

SOME EPIGRAPHIC COMPARANDA BEARING ON THE 'PAN-CELTIC GOD' LUGUS

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As the subject of Celtic mythology developed over the 20th century, the methodology combined ancient Celtic and Romano-Celtic epigraphic evidence together with early Welsh and Irish literature with the objective of recovering ideas about pre-Christian gods. In our current work, it is perhaps no longer safe to assume that the pre-Christian Celtic-speaking peoples (even) shared a common mythology, however one could go about recovering it from surviving material. At the same time, a larger body of ancient epigraphic evidence is now available for the traditional comparative procedure. Against this background, the presentation will consider possible implications of expanded onomastic comparanda from ancient inscriptions relevant to tales from the Welsh Mabinogion and Old and Middle Irish sagas. The focus will be on some narratives that have been seen as reflections of the myth of the 'pan-Celtic god Lugus'. Some recent alternative interpretations will also be weighed in light of detailed epigraphic parallels.

Die Grenzen meiner Sprache bedeuten die Grenzen meiner Welt.¹

The very first thing that strikes one, in reading the Mabinogion, is how evidently the medieval story-teller is pillaging an antiquity of which he does not fully possess the secret; he is like a peasant building his hut on the site of Halicarnassus or Ephesus; he builds, but what he builds is of materials of which he knows not the history, or knows by glimmering tradition merely;—stones not of this building, but of an older architecture, greater, cunninger, more majestic.²

OMPARABLE names found in Romano-Celtic epigraphy recur in supernatural narratives of medieval Ireland and Wales. From the point of view of linguistics, this shared onomastic stock can be treated as a discreet subset among the more than a thousand cognate words and names that can be attributed to the common source of the attested Celtic languages. This material is therefore susceptible to the core methodology of Celtic studies—i.e. the systematic comparison of the Brythonic, Goidelic,

¹ Wittgenstein, *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus* 5.6.

² Arnold 1867, 61.

and Continental Celtic languages—as this technique has advanced incrementally since launched by Lhuyd in 1707. As Celtic studies developed through the 20th century, this subset of Common Celtic names has been of special interest not only as linguistic evidence *per se* but in promising a 'Jacksonian' (1964) window onto the mythology and religion of the pre-Roman, pre-Christian, and mostly preliterate Celts of the Iron Age. In work in the field of Celtic mythology, for which Mac Cana's 1968 book of that name remains an influential example, an eclectic evidence base and synthetic methodology have been employed. The approach brought together the evidence of cognate names with a comparison of themes seen as reflecting myths or religious beliefs branching from a common tradition. This method often went beyond direct evidence from the inherited Celtic lexicon as might establish the distinctively Celtic identity of recurrent ideas. The work of the Rees brothers in particular emphasized the international character of concepts surfacing in the Celtic literatures.³

The methodology of the present case study is more narrowly linguistic. As anticipated by Dillon,⁴ Lugus can be considered a Pan-Celtic god in that reflexes of his name occur for a divine or mythological figure in all sub-branches of Celtic. The present paper focuses on the ancient attestations and cognate forms in the medieval Irish and Welsh tales, together with some associated forms in those tales for which there are counterparts in ancient epigraphy. This might be seen as an exercise in paring down and purifying, so that what we have left will be less than what was given credence a generation ago, but more secure.

However, the 'language alone' side of the balance has continued to grow and solidify. Ancient epigraphic evidence in particular has been greatly augmented by new discoveries, as well as better readings, interpretations, and more accessible resources for previously known inscriptions. The field of Celtic historical lexicography progresses continually, with new etymologies accepted and faulty ones identified and remedied or replaced. The sound laws that account precisely for the relationship of the cognates are constantly honed. The earlier meanings of shared items are augmented and refined as work goes ahead on the primary evidence of texts in the Celtic languages, as well as fuller and more accurate meanings of the cognate forms in other Indo-European languages.

On the level of ideas rather than words, we have no established procedure for recovering pagan gods and myths, or even to say for certain whether this is how the *dramatis personae* of, say, the Mabinogi originated. It will be essentially impossible to make such comparisons scientific, eliminating subjectivity and speculation. On the other hand, despite the intervening centuries and enormous social and cultural as well as linguistic changes, there is a very precise method for deriving medieval from Ancient Celtic forms. The sound laws are regular. They operate invariably in the same way and in the same order. Each successive generation of linguists understands these rules better than the generation before. Historical and comparative lexicography provides a

3 Rees & Rees 1961.

4 1948, 51.

steadily better grasp of the earlier meaning of words. Although we have only occasional flashes of insight into how the thoughts of Celtic-speaking communities evolved across the maelstrom of the post-Roman Migration Period, we can track many, many specific details of language across this gulf.

The attributes and acta that *Celtic Mythology* assigned to the Pan-Celtic Lugus relied heavily on a passage from Caesar's *Bellum Gallicum* that contained no Celtic names or words.

Deum maxime Mercurium colunt. Huius sunt plurima simulacra: hunc omnium inventorem artium ferunt, hunc viarum atque itinerum ducem, hunc ad quaestus pecuniae mercaturasque haber vim maximam arbitrantur. (BGall. VI 17)

Of the gods they worship Mercury most of all. Of him there are the most images. They hold him to be the inventor of all the arts, the guide in journeys and travelling, and they consider him to have the greatest potency for seeking wealth and in commerce.

Although this passage is brief, if its 'Mercury' is accepted as coterminous with Lugus, it expands that Celtic god's dossier enormously, taking in every dedication to, Celtic or Latin epithet or by-name for, and image of Mercury in Gaul and the other Celtic-speaking provinces. The words *itinerum dux* and *inventor omnium artium* in particular invite comparison with Lug's central role in *Cath Maige Tuired* as a traveller from afar and the omniscient master of all crafts amongst the *Tuath Dé* 'Tribe of the gods'. This rôle is echoed in his recurrent epithet *Samildánach* 'equally endowed with many arts'.

There are further suggestive parallels among the Welsh figures with cognate names. For example, Lleu-elys in *Cyfranc Lluð and Lleuelys* returns from overseas to deliver his people from supernatural oppression (*gormes*) by using specialist knowledge. More pointedly, Lleu in the Fourth Branch of the Mabinogi acquires his name and epithet (*Lleu Llaw-gyffes*, 'Lleu of the Deft Hand') in an episode in which he was making gold-ornamented shoes. For this episode, comparison is often made to a dedication commissioned by a guild of shoemakers in the Celtiberian town Uxama Argaela. This Romano-Celtic inscription invokes a group of deities called the *Lugoues*, i.e. the plural of *Lugus*:

LVGOVIBVS SACRVM L. L(...) VRCICO COLLEGIO SVTORVM D. D.⁵

The plural is also found in Gaul, in an inscription consisting merely of the nominative LVGOVES.⁶

Combining these attributes of Lug and Lleu(elys) in the tales with Caesar's 'Mercury' suggests that Lugus was the genius of the class of peripatetic artisans, for whom *aes dáno* 'people of gifts, arts' is the Old Irish term. However, this equivalence

5 CIL II 2818 — Osma, Soria.

6 CIL XIII 5078 — Avenches [Aventicum], Switzerland.

and the value of Caesar's testimony were questioned as long ago as 1940 by Sjoestedt: 'In view of the profound divergence in the mentality and social structure which we observe as between Romans and Celts, one must wonder at such a similarity in their religious ideas...'⁷ Likewise, Dillon and Chadwick's *Celtic Realms* makes the key point: 'But [Caesar] is simply equating Gaulish deities with his own Roman gods. He does not give us a single Gaulish name'.⁸

Years later, a more thorough refutation of Lugus='Mercury' was Maier's, concluding:

... like all classical authors writing about foreign religions, Caesar assumes that it is only man-made institutions which differ from one people to another, whereas the gods everywhere were the same. According to this scheme of thought, no matter how numerous the Celtic gods may be, they are never anything but manifestations of the deities known from classical mythology'.⁹

Caesar was not averse to writing Gaulish (or Ancient Brythonic) names. *Bellum Gallicum* fairly bristles with the native names of individuals, groups, and places. His representation of Celtic names in Roman letters is more phonologically accurate than the norm. He had spent many years in Celtic lands, shrewdly fashioning military alliances and establishing Roman administration. There was, therefore, no reason for Caesar not to have given the Gaulish names for 'Mercury' and the other gods if this strengthened the point he was making, as it would have done if the god he described was coterminous with the god called *Lugus*. It does not necessarily follow that none of what Caesar says of 'Mercury' reflects a native god (sometimes) called *Lugus*.

But the extent to which Caesar and the other classical authors are stuck in their own culture's religious terminology and conceptual framework devalues their testimony on Celtic religion. We should not assume that this pitfall simply disappeared with Greco-Roman paganism; for modern researchers, familiarity with the Olympians continued to condition the expectations in investigations of gods of other Indo-European religions. For example, de Vries related 'Mercury'=Lugus to an explicit concept of cognate Indo-European pantheons.¹⁰

On a second point, Maier's reinterpretation has been challenged. He argues that many examples of the Ancient Celtic names with *Lugu-* are not evidence for a god of this name, but corresponded to a homophonous Old Irish word *lug*, meaning 'lynx', which could be used as a kenning for 'warrior, hero'. Carey (2010) has since reviewed the relevant examples, and reached the opposite conclusion: 'Medieval Irish literature does not provide us with any persuasive indications of a word *lug* meaning "lynx"' (166). The examples once adduced for it are, in their contexts, better understood as meaning '(the god) Lug' or, metaphorically, 'Lug-like hero', the Irish supernatural figure being a renowned warrior. Consistent with this conclusion, there is an entry in the *Etymological Dictionary of Proto-Celtic* '*Lugu- "god Lug", perhaps originally "the shiny one", but

7 Trans. Dillon 1949, 33.

8 Dillon and Chadwick 1967, 13.

9 Maier 1996, 135.

10 De Vries 1977, 58–63.

no **lugu-* “lynx”.¹¹ While effectively rescuing the *Lugus=Lug=Lleu* equation, Carey’s intervention leaves Caesar’s ‘Mercury’ approximately where Maier left him: though not safely ignored altogether in the *Lugus* question, we cannot, on the other hand, simply insert the *Bellum Gallicum* passage into the semantic field of the Proto-Celtic item **Lugu-*.

The inscription of Uxama Argaela naming the *Lugoues* and the shoemakers’ guild has long been known. Rhys saw the parallel to *Lleu* and *Gwydion*’s guise as shoemakers in the *Mabinogi*.¹² But the fuller extent of the Palaeohispanic evidence was not widely recognized until Tovar (1982). He drew special attention to the long Celtiberian inscription in Roman script of Peñalba de Villastar:

ENIOROSEI | VTA · TIGINO · TIATVMEI | TRECAIAS · TOLVGVEI | ARAIANOM ·
COMEIMV || ENIOROSEI · EQVQISQVE | OGRIS OIOCAS · | TO·GIOAS · SISTAT ·
LVGVEI · TIASQ | TOGIAS.¹³

Although there is no general agreement about the interpretation of the text overall, most commentators, including Tovar, have seen both occurrences of *LVGVEI* as datives singular of the divine name *Lugus*.¹⁴

Tovar also brought in epigraphic evidence from north and west of the Celtiberian area in the eastern Meseta. These texts invoke the *Lugoues* as a group in the dative plural, as at Uxama. Some use an indigenous case ending rather than Latin *-bus*:

LVGVBO ARQVIENOBO C(AIVS) IVLIVS HISPANVS V.S.L.M.;¹⁵
LVCOBO | AROVSA(ECIS) | V. S. L. M. | RVTIL[IA] | ANTIANIA;¹⁶
DIBVS M[.] LVCVBO;¹⁷
LVCOVBV[S] ARQVIENI[S] SILONIVS SILO EX VOTO.¹⁸

In the first and last example, the *Lugoues*’ by-name *Arquien-* begins with the element that occurs frequently as the Palaeohispanic personal name *Arquius*, feminine *Arcea*. This name derives from Western Indo-European and means ‘archer, bowman’, cf. Latin *arquus*, *arcus* ‘bow, arch’, Gothic *arhazna* ‘arrow’.¹⁹ What follows *Arqui-* could be a nasal suffix, but more probably the common compound-name second element **genos* ‘born from’ with loss of *g*, cf. *MEDVGENVS*²⁰ versus *CAVNVS MEDVENI*.²¹ There are many Palaeohispanic examples both with and without *-g-* in this Common Celtic compound name, which means ‘mead/honey’ + ‘born’.

Another point raised by Tovar was that the Hispanic evidence for *Lugus* was an

11 Matasović 2009.

12 Rhys 1892, 424–5.

13 MLH IV, K.3.3 — Peñalba de Villastar, Teruel.

14 Cf. Wodtko 2000, 234–7.

15 Cf. HAE 1957–60, 1718; IRLugo 67; Búa 2000 ; Vallejo 2013 — Liñarán, Sober, Lugo.

16 HEp 11, 313; Vallejo 2013 — Lugo.

17 Búa 2003 , 153–4; Marco 2005, 301 — Peña Amaya, north of Burgos.

18 AE 1957, 93; Búa 2000; IRLugo, 68; IRG II, 18 — Sinoga, Rábade, Outeiro do Rei, Lugo.

19 Koch 2016, 438–42.

20 HEp 5, 946 — Messejana, Aljustrel, Beja.

21 HEp 1, 181 — Plasenzuela, Cáceres.



Fig. 1. Geographical distribution of forms of the name *Lugu-* in the Iberian Peninsula mentioned in the text.

argument against the prevalent idea that the cult had spread to Britain and Ireland from Gaul towards the end of the pre-Roman Iron Age, a traveller from afar in fact and not merely in the tales. As Tovar argued, because Celtiberian preserved archaic linguistic features lost in the other Celtic languages and full La Tène Celtic culture never reached the Iberian Peninsula, it was unlikely that a new Celtic god had been imported into Spain in the Second Iron Age. Lugus was more probably an inheritance, predating the separation of Gaulish and Celtiberian. Though Tovar did not use these terms, his conclusion was that Lugus was a Proto-Celtic, rather than a Pan-Celtic, god. This is, as noted above, the conclusion reached by Matasović along different lines.

On the configuration of the Celtic family tree, Tovar anticipated current doctrine. There is general agreement that the first split divided Hispano-Celtic, on the one hand, from the proto-language of Gaulish-Brittonic-Goidelic, McCone's 'Gallo-Insular'.²² A Gaulish-Brittonic-Goidelic commonality following the Hispano-Celtic split is implied by linguistic innovations shared by this subgroup, such as the uninflected enclitic relative pronoun **io*. But Lugus occurs on both sides, going back to the common ancestor.

Palaeohispanic epigraphy is a field in which the present authors have lately worked as part of the Atlantic Europe in the Metal Ages (AEMA) project, funded by the UK's Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC), and one of us previously with the Hesperia

22 McCone 1996; cf. Isaac 2005.

Fig. 2. Predominantly Indo-European and non-Indo-European pre-Roman onomastic zones of the Iberian Peninsula, as characterized by place-names in *briga* and *il(t)i*, respectively. *Briga* and *brig-s* are Celtic or both Celtic and Lusitanian.

Their original meaning was 'height, hill', subsequently 'hillfort', and apparently simply 'major town' in the Roman period. The dashed green line represents the approximate boundary between the zones. Indo-European (mostly Celtic) outliers in the *il(t)i* zone are printed in green italic type.



project in Spain. In refocussing presently on comparanda for *Lugus* and associated names from the Iberian Peninsula, a few points may be noted: (1) The material is relatively extensive. (2) Much of it is linked primarily or exclusively with Brythonic and/or Goidelic comparanda with less close, less numerous, or simply no analogues in Gaul. (3) Much of that Palaeohispanic comparanda was found in the west and north of the Peninsula, rather than the Celtiberian region in the eastern Meseta. This pattern could be a mere accident of survival, but there are other possibilities. The distribution could have to do with survivals in marginal areas, whereas cultural innovations emanating from the La Tène core region had transformed or obliterated older Common Celtic traditions. It could also be that the Atlantic seaways played more of a rôle in the spread of Celtic-language culture than has been generally recognized.

There are Palaeohispanic forms of the god's name with a nasal suffix, e.g.: BANDE LVGVNO.²³ The god's multiforms in the Iberian Peninsula include one probably feminine and one surely feminine example: LVGGONI ARGANTICAENI;²⁴ LVGVNIS | DEABVS | AVR(ELIVS) CEL(ER) | V.S.L.M.²⁵ The nasal suffix can be paralleled in Ogamic Primitive Irish personal names: MODDAGN[I] MAQI GATTAGN[I] MUCOI LUGUNI;²⁶ COVAGN[I]

23 HEp 17, 230 — Vale de Prazeres, Fundão, Castelo Branco.

24 Búa 2000, 274 — Villaviciosa, Oviedo.

25 HEp 6, 167; Beltrán, Jordán, Marco Simón 2005, 920 — altar in Atapuerca, Burgos.

26 CIIC 307 — Windgap, Waterford.

MAQ[I MU]C[OI] LUG[U]N[I];²⁷ VEQIKAMI MAQI LUGUNI;²⁸ [...]CANAVVI MAQ L[UGU]N[I].²⁹ The corresponding Old Irish name is *Luigne*. The epithet or second name in LVGGONI ARGANTICAENI is the exact cognate of the Early Breton woman's name *Arganten* 'beautiful in silver'.³⁰ It is also remarkable, in considering the Fourth Branch of the Mabinogi, to have a form of the name *Lugus* juxtaposed in this way with a compound beginning with the Proto-Celtic word for 'silver' **arganto-* < PIE **H₂erǵnto-*.

During the 1980s, significant progress was achieved on the decipherment of the South-western or 'Tartessian' inscriptions of the Early Iron Age, notably the pioneering work of J. A. Correa. He identified several probably Celtic elements in the SW corpus, most of which have won wider acceptance in subsequent scholarship. Most relevant to the present study is what was, until September 2008, the longest known SW inscription, J.1.1 'Fonte Velha 6' (Fig. 3):

lok^oob^oo niirab^oo t^oo afaia|i k^aalt^ee lok^oo|n ane nafk^ee k^aakⁱisiin|k^oolob^o|o ii t^ee:ro-
b^aar|e (b^e)e t^ea|siioonii.

Correa³¹ compared the opening words **lok^oob^oo niirab^oo** with LVGVBO ARQVIENOB^o and similar pared theonyms from the Roman Period inscriptions cited above, explaining **lok^oob^oo** as the dative plural of the Celtic god's name *Lugu-* and deriving **niirab^oo** from PIE $\sqrt{\text{ner-}}$ 'man, hero', also occurring in the group name Νεριοι in the north-west of the Peninsula. He proposed that the written form **lok^oob^oo** probably represented */lugubo/* in light of the fact that the grapheme u was wholly absent from the 72-sign text. In all of this, Correa was followed by Untermann, Villar, Guerra, Koch and Jordán.³² The **lok^oob^oo niirab^oo** text is especially significant in that it probably dates to the 6th or 7th century BC, and is thus several centuries earlier than any other attestation of *Lugu-*. It also shows that the god had been worshipped as a group as early as this and using a pattern of diction essentially the same as that found formulaically in inscriptions of the Roman Period, e.g. LVGVBO ARQVIENOB^o.

Although Correa's argument that **lok^oob^oo** transcribes */lugubo/* is plausible, another possibility is that **Lugu-* had once had ablaut in its paradigm and that **lok^oob^oo** reflects the full grade. As Kaufman argues,³³ it is more likely that the SW inscriptions conventionally write the diphthong */ou/* as simplex o than that the language had simplified the sound to */ō/* as early as the First Iron Age. The likelihood of full-grade form of *Lugu-* is suggested by several Palaeohispanic personal names, especially from Burgos: AMBATAE AIONCAE LOVG^oEI F^o;³⁴

27 CIIC 41 — Castlekeeran, Meath.

28 CIIC 113 — Knockshanawee, Cork.

29 CIIC 112 — Knockshanawee, Cork.

30 Cartulary of Quimperlé, AD 1126; Evans 1988, 549.

31 Correa 1981, 208; 1992, 99–100.

32 Untermann 1995, 255; Villar 2004, 261–3, 268; Guerra 2010; Koch 2013, 197–8; Jordán 2015, 309, 318, cf. also Jordán 2006.

33 Kaufman 2015, 60, 74.

34 Abásolo 1974a, 185 — Lara de los Infantes, Burgos.

[CA]¹PVRNIAE AMBATAE LOVGEI F.;³⁵ ELAESVS PETOLVS LOVGEI PETRAIOCI F.;³⁶ AEMILIA LOVGO C. F. CLVNIENSIS;³⁷ BRVTIA FESTA LOVGEIDOCVM;³⁸ LOVGESTERI CARANICVM;³⁹ SEGIO LOVGESTERICO AIONIS F.⁴⁰

There is frequent overlap between the stock of divine names and personal names. As McManus points out,⁴¹ a productive category of compound personal names in the Ogam inscriptions has divine names for their first element. These include: LUGUQRIT MA[QI] QRITT[I];⁴² LUGUQRIT[TI MAQI] [ADDI]LONAS;⁴³ --] ECC MAQI L[UGUQ]RRIT⁴⁴ > OIr. *Luccreth*, for the second element cf. Welsh *prydydd* 'poet' < **k^uritios* 'maker of forms', in which case these same ideas are found juxtaposed again in VELITAS LUGUTTI,⁴⁵ cf. OIr. *file*, gen. *filed* '(high-ranking) poet' and *Luigthege*, gen. *Luigthig*⁴⁶ < **Lugutiko*--; CATVVIRR MAQI LUGUVVE[C];⁴⁷ LUGUVVECCA MAQI[--]⁴⁸ > OIr. gen. *Lugech*, *Lugach*; LUGUDECCAS MAQI [...MU]COI NETA-SEGAMONIAS DOLATU BIGA-ISGOB[...];⁴⁹ [CU]NAMAQI LUGUDECA MUC[OI] CUNEA;⁵⁰ LUGUDUC MAQI MAQIOC[--]CI[--].⁵¹

Personal names commencing with **Lugu-* also occur in the other early Celtic languages. Thus, in Gaulish: D M IVL(IAE) LVGVSELVAE VXORIS;⁵² ELVONTIV IEVRV · ANEVNO OLICNO · LVGVRIX ANEVNICNO.⁵³ In Brythonic: *Louocatus* AD 509 x

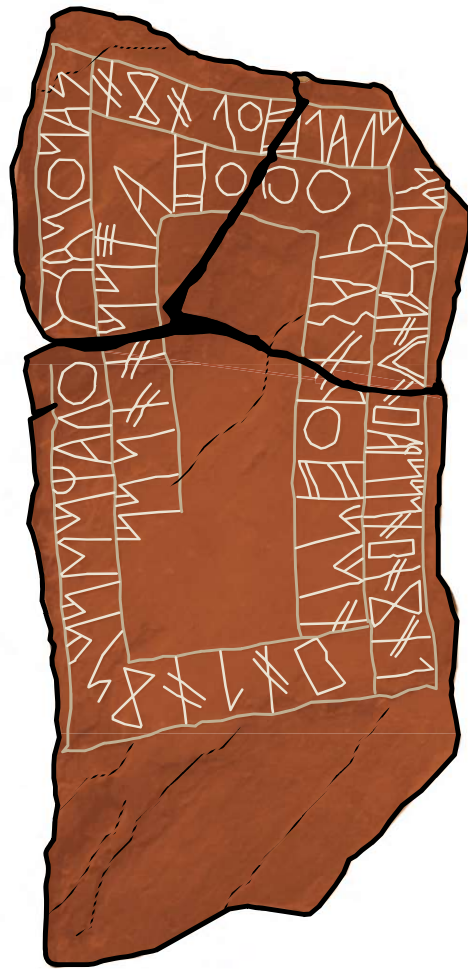


Fig. 3. South-western ('Tartessian') inscription 'Fonte Velha 6' (J.1.1 — Bensafrim, Lagos) 136 x 73 x 15cm.

- 35 AE 1980, 587 — Lara de los Infantes, Burgos.
- 36 Abásolo 1974a, 70 — Lara de los Infantes, Burgos.
- 37 AE 1973, 298 — Braga.
- 38 CIL II 3121; González Rodríguez 1986, n^o 133 — Uclés, Cuenca.
- 39 CIL II 2849 = CIL II 5797; HEp 10, 589 — Pozalmuro, Soria.
- 40 Palol & Vilella 1987, 81; HEp 2, 141; HEp 13, 202 — San Juan del Monte, Burgos.
- 41 McManus 1991, 103.
- 42 CIIC 146 — Reask, Kerry.
- 43 CIIC 68 — Kilcaskan, Cork.
- 44 CIIC 207 — Kilcoolaght, Kerry.
- 45 CIIC 251 — Crag, Kerry.
- 46 McManus 1991, 108.
- 47 CIIC 221 — An Drom Loiscthe [Dromlusk], Kerry.
- 48 CIIC 140 — Áth an Charbail [Aghacarribile], Kerry.
- 49 CIIC 263 — Ardmore, Waterford.
- 50 CIIC 286 — Kilgrovan, Waterford.
- 51 CIIC 108 — Kilcullen South, Cork.
- 52 CIL XIII 996; Raybould & Sims-Williams 2007, 65 — Périgueux.
- 53 RIG II.1, L-4 — Genouilly.

521⁵⁴ < **Lugu-catu-s*, OW *Louhelic*,⁵⁵ *Loumarch*,⁵⁶ Old Cornish *Loumarch* Bodmin Manumissions (twice) also once written *Leumarch* < **Lugu-marco-s* 'stallion of Lugus', *Leucum* Bodmin Manumissions < **Lugu-coimo-s* 'dear to Lugus', cf. the place-name *Lugu-ualium* > Old Welsh *Cair Liguallid* 'Carlisle'.⁵⁷

**Lugu-* also occurs in other name-formation types in the various early Celtic languages. It is the second element in a recurring compound name in the Ogam corpus: NETTAVROECC [KOI] MAQI MUCCOI TRENALUGGO;⁵⁸ TTRENALUGOS,⁵⁹ cf. OIr. *Trianlug*. The following Gaulish examples probably show suffixed forms of *Lugu-* rather than compounds: NAMNIA SVLLA LIVI LVGAVN[I] A(AVLI) LIVI VIND[I]LICIANI LIVIVS LVGAVNVS POSVIT;⁶⁰ LVGIOLAE;⁶¹ LVGISSIV[S];⁶² cf. also CVM LVGARIO SEPTANII F. / LVGARIVS SEPTANII F.⁶³ The simplex occurs as a woman's name in the west and centre of the Iberian Peninsula: LVGVA CADDECVN;⁶⁴ [A]TTA LVGVA CARAECICVM EBVRENI VXOR.⁶⁵

In the lists above, the name recurring in Ogam forms as LUGUDECCAS, LUGUDECA, and LUGUDUC can be etymologized as **Lugu-dek-* 'serving the god Lug'.⁶⁶ The same compound name is found in Gaulish and Hispano-Celtic: D M LVGVDECA(E) PIAE(?) C[O] NIVG(I) GRAT(A)E [ET] GRAECINO FILI[S] PO[S(VIT)];⁶⁷ VALERIO ANNONI LVGVADICI F. VXAMENSIS.⁶⁸ The Old Irish form of this name is *Luguid* or *Lugaid*, gen. *Luigdech*, fairly common in Early Irish literature. *Lugaid Mac Con* is the name of an important and ambivalent figure in Irish legendary history, a king of Ireland reckoned to have ruled a few centuries before St Patrick's time. This Lugaid is the central figure of the lengthy Old Irish tale *Cath Maige Mucrama* ('The Battle of Mag Mucrama'). One key episode in this narrative can be understood as motivated by beliefs associated with the hero's name, *Lugaid* < **Lugu-dek-s*. In this part of the tale, Lugaid and his warband have left Ireland in exile and receive hospitality from the king of Alba (Britain or north Britain). They seek to conceal which one of them is Lugaid, their leader. To force this information out of them, their host offers them a meal of mice with their pelts on. Somehow, Lugaid's identity is uncovered through his men's behaviour in this memorably revolting, but poorly motivated episode. As argued in Koch 1999, the original point, which the handlers of the extant *Cath Maige Mucrama* had lost sight of, was not that eating mice was disgusting,

54 LHEB 14; Lapidge & Sharpe 1985 it. 823.

55 Lib. Lan. 249.

56 AC 903.

57 HB §66a.

58 CIIC 26 — Donaghmore, Kildare.

59 CIIC 120 — Montaggart, Cork.

60 CIL XIII 804 — Bordeaux.

61 CIL XIII 3043 — Paris.

62 CIL XIII 11313 — Trier.

63 AE 1983, 477 — Vila Nova de Gaia, Pontevedra.

64 HEp 1, 400; ERPL, 395 — La Remolina, León.

65 FE 340; ERAv 134; HEp 13, 71 — Narros del Puerto, Ávila.

66 Uhlich 2002, 409.

67 CIL XIII 5926 — Bourbonne-les-Bains.

68 CIL II 2732, 142 — Segovia.

but that someone named *Lugaid* < **Lugu-dek-s* ‘serving the god Lugus’ could not eat *lochaid* ‘mice’ < **lukotes* (nom. sg. *luch* < **lukot-s*), because his name was too similar to the animal’s. He would insult a king and risk his life rather than eating his totem. This example is a reminder that, when we compare various kinds of evidence associated with Lugus, the domains of etymological meaning, traditional narrative, and the phonological surface of the language are intertwined and do not evolve independently.

Koch (1992) draws attention to further pivotal episodes in Irish and Welsh tales in which words sounding like *Lug* and *Lleu* are conspicuously avoided. In the Ulster Cycle, there is a recurrent oath, the form of which varies somewhat, but is basically *tongu do dia toinges mo thuath*, meaning ‘I swear to the god to whom my people swear’ or, as a headless relative, ‘I swear to god what my people swear’. Old Irish *tongu* ‘I swear’ is a suppletive verb. Its verbal noun is *lugae* ‘oath’ (later *luige*), and that is the word that is avoided here in a roundabout way. The supernatural character Lug has a special rôle in the Ulster cycle as the otherworldly father of the central hero Cú Chulainn in the complex, and textually early birth tale *Compert Con Culainn*. Lug also reappears at a dramatic turning point in the Ulster Cycle’s lengthy central saga *Táin Bó Cúailgne*. The reader will therefore think that it is Lug that Cú Chulainn has in mind when he swears the oath as a challenge, gearing up for heroic exploits, in the ‘boyhood deeds’ section of the first recension of TBC. The wording there is *tongu do dia toingte Ulaid* ‘I swear to the god by whom the Ulster folk swear’.

In the Fourth Branch of the Mabinogi, a large chunk of the action turns on three episodes in which the protagonist Lleu’s mother Ar(y)anrot swears prohibitive destinies on her son. With these, she seeks to thwart him in attaining full adult personhood, by denying him a name, arms, and a wife. Each time the wording of the oath is almost verbatim: *mi a dynghaf dyghet iðau...* ‘I swear a destiny on him...’ It is the first of these oaths, intended to prevent Lleu from getting his name, that makes the underlying wordplay apparent: *mi a dynghaf dyghet iðau, na chaffo enw yny caffo y genhyfi* ‘I swear a destiny on him, that he not get a name until he gets it from me’. Later, Ar(y)anrot is tricked into giving the boy the name *Lleu*, as the outcome of the shoemaker episode. A malveolent mother attempting to thwart her child’s destiny to get his name *Lleu* could hardly do so formalizing her curse with words that included the nearly homophonous *llw* ‘oath’, the usual object of *tyngaf* ‘I swear’. The audience will have felt the tension slyly built by not saying *mi a dyngaf llw i Leu* ‘I swear an oath to Lleu’. But Ar(y)anrot is finally outsmarted, so that the name she has carefully avoided slips out. Putting the oaths of the Ulster Cycle and the Fourth Branch together, what is pointedly not being said is word-for-word the same, implying a common source: **tongū (do) Lugei lugiom* ‘I swear an oath to Lugus’.

Cognates of OIr. *tocad* gl. ‘fors’, MW *tynghet* ‘fate, destiny, luck’⁶⁹ occur as personal names in Goidelic, Brythonic, and most abundantly across the centre-west of the Indo-European zone of the Iberian Peninsula : Ogam TOGIT[TAC][C] MAQ[I] SAGARET[TOS],⁷⁰

69 Matasović 2009 sn. **tonketo*-.

70 CIIC 172 — Ballywiheen [Baile Uí Bhaoithín], Kerry.

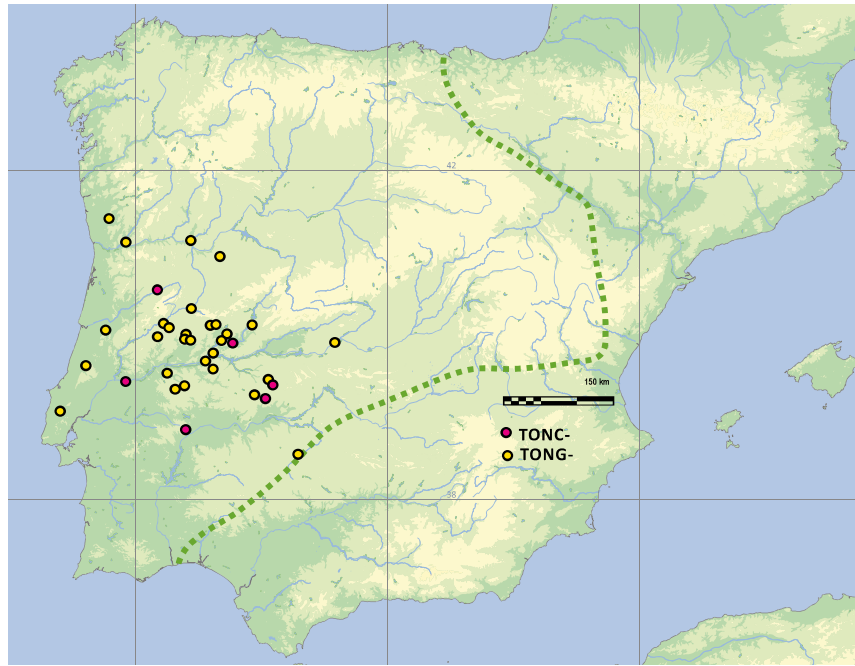
cf. OIr. nom. *Toicthech*, TVNCETACE VXSOR DAARI HIC IACET;⁷¹ both TOGITTAC[C] and TVNCETACE are genitives meaning 'Fortunate'; IVLIA L. F. TONCETA;⁷² TONCETA MATER;⁷³ IVLIA C. F. TONCETA;⁷⁴ TONGETA BOVTI F.;⁷⁵ TONGETA TANCINI F.;⁷⁶ TONGETA PROBINA LIB.;⁷⁷ TONGETAE PITINNAE;⁷⁸ TONGETA TVLORI F.;⁷⁹] TONGETERI F. CLVN(IENSIS);⁸⁰ TONGETAE RVFI;⁸¹ TONGETA PETOBI;⁸² TONGETAE ALVQVI F.;⁸³ TONGETO ARANTO;⁸⁴ IVLIA TONGETA;⁸⁵ IVLIA RVFA TONGETI F.⁸⁶

Palaeohispanic *Toncetamos* can be understood either as a superlative 'most fortunate' or based on the ordinal numbers, 'sequenced auspiciously', cf. ROTAMVS TRI[T]EI CAT[---]⁸⁷ ~ Vedic *prathamá* first', *pratamá* 'foremost', *prathama-já* first-born': [T]ONCIVS [T]ONCETAMVS F. MILES SIGNIFER COH. II LVS.;⁸⁸ TONGETAMVS CAVNI F.;⁸⁹ ARA(M) POS(VIT) TONCIVS TONCETAMI F. ICAEDIT(ANVS) MILIS TREBARVNE L.M.V.S.;⁹⁰ TALAVS TONCETAMI F. BOVTIE(CVM);⁹¹ OVRISONI TONCETAMI F.;⁹² RVFINA RVFI TONGETAMI F.⁹³

From the preceding list, it appears that Palaeohispanic *Toncius/Tongius* could occur in the same families as *Toncetamus* and used in ways consistent with being a different formation from the same root: TONCIVS ANDAI[--- F.];⁹⁴ TONGIVS;⁹⁵ TONGIV[S];⁹⁶ TONGI;⁹⁷ BOVDICAE TONGI F. MATRI;⁹⁸ CELTIVS TONGI F.;⁹⁹ TONGIVS BOVTI F.;¹⁰⁰

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- 71 CIIC 451 — St Nicholas, Pembrokeshire.
 72 CIL II 295 — Odrinhas, Lisbon.
 73 AE 1971, 164c — Collipo, Leiria.
 74 CIL II 296 418 — Torres Vedras, Lisbon.
 75 CIL II 620; CPILC 524; CILCC I, 101; HEp 3, 122 — Brozas, Cáceres.
 76 CIL II 5349; CPILC 80 — Belvís de Monroy (Cáceres).
 77 AE 1967, 172 — Idanha-a-Velha, Idanha-a-Nova, Castelo Branco.
 78 FE 402 — Torre de Coelheiros, Évora, Évora.
 79 FE 107; HEp 2, 828 — Amieira do Tejo, Nisa, Portalegre.
 80 HEp 13, 1003; AE 2004, 708 — São Salvador de Aramenha, Marvão, Portalegre.
 81 HEp 2, 904 — Cárquere, Resende, Viseu.
 82 HEp 2, 896 — Lamas de Moledo, Castro Daire, Viseu.
 83 CIL II 5248 — Región de Lamego, Viseu.
 84 HEp 7, 1286 — Cárquere, Resende, Viseu.
 85 Vasconcellos 1913, 455-7 — Cárquere, Resende, Viseu.
 86 HEp 5, 55 — Badajoz.
 87 AE 1986, 293 434 — São Martinho de Mou, Viseu.
 88 AE 1896, 1418 — Fundão, Castelo Branco.
 89 HEp 1, 207 — Villamiel, Cáceres.
 90 EE VIII 15; ILER 941 — Idanha-a-Velha, Idanha-a-Nova, Castelo Branco.
 91 Albertos 1975a, 2. 212. n.º 234 — Yecla de Yeltes, Salamanca.
 92 ERZamora, 171 — Domez, Zamora.
 93 CIL II 447 — Idanha-a-Velha, Idanha-a-Nova, Castelo Branco.
 94 EE VIII 10; Encarnação 1984, 574 — Elvas, Portalegre.
 95 CPILC 738 — Calzadilla de Coria, Cáceres.
 96 CPILC 592 — Valencia de Alcántara, Cáceres.
 97 Almeida 1956, 227, n.º 135 — Idanha-a-Velha, Idanha-a-Nova, Castelo Branco.
 98 AE 1967, 170; Albertos 1983, 872 — Telhado, Fundão, Castelo Branco.
 99 AE 1934, 22; Encarnação 1984, 638 — Montalvão, Nisa, Portalegre.
 100 CPILC 47; CILCC I, 71 — Arroyo de la Luz, Cáceres.

Fig. 4. Geographical distribution of names in *Tonc-* and *Tong-* in the Iberian Peninsula.



TVOVTAE TONGI F.;¹⁰¹ CATVENVS TONGI F.;¹⁰² CILVRA TONGI;¹⁰³ MAELONI TONGI F.;¹⁰⁴ ALEINIVS TONGI F(ILIVS) GENIO AMMAIENCIS;¹⁰⁵ MAELO TONGI F. / TONGIVS;¹⁰⁶ AVITAE TONGI F.;¹⁰⁷ C. IVLIVS TONGIVS;¹⁰⁸ CAMIRA TONGI F.;¹⁰⁹ RVFVS TONGI F.;¹¹⁰ TITANVS TONGI F.;¹¹¹ FLACCO TONGI F.;¹¹² TONGIO TANCINI F.;¹¹³ TONGIVS SVNVAE F.;¹¹⁴ TONGIVS VIROTI;¹¹⁵ [T]ONGIVS L. GOVTI;¹¹⁶ A. C. NORBANI TONGI F.;¹¹⁷ MATERNVS TONG[I];¹¹⁸ NIGER TONGI F.;¹¹⁹ TONGIVS TANGINI F.;¹²⁰ TANGINVS TONGINAE F.;¹²¹

101 HAE 1172; Almeida 1956, 133 — Idanha-a-Velha, Idanha-a-Nova, Castelo Branco.

102 CPILC 221; HEp 8, 77 — Coria, Cáceres.

103 AE 1967, 167 — Idanha-a-Velha, Idanha-a-Nova, Castelo Branco.

104 AE 1977, 364 — Fundão, Fundão, Castelo Branco.

105 HEp 13, 1001; AE 2004, 706 — São Salvador de Aramenha, Marvão, Portalegre.

106 CIL II 749; CPILC 89; CILCC I, 107 — Brozas, Cáceres.

107 AE 1967, 167 — Idanha-a-Velha, Idanha-a-Nova, Castelo Branco.

108 CIL II 2/7, 956; HEp 7, 147 — Monterrubio de la Serena, Badajoz.

109 CIL II 757; CPILC 25; Albertos 1977b, 38; CILCC I, 26 — Alcántara, Cáceres.

110 CIL II 729; AE 1968, 214; CPILC 586 = CPILC 596 — Valencia de Alcántara, Cáceres.

111 CIL II 795 & add. p. 826; CPILC 202; M. Beltrán 1975–76, 26; Melena 1985, 498; AE 1977, 388 — Ceclavín, Cáceres.

112 AE 1967, 167 — Idanha-a-Velha, Idanha-a-Nova, Castelo Branco.

113 CIL II 5310; CPILC 269 — Hoyos, Cáceres.

114 CIL II 757; CPILC 25; Albertos 1977, 38; CILCC I, 26 — Alcántara (Cáceres).

115 CPILC 221; HEp 8, 77 — Coria, Cáceres.

116 CIL II 840; CPILC 188 = CPILC 662 — Cáparra, Cáceres.

117 CPILC 734; CILCC I, 371 — Valdefuentes, Cáceres.

118 AE 1985, 529; FE 67 — Proença-a-Velha, Idanha-a-Nova, Castelo Branco.

119 HAE 1173 — Idanha-a-Velha, Idanha-a-Nova, Castelo Branco.

120 AE 1967, 181 — Idanha-a-Velha, Idanha-a-Nova, Castelo Branco.

121 HEp 4, 1051; HEp 5, 1019 — Condeixa-a-Velha, Condeixa-a-Nova, Coimbra.

PROCVLO TONG(I)NI F.¹²²

Uncertainty over the first element of the name of Lleu's mother in the Fourth Branch, *Ar(y)anrot*, was canvassed by Williams.¹²³ It has never been fully resolved subsequently whether this is a reflex of PC **arganto-* 'silver' or a term now limited to place-names.¹²⁴ The two Middle Welsh manuscript copies consistently spell the name *Aranrot*, which most translators have modernized as *Aranrhod*. However, the form *Aryanrot* occurs in the Welsh Triads and some medieval poetry, that is, Modern Welsh *Arianrhod* 'silver' + 'wheel'. It is at any rate apparent that some of the medieval Welsh poets and scribes, working within the framework of their language and tradition, thought that first element of Lleu's mother's name was 'silver'. Early forms of the name of one of the female saints of Brycheiniog favour the 'silver' interpretation or at least confirm that it is phonologically possible. The most archaic spelling for this name occurs in the *Cognatio Brychan* text, spelled *Arganwen*,¹²⁵ which clearly contains PC **arganto-* 'silver' and must go back to a written source of the Old Welsh period. In *De Situ Brecheniauc*, which survives in a manuscript of c. 1200, the same figure is *Aranwen*.¹²⁶ In the *Plant Brychan* tract, she is *Aryanwen*.¹²⁷ These variants can be explained as follows. As the first element of a compound, and thus not accented in Old Welsh, *argan(t)-* 'silver' regularly became *aran-*, i.e. the lenited *g-* simply disappeared. However, this sound shift tended to be reversed to *aryan-* as the compounds were correctly understood to contain the common word, the high-frequency isolated form of which was *aryan(t)* silver, which had always been fully accented and therefore less prone to phonetic reduction. An analogous development is found with the word for 'iron', which was also found in Brythonic names. In Old Breton, one finds *Iarn-* as an unaccented first element and *hoiarn* in final position under the accent. This distribution is probably the phonologically regular one, and examples with *Hoiarn-* as first element involve an analogical restoration of the most common form of the common word to all positions, e.g.: *Iarnnueten*,¹²⁸ *Hoiarnnueten*.¹²⁹

The Palaeohispanic divine name and epithet LVGGONI ARGANTICAENI was mentioned above. Similarly, 'silver' is found as the first element of a compound name in the bilingual Latin–Cisalpine Gaulish inscription of Vercelli: ARGANTOCOMATERECVS / ARKATOKO(K)MATEREKOS.¹³⁰ Simplex 'silver' is found several times as a personal name in the Celtiberian area, notably as a feminine name in the third long inscription from Botorrita:¹³¹ **arkanta mezukenoskue abokum**;¹³² **arkanta loukanikum**;¹³³ **arkanta**

122 EE IX 127; CPILC 644; Melena 1985, 489 — Villamiel, Cáceres.

123 Williams 1930, 269.

124 Cf. Hughes 2000, xxiii–xxvii.

125 Bartrum 1966, 18.

126 Bartrum 1966, 15.

127 Bartrum 1966, 82 & n.

128 CR §86 AD 865, §169 AD 863, §170 AD 866.

129 CR §97 AD 842/8.

130 RIG II.1, E-2.

131 K.1.3 – Botorrita, Zaragoza.

132 III-11.

133 K.1.3.

Figure 5. Geographical distribution of names in *Arganto*- ‘silver’ in the Iberian Peninsula.



teiuantikum tirtunos,¹³⁴ **arkanta toutinikum,**¹³⁵ **arkanta ailokiskum,**¹³⁶ **arkanta;**¹³⁷ SEMPRONIA ARGANTA,¹³⁸ ARGANTO MEDVTICA MELMANIQ[VM].¹³⁹ Cf. the Old Breton simplex personal name *Argent*.¹⁴⁰ The simplex also occurs as a Celtiberian kindred name with a velar suffix: [T]OVTONI ARGANTIOQ[VM] ABALI F.¹⁴¹

In the western Peninsula, the oldest example of ‘silver’ in a personal name, or anywhere, is the suffixed form ‘Αργανθωνιος,¹⁴² the name of the beneficent philo-Greek king of the silver-based polity of Ταρτησσος (very probably centred on present-day Huelva). His phenomenal 80-year reign notionally spanned c. 625–c. 545 BC. This name recurs in the Roman Period, again in the west: FLACCVS ARGANTON(I) MAGILANICVM MIROBRIGENSIS.¹⁴³

In Old Breton, compound personal names beginning with ‘silver’ are common: *Arganthael*,¹⁴⁴ *Argantlon*,¹⁴⁵ *Argantlouuen*,¹⁴⁶ *Argantmonoc*.¹⁴⁷ *Argantken* was mentioned above. Amongst the Old Cornish names of the Bodmin Manumissions, one finds *feminam Arganteilin* and *Argantmoet*.

134 III-21.

135 III-44.

136 III-53.

137 IV-20.

138 HEp 8, 275; HEp 10, 291 — Saelices, Cuenca.

139 AE 1916, 73; Abascal 1983, 22 — Riba de Saelices, Guadalajara.

140 CR §109, AD 869.

141 IRPP 42; HEp, 6, 578 — Palencia.

142 Herodotus 1.163–5.

143 CPILC 34; HEp 13, 232; CILCC I, 200 — Garrovillas, Cáceres.

144 CR §176, AD 841–51.

145 CR §189, AD 841–48; §131, AD 821/27/32.

146 CR §136, AD 842.

147 CR §255, AD 820/26.

Much of the action in the Fourth Branch of the Mabinogi is directed by character who acts as the foster-father for young Lleu. In Middle Welsh sources his name is spelled *Gydyon*, *Gwydyon*, and *Gwytyon*. The modernization is *Gwydion*. Rhŷs recognized an earlier tradition in the Old Welsh genealogies of British Library MS 3859 in the sequence:¹⁴⁸ ... *Lou Hen map Guidgen map Caratauc map Cinbelin map Teuhant* ... This series represent rulers of the remote past. The first three are historical, belonging to the time of the Claudian invasion of Britain and the end of the pre-Roman Iron Age: Caratācos †AD 58, his father Cunobelinos †c. AD 41, and Cunobelinos's father Tasciouanos, who ruled c. 20 BC–AD 10. The first two are attested in both Roman histories and pre-Roman coin legends. Tasciouanos is known only from coinage and Welsh genealogies.¹⁴⁹ *Lou* is the Old Welsh form of *Lugus*. Like its Old Irish cognate *sen*, Welsh *hen* 'old' usually precedes its noun. Where *hen* follows a name in genealogies, this may indicate an ancestor figure. *Guidgen* therefore appears to be the Old Welsh form of *Gwydion*. This is not a regular phonological development; rather, the old name has been assimilated to the pattern of names of supernatural figures in Welsh tales, such as *Riannon*, *Teirnon*, *Mabon*, and *Modron*. This suffix goes back to that found in Gaulish and Brythonic divine names of the pagan period, such as *Epona*, as well as *Maponos* and *Mātrona* which correspond to the last two Welsh names. It is interesting to note that this name type appears to have been expanding productively in medieval Welsh literature. OW *Guidgen* is a compound of words derived from the Proto-Celtic roots **ūidu-* 'wood' and **geno-* 'be born', both of which are productive in onomastics, though this compound name itself is not common. Another possible example is the Goidelic or Gaelicized *Fedgenus*, the name of the brother of an abbot of Iona, Uirgnou the Briton, who died in 623.¹⁵⁰

As proposed by Wodtko,¹⁵¹ the Palaeohispanic dedication MVNIDI FIDVENEARVM HIC¹⁵² 'can plausibly be connected to PIE **wid^hu-* "tree, wood"'. As explained above in connection with the examples MEDVGENVS and MEDVENI, *-g-* was frequently lost at the beginning of the second element of Palaeohispanic compound names, much of the evidence being from the western Peninsula and involving specifically **geno-* 'be born' as the second element and following a first element ending in *-u-*. Therefore, Wodtko's proposal allows that FIDVENEARVM possibly reflects a native divine name which was originally (nominative) **Ūidugeniās*, meaning '(goddesses) associated with **Ūidu-ge-nos*' or specifically '(divine) daughters of **Ūidu-ge-nos*'. With a little imagination, the *Fidueneae* could be 'goddesses conjured from the wood', reminiscent of Blodeuweð conjured from flowers by Math and Gwydyon to create a bride for Lleu, in the Fourth Branch. In short, we might be dealing with the cognate of Old Welsh *Guidgen*, the precursor of *Gwydyon* in the Mabinogi.

However, this is uncertain. Wodtko scrutinized the Paços de Ferreira inscription

148 Rhŷs 1892, 551 n. 1.

149 Koch 1987.

150 Herbert 1988, 39.

151 Wodtko 2009, 32.

152 CIL II 5607; HEp 10, 2000, 742— Paços de Ferreira, Eiriz, Porto.

because it might be considered evidence for Lusitanian or Lusitanian-Callaecian. The Indo-European sources of the consonant(s) written F in Lusitanian remain unresolved. If PIE **bh* had regularly become Lusitanian F in all environments, we would expect more examples, as **bh* had occurred frequently in the proto-language. If, on the other hand, the F- in FIDVENEARVM is parallel to the development in Goidelic (e.g. OIr. *fid* ‘wood, tree’ < PC **ūdu* < PIE **ūdhu-*), its rarity could be explained by the lateness of the change, just beginning to make its appearance when the pre-Roman language(s) of the western Peninsula died out.

This paper closes turning to the second epigram at the top, Matthew Arnold’s well-known metaphor for the profound and mysterious mythological roots of the Mabinogi. It hardly needs pointing out how passé its attitude to the subject is. Nonetheless, the up-to-date scepticism over ‘Mercury’=Lugus has more in common with Arnold’s thinking than with some of the approaches to Celtic myth and religion pursued in the meantime. Where we have perhaps come full circle is that Celtic researchers today, like Arnold, do not expect big ideas to have survived coherently from Celtic religion into the Christian Middle Ages, with ancient gods and myths fully recoverable by way of the Irish and Welsh tales. Instead, we sift through what is called in Wales *glo mân*, the ‘fine coal’ or nitty-gritty, meaning here, the words and names, their meanings, and immediate associations, where these show a long-lasting and widespread currency. Today, Arnold’s imagery is strikingly romantic and value-laden. But it is little more than a mystification of basic historical linguistics. Every human being in using language is ‘pillaging an antiquity of which he does not fully possess the secret’. In their changing forms and meanings, the words used today had formerly been arranged to express innumerable now-lost ideas. For the Celtic languages and Celtic-speaking societies a transformative discontinuity coincided with the Conversion, end of the Western Empire, and Migration Period. The Continental Celtic languages that once stretched from Portugal to central Asia Minor disappeared. The Neo-Celtic that persisted in Ireland, Britain, and Brittany suddenly appeared very different from its ancient forerunners. Whether or not the thoughts articulated before this seismic fault-line were actually ‘greater, cunninger, more majestic’ than what followed, they were surely different.

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