

A Gaelic Story



Éire, Banba and Fódhla are royal Sisters in folklore. Éire protects our Land. Banba is related to our Defence, Fodhla to scholarship. Three necessary characteristics. But from where did we originate?

Ancient Times

The Last Glacial Maximum (LGM) ended c6500 BC. As early Proto-Celts, we emigrated from our first homeland, the Urheimat, north of the Black Sea, c1,000 BC. Linguistic archaeology testifies to bonds with other Indo-Europeans. Through pristine lands, Proto-Celts and Germans went west and Proto-Indo-Iranians and Celts went east...

Celts in Europe became closely associated with the Hallstatt and late Iron Age La Tène cultures, the latter flourishing all the way from Spain to Galatia (Turkey).

Bogs preserved a number of our ancestors' bodies. The Roman influence in Europe strengthened, after the defeat of the allied Celtic Cimbri and German Teutones, in 102 BC.

Knights, famed in tales from around the La Tène period (500 B.C.)

Many thousands of our 'saints and scholars' helped reintroduce Latin-based culture in Europe, after the fall of Rome. They laboured as far east as Kiev. But, with the passage of time, our beautiful Gaelic culture met the same end as the hopes of Derdriu and Naoise. History buried our heroic scholars, leaving us voiceless.



We, Gaelic people of Mayo, stand here to address you.

It is remote but our community is vibrant and the environment is undisturbed. Old European links are treasured: most especially those with France and Germany.

We are adventurers. Through the ages, our forbears made their mark on Continental Europe. Right here in Mayo, archaeology records the earliest colonisation of the Continent.

The beauty of Nature can bring us to ask what lies within and beyond our intellect? To ask why Influencers tailor bland slogans to stifle clear, independent thought? Why is the destruction of Nature not of concern to flaccid overlords?

The townland's name reflects its shape - Corrán Buí - Yellow Crescent. Its sand dunes have machair status (an area of level, stable, coastal dune grassland), of scientific interest.

Potatoes were sown in ridges, dug with a spade. The dismissive English term does not recognise the hard labour they involved. Soil beneath the ridge was not dug: sods were dug on both sides of it, forming a furrow and were placed on the ridge.



For French and German Visitors

She sees you! The old connections of her people to France and Germany are remembered. She might like to give you an honorary citizenship of the Napoleonic Republic of Connacht ~ or an Honorary Doctorate from the Schottenkloster of Ratisbon (Regensburg), once staffed from monasteries near her, now in ruins.

The guide will tell visitors that they are amongst their own. Gaelic people have not been seen, as an independent group, since the Great Famine in 1845. But robust Gaelic values do not change.

We share so much. With you we celebrate the history of yesteryear - to make the history of tomorrow.

Germany

Celtic culture, if unfettered, is popular across the globe because it balances sound practice and joyful behaviour. In Germany today the joy and freedom of Gaelic dance is shown off.

And here in Northwest Mayo – the simple roots of all Celtic culture, from here to China.

Celtic and German were once mutually intelligible. A Celtic chieftain's grave, dated c550 BC, was found near Hochdorf an der Enz, in Baden, in 1977. He had gold-decorated shoes, a gold-plated torc, belt, bracelets and brooches – and an iron dagger decorated with gold and a gold dagger sheath. Undisturbed, the grave shows the two peoples lived in peace and prosperity. The Chieftain is regarded as the Tutankhamun of the Celts.

There are substantial links between Irish and German in vocabulary and grammar. Many German names and placenames are explicable through the linguistically connected Irish language (Alp, or Ailp in Irish, means mountain). Similarly, there is Rhone, Rhine, Bonn etc.

In 2011, German experts examined the grave of an aristocratic Celtic woman in the Danube's Celtic heartland. The grave was preserved by water-sodden soil. The oak wood of the floor was dated, indicating that the woman passed away in 609 BC.

The woman was adorned with gold and amber jewellery. Indeed, some 80 tons of gold were found. It showed that Celts had a social order and aristocratic hierarchy from the earliest times.



France

Celtic languages are descended from Proto-Celtic, a branch of the Indo-European family. In the 1st millennium BC, Celtic languages were spoken in much of Europe and Asia Minor. (Irish and Breton are cousin languages.)

The repertoire of Louis-Jacques Suignard, a Breton musician, covers equally both traditional Irish and Breton songs - including gwerziou and sonioù - laments and ballads — for which his band is renowned. Since the implementation of the 'Twinning' concept in the 1950s, more than 150 French and Irish towns and villages have twinned, finding similarities in their similar cultures.

Deauville twinned with the County Kildare. Brest twinned with Dún Laoghaire and the Antibes twinned with Kinsale. Thus is woven a great network of friendship, exchange and business.

Celtic culture has long been an influence in France and spectacular archaeology stands testament to this.

In 2015, archaeologists in France excavated the funerary chamber of a wealthy Celtic Prince, from c500 BC. The site held his chariot, a decorated bronze cauldron, a vase depicting the Greek god of wine and ecstasy, Dionysus, and other artifacts. The tomb, in the Champagne region, dates from the Celtic Hallstatt period.

The ceremonial, Celtic Agris Helmet (le Casque d'Agris - c. 350 BC), found in a cave near Agris, Charente, France, in 1981, is a masterpiece of Celtic artwork. It would have been used for ceremonial purposes. The iron cap is covered with bronze bands. They, in turn, are covered by pure gold leaf. It has coral decorations attached by silver rivets. The helmet is mostly decorated with early Celtic patterns but there are also later motifs and signs of Etruscan and Greek influences.



China

Tocharians migrated from Western Eurasia to China's Tarim Basin, as early as 2000 BC (where the unique Tarim Mummies are found). The Tocharian language, identified as Indo-European, spoken in the Silk Road area. Tocharian is seen as related to Proto-Celtic. Traditional Indian stories tell of kingdoms beyond the Himalayas with an Indo-European culture. Note 'Takhar' (Tocharian) Province in Afghanistan, in which an Indo-European language is still spoken - Pashto. Tocharian has been shown likely to be linked to Proto-Celtic.

In the Taklamakan Desert (Tarim Basin), a male mummy with European features, reddish hair and high cheek bones, was dated to be c3,000 yrs old. 6' tall, he wore a red twill tunic and tartan leggings. In 2007, his DNA showed he was of Celtic origin. Similarly, a female mummy, the Lady of Niya, had light brown hair, brushed and braided. She wore a red burial gown, has light brown hair which looks like it was brushed and braided for her funeral only yesterday.

The Shiji (Records of the Grand Historian) covers Chinese history from c2500 BC to 93 BC. Starting from 2000 BC, the Tarim Basin was a key locus of interaction between western and eastern Eurasia.

Chinese characters, the hànzi, may be written in Traditional Chinese (漢字) or Simplified Chinese (汉字), from 1949. The Romanised pinyin script was introduced in 1958. The old script dates from the late 2nd millennium BC and is the oldest script in use in the World. Characters, of which scholars may know 3-4,000, continue to develop in a variety of ways, including for the adoption of new words.

Traces in Chinese, left by Tocharians before the script was used, is a field of study. Readers may listen at <https://ttsmp3.com/text-to-speech/Chinese%20Mandarin/> to the following words. Noting the rules of linguistic change (for sound and meaning) will underlie further research.

Traditional 船 都 很 谁 天 看 道 蜜 笔 馬 犬 鵝

Pinyin chuán dōu hen shuí tiān kàn dào mì bǐ mǎ quǎn é

Gaedhealg cuan dó an- cé dia chonaic dóigh mil peann marcach coinín gé

Chinese Boat both very who day look road honey pen mare dog
goose = in English

Gaedhealg harbour two very who day saw way honey pen rider rabbit
goose
= in English

- ní fuaimnítear an Ghaedhealg cosúil le Béarla sgríobhtha leis na litreachaibh céanna - 7 infhilltear í.

- noting that Irish is not pronounced as English with similar letters and is inflected.

注意爱尔兰语的发音不是英语·字母相似·并且是屈折的。

Celtic *kaϕno- dua a cues dios ad-condairc duro millssis bennā marco cunā
gegdos

Celtic Harbour two very who day saw path honey horn horse dog
goose =English

Sources: Old Celtic Dictionary, Vincent F. Pintado (cló na bhFiann)

<https://www.wales.ac.uk/Resources/Documents/Research/CelticLanguages/EnglishProtoCelticWordList.pdf>

[The m-r- root for horse is widespread, from Ireland to Korea. In Chinese, 'ma' closely resembles 'marc' in O Irish {the O High German 'merha' (mare) is also close}. Syncope is a term in linguistics for a contraction, within a word, through the loss of a vowel sound or letter. Apocope can refer to the loss (elision) of any final sound (including consonants) from a word. Lenition and Fortition are mutations in which a consonant changes from one considered strong to one considered weak or vice versa. The attestation of cognates, as a group, lies in their number and the application of the rules of linguistic change. These latter, together with slippage in meaning, makes cognates harder to identify.]

Today, Irish-Chinese contacts have been reforged. Two all-Chinese college Gaelic football teams have been set up in Beijing and Shanghai in recent times. The Chinese New Year Festivals in Dublin and elsewhere go from strength to strength.

Chinese groups, who come to Ceathrú Thaidhg (the District of the Taidhg Family – poets to the kings of Connacht), may be enrolled in the order of the Red Branch Knights and pay respect to our Princess of Ní ya, of the ancient kingdom near Khotan (Xinjiang).



