Sims-Williams, Patrick

Prifysgol Cymru
Y Drindod Dewi Sant
University of Wales
Trinity Saint David

Celtomania and Celtoscepticism

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Atgoffir staff a myfyrwyr Prifysgol Cymru Y Drindod Dewi Sant bod hawlfraint ar y darn hwn ac ar y gwaith y cafodd ei gymryd ohono. Gwnaed y Copi Digidol hwn o dan delerau trwydded CLA sy'n caniatáu i chi:

- fynd at gopi a'i lwytho i lawr;
- argraffu copi;

Sylwch bod y deunydd hwn yn UNIG at ddefnydd myfyrwyr sydd wedi cofrestru ar y cwrs astudio fel y nodir yn yr adran isod. Caniateir i holl staff a myfyrwyr eraill ddarllen y deunydd yn unig ac ni ddylent ei lwytho i lawr ac/neu argraffu copi

Mae'r Copi Digidol hwn ac unrhyw gopi digidol neu brintiedig a ddarparwyd i chi, neu a wnaed gennych, o dan delerau'r Drwydded hon, i'w ddefnyddio gyda'r Cwrs Astudio hwn. Gellwch gadw copïau o'r fath ar ôl i'r cwrs ddod i ben, ond at eich defnydd personol eich hun yn unig. Bydd pob copi (yn cynnwys copïau electronig) yn cynnwys y Rhybudd Hawlfraint hwn a bydd yn rhaid eu dinistrio ac/neu eu dileu pan fydd Prifysgol Cymru Y Drindod Dewi Sant yn galw am hynny.

Ac eithrio'r hyn a ganiateir gan gyfraith hawlfraint, ni chaniateir copïo, cadw neu ddosbarthu pellach (yn cynnwys drwy e-bost) heb ganiatâd deiliad yr hawlfraint.

Mae gan yr awdur (ac mae'r term hwnnw'n cynnwys arlunwyr a chrewyr gweledol eraill) hawliau moesol dros y gwaith ac ni all staff na myfyrwyr achosi, na chaniatáu, i'r gwaith gael ei aflunio, ei lurgunio neu ei addasu mewn unrhyw ffordd arall, neu ei drin yn ddiraddiol mewn unrhyw ffordd, a fyddai'n niweidiol i anrhydedd neu enw da'r awdur.

Mae hon yn fersiwn ddigidol o ddeunydd hawlfraint a wnaed dan drwydded gan ddeiliad yr hawl, ac ni ellir sicrhau ei chywirdeb. Cyfeiriwch at yr argraffiad cyhoeddedig gwreiddiol os gwelwch yn dda.

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Name of Author: Sims-Williams, Patrick

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Celtomania and Celtoscepticism

Patrick Sims-Williams
University of Wales, Aberystwyth

THE terms 'Celt' and 'Celtic' have become a battleground. Examining their meaning is an urgent task because schizophrenic signals are forever being sent out to the general public. On the one hand, we have bigger and bigger coffee-table books in many European languages with titles such as 'The Celts'; John Collis remarks that 'we seem to be going through a new period of Celtomania with two or three books appearing each year'.[1] One of the most concise and intelligent was T. G. E. Powell's *The Celts* of 1958; its natural successor is Barry Cunliffe's *The Ancient Celts* of 1997. A heavier read is provided by Helmut Birkhan's *Kelten*, nearly 1300 pages long, while the most expensive of the new multi-authored books is Miranda Green's *The Celtic World*, first published at £130. The heaviest of all is the Italian *I Celti*, weighing in at 3.5kg. *I Celti* presents Paris as the 'focal point of Celtic Studies' and the Celts as the spiritual fathers of an enlarged European Community.[2] This, according to Cunliffe, is 'the New Celtomania, which provides a vision of a European past to comfort us at a time when ethnic divisions are becoming a painful and disturbing reality'.[3]

On the other hand, lurking within some of these books, we find disturbing and unsubstantiated claims which seem to undermine their

[1]'Celtic Myths', *Antiquity*, 71 (1997), 195–201 (p. 196). I am much indebted to Dr Collis for copies of this and other papers. [2]T. G. E. Powell, *The Celts*, new edition (London, 1980); Barry Cunliffe, *The Ancient Celts* (Oxford, 1997); Helmut Birkhan, *Kelten: Versuch einer Gesamtdarstellung ihrer Kultur* (Vienna, 1997); *The Celtic World*, edited by Miranda J. Green (London, 1995) (now available in paperback for £35). For *I Celti* I refer to the English translation, *The Celts*, edited by Sabatino Moscati and others (London, 1991), pp. 13–14. [3]Cunliffe, p. 19. On Celts as proto-Europeans cf. Ruth and Vincent Megaw, 'The Celts: The First Europeans?', *Antiquity*, 66 (1992), 254–60; Sara Champion, 'New Europe Looking for Old Europe', *Scottish Archaeological Review*, 9/10 (1995), 242–47; Timothy Champion, 'The Celt in Archaeology', in *Celticism*, edited by Terence Brown, Studia Imagologica: Amsterdam Studies on Cultural Identity, 8 (Amsterdam, 1996), pp. 61–78 (p. 76); Barry C. Burnham, 'Celts and Romans: Towards a Romano-Celtic Society', in *The Celtic World*, pp. 121–41 (p. 121); John Collis, 'The Origin and Spread of the Celts', *Studia Celtica*, 30 (1996), 17–34 (p. 26); *Cultural Identity and Archaeology: The Construction of European Communities*, edited by Paul Graves-Brown and others (London, 1996).

whole purpose: 'It is not currently possible to prove that any of the iron age peoples who lived in central or western Europe in the first millennium BC definitely spoke a Celtic language or defined themselves as Celts'.[4] This is what Cunliffe calls a 'politically correct view, which argues that the term [Celts] is so abused as to be useless except to those who wish to increase the sales of their books'.[5] An alternative term is 'Celtoscepticism', Robin Llywelyn's calque on 'Euroscepticism'.[6] The two *isms* can hardly be connected, however, despite the attempt by Vincent and Ruth Megaw, in a paper delivered significantly in Slovenia, to attribute the new 'orthodoxy in the British archaeological profession' to a mixture of anti-racism, Euroscepticism, and anti-devolutionism.[7] Their assertions have been rebutted by Simon James, who explains that it is simply that Iron Age archaeologists in Britain and Ireland 'no longer see the Celtic paradigm as very useful—while some see it as actively pernicious'.[8]

The only example of 'politically correct' Celtoscepticism named by Cunliffe is *The Celts: The Construction of a Myth* by the English social anthropologist Malcolm Chapman, but a number of articles with similarly waspish titles could also be cited in literary studies.[9] In Cunliffe's own field, archaeology, an obvious candidate is the dynamite provocatively inserted by John Collis in the collection *Celtic Chiefdom, Celtic State*:

> Celtic society as depicted by authors such as Powell (1958) merely

[4]Sara Champion, 'Jewellery and Adornment', in *The Celtic World*, pp. 411–19 (p. 411). (Both claims can be disproved from inscriptions and the testimony of Caesar and Pausanias; cf. nn. 70 and 83 below.) Cf. Timothy Champion, 'Power, Politics and Status', ibid., pp. 85–94 (p. 88): 'There is no evidence to suggest that anyone in prehistoric or early historic times thought of himself or herself as a Celt'. [5]Cunliffe, pp. 19 and 276. The term 'politically correct' raises the question 'whose politics?'. Academic politics? English politics? 'Political correctness' is also mentioned by Ruth and Vincent Megaw, 'Do the Ancient Celts Still Live? An Essay on Identity and Contextuality', *SC*, 31 (1997), 107–23 (p. 107). [6]Robin Llywelyn, 'Celtigrwydd?', *Llais Llyfrau*, Spring 1998, *Rhifyn Arbennig ar Hunaniaeth Geltaidd*, pp. 5–6 (p. 5): 'Fel y bydd y Sais Ewro-sgeptig yn gwadu ei dras Ewropeaidd ac yn haeru nad oes a wnelo ddim oll â'i gyfyrdryd Ellmynig o Friesland neu Fafaria, bydd llawer o'n gwlad ninnau'n mynnu nad Celtiaid mohonynt o gwbl ond Cymry glân dilychwin heb berthyn i genedl arall yn y byd. Ni welaf ddim o'i le ar hynny heblaw ei fod yn anghywir'. Readers in the future may need reminding that Euroscepticism is not primarily directed against a defunct Pan-Germanism but against the encroaching power of the European Community. [7]J. V. S. and M. R. Megaw, 'Ancient Celts and Modern Ethnicity', *Antiquity*, 70 (1996), 175–81 (pp. 179–80), and 'Do the Ancient Celts Still Live?'. Cf. Collis, 'Origin and Spread of the Celts', pp. 28–31. [8]Simon James, 'Celts, Politics and Motivation in Archaeology', *Antiquity*, 72 (1998), 200–9 (p. 202). [9]Malcolm Chapman, *The Celts: The Construction of a Myth* (Basingstoke and New York, 1992); cf. Patrick Sims-Williams, 'The Visionary Celt: The Construction of an Ethnic Preconception', *CMCS*, 11 (Summer 1986), 71–96; idem, 'The Invention of Celtic Nature Poetry', in *Celticism*, pp. 97–124.

> represents a mishmash of information from different times and different places which is often of little value for understanding the societies being described. Descriptions, or rather caricatures, of societies cannot be transposed in time and space under an invented concept of the 'Celts'; indeed, the whole use of the terms Celt and Celtic is something which should be avoided as it distorts our understanding of the archaeological record.[10]

Similarly Simon James claims that archaeologists are entering a phase of what he calls 'post-Celticism':

> The sheer divergence of the data from different areas makes it harder and harder to make meaningful generalizations across large areas or long periods. . . . Celticism . . . has, in many respects, long been a complacent orthodoxy ripe for re-evaluation.

He admits, however, that 'over-arching similarities and links are downplayed, and even ignored' by post-Celticists, and honestly confesses to 'an exaggerated attempt to distance oneself from the perceived error' of his own pre-Chapman work.[11] In other words, in part we are witnessing a debate about emphasis and about the validity of generalizing at all. At times the term 'Celtic' seems to be expected to pass stricter tests of validity than would normally be applied to, say, 'Germanic' or 'Slavic'.[12] Given the minority status of

[10]John Collis, '*States without Centers?* The Middle La Tène Period in Temperate Europe', in *Celtic Chiefdom, Celtic State: The Evolution of Complex Social Systems in Prehistoric Europe*, edited by Bettina Arnold and D. Blair Gibson (Cambridge, 1995), pp. 75–80 (pp. 76–77). In the same volume Colin Haselgrove refers to 'the familiar and increasingly discredited stereotype of a generalized Celtic society' ('Late Iron Age Society in Britain and North-West Europe: Structural Transformation or Superficial Change', pp. 81–87 (p. 87)). Cf. review of the volume by Adam Gwilt, 'Ageing Structures and Shifting Ideologies', *Antiquity*, 70 (1996), 699–702. See earlier Nick Merriman, 'Value and Motivation in Prehistory: The Evidence for "Celtic Spirit" ', in *The Archaeology of Contextual Meanings*, edited by Ian Hodder (Cambridge, 1987), pp. 111–16; J. D. Hill, 'Re-Thinking the Iron Age', *SAR*, 6 (1989), 16–24. Cf. n. 34 below. John Collis already made his point in a review of Barry Cunliffe's *Danebury: An Iron Age Hillfort in Hampshire*, in *Proceedings of the Prehistoric Society*, 51 (1985), 348–49: 'One can only continue repeating, that there is no such thing as "Celtic" society and Ireland is as irrelevant as, say, urbanized Gaul'. His most recent reiteration is in 'Celts and Politics', in *Cultural Identity and Archaeology*, pp. 167–78 (pp. 172–73). [11]'Celts, Politics and Motivation', pp. 202–4 and 206–8. [12]cf. Collis, 'Origin and Spread of the Celts'. Note D. Ellis Evans's objection to the critique of the term Celt and Celtic by Colin Renfrew, *Archaeology and Language: The Puzzle of Indo-European Origins* (London, 1987), p. 224, that Renfrew did not 'give prominence to the difficulties arising with a host of other terms, including both Greek or Hellenic and Latin or Roman' ('Celticity, Identity and the Study of Language—Fact, Speculation and Legend', *Archaeologia Cambrensis*, 140 (1991), 1–16 (pp. 8–9)). See also J. V. S. Megaw and M. Ruth Megaw, 'Paper Tigers, Tilting at Windmills and Celtic Cheshire Cats: A Reply to Tim Taylor', *SAR*, 8 (1991), 248–52 (p. 249).

contemporary Celtic-speakers, this can *look* unfortunately close to the post-colonial situation described by Siân Jones as

> the critical scrutiny of a minority group's identity and history by the dominant society rather than vice versa, ultimately perpetuating the relations of power between groups. . . . Minority groups are subjected to a relentless discourse which requires them, in one form or another, to possess a traditional homogeneous culture and identity stretching back in a continuous and unilinear fashion into the past. Many will inevitably fail such a requirement. . . .[13]

To some extent, the differences of opinion about the usefulness of 'Celtic' reflect the varying nature of disciplines. One would expect 'Celts' by the shores of the English Channel and the Mediterranean to live ways of life 'determined less by racial origins than by the ecology of the country',[14] whereas their shared Celticity, invisible and irrelevant to the settlement archaeologist, might well be obvious to the linguist in place-names like *Mediolanum* and *Noviomagus*.[15] 'Over-arching similarities' might also be expected to be visible in art, although their significance is less open to proof and consequently more controversial.[16] All too often, in fact, specialists have used the term 'Celtic art' in a woolly, almost meaningless way, as if it were axiomatic that art is a manifestation of ethnicity:

> The very concept of 'Celtic art' seems itself to carry a certain coherence, as though distilling an essential social ethos, to represent the visual sensitivity of 'Celticity', a common cause among those 'barbarian' peoples who had the urge to feel themselves 'Celtic'. . . . It arose from a profound feeling of dissent from the often rather staid conventions of Greek-style ornament . . ., thereby seeming to assert ethnic individuality.[17]

The Celticity debate has spilled over into the English press. *The Daily Telegraph* on 12 March 1998 ran an article 'Is the Celtic Civilisation merely a Myth?', claiming that

> A group of archaeologists . . . have angered self-proclaimed Celts from

[13]Siân Jones, *The Archaeology of Ethnicity: Constructing Identities in the Past and Present* (London, 1997), p. 142. This point—or red herring—is seized on by Megaw and Megaw, 'Ancient Celts and Modern Ethnicity'. [14]A. L. F. Rivet, *Gallia Narbonensis* (London, 1988), p. 15. [15]Joseph Vendryes, *La Religion des Celtes*, edited by P.-Y. Lambert (Spézet, 1997), pp. 5–6. [16]See Ruth and Vincent Megaw, *Celtic Art from its Beginnings to the Book of Kells* (London, 1989), and the critical review by Timothy Taylor, 'Celtic Art', *SAR*, 8 (1991), 129–32; also idem, ' "Celtic" as a Polythetic Class: A Response', ibid., pp. 252–53. [17]Martyn Jope, 'The Social Implications of Celtic Art, 600 BC to AD 600', in *The Celtic World*, pp. 376–410 (p. 376). More 'art historical meandering' on ' "the unity of Celtic art" ' is quoted by Sara Champion, 'New Europe', p. 245.

> Scotland to Cornwall by their claims that the Celtic culture, much trumpeted during the weeks before devolution referendums in Wales and Scotland, is historical 'fantasy'.

A presumably garbled account of the views of Simon James followed:

> Dr James argues that the use of the label Celtic was part of a very 'simple but attractive picture' but essentially bogus, having been inspired by the obvious similarity of the group of languages, rather than being based on evidence. (p. 4)

A curious statement for those who believe in *linguistic* evidence; and for the many nationalists round the world who take their stand on linguistic continuity rather than the shapes of their shields or the pattern of their postholes. It may be recalled that the nineteenth-century German thesis that 'the Greeks were not "Greeks" ' was eventually rejected 'largely on the grounds of the survival of the Greek language itself'.[18]

Whatever the press think, the Megaws were certainly wrong to portray the academic debate as one of English versus Celts. Admittedly, it is likely—*experto crede*—that what Kenneth Jackson called 'the ancient, deep-seated, and almost wholly unconscious English prejudice against "Celts" and all their works' has been an underlying factor in studies such as Malcolm Chapman's.[19] Nevertheless, indigenous currents of Celtoscepticism can also be recognized in the Celtic-speaking countries. These cannot simply be attributed to Unionism or French Republicanism; important other factors have been inter-Celtic xenophobia (especially directed against the Irish in Wales and Scotland) and cross-Gaelic and cross-Brittonic religious divides, plus a common-sense suspicion that pan-Celticism is as much of a foreign creation as the Union or the French Republic. To give two examples from Wales, here is Thomas Parry in 1956:

> Y mae yn ein plith ni Gymry rai eneidiau dethol, ond rhamantaidd, a fyn sôn beunydd am ein cefndyr yn Iwerddon ac yn Llydaw, heb gofio dim am y gwahaniaethau sylfaenol ym magwraeth y ddau deulu sydd wedi gwneud y cefndyr hyn mor ddiethr a gwahanol inni ag ambell gefnder sydd gan rai ohonom yn America ac na welsom erioed mohono. Syndod mor gyndyn ydym i gydnabod mai ein brodyr ni yw'r Saeson, a sylweddoli

[18]Roger Just, 'The Triumph of the Ethnos', in *History and Ethnicity*, edited by Elizabeth Tonkin and others (London, 1989), pp. 71–88 (p. 85). [19]'Fifty Years of Celtic Philology', *Modern Language Review*, 71 (1976), xxiii–xxxvii (p. xxiii). Cf. D. Ellis Evans, 'Celticity, Celtic Awareness and Celtic Studies', *Zeitschrift für celtische Philologie*, 49/50 (1997), 1–27 (p. 15, n. 47): 'the dominant approach in [Chapman's] *own* work is to deal with the "Celts" as "other"!'.

> nad oes dim yn anghyson rhwng cydnabod hynny ac ymladd i'r eithaf rhag y ganibaliaeth o gael ein traflyncu gan ein brodyr.[20]
>
> Among us Welsh there are some select but romantic spirits who will go on and on about our cousins in Ireland and Brittany, without remembering any of the fundamental differences in the upbringing of the two families which have made these cousins as foreign and different from us as some of the cousins some of us have in America and have never seen. It is amazing how reluctant we are to admit that the English are our brothers and to realise that there is no incompatibility between admitting that and fighting vigorously against the cannibalism of being swallowed up by our brothers.

Rather similarly, here is R. T. Jenkins twenty years earlier explaining his lack of interest in Brittany:

> Y gwir yw, mae'n debyg, na allaf oddef 'Celtigrwydd' yn unrhyw un o'i ffurfiau, a bod Llydaw'n dioddef yn fy ngolwg oherwydd ymdrechion annoeth rhai pobl i sylfaenu hanes ac athroniaeth ar ffaith ieithegol—i haeru mai'r un bobl, bron iawn, yw Cymry a Gwyddyl a Llydawiaid 1936, am fod hynafiaid rhai ohonynt (*rhai* ohonynt) wedi bod yn siarad yr un iaith ganrifoedd lawer iawn yn ôl.[21]
>
> The truth is, probably, that I cannot bear 'Celticity' in any of its manifestations, and that Brittany suffers in my view from some people's foolish efforts to found history and philosophy on a linguistic fact—to assert that the Welsh and Irish and Bretons in 1936 are virtually the same people because the ancestors of some of them (*some* of them) spoke the same language many many centuries ago.

Jenkins recounts how, at a Celtic Congress in Glasgow, Saunders Lewis discovered that their Presbyterianism was more important to the Scottish 'Celts' than their Celticity. And so, according to R. T. Jenkins, it should be, 'because Calvinism and Presbyterianism (whatever we may think about them) are weighty, important, and living matters, and the other is only folly and fiction'.[22]

[20] *Amryw Bethau* (Denbigh, 1996), p. 127 (obituary of J. Lloyd-Jones, originally published in *Y Genhinen*). [21] *Cwpanaid o De a Diferion Eraill* (Denbigh, 1997), p. 37, originally published in *Y Llenor* in 1936; for the background cf. T. Robin Chapman, *W. Ambrose Bebb* (Cardiff, 1997), pp. 55 and 89–92. Cf. Simon Brooks, 'Iwerddon, y Celtiaid a Ni', *Barn*, 428 (September 1998), 6: '*fraud* deallusol anhygoel yw Astudiaethau Celtaidd, a'i phrif gyflawniad yw cadw Cymry rhag astudio problemau eu hoes eu hunain' ('Celtic Studies is an incredible intellectual fraud, and its main achievement is keeping the Welsh from studying the problems of their own time'); contrast Robin Llywelyn's favourable verdict (n. 23 below). In a Radio Cymru interview on 5 October 1998 Professor Dafydd Johnston did not accept that Brooks's view would be grounds for closing our Department in Aberystwyth! [22] 'Oblegid y mae Calfiniaeth a Phresbyteriaeth (credwn a fynnom amdanynt) yn bethau sylweddol a phwysig a byw, ac nid yw'r llall ond ffwlbri a ffug.'

'Give me the folly and fiction, please, Mr Jenkins', retorts Robin Llywelyn, 'I'm afraid I find them much more entertaining than your so-called "weighty matters" '![23] No doubt the argument will run and run for ever, for two reasons. The first, academic, reason is that both sides are right. The Reformation fundamentally changed the mentality of one half of the Celtic-speakers, just as the Counter-Reformation changed that of the other, and such historical processes cannot be brushed aside without diminishing and devaluing the peoples' lived experience. But the same is also true, further back in time, of the historical interconnections between the Celtic-speaking peoples; the dilemma that we can rarely distinguish resemblances that go back to a remote period of Celtic linguistic unity from those that result from somewhat more recent connections[24] does not invalidate the significance of the totality of the resemblances. Secondly, popular perceptions are not open to academic reason. If people want to perceive Brittany as basically French or Galicia as basically Celtic, they are not going to heed the views of academics. And if they want to believe that the Welsh have more in common with the Basques and Catalans and other European minorities than with the 'gin-drinking English of Surrey',[25] they will not be swayed by statistics on Anglo-Welsh intermarriage and the consumption of gin in Glamorgan.

VARIETIES OF CELTICITY

It *is* proper for academics in Celtic Studies to exercise some scepticism about the Celtic industry—and not simply to avoid the

[23]'Rhowch i mi'r ffwlbri a'r ffug da chwi, Mr Jenkins; maent beth coblyn yn ddifyrrach gennyf na'ch "pethau sylweddol" bondigrybwyll, mae arnaf ofn' ('Celtigrwydd?', p. 5). He adds: 'Ni ellir mynd i waelod llawer o bethau yn llenyddiaeth Cymru heb allwedd y chwedlau Gwyddeleg a'r ffenest a geir ynddynt ar fytholeg y Celtiaid. Ond fy niddordeb mawr yn yr Wyddeleg yw ei phriod-ddulliau, ei hymadroddion grymus, ei delweddau llachar—rhuddin yr iaith. A'n Cymraeg treuliedig Seisnigaidd ninnau i'w gweld mor glytiog a thila ochr yn ochr â hi. Ond yr un yn y bôn yw teithi'r ddwy iaith ac fe ddysgais lawer am y Gymraeg yn sgil fy nhipyn astudio ar yr iaith Wyddeleg, a dysgu parch at eiriau bach. Canlyniad dysgu am Lydaw ac Iwerddon i mi oedd fy mod i'n deall mwy am fy ngwlad fy hun ac yn gweld arwyddocâd newydd mewn llawer o bethau na fyddwn wedi sylwi arnynt cynt. Dysgais hefyd nad oedd Cymru ar ei phen ei hun'. [24]cf. Patrick Sims-Williams, 'Some Celtic Otherworld Terms', in *Celtic Language, Celtic Culture: A Festschrift for Eric P. Hamp*, edited by A. T. E. Matonis and Daniel F. Melia (Van Nuys, CA, 1990), pp. 57–81 (pp. 58–59). The implication for modern Celticity of the dilemma is that post-Common Celtic connections can be dismissed as not authentically Celtic while Common Celtic ones can be dismissed (as by R. T. Jenkins) as irrelevant to the present! [25]Speech in English by Dafydd Wigley M.P. at a Plaid Cymru congress in 1993, broadcast as a presumably humorous clip on the BBC News in London. Cf. Katie Gramich, 'Celtic Identity', *Books in Wales*, Spring 1998, p. 1: 'There is a rebellious streak in me which asks why I should presume to share a sense of cultural identity with a Glaswegian but not with someone from Nottingham or, say, Salamanca?'.

undeserved[26] charge of 'complacent orthodoxy'. In doing so we may *appear* to be sawing off the branch of study upon which we sit. In fact, however, few of us would claim that 'Celtic Studies' is a discrete branch of research as opposed to a moderately coherent and by now traditional area of interdisciplinary study. In any case, most 'Celtic Studies' academics are principally involved in the study of the particular national traditions of Wales or Ireland or Scotland and so on rather than in the comparative and synthesizing work that is in question. The scholarly study of these individual national languages and literatures goes back to the Middle Ages, though naturally their literary 'canons' are continually being enlarged by modern creative writers, and by the recovery of earlier literature.[27] Clearly such 'Irish Studies' or 'Breton Studies' are as valid as English Studies or Italian Studies.

By contrast, Celtic Studies, in the sense of (say) studying Irish or Scottish Gaelic material in comparison with the other individual national traditions, is a fairly recent activity, comparable to Germanic Studies or Slavonic Studies, and it is this discipline which warrants examination. Comparative Celtic philology began effectively with Edward Lhuyd's *Archaeologia Britannica* of 1707; generalization about Celtic literature began with the 1854 essay *La Poésie des races celtiques* by Ernest Renan; and the study of 'Celtic archaeology' and 'Celtic art'[28] followed still later. Many generalizations about the Celts derive from Renan and his English interpreter Matthew Arnold: for example, the Celts as poetic visionaries, more in touch with the Otherworld and with the world of Nature than the unimaginative Germanic 'race'.[29] An important task for Celtic Studies is to disengage itself from its roots in Romanticism, and this has to be done by questioning every such stereotypical assumption—another one is the

[26]Leading scholars in Celtic Studies have been taking the problems of Celticism seriously for many years; see, for example, Professor William Gillies (Edinburgh), review of Malcolm Chapman's *The Gaelic Vision in Scottish Culture*, in *University of Edinburgh Journal*, 29 (1979), 152–53; numerous articles by Professor D. Ellis Evans (Oxford), two cited above; articles by Professor Donald Meek (Aberdeen) and others in *Celticism*; review of same by Professor Erich Poppe (Marburg) in *CMCS*, 33 (Summer 1997), 105–7; and below, n. 34. [27]For instance, the *Gododdin* was not restored to the canon of Welsh literature until 1758 (Gerald Morgan, *Ieuan Fardd* (Caernarfon, 1988), p. 20), while the eighth- and ninth-century manuscript remains of Old Irish, Old Welsh, and Old Breton were almost unknown until Zeuss's *Grammatica Celtica* of 1853. As Chapman says (pp. 140–41), 'the "infinite series of rememorizations" by which the present appropriates the past' is more subtle than a dichotomy of 'genuine' versus 'invented' tradition. [28]'Celtic' in the sense of 'La Tène'. On their history see Champion, 'The Celt in Archaeology'; Cunliffe, pp. 27–38; Collis, 'Celtic Myths'; Megaw and Megaw, *Celtic Art*, pp. 13–16. [29]See my articles cited in n. 9 above.

supposed Celtic preference for oral rather than written transmission.[30]

Genetic modes of thinking have inevitably dominated Celtic Studies, both because it began with philology and because it developed in the nineteenth century. Even in linguistics the genetic model is of limited use; only a small proportion of any real language is directly inherited from a common ancestor language such as Common Celtic or Common Germanic, and still less from Proto-Indo-European. Typologically all languages are 'mixed'. Nevertheless, Celticists (like Germanicists before them) have been particularly ready to extend the family-tree model beyond language and to see, for example, Welsh bards and kings in terms of 'Celtic' or even 'Indo-European' panegyric and kingship—especially when related words are used, such as Irish *rí* and Sanskrit *rāj-*.[31] Such assumptions need to be tested by comparison with other cultures. Did the bards of Ireland really resemble those of Wales more than they resembled those of Africa?[32] Instead, should we see Taliesin in Latin rather than 'Celtic' terms? Was the Welsh king really closer to an Indian *rajah* or Irish *rí* than to the Anglo-Saxon *cyning* next door?[33] Indeed, is it possible to generalize about 'Celtic society' at all?[34] Such questions raise a serious challenge to the traditional genetic framework which Celtic Studies has inherited from Indo-European studies.

Alongside the above genetic concept of 'Celticity', we are also familiar with the term 'Celtic' to refer to arguably linked or parallel

[30]Patrick Sims-Williams, 'The Uses of Writing in Early Medieval Wales', in *Literacy in Medieval Celtic Societies*, edited by Huw Pryce (Cambridge, 1998), pp. 15–38 (pp. 16–18). [31]The reconstruction of the Proto-Indo-European term for 'king' is now in doubt; the *rex* noun may be limited to Celtic and Italic. See J. P. Mallory, *In Search of the Indo-Europeans* (London, 1989), p. 125. [32]Patrick Sims-Williams, 'Gildas and Vernacular Poetry', in *Gildas: New Approaches*, edited by Michael Lapidge and David Dumville (Woodbridge, 1984), pp. 169–92 (p. 173); cf. Kevin G. Donnelly, 'The Poet and Poetic Language in the Celtic and Southern Bantu Praising Traditions', in *Memory and Poetic Structure*, edited by Peter Ryan (London, 1981), pp. 66–90. [33]Patrick Wormald, 'Celtic and Anglo-Saxon Kingship: Some Further Thoughts', in *Sources of Anglo-Saxon Culture*, edited by Paul Szarmach and Virginia Darrow Oggins (Kalamazoo, 1986), pp. 151–83; Robin Chapman Stacey, *The Road to Judgment: From Custom to Court in Medieval Ireland and Wales* (Philadelphia, 1994), pp. 4–5. See also Wendy Davies, 'Celtic Kingships in the Early Middle Ages', in *Kings and Kingships in Medieval Europe*, edited by Anne J. Duggan (London, 1993), pp. 101–24. [34]See n. 10 above; Donnchadh Ó Corráin, 'Law and Society—Principles of Classification', in *Geschichte und Kultur der Kelten*, edited by Karl Horst Schmidt and Rolf Ködderitzsch (Heidelberg, 1986), pp. 234–40: 'there never seems to have been a "Celtic race" or "Celtic society" ' (p. 234). Cf. T. M. Charles-Edwards, *Early Irish and Welsh Kinship* (Oxford, 1993), p. 477: 'One can say of Ireland and Wales in the early Middle Ages only that they were fairly Celtic societies'. Gaulish and Irish society are compared and contrasted by Nerys Thomas Patterson, 'Clans are not Primordial: Pre-Viking Irish Society and the Modelling of Pre-Roman Societies in Northern Europe', in *Celtic Chiefdom, Celtic State*, pp. 129–36 (pp. 135–36).

developments beside the western seaways in the Middle Ages or later, for example in controversial terms such as 'Celtic folklore', 'Celtic music', 'Celtic spirituality',[35] and 'the Celtic Church'. Perhaps we should also think of some of the widespread features of pagan Celtic mythology in terms of such linked or parallel developments—religious ideas and cults travelling (as Caesar says of the druids and druidism) between the Celtic-speaking countries—instead, that is, of projecting them all back to a remote Common Celtic starting-point?[36] Whatever be the case with 'Celtic paganism', few would suppose that the 'Celtic Church', if there was such an entity, derives from a period of Celtic linguistic unity before the time of Christ! The thesis is that the early Churches in Wales, Cornwall, Brittany, and Ireland developed along sufficiently similar lines as to constitute a provincial 'Celtic' variety of the Universal Church, to be contrasted with, say, the Anglo-Saxon Church or the Spanish Church.[37] 'Celtic' is here being used in a *geographical* sense to refer to regional innovations

[35]On 'Celtic music' see F. Harrison, 'Celtic Musics: Characteristics and Chronology', in *Geschichte und Kultur der Kelten*, pp. 252–63. On the nebulous concept of 'Celtic spirituality/Christianity' see Donald E. Meek, 'Modern Celtic Christianity', in *Celticism*, edited by Brown, pp. 143–57; idem, 'Celtic Christianity: What Is It, and When Was It?', *Scottish Bulletin of Evangelical Theology*, 9 (1991), 13–21; idem, 'Modern Celtic Christianity: The Contemporary "Revival" and its Roots', ibid., 10 (1992), 6–31; and idem, 'Surveying the Saints: Reflections on Recent Writings on "Celtic Christianity" ', ibid., 15 (1997), 50–60; Thomas Owen Clancy, 'Outside Agendas', *Planet*, 123 (June/July 1997), 99–100; Gwynn ap Gwilym, 'Ffydd y Beirdd', *Barddas*, 240 (April/May 1997), 42–44. Anti-revisionist restatements of the peculiarity of Irish and Welsh Christianity include Brendan Bradshaw, 'The Wild and Woolly West: Early Irish Christianity and Latin Orthodoxy', in *The Churches, Ireland, and the Irish*, edited by W. J. Sheils and Diana Wood, Studies in Church History, 26 (Oxford, 1989), pp. 1–23, and Oliver Davies, *Celtic Christianity in Early Medieval Wales: The Origins of the Welsh Spiritual Tradition* (Cardiff, 1996). The latter's Celtic Christianity/spirituality is a (pre)conception characterized by 'the central role of the Christian poet, a special emphasis on the doctrine of the Triune God, an unusually positive attitude to the natural world and a deeply felt sense of community' (p. 5), plus such stereotypes as 'the typically Celtic resistance to metaphysics' (p. 26). It supposedly resulted from 'the interaction of original Celtic primal or tribal religion with the young Christianity' (p. 5), which allowed 'the druidism of a bygone age' (p. 89) to survive. As Davies himself hints, his approach differs from 'purely literary-historical research' and 'clinical scholarship' (p. 142). [36]cf. Sims-Williams, 'Some Celtic Otherworld Terms', pp. 58–60; Caesar, *Gallic War*, 6.13. [37]See the judicious comments of Richard Sharpe, 'Gildas as a Father of the Church', in *Gildas: New Approaches*, edited by Lapidge and Dumville, pp. 193–205, especially p. 202: 'If it is ever possible to use the term "Celtic Church", a popular but imprecise expression, it is in the second half of the sixth century; "the Celtic church" is the *ecclesiae occidentis* of Columbanus' (note Columbanus' plural and non-ethnic qualifier). Cf. Wendy Davies, 'The Myth of the Celtic Church', in *The Early Church in Wales and the West*, edited by Nancy Edwards and Alan Lane (Oxford, 1992), pp. 12–21; Daniel McCarthy, 'The Origin of the *Latercus* Paschal Cycle of the Insular Celtic Churches', *CMCS*, 28 (Winter 1994), 25–49; R. M. Jones, *Ysbryd y Cwlwm: Delwedd y Genedl yn ein Llenyddiaeth* (Cardiff, 1998), pp. 73, n. 55, and 445, n. 16.

or conservations or shared experiences, or, more loosely, as in the phrase 'the Celtic Fringe', to define an area on the basis of its difference from another area, such as England.[38]

This regional usage of 'Celtic' is closer to the 'areal' claims of linguistic typology than to the genetic claims of comparative philology. No typologist would assume, say, that the syntax of Welsh must be developing in parallel with that of Breton rather than that of English on the grounds that Welsh is genetically 'Celtic' and English is 'Germanic'; he would weigh up the evidence. Similarly, we cannot just assume that there is a close resemblance or connection between Welsh and Breton religion or folklore or music just because the genetic model has taught us to call them Celtic. *Linguistic* Celticity is not really relevant here. In fact it is quite difficult, without wishful thinking or forcing the evidence, to find non-linguistic cultural characteristics along the Atlantic seaboard that neatly and exclusively correspond to areas where Celtic languages are or have been spoken. This is true even in literature. A brave recent attempt to enumerate the unifying 'Celtic' features of 'the new Celtic poetry' has to fall back on a sense of 'place' and so on.[39] The first and strongest item on the list is the 'problem of England', which is a common denominator shared with many post-colonial literatures but not with Breton poetry.

Whatever may be its strength today, self-conscious Celtic solidarity cannot be traced back beyond the modern period. When the first-century British leader Calgacus vainly prophesied that the Britons and Gauls would desert the Roman army he unhelpfully included the Germans as well; and when the tenth-century Welsh author of *Armes Prydein* prophesied what has anachronistically been seen as a 'Celtic' alliance against the English, he put the 'men of Dublin', who were Vikings, in pride of place. Again, when Robert Bruce and Sir Gruffudd Llwyd discussed an alliance in 1316 and when Owain Glyn Dŵr wrote to the Scots in 1401, they appealed to the two nations' common grievance against the English rather than their

[38]cf. Donnchadh Ó Corráin, 'Ireland, Scotland and Wales, *c.* 700 to the Early Eleventh Century', in *The New Cambridge Medieval History*, II, edited by Rosamond McKitterick (Cambridge, 1995), pp. 43–63 (p. 43); Chapman, p. 68; Sims-Williams, 'Some Celtic Otherworld Terms', p. 58. [39]Bobi Jones, 'Ailgyfodi Celtaidd', *Llais Llyfrau*, Winter 1997, pp. 6–7 (review of *Writing the Wind: A Celtic Resurgence: The New Celtic Poetry*, edited by Thomas Rain Crowe; cf. the scathing review of the same book by Katie Gramich, *Books in Wales*, Spring 1998, pp. 10–11).

ethnic kinship. To see pan-Celticism in these mooted alliances would be anachronistic.[40]

One has to say 'anachronistic' because the medieval and early modern Welsh and Irish had absolutely no idea that they *were* fellow 'Celts'.

THE DEVELOPMENT OF CELTICITY

Why did this idea of Celticity develop—or get recovered—so late? The main reason was the delay in perceiving the connection between Gaelic (whether Irish or Scottish) and the other languages which we also call Celtic. The derivation of Welsh, Cornish, and Breton from a common British language was clear to Gerald of Wales in the twelfth century (*Description of Wales*, I.6), and the affinity between this British language and ancient Gaulish, which is asserted by Tacitus already in the first century A.D. (*Agricola*, 11), was well known to humanists and antiquarians like William Camden once Tacitus had been printed in the sixteenth century—hence Aubrey's striking claim (in 1659) that the ancient British language was 'spoken from the Orcades to Italie and Spain'.[41] The Gaelic language, however, would seem to have been at first too little known (lying outside the Empire), and then too distinct, to be attached to the Gallo-Brittonic family. Tacitus does not mention language when comparing the Irish and Britons (*Agricola*, 24), probably out of ignorance. Even Gerald of Wales, who was unusually interested in comparing words in European languages, failed to link Irish and Welsh: probably they had diverged too far for their special relationship to be perceived so well as the

[40]Tacitus, *Agricola*, 32 (cf. Alan K. Bowman, *Life and Letters on the Roman Frontier: Vindolanda and its People* (London, 1994), pp. 32 and 97); *Armes Prydein: The Prophecy of Britain from the Book of Taliesin*, edited by Ifor Williams and Rachel Bromwich (Dublin, 1972), line 9. For 'Celticity' in the latter cf. Jones, *Ysbryd y Cwlwm*, pp. 19 and 73, n. 55, quoting Dr Ann Griffiths. I am indebted to Dr Marged Haycock for the following references: J. Beverley Smith, 'Gruffydd Llwyd and the Celtic Alliance, 1315–18', *Bulletin of the Board of Celtic Studies*, 26 (1974–76), 463–78; Seán Duffy, 'The Bruce Brothers and the Irish Sea World, 1306–29', *CMCS*, 21 (Summer 1991), 55–86 (p. 58); *The Chronicle of Adam of Usk 1377–1421*, edited and translated by C. Given-Wilson (Oxford, 1997), pp. 148–51. Note that Owain does claim a *personal* relationship with Robert III of Scotland via their ancestors Kamber and Albanactus, sons of Brutus in Geoffrey of Monmouth. He repeats the assertion of consanguinity (unspecified) in his letter to the lords of Ireland (ibid., pp. 150–53), but this could refer (say) to Owain's ancestor Gruffudd ap Cynan as easily as anything more ancient. [41]William Camden, *Remains Concerning Britain* [1605], edited by R. D. Dunn (Toronto, 1984), p. 22; John Aubrey, *Essay Towards the Description of the North Division of Wiltshire*, quoted by Stuart Piggott, *Ruins in a Landscape: Essays in Antiquarianism* (Edinburgh, 1976), p. 8. Cf. ibid., pp. 61–62, and idem, *Ancient Britons and the Antiquarian Imagination* (London, 1989), pp. 62, 88, and 129.

internal unity of the Romance dialects or of the Germanic dialects.[42] If we adopt the venerable if impressionistic practice of comparing versions of the Lord's Prayer,[43] the relationship of the Old English and Gothic is obvious:

> *Old English*: Fæder ure, þu þe eart on heofonum: si þin nama gehalgod.
> *Gothic*: Atta unsar, þu in himinam: weihnai namo þein.

On the other hand, the Middle Welsh and Middle Irish versions are more distant:

> *Middle Welsh*: Yn tat ni yr hwnn ysyd yn y nefoed . . . kadarnnhaer dy enw ti.
> *Middle Irish*: A athair fil hi nimib, noemthar th'ainm.

Only *yn y nefoed* and *hi nimib* are at all striking (and they are also superficially like *na nebesĭchŭ* in Old Church Slavonic). To the modern philologist *dy enw* and *th'ainm* are also significantly Celtic, but to the layman they are less obviously equivalent than the Germanic *þin nama* and *namo þein*. Needless to say, anyone who knows Welsh and Irish must be aware of similarities between them, but would the layman perceive their special relationship? One counts *un, dau, tri* in Welsh and *aon, dó, trí* in Irish, but then these are also *one, two, three* in English, *un, deux, trois* in French, and *ek, dvi, tri* in Bengali. In the Middle Ages, similarities were rarely explained genetically. Thus the Irish *Glossary* attributed to Cormac tends to attribute the similarity of words in Irish and Brittonic to borrowing, and genetic connections are not implied by its occasional laconic remark such as '*dobar* is a word common to Irish and Brittonic, meaning "water" '.[44] After all, as Gerald of Wales points out, Welsh

[42]*Itinerary Through Wales*, I.8, and *Description of Wales*, I.7 and 15. Cf. Sims-Williams, 'Some Celtic Otherworld Terms', p. 57; G. Bonfante, 'A Contribution to the History of Celtology', *Celtica*, 3 (1956), 17–34 (pp. 17–21). For early perceptions of Germanic and Romance see Michael Richter, *Studies in Medieval Language and Culture* (Blackrock, 1995), pp. 77–78. [43]For Welsh this starts in 1555 (Erich Poppe, 'The Celtic Languages in Conrad Gessner's *Mithridates* (1555)', *ZCP*, 45 (1992), 240–50) and continues till W. B. Lockwood, *Indo-European Philology* (London, 1969), pp. 152–76, whom I quote—but instead of his modern Celtic versions I use: *The Elucidarium and Other Tracts in Welsh from Llyvyr Agkyr Llandewivrevi* A.D. *1346*, edited by J. Morris Jones and John Rhŷs (Oxford, 1894), pp. 147–48; *The Passions and Homilies from Leabhar Breac*, edited by Robert Atkinson, Todd Lecture Series, 2 (Dublin, 1887), p. 259. [44]Paul Russell, 'Brittonic Words in Irish Glossaries', in *Hispano-Gallo-Brittonica: Essays in honour of D. Ellis Evans*, edited by Joseph F. Eska and others (Cardiff, 1995), pp. 166–82 (pp. 170 and 177); Thomas Charles-Edwards, 'Language and Society among the Insular Celts AD 400–1000', in *The Celtic World*, pp. 703–36 (pp. 710–11 and 720–21).

dwfr also looks like Greek *hydōr*. Gerald's explanation is that the Britons spent a long time among the Greeks after the Fall of Troy. He also reports that 'water' is *ydor* in the language of the fairies—a literally substrate language![45]

There were several reasons for *not* seeking to link Irish and Welsh. In the Middle Ages and beyond, the Welsh generally disliked the Irish, the term *Gwyddel* 'Irishman' being used alongside *Sais* and *Iddew*, 'Englishman' and 'Jew', as a term of abuse.[46] The native names for their languages were quite distinct, and no umbrella term like 'Celtic' was in use. The two nations gave themselves very distinct ancestries: while the Britons came from Troy via Greece, the Irish came from Scythia via Egypt and Spain.[47] Moreover, the biblical story of the Tower of Babel discouraged hypothesizing lost intermediary languages between Babel and attested languages. So learned a lexicographer as Dr John Davies maintained in 1621 that Welsh was one of the languages ordained at the Tower of Babel, and similar speculations were still purveyed in the eighteenth century by such influential writers as Paul-Yves Pezron and Theophilus Evans.[48] The Irish tradition, which goes back to the eighth century, was that Irish was created by a sort of Language Board which met at the Tower of Babel to select elements from the seventy-two new languages of the world in order to synthesize a superior language: Gaelic.[49] There was no room for 'Common Celtic' in this Irish vision.

In the Early Modern period Irish and British were still kept far apart in the accepted, mainstream classifications of European languages, such as that by Scaliger (1599).[50] In his posthumous *Originum Gallicarum Liber* of 1654 the Dutch scholar Boxhorn (d. 1653)

[45]*Itinerary Through Wales*, I.8. The Greek and Celtic words are not genuine cognates. [46]Patrick Sims-Williams, 'Irish Elements in Late Medieval Welsh Literature: The Problem of Cuhelyn and *Nyf', in *Celtic Linguistics/Ieithyddiaeth Geltaidd: Readings in the Brythonic Languages, Festschrift for T. Arwyn Watkins*, edited by Martin J. Ball and others, Current Issues in Linguistic Theory, 68 (Amsterdam, 1990), pp. 277–95 (p. 287, n. 7). [47]John J. Contreni, 'The Egyptian Origins of the Irish: Two Ninth-Century Notes', in his *Carolingian Learning, Masters and Manuscripts* (Aldershot, 1992), Essay XVII and Notes, p. 7; John Carey, *The Irish National Origin-Legend: Synthetic Pseudohistory*, Quiggin Pamphlets on the Sources of Mediaeval Gaelic History, 1 (Cambridge, 1994); cf. Andrew Hadfield, 'Briton and Scythian: Tudor Representations of Irish Origins', *Irish Historical Studies*, 28 (1993), 390–408. [48]R. Brinley Jones, *The Old British Tongue: The Vernacular in Wales 1540–1640* (Cardiff, 1970), p. 60; Geraint H. Jenkins, 'The Cultural Uses of the Welsh Language 1660–1800', in *The Welsh Language before the Industrial Revolution*, edited by Geraint H. Jenkins (Cardiff, 1997), pp. 369–406 (pp. 375 and 378). [49]Damian McManus, *A Guide to Ogam* (Maynooth, 1991), pp. 148–49. [50]See Bonfante, 'A Contribution', pp. 22–23; Daniel Droixhe, 'Ossian, Hermann and the Jew's-Harp: Images of the Celtic Languages from 1600 to 1800', in *Celticism*, pp. 21–33 (p. 22); idem, 'Wilkins et les langues européennes', in *La Linguistique entre mythe et histoire*, edited by Daniel Droixhe and Chantal Grell (Münster, 1993), pp. 41–54 (pp. 43–45).

admitted Welsh to his Nordic 'Scytho-Celtic' language family, which was already made up of Latin, Greek, and Germanic; but Irish remained outside the 'Scytho-Celtic' fold, despite the tentative speculations of Sir James Ware in that same year.[51] A few antiquaries did link Scottish Gaelic or Irish with Gaulish and British, notably George Buchanan in his *History of Scotland* in 1582,[52] and John Toland from Donegal, touring the English coffee-houses in the 1690s,[53] yet the idea was generally dismissed, for instance by the influential linguist John Wilkins (1668),[54] and was not demonstrated scientifically until the appearance of Edward Lhuyd's work in 1707.[55] After Lhuyd it gradually came to be accepted that ancient Gaulish, British, and Irish form a family of languages;[56] and other ancient languages, now better and better attested in inscriptions, have since been added to this 'Celtic' family, notably 'Lepontic' in north Italy and Celtiberian in Spain—almost vindicating Aubrey's claim that British had been 'spoken from the Orcades to Italie and Spain'.[57] The choice of the

[51]Joseph T. Leerssen, *Mere Irish & Fíor-Ghael: Studies in the Idea of Irish Nationality, its Development and Literary Expression prior to the Nineteenth Century* (Amsterdam, 1986), pp. 334–35; Prys Morgan, 'Boxhorn, Leibniz, and the Welsh', *SC*, 8/9 (1973–74), 220–28. [52]The priority yet lack of influence of Buchanan were stressed by Eoin MacNeill, 'The Re-Discovery of the Celts', *Irish Review*, 3 (1913–14), 522–32; cf. idem, *Phases of Irish History* (Dublin, 1919), pp. 4–6; Francis Shaw, 'The Celtic Twilight', *Studies*, 23 (1934), 25–41 and 260–78 (pp. 25–26); John MacQueen, 'The Renaissance in Scotland', in *The Celts and the Renaissance: Proceedings of the Eighth International Congress of Celtic Studies, 1987*, edited by Glanmor Williams and Robert Owen Jones (Cardiff, 1990), pp. 41–56 (pp. 46–47); John Collis, 'George Buchanan and the Celts in Britain', in *Celtic Connections: Proceedings of the Tenth International Congress of Celtic Studies, 1995*, edited by Ronald Black and others (forthcoming). [53]Leerssen, pp. 335–36; Alan Harrison, 'John Toland (1670–1722) and Celtic Studies', in *Celtic Languages and Celtic Peoples: Proceedings of the Second North American Congress of Celtic Studies, 1989*, edited by Cyril J. Byrne and others (Halifax, 1992), pp. 555–76. [54]John Wilkins, *An Essay towards a Real Character, and a Philosophical Language* (London, 1668), p. 4, distinguishes between 'The old Gaulish or British' and 'The Irish, in Ireland, and from thence brought over into some parts of Scotland', but adds: 'Though Mr. Camden would have this to be a derivation of the Welsh'. The reference to Camden is taken seriously by Droixhe, 'Wilkins', p. 45, but I cannot find that Camden said this (cf. n. 41 above). Camden did note 'many British words' in Irish (William Camden, *Britannia*, edited by Edmund Gibson (London, 1695), cols 966–67), but that is a different matter. [55]G. J. Williams, 'The History of Welsh Scholarship', *SC*, 8/9 (1973–74), 195–219 (pp. 211–13); Brynley F. Roberts, 'Edward Lhuyd and Celtic Linguistics', in *Proceedings of the Seventh International Congress of Celtic Studies, 1983*, edited by D. Ellis Evans and others (Oxford, 1986), pp. 1–9. [56]An example is the work of James Parsons (1767), noted by Mallory, p. 10. For subsequent developments see Erich Poppe, 'Lag es in der Luft?—Johann Kaspar Zeuß und die Konstituierung der Keltologie', *Beiträge zur Geschichte der Sprachwissenschaft*, 2 (1992), 41–56. [57]See n. 41 above. The relationship between these Celtic dialects is still controversial; cf. Patrick Sims-Williams, 'The Celtic Languages', in *The Indo-European Languages*, edited by Anna Giacalone Ramat and Paolo Ramat (London, 1998), pp. 345–79 (pp. 352–53).

term 'Celtic' was almost accidental but not wholly arbitrary[58] or erroneous, unlike modern labels such as 'Lepontic'. It was known from the opening of Caesar's *Gallic War* that the Gauls of central Gaul called themselves *Celtae*, and in the Middle Ages the term *Celtica lingua*, referring to Gaulish or a central Gaulish dialect, had occasionally occurred alongside *Gallica lingua*.[59] Probably *Celtic* came to be preferred to *Gallic* for the new language family because the term *Gallic* was too closely associated with French by Lhuyd's day. Besides, as Lhuyd's contemporary Leibniz implied in 1704, the term 'Celtic' had the advantage of vagueness; Gallo-Brittonic, Irish, *and* Germanic could all be derived from a single language 'which one might call Celtic (*la Celtique*)' since 'the ancients called the Germans as well as the Gauls Celts (*Celtes*)'.[60]

THE PROBLEM OF 'CELTIC'

Edward Lhuyd did not address in print the question of how the Celtic language family was related to the other languages of the world. Here the decisive step was taken by another Welshman, Sir William Jones, in his famous aside in 1786:

> no philologer could examine [Sanskrit, Greek, and Latin] without believing them to have sprung from some common source, which, perhaps, no longer exists: there is a similar reason, though not quite so forcible, for supposing that both the *Gothick* and the *Celtick*, though blended with a very different idiom, had the same origin with the *Sanscrit*.[61]

The subsequent and still continuing reconstruction of this common source, Proto-Indo-European, is one of the great abstract scientific

[58]Collis, 'Origin and Spread of the Celts', pp. 21–22, refers to it only as 'fairly arbitrary'. He does not mention the material mentioned in the following footnote, like Chapman, who says that 'the term "Celt" almost disappears from view' in the Middle Ages (pp. 53 and 201–2). [59]David N. Dumville, 'Ekiurid's *Celtica lingua*: An Ethnological Difficulty in *Waltharius*', *CMCS*, 6 (Winter 1983), 87–93 (pp. 89 and 91); Sims-Williams, 'The Celtic Languages', p. 347. A well-known instance must have been Sulpicius Severus, *Dialogues*, I.27, where an Aquitanian says to a Gaul: 'Speak, if you like in Celtic, or Gallic if you prefer the term (*vel Celtice aut si mavis Gallice*), so long as you speak about Martin': *The Western Fathers*, translated by F. H. Hoare (London, 1954), pp. 68, n. 1, 100, and n. 3; cf. E. Zupitza, 'Kelten und Gallier', *ZCP*, 4 (1902–3), 1–22 (p. 7). From the time of Gessner (1555), *Gallica* (*vetus*) and *Celtica* were generally synonymous in linguistics (referring to the language of ancient Gaul, often confused with proto-Germanic): see Poppe, 'Celtic Languages in *Mithridates*', pp. 246–47. [60]Bonfante, pp. 28–29; for Leibniz's awareness of Lhuyd's work (in 1699) see ibid., p. 27. Bonfante notes (p. 19, n. 2) that French is already *Gallica lingua* in Gerald of Wales. Collis, in his paper on Buchanan (n. 52 above), also points to the ambiguity of *Gallic*. On the equation of Celts and Germans cf. Piggott, *Ruins*, pp. 60–61; and n. 96 below. [61]*Sir William Jones: Selected Poetical and Prose Works*, edited by Michael J. Franklin (Cardiff, 1995), p. 361.

achievements of the modern world.[62] Less sophisticated, scientific, and successful, however, have been attempts to address the other problems raised by Jones: the non-Indo-European 'substrate' elements in Germanic and Celtic (and indeed the other Indo-European dialects), and the location of Proto-Indo-European in time and space. These problems have stretched the comparative method to breaking point.[63] The comparative reconstruction of Proto-Indo-European society, culture, and literature also seems to lack the logical foundations of purely linguistic reconstruction; one critic has even dismissed it as a 'dream world'.[64]

Many of the problems surrounding 'Proto-Indo-European'—its date, homeland, archaeological context, and cultural significance—also arise with 'Celtic'. As we shall see, matters are complicated by the fact that the term 'Celtic' is used in different and often conflicting ways by linguists, historians, archaeologists, art historians, and others. Linguists often like to argue that the linguistic use of 'Celtic' should be given priority.[65] That would certainly be convenient because it is possible scientifically to differentiate between what we can define as 'Celtic' and 'non-Celtic' languages: the discovery of a new Celtic language could be confirmed by the litmus test of distinctively Celtic phonological innovations such as the loss of IE /p/, as in the word for 'father', Gaulish *atir*, Old Irish *athair* versus Latin, Greek,

[62]Notwithstanding the limitations and misapplications mentioned by Hildegard L. C. Tristram, 'Celtic in Linguistic Taxonomy in the Nineteenth Century', in *Celticism*, pp. 35–60. [63]See Patrick Sims-Williams, 'Genetics, Linguistics and Prehistory: Thinking Big and Thinking Straight', *Antiquity*, 72 (1998), 505–27. [64]Colin Renfrew (on Dumézilians) in 'Archaeology and Linguistics: Some Preliminary Issues', in *When Worlds Collide: The Indo-Europeans and the Pre-Indo-Europeans*, edited by T. L. Markey and John A. C. Greppin (Ann Arbor, 1990), pp. 15–24 (p. 18); cf. Stefan Zimmer, 'The Investigation of Proto-Indo-European History: Methods, Problems, Limitations', ibid., pp. 311–44. A striking example is the Proto-Indo-European horse-sacrifice ritual reconstructed by comparative mythologists from material stretching from ancient India to Gerald of Wales's darkest Connacht. The comparative method, in J. P. Mallory's summary, 'suggests that the horse is selected from a paired chariot team. But archaeological evidence indicates that the horse was not likely to have been employed in paired draught until the invention of the spoked wheel and chariot, which is normally dated to after about 2500 BC and, consequently, some time after we would have assumed the disintegration of the Proto-Indo-European community.... Although cultural borrowing or parallel development may be suggested, this is a problem yet to be resolved' (Mallory, pp. 136–37, citing Jaan Puhvel, 'Aspects of Equine Functionality', in *Myth and Law among the Indo-Europeans*, edited by Jaan Puhvel (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1970), pp. 159–72 (p. 163)). It is perhaps a problem which casts doubt on the whole basis of non-linguistic Proto-Indo-European reconstruction. [65]For example, Myles Dillon in Myles Dillon and Nora K. Chadwick, *The Celtic Realms* (London, 1967), p. 17. This is opposed by Powell, p. 15, and by Evans, 'Celticity, Identity and the Study of Language', pp. 5–6, but is supported by Colin Renfrew, 'Prehistory and the Identity of Europe, or, Don't Let's Be Beastly to the Hungarians', in *Cultural Identity and Archaeology*, pp. 125–37 (pp. 132–33). Cf. idem, *Archaeology and Language*, pp. 220 and 225.

and Sanskrit *pater, patér, pitar-*. On the other hand, there is no doubt that the term 'Celt' was originally an ethnic one and that the derived adjective 'Celtic' was only secondarily used to refer to the language of ethnic 'Celts'; it would therefore be presumptuous for linguists to try to stop historians and archaeologists talking about 'Celts' except when these can be proved to have been 'Celtic-speaking peoples'. Instead of attempting to restrict the term 'Celtic' at this late date it is more practical to emphasize how differently it has been used in different disciplines. This should help us to avoid making premature syntheses about 'The Celts', which is an ever-present danger in 'Celtic Studies'. Synthesis is of course an ultimate aim of scholarship, but it must be preceded by analysis. And what is the point of rushing things?

We can look at the three disciplines of philology, history, and archaeology, in that order. I need say nothing of physical anthropology and genetics. In Sir John Rhŷs's phrase, 'skulls are harder than consonants', but so far biologists have shed little light on the concept of 'Celtic'. Even the fact that it is problematic has not got across, to judge by Sir Walter Bodmer's 1992 Rhŷs Memorial Lecture on 'The Genetics of Celtic Populations'. 'The Celts of the British Isles', we learn, descend from the first Middle Eastern farmers, of 'dark hair and small stature'. 'No doubt these migrating farmers, who may be the closest relatives of the Celts of Central Europe, fancied the blond, blue eyed women of the north.'[66] This is barely more than an inversion of Kuno Meyer's opinion in 1916 that the Celts

> were a tall, long-limbed, small-faced, light-haired, blue-eyed people. Naturally, there were no women among the invaders and intermarriage took place between the conquerors and the conquered. In two cases the natives were dominant and thus we have three types of Celtic peoples: the dwarf swarthy men of the north; the moderate-sized swarthy Celt who is the product of intermarriage; and the typical tall, fair Celt.[67]

After Meyer's time prehistorians strove to break up such facile equations between genetics and ethnography, and indeed several other disciplines. Thus Glyn Daniel, in his Rhŷs Memorial Lecture in 1954, praises the statement of Henri Hubert in *The Rise of the Celts* (London, 1932) that

> anthropology has nothing to tell us about the Celts, and in spite of many

[66]Walter F. Bodmer, 'The Genetics of Celtic Populations', *Proceedings of the British Academy*, 82 (1993), 37–57 (p. 56). [67]Quoted by Joachim Lerchenmueller, *Keltischer Sprengstoff: eine wissenschaftsgeschichtliche Studie über die deutsche Keltologie von 1900 bis 1945* (Tübingen, 1997), p. 97.

> efforts, has never told us anything. . . . Peoples and races being different things do not necessarily coincide, and in fact never coincide exactly.

Daniel goes on to lament that 'Hubert himself went on to confuse, throughout his life and work, archaeological and linguistic ethnography: and this confusion was very widespread in the twenties and thirties of this century'.[68] It is fascinating and rather dispiriting to see the crude way in which distinguished scientists are now attempting to synthesize all these disciplines again. Their so-called 'new synthesis' looks far too like the old credulity writ large.[69]

Language

The evidence for early Celtic speech is heavily biased towards the Mediterranean area because this was where writing developed. The earliest Celtic inscriptions are all from north Italy, Spain, and southern Gaul,[70] and do not take us back further than about 600 B.C. From further north we have Celtic place- and personal names, but their numbers are relatively slight before the expansion of the Roman Empire reveals the full northwards extent of Celtic names round about the time of Christ. Some care is needed in interpreting the presence or absence of such names, since place- and ethnic names can be taken over from foreigners, while foreign personal names can be adopted for reasons of prestige.[71] In general it is difficult to know how long a name has been in use prior to its first attestation, and what it tells us about the linguistic situation at the time of that attestation. To take the British Isles, for example, many of the known Celtic place-, ethnic, and personal names of Roman Britain could *in theory* have been introduced relatively recently, in connection with population movements from the Continent, like that of the Belgae

[68]Glyn E. Daniel, 'Who Are the Welsh?', *PBA*, 40 (1954), 145–67 (p. 158). [69]See more fully Sims-Williams, 'Genetics'. [70]They reach northern Gaul in about the first century A.D. See maps in Michel Lejeune, *Recueil des inscriptions gauloises*, II, fasc. 1 (Paris, 1988), pp. 5 and 57, and Javier de Hoz, 'Hispano-Celtic and Celtiberian', in *Proceedings of the First North American Congress of Celtic Studies, 1986*, edited by Gordon MacLennan (Ottawa, 1988), pp. 191–207 (pp. 193 and 195). [71]Hence German scholars distinguish *Namengebiete* from *Sprachgebiete*: cf. Joseph F. Eska and D. Ellis Evans, 'Continental Celtic', in *The Celtic Languages*, edited by Martin J. Ball and James Fife (London, 1993), pp. 26–63 (p. 47). Note the case of the Cimbri who attacked Celts of central Europe in the late second century B.C. Their leaders' names are arguably Celtic, or transmitted in Celtic guise, but this does not prove that the Cimbri were Celtic-speakers; indeed, they are usually regarded as Germanic. Cf. Powell, p. 190; C. S. Elston, *The Earliest Relations between Celts and Germans* (London, 1934), pp. 118 and 122; Cunliffe, pp. 221–22, 237, and 313. On the prestige of Gaulish names cf. Javier de Hoz, 'Lepontic, Celt-Iberian, Gaulish and the Archaeological Evidence', *Études celtiques*, 29 (1992), 223–39 (p. 233).

in the second or first century B.C.[72] Irish evidence effectively begins still later, with the place- and tribal names in Ptolemy's *Geography* in the second century A.D. Some of these names could have been introduced into Ireland quite recently from Britain.[73] In view of such problems, a great deal depends on the very early names for Ireland and Britain, *I(w)ernē* and *Albiōn*, which may be attested as early as the sixth century B.C., assuming that the contents of a lost Marseilles sailing-manual (*periplous*) have been correctly transmitted by the Late Latin poet Avienus.[74] These names are probably Celtic. *I(w)ernē* is probably a feminine adjective meaning 'fat, rich, fertile', referring to the fertility of the emerald isle, and cognate with Greek *píeira* and Sanskrit *pīvarī*; it shows the typically Celtic loss of Indo-European /p/. The Celticity of *Albiōn* is indicated by the Middle Welsh word *elvyd* 'earth, world' (from **albio-*) and the Galatian personal name *Albiorix*, which must mean 'king of the world'.[75] Unfortunately, we cannot be sure that *I(w)ernē* and *Albiōn* were not names originally bestowed by continental[76] Celtic-speakers; they do not prove that

[72]Noticed by Caesar and Tacitus, it is the only pre-Roman 'invasion' which is actually documented. [73]Sims-Williams, 'Genetics', p. 515. [74]*Rufus Festus Avienus, Ora Maritima*, edited and translated by J. P. Murphy (Chicago, 1977). Avienus calls the inhabitants of Ireland and Britain *Hierni* and *Albiones* (lines 111–12), ethnonyms which imply that the two islands bore the names *I(w)ernē* (source of *Iouernia*, *Hibernia*, and *Ériu*) and *Albiōn*. The derivation of Avienus has been debated, however; see John Hind, 'Pyrene and the Date of the "Massaliot Sailing Manual" ', *Rivista storica dell'antichità*, 2 (1972), 39–52; Arnaldo Momigliano, *Alien Wisdom: The Limits of Hellenization* (Cambridge, 1975), p. 58; C. F. C. Hawkes, *Pytheas: Europe and the Greek Explorers*, J. L. Myres Memorial Lectures, 8, 1975 (Oxford, [1977]), pp. 19–21; Antonio Tovar, 'The Celts in the Iberian Peninsula: Archaeology, History, Language', in *Geschichte und Kultur der Kelten*, pp. 68–101 (pp. 79–80); H. D. Rankin, *Celts and the Classical World* (London, 1987), p. 6; *The Oxford Classical Dictionary*, third edition, edited by Simon Hornblower and Antony Spawforth (Oxford, 1996), s.nn. Albion, Hibernia, and *periploi*; Philip M. Freeman, 'The Earliest Greek Sources on the Celts', *ÉC*, 32 (1996), 1–48 (pp. 15–17). [75]See John T. Koch, 'New Thoughts on *Albion*, *Iernē*, and the Pretanic Isles (Part One)', *Proceedings of the Harvard Celtic Colloquium*, 6 (1986), 1–28; and further literature in D. Ellis Evans, 'Some Remarks on the Study of Old Celtic Proper Names', in *Indogermanica et Caucasica: Festschrift für Karl Horst Schmidt*, edited by Roland Bielmeier and others (Berlin, 1994), pp. 306–15 (p. 312), and in David N. Dumville, 'Ireland and Britain in *Táin Bó Fraích*', *ÉC*, 32 (1996), 175–87 (pp. 176–78). [76]Or British in the case of *I(w)ernē*. Even if *Albiōn* meant 'earth, world', it would not necessarily have been bestowed on Britain by its own self-sufficient inhabitants. Britain could be a 'world' as viewed from the Continent; compare the use of Latin *orbis* in *orbis alter* referring to Ceylon, Britain, and so on. See Sims-Williams, 'Some Celtic Otherworld Terms', p. 61; R. W. Southern, *Medieval Humanism and Other Studies* (Oxford, 1970), pp. ix and 133, summarized by Andrew Breeze, 'Iolo Goch and the Islands of the Ocean', *ZCP*, 46 (1994), 213–15 (p. 215); and further references to Britain as 'another world', 'little world', and 'distinct' world gathered by Piggott, *Ruins*, p. 42, and *Ancient Britons*, p. 19. For the geographical perspective see Thomas O'Loughlin, 'Living in the Ocean', in *Studies in the Cult of Saint Columba*, edited by Cormac Bourke (Dublin, 1997), pp. 11–23. If the popular

there were Celtic-speakers actually *in* sixth-century Britain and Ireland.

This grudging formulation is not meant to exclude the possibility that Celtic speech was much much older than the sixth century in these islands. The fact is that we simply do not know whether Celtic was brought over as late as the second half of the first millennium B.C., as some distinguished Irish scholars have supposed,[77] or whether it had gradually evolved *in situ* from late western Indo-European over many millennia, from 4500 B.C., as argued by Colin Renfrew.[78] This disparity of four thousand years is a striking illustration of the impossibility of mapping the early distribution of Celtic speech. It follows that we cannot even begin to guess where Celtic speech began. Cunliffe notes the 'general consensus of linguists' that the origin of Celtic 'lay within the Rhine–Danube zone late in the second or early in the first millennium'. If there is such a consensus, it can only be based on extra-linguistic speculation—which presumably explains why it is 'perfectly consistent with the archaeological evidence'![79]

History

The modern ethnic term 'Celts' derives from Greek *Keltoi* and Latin *Celti* or *Celtae*. However, the early Greek and Roman writers also used the terms *Galatai* and *Galli*; modern usage, perhaps bowing to the authority of St Paul and Julius Caesar, has confined these to the ancient Galatians of modern Turkey, and the ancient Gauls of modern France—otherwise we might be discussing 'Galatian' or 'Gallic' studies. Some classical writers show a preference between the three terms *Keltoi*, *Galatai*, and *Galli*, but others tend to use them synonymously, and it seems impossible to detect any original distinction between them.[80] As usual with proper names, their etymologies cannot be proved; but *Keltoi* has been plausibly derived from a root **kel-* 'exalt', so meaning 'the high ones, *uchelwyr*', and

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derivation of *Albiōn* from the white cliffs of Dover were correct (cf. John Rhys and David Brynmor-Jones, *The Welsh People*, sixth edition (London, 1913), p. 77), it could obviously be a Continental name in origin, derived from the Celtic (and Italic) stem **alb-* 'white'. [77]David Greene, 'The Coming of the Celts: The Linguistic Viewpoint', in *Proceedings of the Sixth International Congress of Celtic Studies, 1979*, edited by Gearóid Mac Eoin and others (Dublin, 1983), pp. 131–37; Kim R. McCone, review of *Geschichte und Kultur der Kelten*, in *Peritia*, 8 (1994), 262–67 (p. 266). [78]*Archaeology and Language*, p. 242. Cf. Sims-Williams, 'Genetics', p. 508. Cunliffe, pp. 155 and 271, speculates that Celtic was the language of the Atlantic zone of *c.* 1300–600 B.C. [79]ibid., p. 270. [80]Hubert, pp. 21–24; Powell, p. 18; Piggott, *Ruins*, pp. 56 and 60. Cf. Pierre-Henri Billy, *Thesaurus Linguae Gallicae* (Hildesheim, 1993), s.nn. Celtae, Galli, etc., and n. 87 below. Their ancestor was alternatively Keltos or Galatos: David Rankin, 'The Celts through Classical Eyes', in *The Celtic World*, pp. 21–33 (p. 22).

Galatai and *Galli* from the root **gal-* 'to be able', so meaning 'the capable, valorous ones'.[81] Yet the remarkable coincidence that both *Keltoi* and *Galatai* contain a velar stop plus /l/ and /t/ suggests that they may be related, as Kenneth Jackson, for one, thought.[82] Did the ethnonyms reach the classical world through languages which confused, or did not make a phonemic distinction between, voiceless and voiced stops? Could one perhaps derive all three terms, *Keltoi*, *Galatai*, and *Galli*, by understandable phonetic processes, from a single preform—perhaps Proto-Celtic **kl̥toi*, 'concealed ones, ?guerrillas'? If so, the form said by Caesar to be used by the inhabitants of central Gaul of themselves—*Celtae* (with /kel-/ rather than the expected Celtic /kli-/)—would have been reborrowed from the classical world, which is by no means impossible.[83]

Any attempt to place these Celts on an ethnic map of ancient Europe is hampered by the shortage of sources for temperate Europe before the Roman Empire expanded beyond Italy and Spain in the century before Christ; and by that time who knows how many population movements and ethnic regroupings may have taken place? Prior to this period, the ancient writers only give us glimpses of *Keltoi*, *Galatai*, and *Galli* as they impinged on Mediterranean consciousness, and cannot be expected to reveal their full distribution in northern Europe. In the sixth century B.C. Hecataeus of Miletus, if correctly reported, allows us to glimpse *Keltoi* in the cities of *Nyrax* (in Austria??) and Narbonne and in the hinterland of Marseilles,[84] and in the fifth century Herodotus makes the *Keltoi* the penultimate people of western Europe, living beyond the pillars of Hercules, that

[81]D. Ellis Evans, *Gaulish Personal Names* (Oxford, 1967), pp. 332–33; Karl Horst Schmidt, 'Galatische Sprachreste', in *Forschungen in Galatien*, edited by Elmar Schwertheim (Bonn, 1994), pp. 15–28 (p. 15). [82]apud Piggott, *Ruins*, p. 56. See also Zupitza (n. 59 above); Elston, pp. 3–4. For confusion of /k/ and /g/ see Evans, *Gaulish Personal Names*, pp. 400–3, and references in Patrick Sims-Williams, 'A Turkish–Celtic Problem in Chrétien de Troyes: The Name *Cligés*', in a forthcoming volume edited by John Carey and others (Andover, MA, 1999), and J. F. Eska, 'On Voicing Crossover in Gaulish Plosives' (forthcoming). [83]This 'popular etymology' is rejected by Birkhan, *Kelten*, p. 47, n. 4. Caesar, *Gallic War*, 1.1, says that the *Galli* called themselves *Celtae*, and Pausanias, *Description of Greece*, 1.4.1, says that the term *Galatai* was recent and that they were originally called *Keltoi* 'both by themselves and by all other peoples' (*Monumenta Historica Celtica*, I, edited and translated by W. Dinan (London, 1911), pp. 92–93). A common comparison is the case of the Greeks, so called by the Romans, but Hellenes to themselves: Christian Goudineau, 'Gaulois d'hier et d'aujourd'hui', in Christian Goudineau and others, *Redécouverte des Gaulois* (Paris, 1995), pp. 7–20 (p. 10). Chapman, pp. 30–34 and 48–49, has suggested that *Keltoi* was a Greek word for 'foreigner' later taken over by the 'Celts' themselves. There is no evidence, however, for this speculation and, fatally, he offers no Greek etymology. On the other hand, parallels include the Old Irish name for themselves, *Goídil*, which is thought to derive from the Welsh *Gwyddyl*, originally meaning 'wild men' from Welsh *gŵydd* 'wild' (not *gwŷdd* 'forest', as Chapman, p. 56!). [84]*Monumenta Historica Celtica*, I, 8–9; Freeman, pp. 14–15. Cf. Powell, p. 13; Rankin, *Celts*, p. 8; Birkhan, p. 38.

is, in western Iberia; confusingly, he states that the Danube (*sic*!) rises in their territory near the city of *Pyrene*, a city which Avienus locates on the coast near the Pyrenees.[85] For early northern Europe there is only Avienus' tantalizing allusion, if it really comes from an ancient source, to the *Celtae* having driven out the Ligurians from their homeland on some freezing northern coastline.[86] Only from the late fourth century did the barbarians begin to make a more indelible impression on the classical world: *Galli*/*Keltoi* sacked Rome in 390, and in 279–278 *Galatai* invaded Greece, reaching Delphi, and then settled in Asia Minor.[87] Already in the fourth century Aristotle includes the *Keltoi* alongside the Scythians, Persians, and Thracians in a list of warlike nations strong enough to conquer others.[88]

Militarily, then, Celts eventually impinged on the Romans and Greeks, and on their neighbours, including the Jews (II Maccabees 8, 20).[89] In other ways, however, their impact was negligible. This had momentous negative consequences, since, as Momigliano observes, 'Hellenism still affects our attitude towards ancient civilizations':

> Since the time of Attila many factors have contributed to the erosion of the Hellenistic view of the world, but *homo Europaeus* has remained intellectually conditioned by his Hellenistic ancestors. The triangle Greece–Rome–Judaea is still at the centre and is likely to stay at the centre as long as Christianity remains the religion of the West. Persia, Mesopotamia and Egypt remain more or less where Hellenistic erudition put them as the holders of barbarian wisdom. The Phoenicians, and in particular the Carthaginians, are still given pride of place in our handbooks for their institutions and their colonization because the Greeks recognized themselves in such things. The Celts, who were only superficially touched by Hellenistic civilization and represented the greatest terror for both Greeks and Romans, have simply been left outside the horizon of the traditional civilized Western world. The picture we give of them is still that of Posidonius. Vercingetorix, Boudicca and a few Druids are allowed to remind the schoolboys of the European community that the Celts did exist in the age of the Romans. The average knowledge of an educated modern man

[85]Herodotus, *Histories*, 2.33 and 4.49 (Freeman, pp. 18–20); Avienus, *Ora Maritima*, lines 559 and 562. Cf. Powell, pp. 13–15; Hind; Rankin, *Celts*, pp. 3 and 8–9. Note that Aristotle places the source of the Danube in the Pyrenees: *Meteorologica*, 1.13 (*Monumenta Historica Celtica*, I, 38–39; Freeman, p. 34). [86]Avienus, *Ora Maritima*, lines 129–34. Cf. Rankin, *Celts*, pp. 5–6. The Celts are associated with the sea by Aristotle and Strabo, as are the Cimbri of (?)Jutland (Freeman, pp. 32–33 and 37); this may refer to flooding of the Low Countries, according J. J. Tierney, 'The Celtic Ethnography of Posidonius', *Proceedings of the Royal Irish Academy*, 60, Section C (1960), 189–275 (p. 195). According to Timagenes, in the first century B.C. the druids taught that some Gauls had been driven south by sea-floods beyond the Rhine (Hubert, p. 141; Carey, *Irish National Origin-Legend*, pp. 2–3). [87]As reported by Plutarch, Aristotle called the sackers of Rome *Keltoi* (Freeman, p. 34). Cicero assumes that the same *nationes* (in the context, Gauls) were responsible for Rome and Delphi (*Pro Fonteio*, 30). [88]Freeman, p. 31; Momigliano, p. 135. [89]ibid., p. 90.

> about India is not superior to that which is to be found in Greek and Roman writers. Even now there is no obligation in our traditional curriculum to know anything about China because the Greeks and the Romans knew nothing or almost nothing about it. The eighteenth century performed the greatest rescue operation for forgotten civilizations humanity had ever witnessed. The Chinese, the Indians and the Celts were the most important beneficiaries. But the consequences were felt only by professors, philosophers, poets and cranks.[90]

This peripherality has a direct bearing on the problem of the Celts. The authentic civilization of the Chinese and Indians could be recovered from their own ancient writings. This was impossible for the early Celts, although the recovery of inscriptions is gradually rectifying the balance. Consequently, professors and cranks alike are principally dependent on the same ambiguous classical sources. Some will deduce, with Momigliano, that 'the Celts did exist', despite the poor quality of the classical record. Others, with Chapman, will entertain the attractively Post-Modern 'possibility that what were moving across the map were names and fashions, not people at all'.[91] Some, with Powell, will synthesize the classical allusions and deduce that

> the Greeks recognized the Celts to be a major barbarian people living west and north of the Western Mediterranean, and beyond the Alps.

They will find confirmation in Ephorus' four-fold division of the fourth-century barbarian world between Celts, Scythians, Indians, and Ethiopians.[92] The sceptics will reply that Ephorus' partition of the north between Celts and Scythians may be as much of an ethnic simplification as his division of the south between Indians and Ethiopians obviously is.[93] Chapman goes so far as to argue that, to the Greeks, *Keltoi* meant merely north-west European barbarians in general—or 'wogs', as he says.[94] This, however, does not do justice even to the earliest Greek writers. Many were less schematic than

[90]ibid., pp. 11–12. [91]Chapman, p. 44. He compares the spread of Punks in the 1970s (p. 43). [92]Powell, p. 14; for Ephorus see *Monumenta Historica Celtica*, I, 42–45 (cf. pp. 50–51 and Tierney, p. 195); Freeman, pp. 34–37. Similarly, Aristotle refers to Scythia and Celtica as the cold lands where donkeys cannot live: ibid., p. 33; *Monumenta Historica Celtica*, I, 40–41. [93]Renfrew, *Archaeology and Language*, pp. 219–20; Chapman, pp. 35–37. [94]ibid., p. 33. Cf. n. 83 above. Chapman anachronistically argues backwards from the use of *Keltoi* in twelfth-century Byzantium to refer to the Western European crusaders in general (pp. 182–84; cf. Paul Magdalino, *The Empire of Manuel I Komnenos, 1143–1180* (Cambridge, 1993), p. 539, s.n. 'Celts (Western Europeans)'); the British use of 'the Hun' to refer to Germans in 1914–18 and the Sudanese use of 'Turks' for white foreigners in the 1940s (personal communication from Dr J. A. Alexander) shed no light on the historical Huns and Turks. Cf. Megaw and Megaw, 'Ancient Celts and Modern Ethnicity', p. 177.

Ephorus—who was making a broad geographical point rather than a precise ethnographical one—and specifically differentiated Celts from peoples such as the Cynesians in southern Portugal (Herodotus) and the Ligurians of Marseilles (Hecataeus), while others objected to Ephorus' inclusion of most of Iberia in *Celtica* (Strabo) or otherwise distinguished between Celts and Iberians (Xenophon and Plato).[95]

All the same, it *is* likely that Mediterranean observers often failed to distinguish 'Celts' from neighbouring barbarians, especially in the remote north; certainly the Romans did not distinguish between Celts and Germans until about the time of Caesar.[96] This sort of error is not really so different, however, from the way the French have tended to class all inhabitants of Britain as *les Anglais*. The fact that the ancient ethnographers' map of the *Keltoi* was imperfect does not wholly invalidate it. MacNeill's interpretation remains attractive:

> The reason why to the Greek mind, in the early centuries of history, the Celts appeared to occupy so much of Middle Europe and to occupy it so exclusively, was I think this: the Celts at that time actually occupied the upper valleys of the Danube, the Rhone, the Rhine, and the Elbe, and the high ground between. These rivers were the principal highways of such transcontinental commerce as then existed, and this commerce was probably considerable, comprising various metals, salt, amber, etc. Whatever came and went in the course of transcontinental trade from north-western Europe to the Mediterranean countries followed trade routes which lay through the central region north of the Alps, and all this region was held by the Celts. In this way, the Celts seem to be more extensively spread over northern middle Europe than they actually were.[97]

The ancient ethnographers' mental map of *Keltoi*, *Galatai*, and *Galli* is a map of the distribution of classical terms, not a map of how the ethnic groups themselves perceived their relationship with each other and with other northern peoples. Some of these 'Celts' may not have accepted the Celtic label at first, just as the term *Germani* was at first foreign to most 'Germanic' tribes.[98] On the other hand, some Celtic-speaking peoples may have regarded themselves as ethnically akin to the *Keltoi*, *Galatai*, or *Galli* even though they rarely or never used those ethnonyms of themselves. Here we can compare the medieval Welsh and Bretons, who were certainly aware of their kinship as Britons even though the Welsh increasingly referred to

[95]Freeman, pp. 14, 18, 20, 24, and 36–37. [96]See Tierney, pp. 200 and 213; I. G. Kidd, *Posidonius*, II, *The Commentary*, 2 vols (Cambridge, 1988), I, 323–26. Cf. Elston, pp. 19–21; Colin Wells, 'Celts and Germans in the Rhineland', in *The Celtic World*, pp. 603–20 (p. 609). [97]*Phases of Irish History*, pp. 11–12. [98]Tacitus, *Germania*, 2, cited by Kidd, *Commentary*, I, 325; cf. Elston, p. 36. For ethnic identity being created by the process of colonization see Jones, *Archaeology of Ethnicity*, pp. 95–97.

themselves as *Cymry* rather than *Brython*.[99] Such a situation presents a problem for modern 'subjectivist' ethnologists who make a 'self-appointed ethnonym' the touchstone for ethnic identity.[100] What, for instance, are we to make of the fact that the inhabitants of Britain and Ireland are never called Celts? This is not just due to defective sources; Pytheas of Marseilles in the fourth century B.C. says that Britain lies to the north of *Celtica*,[101] as in the first century B.C. does Strabo (2.5.28 and 4.5.1), who also compares the appearance and customs of the Britons and Irish with those of the *Keltoi*, implying that the British and Irish were *not* termed Celts.[102] This makes it problematic for *us* to call them Celts, as Collis and James rightly insist.[103] On the other hand, we cannot deduce that the Britons and Irish felt no kinship with the Continental peoples who *were* called Celts (any more than in the case of the kinship of the Angles and Saxons before they agreed to be the English *gens Anglorum*). Some tribal names, such as *Parisii* and *Atrebates*, are repeated on both sides of the English Channel; and observers like Caesar and Tacitus refer to linguistic, cultural, and political links between Britain and the Continent, including the druids of Gaul going to Britain for further study, and to similarities 'in the character and customs of the people' (*ingenia cultusque hominum*) between Britain and Ireland.[104] These are telling facts for an 'objectivist' ethnologist, and undermine Collis's 'subjectivist' deduction that 'there is no logic in calling the indigenous inhabitants of the British Isles "Celts" '.[105]

Personally, I suspect that the distinction between the British Isles and *Celtica* was originally geographical rather than ethnological; in the earliest period, when little was known of the ethnic situation, it was perhaps convenient for ancient geographers to distinguish

[99]Williams and Bromwich, *Armes Prydein*, pp. 20–21. [100]cf. Renfrew, *Archaeology and Language*, p. 216, and idem, 'Prehistory and the Identity of Europe', p. 130 (dismissed as Stalinist by Megaw and Megaw, 'Ancient Celts and Modern Ethnicity', p. 179!); Jones, *Archaeology of Ethnicity*, pp. 52, 57, 59–60, and 84. [101]*Monumenta Historica Celtica*, I, 64; Freeman, p. 41; Rankin, *Celts*, p. 47: Kent is several days' sail from *Celtica*. Hecataeus also seems to have described Britain as facing *Celtica*: see Cunliffe, p. 184. [102]Tierney, p. 253. On their similar habits see ibid., p. 252; Rankin, *Celts*, p. 78; Chapman, p. 173 (Strabo, *Geography*, 4.5.2 and 4.5.4; Diodorus Siculus, *Library of History*, 5.32.3). [103]Collis, 'Origin and Spread of the Celts', p. 21; James, p. 205. [104]A. L. F. Rivet and Colin Smith, *The Place-Names of Roman Britain* (London, 1979); Caesar, *Gallic War*, 2.4, 4.20, 5.12, 5.14, and 6.13; Tacitus, *Agricola*, 11 and 24. [105]'Origin and Spread of the Celts', p. 21; cf. Jones, *Archaeology of Ethnicity*, p. 57. Renfrew, 'Prehistory and the Identity of Europe', p. 128, differentiates between individual languages which provide a basis for ethnicity and 'language families' which do not. As a general rule this is dubious (cf. Bede, *Ecclesiastical History*, v.9, for the kinship of the Anglo-Saxons and the Continental Germans, and the fact that the former were also termed *Garmani* by the Britons). Moreover, the similarities between Lepontic, Gaulish, British, and the other ancient Celtic languages seem to have greatly outweighed their differences.

between *Celtica*, meaning the Continent, which was already known to be occupied by Celts, and the little-known offshore islands such as Britain and Ireland and *Thule* (so still Milton, *Paradise Lost*, I.521: 'And o'er the Celtic [fields] roamed the utmost isles'). Compare the way in which Europeans have always distinguished Scandinavia from Germany,[106] or Ceylon from India, despite their respective linguistic and cultural interconnections. From this perspective, modern Welsh or Irish appropriation of Posidonius' Celtic ethnography is no more or less unreasonable than modern Danish appropriation of Tacitus' *Germania* and the Old English *Beowulf*. And while Collis is no doubt biologically correct in stating that 'Modern groups calling themselves "Celts" have no basis for claiming the ancient Celts as their ancestors', their claim may not be much more tangential than the modern Greek claim to descend from the ancient Greeks, which everybody now accepts, at least within the spirit of the discourse.[107]

Our map of people anciently identified as 'Celts' is not necessarily a map of the distribution of Celtic-speakers. Many of the 'Celtic' invaders of Italy and Greece did speak Celtic languages, if we can judge by the names of their tribes and leaders, but we cannot exactly equate Celtic-speaking with ethnic *Keltoi*, *Galatai*, and *Galli*. For example, in recent years philologists have detected the earliest traces of Celtic speech in 'Lepontic' inscriptions just north of the river Po in the sixth century, long before the advent of the *Galli* in north Italy in the fourth century.[108] Thus we know of Celtic-speakers who were not labelled Celts, not only in Britain but also beyond the Alps. Conversely, some of the tribes who were at first labelled 'Celts', such as the Cimbri from (?)Jutland, probably spoke Germanic.[109] Nevertheless, there is clearly a very considerable overlap between the ancient 'Celts' and what we would call Celtic-speakers. This

[106]cf. Elston, p. 36. [107]Collis, 'Origin and Spread of the Celts', p. 22; cf. n. 18 above. [108]Venceslas Kruta, 'In Search of the Ancient Celts', in *The Celts*, pp. 29–34 (p. 34); idem, 'Celtic Writing', ibid., pp. 491–97 (pp. 491–93); Aldo Luigi Prosdocimi and Patrizia Solinas, 'The Language and Writing of the Early Celts', ibid., pp. 51–59 (pp. 52 and 56); Raffaele Carlo De Marinis, 'Golasecca Culture and its Links with Celts Beyond the Alps', ibid., pp. 93–102 (pp. 95–96); Daniele Vitali, 'The Celts in Italy', ibid., pp. 220–35 (p. 220); de Hoz, 'Lepontic, Celt-Iberian, Gaulish and the Archaeological Evidence'; cf. Cunliffe, pp. 2, 51, 62, 70, and 302, fig. 17; Otto-Herman Frey, 'The Celts in Italy', in *The Celtic World*, pp. 515–32; idem, 'The Celts in Italy', *SC*, 30 (1996), 59–82. On pp. 517 and 75 respectively, Frey notes Livy's questionable hint of a sixth-century Gaulish invasion in the time of Tarquinius Priscus. This was 'more of a misunderstanding than a memory' according to Ludwig Pauli, 'Early Celtic Society: Two Centuries of Wealth and Turmoil in Central Europe', in *Settlement and Society: Aspects of West European Prehistory in the First Millennium* B.C., edited by T. C. Champion and J. V. S. Megaw (Leicester, 1985), pp. 23–43 (p. 25). [109]Tierney, p. 200; Kidd, *Commentary*, I, 323. On their leaders' names see n. 71 above. The superficial similarity between *Cimbri* and *Cymry* led to endless complications in Early Modern scholarship; cf. Piggott, *Ruins*, p. 60.

is not surprising because language *was* a factor in the process of ethnographical classification, at least latterly. Thus Tacitus connects the southern Britons with the Gauls on the grounds of probable racial origin *and* similarity of language, while differentiating the majority of Germanic-speaking tribes across the Rhine from those who spoke *Gallica lingua*.[110] Again, Caesar implies a normal connection between nationality and language (as in the medieval adage *gentem lingua facit* 'a language makes a people'), since he feels it necessary to explain why Ariovistus, a German king, habitually used the 'Gallic language' (*Gallic War*, 1.47). As Colin Wells deduces,

> it is clear that one way, and perhaps the most significant way, of distinguishing the Germans from the Celts is by the language that they speak . . .: even if other cultural distinctions that might interest a modern ethnographer escaped them [the Roman army], they could hardly have failed to notice when it was necessary to change the interpreter.[111]

Are we not in much the same position ourselves? According to Cunliffe,

> What can be deduced of Germanic society from Julius Caesar and from the more specific accounts of Tacitus written 140 years later, gives the impression of communities differing little from the Celts of the fourth and third centuries. In other words, degree of social complexity cannot be taken as a distinguishing factor between Celt and German. If a single characteristic is required, it can only be language.[112]

In this sense at least there is some truth in *The Daily Telegraph* jibe that 'the label Celtic' was 'inspired by the obvious similarity of the group of languages, rather than being based on evidence'. As Isidore of Seville was to put it, 'Peoples have arisen from languages, not languages from peoples' (*Etymologiae*, IX.i.i: 'Quia ex linguis gentes, non de gentibus linguae exortae sunt').

Of course, ancient authors did make mistakes in linguistics. When Tacitus gets as far north in Germania as the *Aestii*, who presumably spoke a Baltic language such as Lithuanian, he gives us a shock by

[110]And *Pannonica lingua*. See *Agricola*, 11; *Germania*, 28 and 43; Chadwick and Dillon, p. 17. [111]Wells, p. 606. On the name *Ariovistus* see ibid., p. 617, n. 14, also Pierre-Yves Lambert, 'Préverbes gaulois suffixes en *-io-*: *Ambio-*, *Ario-*, *Cantio-*', *ÉC*, 31 (1995), 115–21 (p. 117). For the adage and Isidore (below) see R. R. Davies, 'The Peoples of Britain and Ireland, 1100–1400: IV Language and Historical Mythology', *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*, sixth series, 7 (1997), 1–24 (p. 9). [112]Cunliffe, pp. 237–38.

saying that their language was similar to *lingua Britannica* (§45)[113]—which is rather reminiscent of the alleged Welsh-speaking American Indians! Yet the ancients *were* interested in linguistic differences, and the valid distinction between Celtic and Germanic is ultimately due to them. There is moreover solid evidence from Celtic-language inscriptions that many of the peoples who were *called* 'Celts', such as the *Celtiberi* of Spain and the *Celtae* of Gaul, *did* speak what we also call Celtic languages.[114] This linguistic evidence is underrated by the modern sceptics who wish to empty the ethnonym *Keltoi* of almost all meaning.[115]

Archaeology

It is often supposed that archaeology, the third and latest of the three disciplines, can compensate for the deficiency of the linguistic and historical sources for the early Celts. This is only possible if we can equate ethnic or linguistic 'Celts' with the material assemblages or 'cultures' more or less confidently identified by archaeologists. That is perilous in truly prehistoric periods: 'no direct connection between material culture and language in non-literate contexts has proved possible'.[116] Naturally there have been many attempts, starting with William Stukeley, who began to describe monuments such as Stonehenge as 'Celtic' not long after Lhuyd had established that the Ancient Britons spoke Celtic.[117] Even today, many archaeologists in the Continental European tradition are happy to equate the Hallstatt and La Tène cultures with the Celts as a matter of definition; thus in 1995 Franz Fischer of Tübingen stated that

> In European archaeology today the term 'early Celts' refers to late Hallstatt culture, part of early La Tène culture, Hallstatt D and La Tène A of Paul Reinecke's nomenclature, or the time of the sixth and fifth centuries BC

while Patrice Brun of Paris noted that

[113]*Germania*, 45. Cf. Karl Horst Schmidt, 'Keltisch, baltisch und slavisch', in *Symbolae Ludovico Mitxelena Septuagenario Oblatae*, I, edited by José L. Melena (Vitoria, 1985), pp. 23–29 (p. 24). Tacitus was refuted by Gessner in 1555: see Poppe, 'Celtic Languages in *Mithridates*', p. 243. Perhaps the absence of Germanic sound-changes made British and Baltic sound similar? [114]See maps referred to above, n. 70. On the meaning of *Celtiberi* see Henry M. Hoenigswald, 'Celtiberi: A Note', in *Celtic Language, Celtic Culture*, pp. 13–15. [115]cf. Collis, 'Origin and Spread of the Celts', p. 22: 'the extension of the term "Celt" to speakers of these languages [the so-called Celtic languages] and their descendants has no historical basis'. [116]Stuart Piggott and Martyn Jope, 'Archaeological Evidence: Britain and Ireland. First Millennium B.C. to Recent Times', in *Geschichte und Kultur der Kelten*, pp. 52–56 (p. 53). On the problem of 'archaeological cultures' see Jones, *Archaeology of Ethnicity*, pp. 15–29. [117]Piggott, *Ancient Britons*, p. 129.

> The term 'Celt' designates with certainty the La Tène cultural complex from 400 BC on. . . . The bearers of the La Tène culture are clearly Celts.[118]

On the other hand, even before Grahame Clark's famous critique of 'The Invasion Hypothesis in British Archaeology',[119] British archaeologists were rightly sceptical about matching prehistoric changes in material culture with hypothetical ethnic movements—inevitably calling into question the Hallstatt/La Tène = Celtic equation, which arose no earlier than the mid-nineteenth century.[120] French and German archaeologists are perhaps still content with it because they are not troubled by living in the British Isles or Iberia, which are rich in evidence for Celtic speech but relatively poor in Hallstatt and early La Tène material—no more than two Hallstatt-type iron swords have been found in the whole of Britain and Ireland.[121] Whatever the reason, however, Insular archaeologists are much more cautious about equating stylistic assemblages (often of diverse ultimate origin) with ethnic groups. For example, John Collis was already sparing with the term 'Celt' in his *European Iron Age* of 1984. As he said then,

> The picture drawn a generation ago . . . of the Celts, bearers of La Tène culture and art originating on the central Rhine–Mosel, and after 400 spreading east into central Europe and west into northern France and Britain . . . can no longer be accepted.[122]

Unfortunately this picture is still commonplace today. For instance, in their otherwise admirable *Celtic Art*, Ruth and Vincent Megaw include a typical map showing the 'Original territory of the Celts and the La Tène civilization' in the upper Rhine and upper

[118]Franz Fischer, 'The Early Celts of West Central Europe: The Semantics of Social Structure', in *Celtic Chiefdom, Celtic State*, pp. 34–40 (p. 34); Patrice Brun, 'From Chiefdom to State Organization in Celtic Europe', ibid., pp. 13–25 (p. 13). Cf. Mallory, p. 164: 'archaeologists are seldom embarrassed at attributing the Celtic languages to the bearers of La Tène remains . . .'. [119]*Antiquity*, 40 (1966), 172–89. Compare already the scepticism of Glyn Daniel (n. 68 above). This is not an exclusively Insular position, of course; cf. Igor M. Diakonoff, 'Language Contacts in the Caucasus and the Near East', in *When Worlds Collide*, pp. 53–65 (p. 57). [120]See n. 28 above. [121]See Peter Northover, 'The Technology of Metalwork: Bronze and Gold', in *The Celtic World*, pp. 285–309 (pp. 285–86), and Barry Raftery, 'Ireland: A World Without the Romans', ibid., pp. 636–53 (pp. 637, and in general pp. 650–51). Cf. Gearóid Mac Eoin's ironic remarks, somewhat misunderstood by one reviewer (n. 77 above), in 'The Celticity of Celtic Ireland', in *Geschichte und Kultur der Kelten*, pp. 161–74. On the problem of 'invasion hypotheses' versus acculturation in Spain see Martín Almagro-Gorbea, 'The Celts of the Iberian Peninsula', in *The Celts*, pp. 389–405 (p. 389), and idem, 'From Hillforts to *Oppida* in "Celtic" Iberia', *PBA*, 86 (1995), 175–207 (p. 180); also Tovar, p. 73; Cunliffe, p. 139. [122]*The European Iron Age* (London, 1984), p. 126 (cf. pp. 10–11 and 138). Cf. Collis, 'Celtic Myths', pp. 196 and 198; John Waddell, 'Celts, Celticisation and the Irish Bronze Age', in *Ireland in the Bronze Age*, edited by John Waddell and Elizabeth Shee Twohig (Dublin, 1995), pp. 158–69.

Danube and a 'Zone of expansion of the Celts' in western France, the British Isles, and elsewhere. This is likely to mislead readers who miss their accompanying caveats, or their more recent double-edged apologia that ' "Celtic" is a term which is just as valid as the no less conventional—and *arguably equally inapposite*—archaeological labels "Hallstatt" and "La Tène" ', or their working definition that 'Celts are those who produced early Celtic, or more specifically early La Tène, art, . . . *a circular definition, though consciously so*' (my italics).[123]

We cannot deny the likelihood that *some* of the ancient authors' *Keltoi*, *Galatai*, and *Galli* participated in the Hallstatt and La Tène cultures. It is perfectly *possible* that Herodotus' *Keltoi* around the upper Danube(?) were the late Hallstatt, Greek-influenced refortifiers of the Heuneburg,[124] and that Celtic was the *lingua franca* of what Bettina Arnold calls 'the late Hallstatt high-status elite sodality . . . which cuts horizontally across kin groups and territorial boundaries, binding communities together in new ways'.[125] We cannot assume, however, that all participants in Hallstatt and La Tène culture were ethnically or linguistically Celtic. Nor did all *Keltoi*, *Galatai*, and *Galli* favour Hallstatt and La Tène styles. The documented *Celtiberi* of Spain and the *Galli* of north Italy cannot easily be identified on this basis,[126] and the Celtic advance on Delphi and settlement in Galatia have left barely any distinctively 'Celtic' archaeological record.[127] Most decisively of all, the recent recognition of sixth-century Celtic inscriptions in the indigenous archaeological context of the Italian Golasecca culture, north of the river Po, has demonstrated that Celtic speech need not be accompanied by Hallstatt and La Tène material culture.[128] It must follow that the presence or absence of Hallstatt or La Tène material in undocumented areas of temperate Europe (such as Britain and Ireland) should no longer be

[123]Megaw and Megaw, *Celtic Art*, p. 11, Map 2 (cf. cautions on pp. 20 and 30, and p. 189 on 'cumulative Celticity'); 'The Nature and Function of Celtic Art', in *The Celtic World*, pp. 345–75 (p. 346; cf. p. 370); 'Do the Ancient Celts Still Live?', pp. 115–16. Indeed the Hallstatt and La Tène labels have also been attacked by John Collis, in 'Adieu Hallstatt! Adieu La Tène!', in *Actes du VIIIe Colloque sur les Ages du Fer en France non-méditerranéenne, 1984*, edited by A. Duval and J. Gomez de Soto, *Aquitania*, Supplement 1 (1986), 327–30. [124]cf. Hind, p. 50; Collis, *European Iron Age*, p. 88; Cunliffe, pp. 53–57 and 301, fig. 16; Ian Ralston, 'Fortifications and Defence', in *The Celtic World*, pp. 59–81 (p. 71); Collis, 'Origin and Spread of the Celts', p. 23. [125]'The Material Culture of Social Stucture: Rank and Status in Early Iron Age Europe', in *Celtic Chiefdom, Celtic State*, pp. 43–52 (p. 49). [126]On Spain see n. 121 above; also Cunliffe, pp. 133, 139, and 141–42, implicitly rejecting Majolie Lenerz-de Wilde, 'The Celts in Spain', in *The Celtic World*, pp. 533–51. On Italy see Collis, *European Iron Age*, p. 138 (cf. Megaw and Megaw, *Celtic Art*, pp. 67 and 108); Frey, 'Celts in Italy' [1996], pp. 62 and 77; Collis, 'Origin and Spread of the Celts', p. 29. [127]Cunliffe, pp. 82, 172, 180, and 306. [128]See n. 108 above. In general, cf. Ian Armit, *Celtic Scotland* (London, 1997), p. 14.

used to determine the presence, absence, or arrival of ethnic or linguistic Celts.

Over-reaction to the 'invasion hypothesis' constitutes the contrary fallacy which Christopher Hawkes dubbed 'immobilism', that is, insistence on interpreting *cultural* continuity in terms of *ethnic* continuity.[129] Thus we have Colin Renfrew arguing in 1987 for proto-Celtic speakers in Britain and Ireland before 4000 B.C., in which case Stonehenge is presumably in a sense Celtic after all, and we have Patrice Brun arguing in 1995 for a cultural and therefore demographic continuity in the so-called 'North-Alpine complex' back from the Celtic La Tène through the Hallstatt and the Urnfield cultures, to the Tumulus culture of the Middle Bronze Age.[130] Renfrew is certainly right to say that this north Alpine area 'has no specially privileged claim to be the unique and original homeland of the Celts'.[131] Unless 'immobilism' is admitted to be a fallacy, however, we seem to be left with the perhaps unlikely[132] prospect of millennia of immobile proto-Celts all the way from Ireland to the Alps—or even to the Po, if we follow those Italian archaeologists who trace the Golasecca culture back to the Bronze Age.[133]

We may suspect that archaeology can never explain the ethnogenesis of the Celts; their knowable history begins about 500 B.C., and even then with an uncontrollable bias towards a Mediterranean perspective. Personally, I would not attempt the impossible task of banning the convenient and 'unfrightening'[134] Celtic label for 'La Tène' art. After all, it is likely that a good deal of it *was* produced or popularized by ethnic and linguistic Celts, and especially by Gauls; and numismatics sometimes establishes a direct link between Celtic

[129]cf. Mallory, pp. 63–64 and 164–68; David W. Anthony, 'Migration in Archeology: The Baby and the Bathwater', *American Anthropologist*, 92 (1990), 895–914. [130]Renfrew, *Archaeology and Language*, p. 245; Brun, p. 13. Cf. Pauli, p. 28; Renfrew, *Archaeology and Language*, p. 240. [131]ibid, p. 249. [132]'It seems unlikely that only one language, Gaulish, would have been spoken in a territory the size of France peopled by small decentralized societies', according to John Robb, 'A Social Prehistory of European Languages', *Antiquity*, 67 (1993), 747–60 (p. 758). Actually, we do know of other languages there (cf. Joshua Whatmough, *The Dialects of Ancient Gaul* (Cambridge, MA, 1970), pp. 3 and 47), but it is difficult to justify Robb's view theoretically; cf. de Hoz, 'Lepontic, Celt-Iberian, Gaulish and the Archaeological Evidence', p. 234; Sims-Williams, 'Genetics', pp. 510–11. [133]De Marinis, p. 96; Vitali, p. 220; de Hoz, 'Lepontic, Celt-Iberian, Gaulish and the Archaeological Evidence', p. 224; Frey, 'The Celts in Italy' [1991], p. 515; cf. Pauli, p. 27; Cunliffe, p. 70. To associate the introduction of Celtic speech into Italy with the introduction of the Canegrate Urnfield culture *c.* 1200 B.C. is surely to reinstate the 'invasion hypothesis'? [134]Paul Jacobsthal justified 'Early Celtic Art' as an 'unorthodox term' for La Tène I and II/A and B on the grounds that 'the traditional terms involve intricate, unsettled controversies on chronology which, if discussed here, would frighten the reader': 'Imagery in Early Celtic Art', *PBA*, 27 (1941), 301–20 (p. 303).

onomastics and 'Celtic art'.[135] But it must always be stressed that this 'Celtic art' may be no more or less 'Celtic' than other Iron Age art forms to which the 'Celtic' label is not attached. According to Megaw and Megaw, 'the first scattered hints of Celtic art' in the British Isles do not appear until the late fourth century B.C.[136] Unless one guesses that that is when the Celts themselves arrived, this formulation seems to imply the possibility of earlier Celtic-speakers producing *non*-Celtic art—a terminological conundrum of which the Britons and Irish would have been blissfully unaware. One subjective reason why the 'Celtic' = La Tène equation seems irresistible is that La Tène art was one of the ingredients, along with Germanic and Antique Christian art, that gave us the early medieval Insular Art of 'Celtic' Britain and Ireland. Yet we cannot logically argue back from this; the survival of La Tène art in Ireland does not demonstrate La Tène's quintessential Celticity any more than the survival of the triple harp in Wales makes the triple harp Celtic rather than Italian.[137]

CONCLUSION

We have seen that different disciplines have developed related but sometimes conflicting concepts of 'Celticity'. We have Celtic language and Celtic ethnicity, which, I have argued, often go together, and also Celtic archaeology and Celtic art, which must be placed further off. All these uses of 'Celtic' have some historical validity and are far too useful to abandon. The problems arise when we try and synthesize them in a coffee-table book or television documentary. Can we restrict the 'real' Celts to where there is a complete overlap between ancient Celtic ethnonyms, evidence of 'Celtic' language, and La Tène culture—in some Astérix enclave in France perhaps?[138] No; such a map would reveal less about an entity 'Celts' than about the limitations of our Mediterranean sources and about the history of modern terminology. It is preferable to be more permissive and use the term 'Celtic'—with all due vigilance—in the way appropriate to each discipline. There is no problem so long as we do not use the concept 'Celtic' unthinkingly as a short-cut from one discipline to another, or from one region to another, or from one millennium to the next. For example, because two Iron Age sites are both 'Celtic'

[135]As noted in the 1880s by Otto Tischler: Megaw and Megaw, *Celtic Art*, p. 14. [136]ibid., p. 100. [137]On the survival on the 'Celtic fringe' of European fashions see Chapman, pp. 94–119, who is perverse, however, in seeing Insular Celtic culture as wholly derivative. To give one early counter-example, see Collis, *European Iron Age*, p. 177, on mirrors and shields: 'only Britain could offer something that was different, exciting and a challenge to Roman taste'. [138]John Collis, 'Celtes, culture, contacts: confrontation et confusion', *Aquitania*, 12 (1994), 447–56 (fig. 12 and p. 454). For the absence of La Tène in areas of France, see Olivier Büchenschütz, 'The Celts in France', in *The Celtic World*, pp. 552–80 (p. 555).

they are not necessarily otherwise comparable.[139] Again, because Celtic languages are still spoken in Britain and Ireland we will not just assume that the cultures of the two islands have ever been similar, or still are meaningfully 'Celtic'. Maybe they are, maybe they aren't. The Celts are not necessarily 'still here'[140] because elements of their language are. The whole debate about Celtic cultural continuity, about whether medieval Irish and Welsh literature and society really afford a window on the Celtic Iron Age,[141] will only be settled by getting down to evaluating the evidence, not by invoking the genetic concepts of Celtic and Indo-European.[142] At best, the linguistic family-tree model only provides a metaphor for one type of cultural relationship, and this needs to be offset by the very different linguistic models offered by the substratum theory and by linguistic typology.

It is probably time for Celtic Studies to make fewer excessively grand assumptions about non-linguistic Celtic unity and continuity. Otherwise in reaction students of the national cultures of Wales, Ireland, Scotland, and Brittany will follow their colleagues in Germanic studies in England and Scandinavia and throw out the comparative baby with the bathwater. We see this happening already in literary studies in Ireland, where some scholars, following James Carney, prefer, some of the time at least, to portray early Irish culture in Christian and classical terms rather than Celtic and Indo-European terms. In Wales a comparable tendency is implicit in the work of Saunders Lewis[143] and is waiting to be developed. In this matter it is easy to go to extremes, as happened in Anglo-Saxon studies in the 1970s, when all Old English literature seemed uniformly biblical and patristic rather than Germanic.[144] Striking a balance is a major task for Celtic Studies too, and this involves re-examining the evidence for Celticity. A course has to steered between Celtomania and Celtoscepticism. For those lucky enough to be teachers of Celtic Studies, here is a wonderful opportunity to present students with a significant

[139]Hill (n. 10, above), p. 18. [140]Dafydd Iwan's 'Yma o hyd' is the theme-song of the *Celtica* exhibition at Machynlleth. [141]I hope to discuss 'Celtic continuity' on some other occasion. [142]cf. Chapman, pp. 73–74. [143]e.g. 'The Tradition of Taliesin', *Transactions of the Honourable Society of Cymmrodorion*, 1968, pp. 293–98 (printed in a different recension by Alun R. Jones and Gwyn Thomas, *Presenting Saunders Lewis* (Cardiff, 1973), pp. 145–53). Cf. n. 32 above. [144]cf. Patrick Sims-Williams, review of *Pagan Past and Christian Present in Early Irish Literature* by Kim McCone (Maynooth, 1990), in *Éigse*, 29 (1996), 179–96. This controversy still rumbles on: see, succinctly, D. A. H. Evans, reviewing *A Store of Common Sense: Gnomic Theme and Style in Old Icelandic and Old English Wisdom Poetry* by Carolyne Larrington, in *Saga-Book of the Viking Society for Northern Research*, 24 (1995), 180–86 (p. 181). I am grateful to Rosemary Graham for drawing this to my attention.

and stimulating academic debate in place of the pre-packaged 'Celtic Civilization' of the coffee-table books.[145]

[145]This paper is based on my Inaugural Lecture as Professor of Celtic Studies in the University of Wales, Aberystwyth, 28 February 1996, later revised for the Royal Irish Academy, 7 March 1996, and the Twentieth Annual University of California Celtic Studies Conference at Los Angeles, 24 May 1998. The original Inaugural Lecture ended: 'This has been a rather technical lecture, but I hope that it has conveyed a sense that Celtic Studies, in the comparative sense I believe in, ranges far and wide across time and space, and involves not only old forgotten languages and some happily still spoken, but also the culture and arts, the literature and mythologies of many generations. Whether or not we should claim that they are part of our tradition in any quasi-genetic sense, these human achievements can, by adoption, become part of tomorrow's tradition, if we so wish. Celtic Studies is an international discipline, open to all comers, and it can interact with the other humanities studied here in Aberystwyth. Celtic Studies is a humane subject and it is also an analytical one. As such, I hope that it has a secure future in this College'.