Latin original, thus not all ‘traces of translation’ (see Luft 2016) are merely calques, but they can also be markers of a deliberate stylistic choice in a specific literary register. However, mapping this text of unclear provenance among texts undoubtedly translated from Latin and defining its linguistic profile will already be a benefit for our understanding of Middle Welsh religious texts, and of the complex nature of cultural und linguistic influences on Middle Welsh more generally.

References


10:00-10:30  **Dafydd Johnston (Aberystwyth, CAWCS): Some examples of calques from French into Middle Welsh**

Study of the effects of language contact on Middle Welsh has mostly focused on loanwords. This paper will consider evidence for the less obvious process of calquing or loan-translation, by which the sense of a native word is extended through association with a particular sense of a foreign word. The most secure example is *mwyn*, which corresponds to the secondary sense of French *gentil*, ‘kind’, but was used to convey its primary sense, ‘noble’, in the Mabinogi: *Mab y dynnyon mwyn yw* (PKM 23.10), ‘He is the son of noble people’. This usage can be seen to have had a limited currency amongst the Welsh social elite until the end of the Middle Ages. Other examples to be considered include *hoyw* influenced by *gaie* and *gwladaidd* corresponding to *paysan*.

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**Session 6 – 10:45-12:45, Breton and French literatures and languages in contact (Chair: Ksenia Kudenko)**

10:45-11:15  **Natalia M. Dolgorukova (National Research University Advanced School of Economics, Moscow): Tradition celtique dans le lai Chievrefueil de Marie de France**

The paper addresses the obscure passage from Marie de France’s lay *Chievrefeil* that describes Tristram cutting a hazel rod and carving his name on it to let his beloved Iseult know about his presence. The passage sparked an ongoing academic discussion concerning the content of the message Tristram left on the rod and the medium he used to express that content. Putting forward various interpretations, scholars have been attempting to tackle several inconsistencies in the narration.

First of all, it is not clear what exactly was written on the rod besides Tristram’s name. There are two possible answers to this: either it was the entire story of his misfortunes while he was separated from the Queen, or it was only a quote that Marie gives us in lines 77-78: ‘Bele amie, si est de nus: / Ne vuz sanz mei, ne mei sanz vus’. Whatever the answer, still it is difficult to conceive of how Tristan could have fitted the whole story onto the stick. Secondly, the rod with the message to the Queen was obviously a compromising evidence of their adultery. How did Tristram dare leave it on the road where any member of the royal procession including King Mark himself could have spotted it?

Some scholars (L. Spitzer, E. Rickert) provided a symbolical interpretation of the passage, suggesting that Iseult had read the message with her ‘heart’, rather than with her eyes.
Others (A. Hatcher, J. Frappier) proposed a middle-ground solution, contending that the message Tristram had inscribed on the hazel rod contained only his name and, probably, lines 77-78. However, drawing upon Marie’s own unequivocal statement: ‘Tutes les lettres i conut’—‘[she] recognized all the letters’, I put forward further arguments supporting the Ogham hypothesis, according to which Tristram inscribed his message in ogham letters (G. Schoepperle, G. Frank, M. Cagnon, M. Demaules).

According to J. Vendryes, throughout the Middle Ages, learned people had been familiar with ogham, and many manuscripts featured the ogham alphabet. The word ‘ogham’ as designating a type of an alphabet was known to Latin grammarians as well, and in particular, to Varro and Priscian to whom Marie de France made a reference in the general Prologue to her Lais. Archeologists have found multiple ogham inscriptions not only on the territory of Ireland, but also in Britain—in South Wales, Cornwall, Scotland—where Marie’s lays are set. Ogham alphabetic symbols are strokes and dots located to the right or to the left of a single stemline, which was a vertical edge of an upright stone or a piece of wood. It is noteworthy that Tristram first squared off the hazel rod, so that it had four surfaces and, consequently, four stemlines where he could easily carve strokes.

Like Germanic runic letters, the Ogham alphabet was used to encrypt messages. There is no evidence that it was used specifically in magic practices, but as an encryption system, it could have been employed to code curses or spells. However, Tristram’s message is the message of love. And similar examples of lovers using secret alphabets in their messages to the beloved ones can be found in the medieval literature, and not only in the Irish or Icelandic, but even in the English one.

In Atlakvida of the Poetic Edda, Gudrun sends a warning to her brothers, carving it on a ring in runes. In Gisla Saga, Gisli throws a rune-covered stick into her brother’s house to make him come out and meet her. Saxo Crammaticus mentions a runic carving on the wood in his Gesta Danorum. On this list, Scél Baili Binnbérlaig (The Story of the Baile Sweet-Spoken) deserves special attention not only because it mentions wooden tablets where the story of love between Baile and Ailinn was inscribed, allegedly, in ogham letters (which were used as a mnemonic device in that case) but also because it compares the wooden tablets drawn to each other with a honeysuckle clinging with its tendrils to a twig so that they cannot be separated. Here we can clearly see the motif affinity between Tale of Baile and Marie’s Cheivrefoil, which presents a counter-argument to Pierre Le Gentil’s claim that the honeysuckle motif is absent from the Celtic tradition and is a fruit of the French sensibility. It is necessary to add to this list the Old English poem The Husband’s Message, where the speaker of the poem is a wooden tablet covered with runic symbols, which delivers a message of a husband to his wife, asking her to come and see him. We cannot but notice a striking similarity of the performative speech acts as well as their mediums in Marie’s
Cheivrefoil and in The Husband’s Message. Both poems contain a message encoded with a cryptic ancient alphabet, which begs an addressee for a tryst that will bring joy to the lovers. But while in the 8th-9th centuries the joy was promised to reuniting spouses, in the 12th century, it was only possible in the reunion of courtly lovers.

By and large, contacts with the Celtic literature gifted a brilliant metaphor of the hazel tree forever bound to the honeysuckle to the French medieval literature, which, in its turn, enriched the Celtic legend about Tristram and Iseult with a new interpretation.

11:15-11:45  **Sonja Schnabel (PhD candidate, Marburg): How did that end up here? — The creative work of combining motives in An buhez sante Barba**

The sixteenth century Breton saint’s play An buhez sante Barba tells the story of the maiden Barbara who is made to live in a tower by her father Dioscorus in order to keep her safe and preserve her beauty. She secretly converts to Christianity and suffers great torment at the hands of the heathen authorities. In the end she is beheaded by her own father who is struck by lightning in an act of divine punishment. Barbara is welcomed in heaven among the martyrs of Christ.

While the historicity of Barbara is highly doubtful, the legend became extremely popular in Europe and the worship of the saint turned into a cult, which reached its climax in the fifteenth century. The cult was particularly strong in France and Belgium and play-performances about saint Barbara abounded in France in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries.

The Breton play was clearly inspired by a variety of international sources, among which are two French plays, a five-day-play and a two-day-play. The influence of the two-day-play appears to be considerably less significant than that of the former. Furthermore, two Latin legends of saint Barbara have influenced the Breton play, namely a later version of the *Legenda Aurea*, and the *Historia siue legenda beatissime virgine Barbara* by a Belgian monk called John of Wakkerzeel, in which he attempted to reconcile the different accounts of Barbara’s legend circulating in Europe on the one hand, and the translation history of her relics on the other.

Some motives of the Breton version can be clearly linked to one or several of these sources, but others are of less certain origin. In any case, the creativity with which the author has treated the subject matter is simply marvellous. I will present some of my findings in this regard and illustrate how much effort the author had to expend in order to create the framework of a Breton play with an international saint at its centre. For while the play employs a typical Breton rhyme scheme, which consists of 813 six-verse stanzas involving
end rhyme as well as internal rhyme, the subject matter derives for the most part from the international sources mentioned above. I will demonstrate that *An buhez sante Barba* shares motives with all the source texts and attempt to show how the author combined them in order to create this very special work of art. Examples will be the building process of the tower, which partly derives from the French five-day-play, but nevertheless shows distinct features that do not occur anywhere else, such as the presence of a „historically correct“ building crew on stage. Similarly, the author chose to adapt the bath-house, which is customarily built for Barbara by her heathen father in the Latin versions. In order to suit the local conditions better, the author transformed it into a fountain. Despite the changes, he managed to convey most of the motives, such as for example the appearance of John the Baptist, by devising creative speeches for the characters which evoke the absent figure and its implications.

11:45-12:15 **Anna Muradova (Institute of Linguistics, Moscow):** *Breton-French Dictionary and Handbook: Vocabulaire nouveau ou colloque français et breton as a testimony of the colloquial language*

The handbooks containing Breton-French dictionary and a Breton-French or Breton-French-Latin phrasebook were printed in French Brittany since the XV century, when the famous Catholic, the trilingual dictionary by Jehan Lagadeuc, composed in 1464 and printed in 1499 in Treguier.1 This kind of handbooks and dictionaries were made for the use of both French and Breton speakers, especially priests and merchants. They are precious testimony of the written and sometimes spoken language of the Premodern Breton, and presents an interest for linguists as well as for specialists in history and cultural studies. The numerous modern reeditions of Catholicon2 show the growing interest of scholars for the Breton tradition of making dictionaries, handbooks and both descriptive and prescriptive grammars. The Catholicon is the first but not the unique book in this genre. The followers of Jehan Lagadeuc also deserve attention.

The editions and numerous re-editions of Colloquia in XVII-XVIII centuries were published in Morlaix, Brest, St Brieuc Quimper, Vannes, Landerneau, Rennes, Caen. Many of them were

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1 Le Menn, Gw., Le vocabulaire breton du Catholicon (1499), Le premier dictionnaire breton imprimé breton-français-latin de Jehan Lagadeuc, Skol Vreiz, Spezet, 2011

studied by Joseph Loth and La Borderie. The latest editions were made at the beginning of
the XX century as the *Nouveau Dictionnaire ou Colloque François et Breton*, published in
Morlaix, which last edition (with some modifications) was made in 1915. The first edition of
this Colloque was printed in Morlaix in 1717 by Paul de Plosquellec, as an alternative to the
more ancient Colloque by Guillaume Quiquer (first edition — 1626). Very probably Paul de
Plosquellec, the editor, was also the author of the book.

The *Nouveau Dictionnaire ou Colloque François et Breton* was reprinted in 1740, 1750
and 1755 in Morlaix, after that in 1764 in Saint-Paul-de-Léon by J.-P. Le Cremeur, in 1773
an exact copy of the first edition was published in Quimper by the publisher Marin Blot
in Quimper in and then under the name *Vocabulaire nouveau ou Colloque François et
breton: ouvrage très utile pour ceux qui sont curieux d'apprendre l'un ou l'autre de
ses deux langues*, published in Quimper in 1778 by the widow Blot. Meanwhile another
reedition was made in Morlaix by Guyon. The later editions reproduced the original of 1717
but in some cases some changes were necessary: in the reedition in 1791 (after the French
Revolution) by Y.-J.-L. Derrien (Quimper) the word “Monsieur” was replaced by “citoyen”.3

The analysis of the evolution of Breton written standard in XVIII century and its influence
of the later reform of the Breton orthography by Le Gonidec4 and other tentatives of reform-
ing the written Breton, the evolution of Premodern Breton into Modern Breton. The edition
of 1778 by the widow Blot is available in several libraries and also in digital format that
makes it possible to observe the evolution of written and spoken Breton from the XV cen-
tury up to the XVIII. These handbooks & dictionaries are a precious source for any study of
grammar and syntax of Premoden Breton.

12:15-12:45  **Nelly Blanchard (University of Western Brittany, CRBC):**

*La bio-autobiographie en breton de Julien Godest*

Sollicité par la personnalité marquante de l’emso François Jaffrenou (1879-1956), le
paysan cornouaillais Julien Godest (1849-1933) se lance dans un long travail d’écriture littéraire et produit vers 1913 un texte de nature bio- et autobiographique (manuscrit d’environ 300 pages conservé aux Archives départementales du Finistère et actuellement en courant d’établissement, de traduction et d’analyse pour une publication). L’auteur souhaite témoigner et porter réflexion sur la rencontre d’un Bas-Breton avec l’armée nationale lors de son service militaire, de l’apprentissage de la langue française par ce soldat monolingue bretonnant, de ses activités belliqueuses lors de la Commune de Paris, mais également

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3 Ab. Le Goaziou, *La longue vie de deux « Colloques François et breton »* (1626 – 1915), Quimper, 1950, p17
donner son opinion sur deux phénomènes qui prennent de l'ampleur en cette toute fin du XIXe siècle : la déchristianisation et l'exil des Bretons vers les grandes villes, notamment vers Paris. À l’aube de l’entrée dans la modernité, tous ces points de rencontre culturels et linguistiques sont autant de moments provoqués par l’Histoire et les importantes transformations politiques et sociales de cette époque. Sa langue, son écriture et la conception de son récit de vie par Julien Godest reflètent pourtant des archaïsmes culturels qui peuvent nourrir les questions de temporalité et de la nature des échanges culturels. Le projet littéraire de Godest tend sans cesse des ponts entre des valeurs et des éléments culturels plus ou moins anciens, et des événements et phénomènes sociaux qui lui sont contemporains. Les marges littéraires comme celle créée par Godest peuvent ainsi constituer des outils d’archéologie culturelle, autant que des observatoires précieux de la réception des contacts culturels plus récents.

Session 7–13:45-15:15, 18th–19th century sources and exchanges (Chair: Dafydd Johnston)

13:45-14:15 Ken Ó Donnchú (University of Western Brittany): ‘As olc linn ar ndear braithre dar ngonadh’: Irish language manuscripts written in Prague

The presence of an Irish Franciscan house in the Czech lands, along with the unsuccessful attempts at founding a house in Wieluń, Poland, constitutes some of the most substantial evidence of Irish-Slavic relations in the 17th and 18th centuries. The history of the Irish Franciscans in continental Europe has been the subject of much scholarly investigation, which has focused mainly on the renowned Louvain college. Such attention is understandable, given the magnitude and impact of the literary output of the so-called ‘Louvain achievement’ (cf. e.g. the collection edited by Bhreathnach, MacMahon and McCafferty 2009). One factor which facilitated this achievement was the transmission both in manuscript and print form of the writings of the Louvain Franciscans. Successfully embracing the print revolution also meant that the literary output of the Louvain friars had an increased chance of surviving the hazards and dangers of the passage of time. The case of the Irish Franciscans in Prague is instructive in this regard. Although less prolific than their Louvain compatriots, the Prague house, active for over 150 years, nevertheless produced many works, ranging from original theological treatises to copies of grammatical and historical texts, both in Latin and in the vernacular.

The works composed in Irish were produced solely in manuscript form. These manuscripts have consequently suffered a fate comparable to that of so many Irish manuscripts, being variously dispersed, damaged, or lost to obscurity. Previous studies have remarked on the
absence in Prague libraries and archives of Irish language manuscripts recorded in the catalogue of the Irish Franciscans in Prague (Dillon 2007; Mac Craith and Worthington 2003). This paper will examine the contents of those Prague productions which have been located elsewhere. Also considered are copies of works produced in Prague, the originals of which no longer survive (Dillon 2013). Finally, this paper will consider other manuscripts which are potentially of the same provenance, in particular the case of UCD Franciscan Collection MS A 32 f.5, a single paper folio which preserves the only known example of the Czech language in a Gaelic manuscript. The content of that folio, along with another stray item in the same collection (A 30 f.3), sheds light on the relationships between the continental houses, and highlights the more quotidian and less-vaunted aspects of the lives and work of these exiled Irish men of God.

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14:15-14:45 Angelika H. Rüdiger (PhD candidate, Bangor): The druids and the fairies—searching for Wales’ national identity during the eighteenth and nineteenth century

Classical authors introduce the druids as high-ranking members of ancient Celtic culture. During the eighteenth century the druids became identification figures for the achievements of national culture in Wales, when in the search for ancient roots of the Welsh nation the classical time of Celtic tribes lead by the wisdom of the druids was presented as a golden age of learning and of pre-Roman scholarship on Welsh ground, e.g. in Drych y Prif Oesoedd by Theophilus Evans.

At the end of the nineteenth century, however, we observe that the druids are presented as
primitive magicians or shamans, relicts of a primitive pre-Celtic past by Sir John Rhŷs in *Celtic Folklore—Welsh and Manx*. Nevertheless, Rhŷs, too, aims at presenting the ancient Celtic roots of the Welsh in a most favourable way.

This paper explores how such a dramatic paradigm shift regarding the ideas about the druids could come about. It will show how conflating the druids with the fairies by the Scot Cririe and Peter Roberts constitutes an important element for bringing about this change, for the two authors believed that the fairy folklore was a memory of the druids who had gone into hiding after the Roman conquest. Cririe’s and Roberts’ ideas and the application of social-Darwinist theories enabled Rhŷs to devise an image of the druid as a magician rooted in a non-Celtic culture as seen in *Celtic Folklore—Welsh and Manx*.

This paper will also highlight examples how the above mentioned, contradicting views about the druids precipitated in Welsh culture.

14:45-15:15  **Bernhard Maier (Eberhard-Karl University of Tübingen): At the beginnings of Celtic Studies in France and Germany: the letters of Henri d’Arbois de Jubainville (1827-1910) to Ernst Windisch (1844-1918)**

Among the papers of the German Celticist and Indologist Ernst Windisch (1844-1918), which are preserved in the Archive of the University of Leipzig, the most extensive collection of letters and postcards in the field of Celtic Studies is due to Kuno Meyer (1858-1919), who was among Windisch’s earliest, most faithful and most productive pupils. Next to this, the most extensive Celtic correspondence of Windisch appears to have been with his French colleague Henri d’Arbois de Jubainville (1827-1910), first professor of Celtic at the Collège de France and long-time editor of Revue celtique. Unlike Windisch, who was an Indo-Europeanist by training and continued to combine an interest in ancient Ireland with one in ancient India for most of his active academic career, d’Arbois de Jubainville was first and foremost an historian with a strong archaeological bent. Both men, however, shared a keen interest in the fabric of ancient civilisations and its reflection in literature. Between 1884 and 1907, more than fifty letters and postcards from d’Arbois to Windisch testify to the cordial relationship between the two scholars, who are among the most important founding fathers of Celtic Studies as an academic discipline in France and Germany. In my paper, I shall try to present an overview of d’Arbois’ letters to his German colleague, pointing out in which ways and to which extent they reflect specific problems of research, the institutional setting of Celtic Studies in the decades around 1900, and the personality of the letter writer. For this purpose I shall quote from the letters themselves, but also from references to d’Arbois, Windisch and some of their German, French, British and Irish colleagues in other let-
ters of the period. In conclusion I shall address the question to what extent a comprehensive
analysis and appraisal of as yet unpublished scholarly letters may contribute not only to a
profonder understanding of the formation and early history of Celtic Studies, but also to
an enhanced appreciation of its present situation.

Session 8–15:30-17:00, Modern Irish studies and linguistics (Chair: Séamus Mac Mathúna)

15:30-16:00  Oksana Dereza (PhD candidate, Moscow): A searchable database of Old
Irish texts

A sufficient part of contemporary linguistic studies are corpus-driven, as such a methodolo-
gy allows to draw upon statistical data apart from a scholar’s intuition. It makes the results
of any linguistic research more reliable and scalable, which is a significant step forward for
humanities, bringing it together with science and technology.

Although corpus linguistics in modern sense has a long history and dates to 1967, when
“Computational Analysis of Present-Day American English” (Kučera, Winthrop, 1967) was
published, some languages still lack computational resources for corpus analysis. It is espe-
cially true for ancient languages, such as Old Irish.

A text corpus is a large searchable collection of texts with special morphological, syntactic
and semantic markup and metadata. Building a corpus of historical texts is a challenging
task, especially regarding markup, due to the three main factors:

(a) the grammar of old languages tends to be more complicated than the grammar of modern
ones;

(b) there number of digitised texts in old languages is sufficiently smaller than in modern
ones;

(c) there is almost no software for automatic markup of texts in old languages.

However, this task is not impossible, as the examples of “Welsh Prose 1300-1425” and “His-
torical Irish Corpus 1600-1926” show. I shall point out that both projects are not fully-fledged
corpora, but rather searchable text databases. The texts in these corpora are normalised
and segmented, but do not have any linguistic markup. This is a first stage of implementing
a language corpus.

Computational resources for old languages, including corpora, have just begun to emerge:
for example, “Historical Irish Corpus” was launched by the Royal Irish Academy only in
2017. The only corpus of Old Irish is still POMIC (Lash, 2014), represented by a set of parse trees in graphic format, which is convenient only for a limited number of linguistic tasks.

I propose a searchable database of Old and Middle Irish texts compiled from the texts published on UCC CELT website. All the texts are provided with metadata such is a historical period, an author (if any), an edition used for the digital version of the text etc. and lemmatised by an Ealy Irished Lemmatiser described in (Dereza, 2016a) and (b). Lemmatisation allows to search all the forms of a word, not only the exact match to the query, unlike in the corpora mentioned above. The database is processed with the help of Python and R and to be published as a Shiny app soon.

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16:00-16:30 Victor Bayda (Moscow State University): The Irish construction of attention with ar ‘on’

The paper considers the use of the preposition ar ‘on’ with the verb tabhair ‘give’ in constructions with nouns like aird ‘attention’, aghaidh ‘face’, cuairt ‘visit’:

thug Seán aird ar Máire
give.PST Seán attention on Máire
‘Seán paid (gave) attention to Máire’

The use of ar with tabhair ‘give’ is unusual due to the dative semantics of the verb, which means that more often it is used with the dative preposition do ‘to’. This means that the construction has a high degree of integration of the elements and is non-compositional as the
meaning of the whole depends on the combination of the elements and their interpretation is a function of the meaning of the construction.

The unusual use of *tabhair* with *ar* poses the question as to how this can be accounted for. The *Nua-Chorpas na hÉireann* provides the following nouns used in this construction:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Nouns</th>
<th>No. of occurrences</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>aghaidh ‘face’</td>
<td>543</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cuairt ‘visit’</td>
<td>510</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>aird ‘attention’</td>
<td>256</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>turas ‘journey’</td>
<td>137</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>súil ‘eye’</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>amharc ‘look’</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>íde ‘ill usage,’</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>súilfhéachaint ‘glance’</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>síth ‘rush, dash’</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>féachaint ‘look’</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

These nouns refer to various kinds of situations with a common semantic component in their meanings — that of attention. The paper explores the possibility of explaining this use through posing a general construction [ATTENTION PREDICATE *ar* OBJECT OF ATTENTION], or the CONSTRUCTION OF ATTENTION. Other possible instantiations of this construction include, for example:

- *breathnaigh/féach/amharc* ‘look’ *ar* *X* ‘look at *X*’;
- *cuir* ‘put’ *aithne, eolas* ‘knowledge’ *ar* *X* ‘learn to know *X*’.

In this case we can argue that *TABHAIR* *AR* inherits the pattern of governing from the more abstract construction CONSTRUCTION OF ATTENTION [ATTENTION PREDICATE *ar* OBJECT OF ATTENTION].

Such an approach can enable us to account for other similar situations where the same
verb is used with a number of prepositions each of which is inherited from a more general construction that can accommodate various verbs and verb-noun constructions with the constructionally prescribed preposition to encode a particular meaning, attributed to the concrete instantiation by the more general construction.

16:30-17:00  Tatyana Mikhailova (Moscow State University): *How to say ‘road’ in Irish: Lexicostatistics and the theory of universal semantic shifts*

_Atāt tra ilanmand for na conaraib..._

(Cormac's Glossary)

A new and really revolutionary methodic of ‘dating’ language changes was proposed in 1950s by Morris Swadech (1952, 1955), who examined changes in basic vocabulary of a language and gave a kind of a postulate: the 1000-year retention rate represents 86%, in other words, 14 words (from the 100-words list!) must be replaced. This new technique of dating language changes was called—lexicostatistics. Later this simple methodic of dating was modified (Starostin 1999; Blažek 2007) and sorely compromised in Gray and Atkinson (2003; but supported in Renfrew 2013). James Mallory calls this technique as ‘often cited but usually rejected’ (Mallory 2013:258). “We cannot help concluding that the _lapis philosophorum_ of glottochronology is unable to transmute the baser metals of lexicostatistical numbers into pure gold of reliable dating. The radiocarbon method of dating is good for atoms, but is not good for culture-bound human languages”—as a linguist from Russia summarized the skeptical view on lexicostatistical method (Dolgopolsky 2000:404).

Being not popular in traditional historical linguistics lexicostatistics continues to develop in some circles in Russia and USA. Databases of basic vocabularies of many languages (with proposed etymologies, list of synonyms and dating of changes) are published or uploaded (for Celtic—see Blažek and Novotná (2006), see also—“The Global Lexicostatistical Database”: www.starling/rlenet.ru.). The use of this precious comparative material _sub specie_ of the theory of universal semantic shift typology (see Zalizniak et al. 2012) could give very interesting new results.

The concept # 68 from Swadesh word-list is ‘road’, which belongs rather to so called ‘cultural vocabulary’. The basic notion of ‘road’ depends on the level of civilization of the nation, its geographical and climatic position and its cultural contacts. The results of the conducted comparative and diachronic study of semantic changes of the word ‘road’ based on Slavonic, Baltic, Germanic and Roman languages could be generalized as:
1. Three main semantic models of ‘road’ are revealed:

1) The general idea of moving or walking (Slavonic *път’ - Litt. pintis ‘road’, Russian put ‘way’ etc. < IE *pent- ‘to go, to walk’, but Lat. pons, -tis ‘bridge’, Gr. pontos ‘sea’; Germanic *wegaz ‘way, road’, < IE *wegʰan- ‘to move, to go’; Germ. Steg ‘path’, Lath. stīga ‘path, road’, Eng. stair - < IE *steg- ‘to move up, to go with effort’; but comp. Greek hodós ‘way, road’ and Russian hodit ‘to go’, both from IE *sod-/*sed- ‘to sit’).

2) The specification of making the road (Russian дорога, Polish droga, from IE *dhergh- ‘to pull, to weed’, cf. also Germ Trakt, but Goth. dragan ‘to take off’; Czech cesta from IE *keid- ‘to divide > to clear’; Latin strata, literally ‘pavement’ - the base of the ‘road’ in Roman languages including early borrowing in Germanic: Strasse).

3) The idea of a preferential user of the road (Engl. road < CG. *raido- ‘vehicle, chariot’ < IE name of the ‘wheel’, the same semantic extension cf.: Polish koleja ‘road’ and Russian koleja ‘track’ < Slavonic *kolo- ‘wheel’; Dutch spoor ‘road, path’ < IE *sphere- ‘to go with feet’).

2. Two main directions of semantic extension are formulate:

1) ‘road’ → ‘way, journey’ → ‘way of life, destiny’ (Danish stí ‘path, destiny’ < CG *stige and Russian dialectal stezka ‘a small path’ and stezia ‘destiny, way of life’; Old Norse senda ‘journey, way’ and Old Engl. stō ‘way, destiny’, both from IE *sentu- ‘to go; path, way’).

2) ‘road’ → ‘way, manner’ → ['good manner', ‘luck’] (many examples from Germanic languages, but also Russian drugim putem ‘by another way’ and (coll.) vse putem ‘all is OK’, literally ‘all is by the way’).

The main goal of the paper is to study Celtic (especially — Goidelic) words denoting ‘road’, to collect ranked synonyms, to give motivated etymologies, to exercise a diachronic and comparative study of the use of the names of the ‘road’ in Old, Middle and Modern Irish and in Scottish Gaelic (including comparative data from Continental Celtic and Insular Brittonic languages) and to reveal and describe supposed Goidelic innovations (slige, belach, bóthar). The final aim is to introduce Goildelic data into the described scheme of semantic shift.

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