

DAVID STIFTER, AARON GRIFFITH

Old Irish

Introduction – Part 1: History of the Irish Language

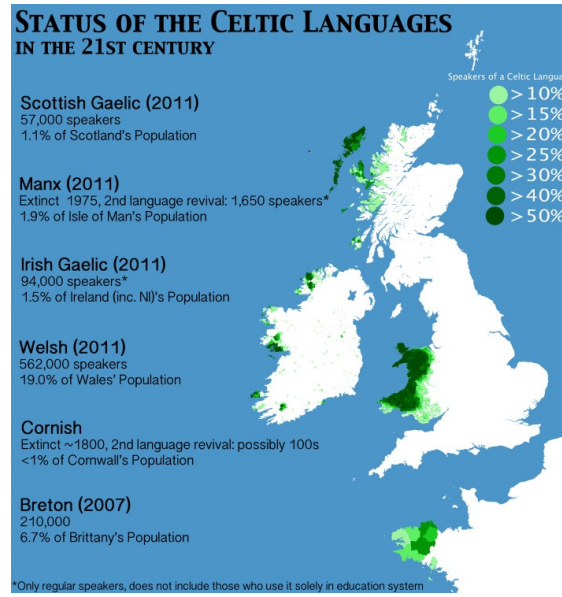
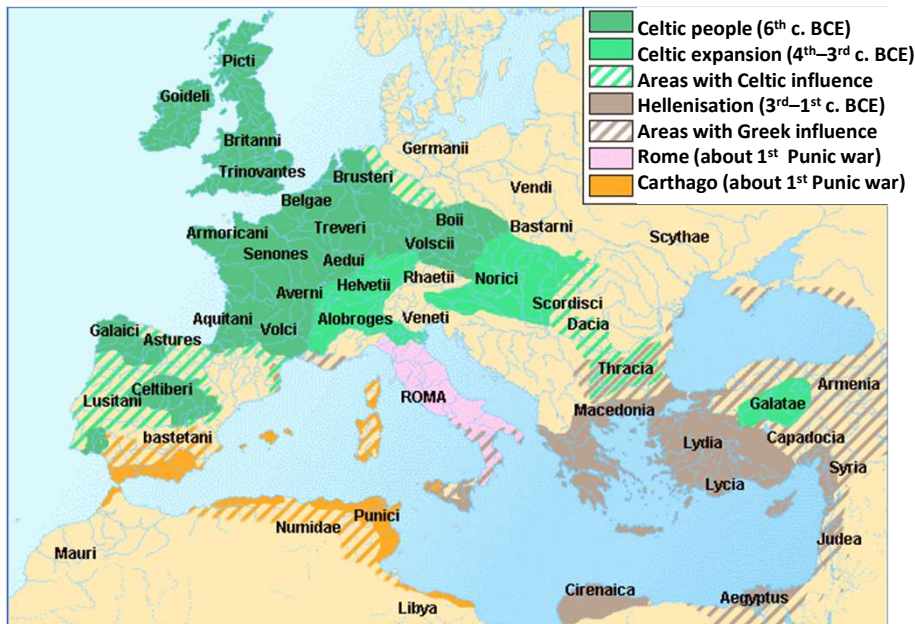


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Roadmap

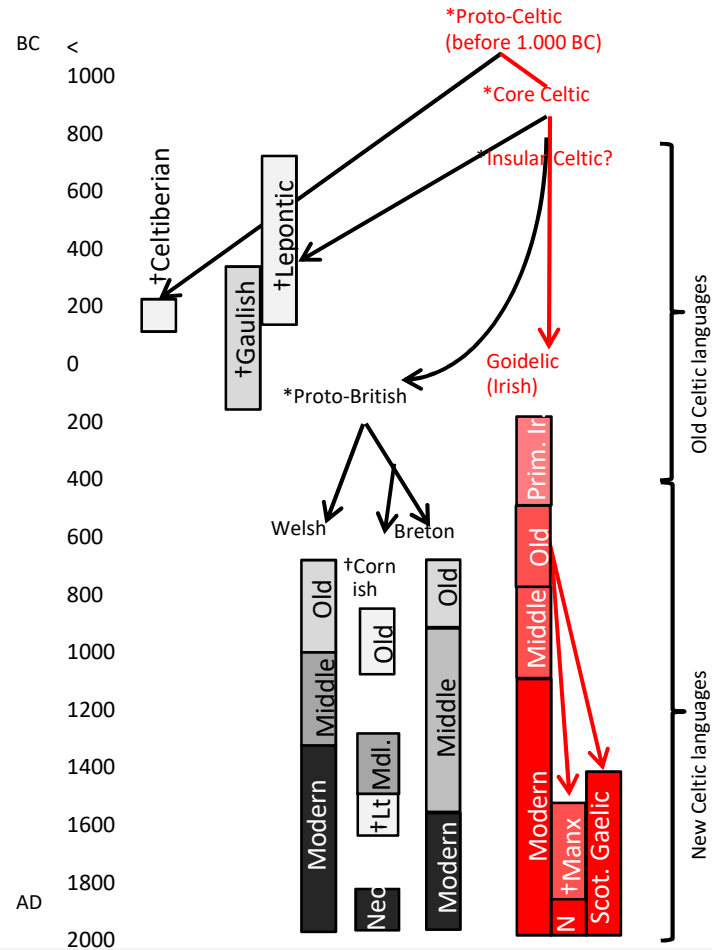
- Introduction
 - Irish as a Celtic Language
 - History of the Irish Language

Past and present extent of Celtic languages



turgamures, https://www.reddit.com/r/MapPorn/comments/4l6ddn/oc_modern_distribution_of_celtic_languages_3145/

A Celtic language tree



Timeline

- Proto-Celtic (PC) 2nd mill. B.C.?
- Insular Celtic? 1st mill. B.C.?
- Proto-Goidelic before 4th c. A.D.
- Early Irish { ■ Primitive Irish (PrimIr.) 4th–6th c. A.D.
- Archaic/Early Old Irish 7th c.
- Old Irish (OIr.) 8th–9th c.
- Middle Irish (Mlr.) 10th–12th c.
- Early Modern Irish 13th–16th c. (dialectal differentiation of Scottish Gaelic & Manx)
- dialectal Modern Irish 17th–21st c. (Munster, Connacht, Ulster; *An Caighdeán Oifigiúil*)

The origins of the Irish

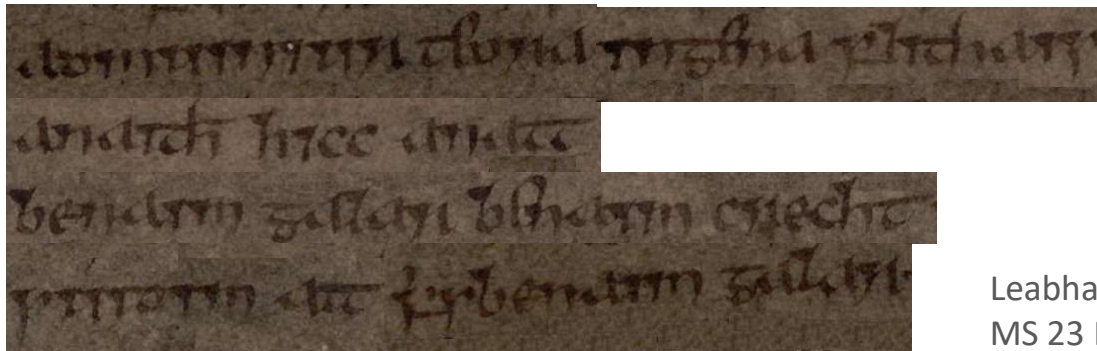


James P. Mallory, *The Origins of the Irish*, 2017

When did Irish come to Ireland?

- ‘Un-Irish’ vocabulary
 - *naithir* ‘serpent’ < PIE $*\eta h_1 tri h_2-$
 - *art* ‘bear’ < $*h_2 rt k o-$

When did Irish come to Ireland?



Leabhar Breac, Royal Irish Academy
MS 23 P 16 (1230), p. 99

*Ad·muiniur téora ingena Flithais.
A naithir hícc a n-att!
Benaim galar, benaim crécht,
suidim att, fris·benaim galar.*

I invoke the three daughters of Flidais.
Serpent, heal the swelling!
I beat the illness, I beat the ulcer,
I sedate the swelling, I beat against the illness.

When did Irish come to Ireland?

- ‘Un-Irish’ vocabulary
 - *naithir* ‘serpent’ < PIE $*\overset{\circ}{n}h_1trih_2-$
 - *art* ‘bear’ < $*h_2rtk\hat{o}-$
- Language shift 2nd quarter 1st mill. AD?
- Transparent place names
- Attested Old Irish ancestor of Irish, Sc. Gaelic, Manx
- Uniformity of Old Irish

The lack of dialectal differentiation

- Old Irish a standard learnt in school
- Old Irish a ‘colonial language’ – rapidly spread over the island shortly before the historic period

Remarkable linguistic traits

1. Initial mutations
2. Inflection through internal changes
3. Strictly head-initial language
4. Double set of verbal inflection
5. Cliticisation of pronouns
6. Distinction between stressed
existential verb vs. unstressed copula
7. Emphasis by movement

Ad·tlochomar indithim dúib!



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