

## THE POWERFUL SONG OF AMAIRGEN MAC MILED OF BRIGANTIA (ESPAÑ) IN THE LIGHT OF IRISH, GALICIAN, WELSH AND BRETON MYTHOLOGY

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**Abstract:** *The medieval manuscript Lebor Gabála Éirénn (The Book of Invasions of Ireland) is the subject of heated debate in academia regarding the possible historical veracity of parts of its possibly pre-Christian text that have not been contaminated with additions from Roman and Christian history. John Carey, one of the most renowned experts on this subject, discusses in his article Donn, Amairgen, Íth and the Prehistory of Irish Pseudohistory<sup>1</sup> the various aspects of this debate and his goal of linking the druid Amairgen and his brother Donn with Indo-European deities. In this article, I will not enter into this debate but rather offer an interpretation of the Song of Amairgen recited by Amairgen Mac Miled in the light of Irish, Breton, Welsh and Galician legends and traditions.*

**Keywords:** *amairgen, brigantia, a corunha, song of Amairgen*

### 1. INTRODUCTION

This study explores the Song of Amairgen as a source of Celtic mythology. By examining its symbolic motifs, and cosmological assertions, this article positions Amairgen's song not merely as a mythic invocation but as a text about Celtic worldview and identity. The research undertakes a comparative analysis with selected parallel mythic traditions in other Celtic countries, particularly but not limited to Galicia, highlighting themes that suggest a pan-Celtic mythological memory. This memory is retained in legends and can logically explain certain rituals, beliefs and legends existing in Galicia, Ireland and other Celtic countries. I believe this article will add value to the study and understanding of Celtic mythology applied to legends and rituals that were preserved until very recently in remote villages in certain Celtic countries like Galicia and Ireland and other.

It is widely known that certain ancient songs and poems can be a rich source of information about the way people saw their world and how they explained weather, topographic events and other. I could not find in the

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<sup>1</sup> The Journal of Indo-European Studies, vol. 38, numbers 3 and 4, Autumn/Winter 2010.

sources I consulted any study that tried to read and understand Galician traditions under the light of the mythological concepts that we can see in each line of the Song of Amairgen.

## 2. METHODOLOGY

The methodology of this study covers the following points:

- To analyze the Song of Amairgen as a mythological and poetic source of early Celtic cosmology and thought.
- To compare its themes with selected legends from Irish legends, Welsh legends and Brittonic bardic poetry, Breton traditions, and Galician legends.
- Suggest a possible way of interpreting the cosmologic information encapsulated in every line of the text of the Song of Amairgen.

## 3. THE BOOK OF INVASIONS OF IRELAND, BRIGANTIA IN ESPAÑA

The Song of Amairgen is an important part of the legend about the last invasion of Ireland by the Gaedil Celts of Brigantia, recounted in the *Lebor Laignech* (Book of Leinster), which contains the oldest version of this legend,<sup>2</sup> and is dated between 1164 and 1224. The Book of Leinster was compiled largely by Áed Ua Crimthainn, abbot of Tír Dhá Glas (Land of the Two Rivers, anglicized as Terryglass), a village in the county of Tipperary, Ireland.

The book recounts how the murder in Ireland of the Gaedil nobleman Íth Mac Míled, from Brigantia (España), led to a punitive expedition led by Éremón from Brigantia and king of España. The Irish book goes on to say that 40 military leaders of the *Gaedil* Celts from the region of Brigantia set sail in their ships to invade Ireland and avenge the murder of Íth. According to the legend, the following took part in this expedition of conquest that set sail from Brigantia:

- The *clan of Bregon*: Brego, Bile, Blad, Cualu, Cuailuge, Fúat, Muirthemme, Nár, and Eblíu.
- The *clan of Míle*, relatives of the murdered Íth Mac Míle, which motivated the military expedition to conquest Ireland: Donn, Colptha, Amairgen (n.a. the druid), Éber, Ír, Éremón, Airech, Érennán.
- The *clan of Éremón*: Muimne, Luigne, Laigne.
- The *clan of Éber*: Ér, Orba Ferón, Fergna.

The book goes on telling that elite warriors joined this military expedition: Bres, Buas, Buaigne, Caicher, Fulmán, Mantán, Sétga, Sobairce, Etan and Goisten and their troops. A quick etymological analysis of some of these names results in Bres (Great), Buas and Buaigne (root *bu*, meaning *bull*), Fulmán (thunder) and other suggestive names about their physical (and spiritual?) power and prowess.

According to this oldest version of the legend, Brigantia is located in España, which immediately leads us to speculate that it could be Spain. Brigantia was also the ancient name of the current city of A Coruña, in Galicia, but in addition to the Gaedil of A Coruña, there were other Celtic tribes called Brigantes who left similar place names in the regions where they lived:

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<sup>2</sup> Dr Kelly Fitzgerald, Director of the School of Irish and Celtic Studies and Ethnology at University College Dublin, email 27 November 2023.

- One of them, a small tribe, lived in the Alps and Strabo described them as the Brigantioi (Βρυγόντιοι).<sup>3</sup> They lived south of Lake Constance, in the region that is now part of Austria, and their main city was Brigantion, now germanised to Bregenz.
- Another, in northern England, was a powerful confederation of Celtic tribes led for a time by the famed Queen Cartimandua, an occasional ally of Rome. The Romans called this region Brigantia. It is located on what is now the border between England and Scotland.

Brigantion in the Austrian Alps is geographically very far from Ireland, and it seems to me that there is scarce possibility that they were the ones mentioned in the *Lebor Gabála Éirenn*. The legend clearly mentions that the invasion of Ireland by the Gaedil of Brigantia was carried out through a military maritime expedition. That is, the Brigantia from which the Gaedil clans came to conquer Ireland was located on the coast and not on the shore of a lake, which excludes Brigantion near Lake Constance. That leaves us with the Brigantes of Britannia, who did live throughout the north of present-day England and part of whose lands were located by the sea. However, the legend clearly states that the invasion originated in Brigantia and was led by Éremón, who was also the king of España.

**The Tower of Brigantia and the Tower of Bréoghán.** A Coruña, in Galicia, had the attested name of Brigantia, according to the Christian priest, historian and Roman theologian Paulus Orosius (383–420 AD) in his manuscript *Historiae Adversum Paganos*, from the year 417: "...ubi Brigantia Gallaeciae ciuitas sita altissimam pharum et inter pauca memorandi operis ad speculam Britanniae erigit." The English translation by I.W. Raymond (1936) is: "There in Gallaecia is situated the city of Brigantia, which raises its very high lighthouse, one of the most remarkable structures in the world, looking towards Britannia."

However, in his translation, Raymond forgot to consider the Latin word *erigit*, which means *to build*. Furthermore, the word *speculam* does not only mean *to look at*, but also *to observe*. In fact, the main meaning of *spēcūla* is *watchtower*, *lookout*<sup>4</sup> and *speculis esse* means *to be alert*, *to be on the lookout*.<sup>5</sup> Orosius also mentions that Britain and Ireland are situated *ad prospectum Hispaniae* (*facing Hispania*).<sup>6</sup> This may attest to the fact that he knew the difference between *facing* (*prospectum*) and the meaning I propose by strictly following Orosius' Latin text: *to watch*, *to lie in wait* (*speculum*). Therefore, the translation I propose is:

*"There in Gallaecia lies the city of Brigantia, which raises its very high lighthouse, one of the most remarkable structures in the world, ~~looking towards~~ built to watch over Britannia."*

Does that make sense? Back in the day, and in the present days, the abundance of one provoked the envy and greed of another. Therefore, I think that such a tall tower was not only used to alert and guide sailors (lighthouse). The lighthouse of A Coruña-Brigantia was possibly multi-purpose. It served as a guide for coastal traders and fishermen, but it also attracted pirates from other coastal regions of the Celtic Sea and served as a watchtower to control the surrounding territory, protecting it from incursions from the sea and land.

Raids were frequent among the Celtic peoples and between clans as well. For centuries, the Irish attacked and occupied the coasts of Wales, forcing the Welsh to seek help from a Scottish leader to drive them back to Ireland. This would better explain why one of the characters in this legend of the last invasion of Ireland, the Gaedil Íth Mac Miled, climbed the tower of Brigantia. He may have been waiting for a fishing

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<sup>3</sup> Geografika, 4 6 8, Strabo.

<sup>4</sup> A New Latin Dictionary, p.1738, Charlton T. Lewis and Charles Short, Harper & Brothers Publishers, Oxford, 1891.

<sup>5</sup> Dictionnaire Latin Français, p.1246, Félix Gaffiot, version V.M. Komarov, 2016.

<sup>6</sup> Thank you to Sarah Van Der Pas.

boat or a coastal trading vessel carrying food or goods or keeping watch for enemies coming by sea or land. I speculate that perhaps the watch was kept in shifts with other warriors from his clan and other clans of the Gaedil Celts who the legend says lived in Brigantia.

Although other authors suggest that the tower of Brigantia-A Coruña was dedicated to the deity of the same name, this is not attested. There is no mention in the sources I consulted that the Galician Brigantia tower had a religious function, although there are epigraphs about a deity Brigantia who was worshipped by the clans that formed the Brigantes confederation in what is now northern England.

The Lebor Gabála Érenn does not refer to it as the Tower of Brigantia, but as the Tower of Bréoghán. Bréoghán was not a deity, but the late patriarchal king of the Mac Miled clan, ancestor of Íth Mac Miled, of the druid Amairgen and his brother Éremón, king of Espaiñ. Could the Tower of Bréoghán be the current Tower of Hercules near A Coruña in Galicia? No traces of pre-Roman (Celtic) constructions were found in the excavations carried out by the team led by Galician archaeologist Dr. José Maria Bello Diéguez in the 1990s.<sup>7</sup>

**Possible linguistic and cultural connections between Galicia and Ireland?** Galician linguist Higinio Martins suggests that the Galician Celtic language spoken in Galicia until the time of the Roman Empire was Gaelic:

*"A clear picture emerges of the linguistic situation in the west of the peninsula (and the rest) in the first millennium. It was surprising to find evidence of the survival of a pre-Roman Indo-European language of the Celtic type until around the year 1000, coexisting with a very archaic Republican Latin. The pre-Roman language shows a profile close to Goidelic Celtic (i.e. Celtic Gaelic spoken in Ireland, Irish) ... At the same time, many other words increasingly corroborate the Celtic nature of this long-forgotten language, with its intact labiovelar Celtic, Goidelic type (n.a. Gaelic)."*<sup>8</sup>

For their part, several Irish scholars believe that the Gaelic language was brought to Ireland by the Gaedil of Brigantia<sup>9</sup> led by the king of Espaiñ Éremón and his brother, the druid Amairgen Mac Miled, as recounted in the Lebor Gabála Érenn. They also believe that the Song of Amairgen was the first poem recited in Ireland and that it was the first time the Gaelic language was spoken on that island. If this is true, the cradle of present Gaelic language and culture was Galicia.

If Éremón and his followers were from Espaiñ (Hispania), they would not have been from British Brigantia. There is no known Brigantia located in Hispania other than A Coruña.

There is this record in an Irish book from 1847: *"There are few people who have not heard of the Mac Carthies – one of the real old Irish families, with the real old Milesian blood (n.a. of the Miled clan or people or families) running in their veins, as thick as buttermilk."*<sup>10</sup> More than two millennia after their legendary (or true?) invasion of Ireland, the Gaedil of Brigantia and their descendants, the MacCarthies of the Ballinacathry region (Cork), were mentioned with respect by Irish authors.

Not only that, but there is also an Irish tradition that links the *banshee* fairies (*bèan sídhe*) to the land of the Mac Miled. They are fairies who announce the death of people. They live in the forests and scream to announce future death. Irish tradition says that these *banshees* only warn of death when the future deceased

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<sup>7</sup> Email dated 14 September 2023 from Dr Ana Santorum, director of the Tower of Hercules.

<sup>8</sup> Obscure or hidden etymologies, Higinio Martins Esteves, Galician Academy of the Portuguese Language, v.2, Annexes, 2015.

<sup>9</sup> Olivia O'Leary on the Song of Amergin: 'It's a poem that sounds a deep echo with any of us born on Ireland' <http://web.archive.org/web/20231127163224/https://www.rte.ie/radio/radio1/stories/1218968-drivetime-olivia-oleary-amergin/> ed on 27 November 2023.

<sup>10</sup> Fairy legends and traditions of the South of Ireland, p.75, John Murray editor, London, 1834.

belongs to one of the Milesian families,<sup>11</sup> descendants of the Gaedil clans who are said to have conquered Ireland.

Therefore, although this invasion by the Gaedil has not yet been proven, the subject is of great interest in Ireland, and I will now begin a comparative analysis of Irish, Breton and Welsh traditions and legends, which seem to correspond to certain traditions in Galicia. I try to discern the possible cosmology of each line of text from the Song of Amairgen Mac Miled, the druid who is said to have created and recited it.

#### 4. THE SONG OF AMAIRGEN

The Lebor Gabála Éirenn manuscript recounts that when the druid Amairgen mac Miled first set his right foot on the Irish island, a Celtic custom that we still use today, he recited the *Invocation of Amairgen*, a poem that calls upon earthly and spiritual powers to grant Ireland to him and his companions. Once his conquest of Ireland was complete, he recited a victory song, *The Song of Amairgen*. It is this song that we will now analyse, comparing it with Irish, Galician, Welsh and Breton traditions.

It should be understood not only as a cry of victory, but as a declaration of the powers that Amairgen mac Miled, now absolute Magistrate of Ireland and Druid-of-the-Druids (Ollam Éirenn), had in the fields of earthly and spiritual wisdom. The Song of Amairgen is an incantation of the powerful conqueror who manages to mobilise all the forces of this world and the Beyond to his advantage to conquer the island of Ireland.

Am gaeth i m-muir,  
Am tond trethan,  
Am fuaime mara,  
Am dam secht ndirend  
Am séig i n-aill,  
Am déir gréne,  
Am cain lubai,  
Am torc ar gail,  
Am hé i l-lind,  
Am loch i m-maig,  
Am brí a ndai,  
Am brí danae,  
Am brí i fodb frás feochtu,  
Am dé delbas do chind codnu,  
Coiche nod gleith clochur slébe?  
Cia on co tagair aesa éscá?  
Cia du i l-laig fuiniud grene?  
Cia beir buar o thig Tethrach?  
Cia Imar Tethrach tibi?<sup>12</sup>

I am the sea wind  
I am the wave of the ocean  
I am the roar of the sea  
I am the bull of seven battles  
I am the eagle on the cliff  
I am the dew  
I am the most beautiful of flowers  
I am a bold boar  
I am a salmon in the lake  
I am a lake on the plain  
I am the mountain in a man  
I am the wise word  
I am the tip of a gun  
I am the god who created fire in the head  
Who protects the rocky mountain?  
Whence does the water of the waterfall come?  
Where does the sun set at the end of the day?  
Who drives the cattle from Tethrach's house?  
Who is Tethrach's heir?

#### 5. DISCUSSION AND RESULTS

The answer to each rhetorical question is he, Amairgen. In the lyrics of Amairgen's Song, the imperative "*I am*" finds parallels in poems dedicated to the Egyptian deity Isis and Greek hymns prior to 350

<sup>11</sup> The London Journal and Weekly Record, v.5-6, p.109, G. Vickers, London, 1847 at [http://web.archive.org/web/20231003085218/https://books.google.at/books?id=AIU-AQAAMAAJ&printsec=frontcover&pg=RA1-PA109&dq=%22Banshee%22+%22Kavanagh%22&hl=en&redir\\_esc=y#v=onepage&q=%22Banshee%22&f=false](http://web.archive.org/web/20231003085218/https://books.google.at/books?id=AIU-AQAAMAAJ&printsec=frontcover&pg=RA1-PA109&dq=%22Banshee%22+%22Kavanagh%22&hl=en&redir_esc=y#v=onepage&q=%22Banshee%22&f=false) 3 October 2023.

<sup>12</sup> Lebor Gabála Éirenn, v.5, p.110-112, Stewart Macalister, Irish Texts Society, Dublin, 1956.



BC.<sup>13</sup> Therefore, the "*I am*" in this invocation poem by the Celtic priest of Brigantia comes from very ancient mythology.

**The sea wind, its roar and the ocean waves. The placid lake.** These texts from the Song invoke the dangerous sea wind in the North Sea, so strong that it roars. They also claim the power of the violent crashing of the waves on the sea cliffs and the icy wind that comes from the North Pole. This is the North Sea, known for its fury and unpredictability. A sunny day with a sea as placid as a lagoon turned into a raging ocean in 30 minutes, with waves crashing against the rocky coastline and spraying jets of foam up to five metres high. This is what I witnessed personally in Saint Jean de Luz (French Basque country). In Galicia, many ships are wrecked on the Costa da Morte. Imagine 2,000 years ago, a fisherman sailing peacefully on a calm sea and within minutes, fighting for his life against the violent waves in a storm.

In Irish tradition, the sea is the Otherworld. The ninth wave carries away the beautiful goddess Clíodna, who was sleeping on the sands of a beach. Her grandfather, the god of the ocean Lír, did not want her to continue courting a mortal and so took her back to the Otherworld, from where she had come to the World of the Living to stay with her human lover.

Lakes, the sea and rivers are portals between the World of the Living and the Otherworld, and the deposition of weapons and objects into water bodies was a frequent practice, either as possible offerings to deities, to neutralise objects that were considered dangerous, or as offerings to deceased ancestors who lived in the Otherworld.<sup>1415</sup> The bottom of the waters (The Beyond) was the origin of malevolent beings, such as the dangerous kelpie ponies and the afanc (abacc, afanco, from Proto-Celtic \*abanco), a word that possibly first meant beaver but later came to also mean leprechaun. The afanc were usually evil and dangerous.

**The bull of seven battles.** It represents male fertility. The Irish goddess of war Mor-Rígain (Queen of the Dead) took her cows to be covered by the bull Donn Cúailnge, the largest in Ireland. But the bull also represents strength, vitality, prestige, riches and power, as can be seen in the legend of Táin Bó Cúailnge (The Brown Bull of Cúailnge). In this legend, the powerful Queen Medb invades the lands of King Conchobar and, after destroying everything in her path, steals the bull Donn Cúailnge, that was the reason for her greed, in order to gain more power, prestige and prosperity.<sup>16</sup> The number seven occurs in few Celtic legends and seems foreign to me, possibly a Christian influence, in a Celtic culture where the number nine is ritually sacred.

**The vulture on the cliff.** It may be the psychopomp bird that carries the souls of the deceased to their destinations in the afterlife. They may be ravens, as Barry Cunliffe points out, based on several Celtic helmets with images or reproductions of ravens found in Ireland, France, and Romania. To these, I add geese (France) as seen on the helmet on the head of the statue of the Celtic deity Brigit of Ménez Hom, from the 1st century AD, in the Musée de Bretagne. Could they perhaps be related to the eagles that were buried at the entrance to megalithic tombs in Northern Europe, as found by archaeologists and described by Gimbutas in her books? If so, then the psychopomp bird, in the case the vulture, is a pre-Celtic tradition. Regarding psychopomp owls from Galicia and the Italian Alps, possibly of pre-Celtic origin, I suggest reading my article on this topic, "*Owl-like plaques from the Copper Age and the dusio, duso, dusion, dūsus, and duc. Not primarily toys, and with deep ritual significance (death)*", which suggests associations between owls, the incubi and death in medieval times as well as interesting findings through the etymology of certain keywords.

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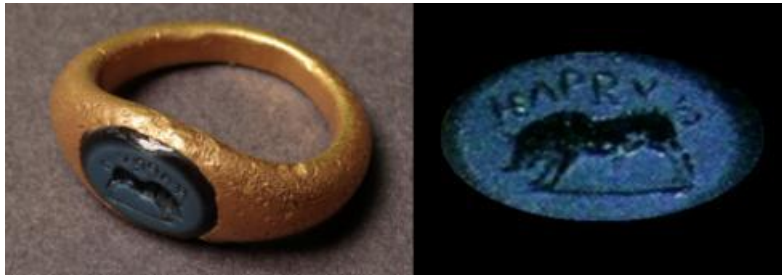
<sup>13</sup> Echoes of Antiquity in the Early Irish Song of Amergin, Lloyd Graham.

<sup>14</sup> The Water Deposition Tradition in Scotland in the Bronze and Iron Age, Kelly Gillikin Schoueri, thesis, University of Edinburgh, 2016.

<sup>15</sup> Strangers from the waters – serpents, canids, horses and others: Indo-European conceptions of human ecology and the CENTRE-PERIPHERY spatial schema, pp. 10–15, Riccardo Ginevra, Stockholm University Press, 2025.

<sup>16</sup> The ancient Irish epic tale Táin Bó Cúailnge (The Cualnge Cattle-Raid), Joseph Dunn, from the Book of Leinster, fo. 64a., David Nutt, London, 1914.

**The warrior boar.** The boar only stops attacking if it is killed. It is a symbol of violence in battle, a Northern European tradition attested to in the Proto-Germanic word *\*eburo* (boar), which derived into Old English *efor* (boar) and Old Norse *jǫfurr*, which no longer means *boar*, but *king*.<sup>17</sup> In other words, this etymological evolution proves that the warrior that is most impetuous and violent like a boar, became king. In Figure 1, we see a gold ring found in the Cies Islands (Galicia) with the effigy of a boar.



**Figure 1.** The Romans called the Cies Islands (Vigo) *Insulae Deorum* (Islands of the Gods). On the left, Galician ring from the Cies Islands (Vigo), 1st-2nd century AD. Found in 1974, solid gold with agate stone, image of a boar attacking with bristling mane. On the right, inverted photo © André Pena Graña. In HEAPRVO, I see the Latin word *apru* (boar) derived from the Indo-European root *\*h<sub>1</sub>(e)pro*.<sup>18</sup> The "S" is not a letter, but rather the boar's tail. Publication authorised by the Pontevedra Museum Funds. *Reproduction without authorisation is prohibited outside this article.*

**The wisdom of salmon and hazelnuts.** In the legend of Nechtan's well (Tobar Nechtan, the Well of Wisdom) or Tobar Segais (the Well of the Forest) in Ireland, the salmon became wise by eating the hazelnuts that fell from nine hazelnut trees growing around the well. This *well* (*tobar*, which also means *spring*) is not artificial, but a pond where wild animals drink, perhaps of the type of *glacial ghost pond* common in England. From Nechtan's well, seven Rivers of Wisdom spring forth, and their waters return to it. In Irish tradition, these rivers are under the ocean. This could possibly mean they are in the Afterlife realm.

According to archaeological findings, hazelnuts were the main food source for pre-Celtic peoples in various regions of Europe and other peoples in China since around 6,000 BC. The pollen map showed a high incidence of hazelnut trees in Ireland and France and a medium-level incidence in northern Galicia. In Ireland, large quantities of hazelnut shells have been found in archaeological investigations, in wells and other places where inedible parts were discarded. Most of the huge hazelnut forests were later gradually replaced by oaks and other trees. The importance of this food, which ensured survival during the winter, may have given rise to the belief that it was a source of wisdom. Hazelnuts are a rich food,<sup>19</sup> and for that reason I speculate that they represented abundance, wealth and, therefore, wisdom in pre-Celtic cultures. Perhaps for this reason, in certain historically Celtic regions, hazel sticks were used against evil, and it was forbidden to use hazel wood for burning.<sup>20</sup> Until recently, it was believed in Wales that carrying a chaplet made of hazel leaves and branches brought good luck.

However, after further investigation, I believe that this is not the reason for the wisdom attributed to hazelnuts. Perhaps the "hazelnuts" mentioned in the Irish legend conceal the consumption of another very unusual product, suggested in the next item of this article.

<sup>17</sup> Etymological Dictionary of Proto-Germanic, p.114, Guus Kroonen, Brill, Leiden, 2013.

<sup>18</sup> Of boars and men, the Latin inscription of the Fucine Lake and a note on the Oscan Tavola d'Agnone, Blanca Maria Prósper, University of Salamanca, pre-print, 2025.

<sup>19</sup> The wild bunch, exploitation of the Hazel in prehistoric Ireland, Anne M. G. McComb and Derek Simpson, Ulster Journal of Archaeology, vol. 58, pp. 1–8, 1993.

<sup>20</sup> Dictionary of Celtic Mythology, p. 265, James Mackillop, Oxford University Press, 2000.

How to identify a wise salmon? When the salmon eats the nine hazelnuts from the nine hazel trees that grow at the edge of the Well of Wisdom, nine spots appear on its body. Whoever eats the flesh of this nine-spotted salmon becomes wise. According to Irish legend, the giant Fionn Mac Cumhaill, who ingested a few drops splashed from the boiling salmon soup made by his mentor, a druid, became very wise.

Hazel trees are known to be among the four most important trees in Celtic mythology, along with ash, oak and yew trees.<sup>21</sup> Yew staffs are used in Christian pilgrimages to San Andrés de Teixido (Galicia), possibly a remnant of pre-Christian pilgrimages. The following Galician tradition was recorded in 1924: a woman in San Xián de Sergude always lost all her children to sicknesses. Her last daughter had also declining health and would soon die. They discovered that this was caused by the *meiga chuchona* (n.a. in Galician tradition, a witch who sucks people's blood). The *Meigas chuchonas* come in the form of large black flies (horseflies) that suck the blood of babies. Galician tradition says that one should '*hit the fly with a sprig of laurel, since there are no hazel trees around here, which would be better.*'<sup>22</sup> The laurel branch scares away the witch-fly, but the hazel branch works better for that, it is more powerful to scare away witches.

**A mountain in a man.** Amairgen is powerful like the telluric force of a mountain. Mountains live. We saw earlier that the name Amairgen means *son* (-gen, -ken) of *song* (amar). In another book of mine, still to be published, I suggest that in northern France and Belgium, the suffix -ken was used to name smaller protrusions on the slope of another larger elevation. French place names such as Barbachen and Barbazán may perhaps descend from the pre-Celtic root *barb-* (protrusion, edge, tip) added to the Proto-Indo-European suffix \*-ken (son).<sup>23</sup> It is attested that the French city of Barbachen was called Barbaxien (1269) and Barbaceno (1415).<sup>24</sup>

Through this etymology, I think that the Celtic peoples believed that a protrusion on the side of a mountain was the daughter of the mountain, which helps to better clarify this phrase from the Song of Amairgen. For the Celts, everything was alive. Rivers, stones, everything had a soul. It would be natural for them to consider a hill or terrace on the side of a mountain as the daughter of the mountain. In Ireland, several hills are associated with the lunar and chthonic deity Áine, which is the moon of the summer solstice (27<sup>th</sup> June): Cnoc Ainne (Hill of Áine) in Limerick and Donegal. The one in Limerick is also close to another hill and is therefore popularly called Áine's Breasts, according to the renowned Irish ethnologist, archaeologist and historian Eamonn P. Kelly, because the shape of the local relief associated with the two hills resembles the body of a reclining woman and her two breasts. Also, there is Dún Áine (Áine's Hill) in Louth and others.

The Earth's relief changes every day (=it is "alive"). The Earth "creates" islands in the sea and destroys them with an explosion, such as Krakatoa, Indonesia, 1883, and the Hunga and Há'apai Tonga islands in Polynesia, created in 2015 and exploded in 2022.

**The wise word and wisdom.** It would represent years of philosophical debate and study in the schools of druids mentioned by the Roman general Julius Caesar in his book *De Bello Gallico* (59 BC). Fifteen to twenty years of study, without writing, memorising poems that are records of history, traditions, mythology, healing techniques, diplomacy, military strategies and Celtic laws. All of this was "archived" in memory and recited in rhyming poems. Significant intelligence is required to achieve this level of study. Furthermore, wisdom was one of the main objectives of the druids. Through one of the legends about Keridwen, we better understand the role of wisdom in Celtic culture:<sup>25</sup>

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<sup>21</sup> Ireland's trees, myths, legends and folklore, pp. 19, 70-72, 75, Niall Mac Coitir, The Collins Press, Cork, 2015. I would like to thank Ms Ida Barret for recommending this book to me.

<sup>22</sup> Traditional Galician Legends, p. 38, by Leandro Carré Alvarellos (1888–1976), Porto, 1957.

<sup>23</sup> Etymological Dictionary of Proto-Celtic, p. 201, Ranko Matasović, Brill, Leiden, 2009.

<sup>24</sup> Dictionnaire toponymique des communes des Hautes-Pyrénées, Michel Grosclaude and Jean-Francois Le Nail, Conseil Général des Hautes-Pyrénées, Tarbes, 2000.

<sup>25</sup> "Ceridwen" in Dictionary of Celtic Mythology, pp. 10, 16, 85, 128, James Mackillop, Oxford University Press, 1998.



*"In times past, there lived in Penllyn a man of gentle lineage named Tegid Foel, and his dwelling was in the midst of Llyn Tegid (Lake Tegid), and his wife was named Caridwen. And there was born to him of his wife a son named Morvran ab Tegid and also a daughter named Creirwy, the fairest maiden in the world was she; and they had a brother the most ill-favoured man in the world, Afagddu..."*

A good mother, Kerridwen was concerned that her son Afagddu would not be accepted among men of noble lineage because of his ugliness. If he had the merit of Wisdom, she thought, he might be accepted. So, consulting the Lyfreu Fferyllt (Books of the Magicians), she decided to cook a cauldron of Inspiration and Science for her son, so that he would be accepted because of his knowledge of the mysteries of the future of the world.<sup>26</sup> This attest to the importance of Wisdom in Celtic culture. Mother Keridwen's first thought was not to find some magic solution that would make her son more handsome or richer, but *to make him wise*. It seems to me that this attests to the great value of wisdom in Celtic culture. Even if Afagddu were the ugliest man in the world, he would be accepted by all if he were wise.

**The god who created fire in the head.** The Celts believed that people's souls resided in their heads, suggests John T. Koch. The head was the soul, so it may be that when the druid Amairgen Mac Miled declared, *"I am the god who sets the head on fire,"* he was referring to *"setting the soul on fire."* Macalister suggests that this refers to "divine inspiration."<sup>27</sup> But what could this god who sets the head on fire be?

Through trances, the druid invokes the spirits of brave warriors and wise druids who have already passed away, seeking to acquire wisdom, information, or victory in earthly battles that are connected to spiritual battles in the afterlife. The Christian fire in the soul is spiritual. The Celtic fire would be perhaps physical (body, in the head) and spiritual (soul).

In the folk imagination of the Iberian Peninsula, England, and France, goblins are associated with mushrooms. There is a red mushroom called Scarlet Elf Cap (*Sarcoscypha coccinea*). There is also *Amanita muscaria*, called *mata-bois* (*bull killer*) mushroom in Portugal, a mushroom that is widely present in Europe. Some ancient European peoples believed that leprechauns lived in mushrooms.<sup>28</sup>

Irish tradition tells us that the *Lupracháin* (Anglicised to *Leprechaun*) were goblins associated with mining and fire. That is why their hair was red.<sup>29</sup> The Christian saint Brigid, possibly a descendant of the Celtic Brigit, is described as having columns of fire on her head. When her nanny fell ill, Brigid drew water from a well to give to her. According to legend, this "water" looked like beer, which is the same colour as dried *Amanita muscaria* tea. This "water", possibly a mushroom infusion (?), cured the nanny. We can just guess if the Celts noticed the red sprites in the troposphere, which may appear as red-orange columns of fire.

A tradition from Brittany details red hair: in the coastal region of Louannec (Côte-d'Armor), an enraged farmer wounded Saint Erwan with a sword. As punishment, according to legend, the farmer's children up to the ninth generation were born with red hair, representing the blood shed by the wounded saint.<sup>30</sup>

The bard Myrddin Wyllt (Merlin the Wild) is said to have composed the following verses, which highlight the significance of the red colour of the flowers of certain apple trees. The apple tree with red flowers is "sought in vain". Are these mythological flowers that exist only in the afterlife? Or are they sought in vain because they were not apple trees, but another type of ingredient?

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<sup>26</sup> The Mabinogion, translated from the Red Book of Hergest, vol. 3, p. 117, Charlotte Guest, T. Fisher, London, 1902.

<sup>27</sup> Lebor Gabála Éirenn, v.5, pp. 110, 111, Stewart Macalister, Irish Texts Society, Dublin, 1956.

<sup>28</sup> Gnomes and Other Male Spirits of Nature, Jesus Callejo Cabo, EDAF, Madrid, 1996.

<sup>29</sup> Popular Tales of Ireland, David Fitzgerald, in *Revue Celtique*, vol. 4, p. 180, F. Vieweg, Paris, 1879, 1880.

<sup>30</sup> Secret Brittany from A to Z, p.141, Bernard Rio, Éditions du Rocher, Monaco, 2011.

<i>Afallen peren a pren fion</i>	<i>Sweet apple tree with red flowers</i>
<i>A tify dan gel yg coed Keliton</i>	<i>That grows hidden in the forest of Caledonia</i>
<i>Kid keisser ofer it herwit y hafon</i>	<i>Sought after, it will be in vain for its virtues</i>
<i>Yny del kadwaladir oe kinadyl Rid</i>	<i>Until Cadwaladr comes to this ford</i>
<i>Reon Kinan in y erbin ef hychwin ar saesson</i>	<i>Rheon Cynan before him attacking the Saxons</i>
<i>Kimry a orvit kein bid eu dragon</i>	<i>The Welsh will win</i>
<i>Kaffaud paub y theithi llauen vi bri brython</i>	<i>They will win their rights, the honour of the Britons</i>
<i>Kenhittor kim eluch kathil hetuch a hinor</i> <sup>31</sup>	<i>They will sound horns, music of peace and good times</i>

Eamonn P. Kelly describes an Irish legend that tells of a day when Lough Gour, in County Limerick, dried up. A knight passing by saw a tree in the middle of the dry lakebed. Underneath it was a woman dressed in a green cloak and weaving cloth.<sup>32</sup> In this case, the colour of the fabric is green and not red. There are also legends about leprechauns wearing green hats or clothes.

In the case of the woman of Lough Gour, Eamonn suggests that it would be the Celtic Tree of Life and the woman would be Áine, the lunar deity. She probably descends from the ancestor Argantorota (Gaelic and Welsh Arianrhod), whose name means Silver Disc. Such was the importance of trees in Celtic mythology that one of the etymologies proposed for the name of the Celtic priest-sage, the druid, comes from *the* Celtic *\*d(a)ru* (*trunk*) and *\*weyd* (*to see, to read, to know*). *\*Druweyd*, druid, the *reader of the trunk, the one who sees the trunk, the knower of the trunk*.<sup>33</sup> The druid would be an expert in reading tree trunks, a ritual<sup>34</sup> described by the Roman historian Pliny the Elder in his encyclopaedia *Historia Naturalis*. But, what could he read in the bark of a tree?

Various cultures on different continents have traditions about an ancestral tree, the Tree of Life. Perhaps they believed that the tree connected the heavens (the treetop) and the earth (the roots) through its trunk (conductor), as attested to in many legends around the world, including Slavic and Germanic ones.<sup>35</sup>

The Germanic peoples believed that the goddess Freya lived in the elder tree. Freya is the protector of homes and houses, of love, and of the fertility of people, animals, and plants. She protects the souls of Germanic warriors who died in battle. But another deity is also related to the elder tree: the deity of water sources, Holla. The equation of this joint dwelling is as follows: Freya guarantees the fertility and protection of people, animals and plants, while Holla ensures that there is no shortage of rain and water for irrigation. The result: an abundance of food for the people of the villages.

However, I thought, the European elder is a shrubby tree. Its trunk can be thick, but this is rare in the cold Germanic lands. If Freya lived *in* the elder, inside it, how could another deity, Holla, fit into this thin shrubby tree? Germanic folk tradition explains: Holla lives *under* the canopy of the elder tree. Nowadays, in Nordic countries, it is traditional to plant an elder tree near houses, although many no longer know why. It is to protect the home and ensure the fertility of people, animals and plants (Freya) and to guarantee water for cultivation (Holla) and an abundance of food. There are two primary concerns, regardless of whether we live in a cave or a luxury flat: safety and food. The regrowth of the cut elder tree and its rapid growth even in cold climates represent the vigour of life and fertility, perhaps even immortality, in the imagination of Germanic peoples.

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<sup>31</sup> Gwyn eu Byd, some comments on the Myrddin poetry, John Bollard, in *Proceedings of the Harvard Celtic Colloquium*, vol. 10, p.76, 1990.

<sup>32</sup> Áine, her Sacred Sanctuary and Enchanted Lake, Eamonn P. Kelly, *Irish Lives Remembered*, vol. 58, Autumn-Winter, pp. 24-36, 2022.

<sup>33</sup> Celtic culture, a Historical Encyclopedia, vol. 1, p. 615, John Koch, ABC Clío, 2006.

<sup>34</sup> Celtic culture, a historical encyclopedia, vol. 1, p. 615, John T. Koch (Editor), ABC Clío, Oxford, 2006.

<sup>35</sup> Tree cult in the mythology of the peoples of the world, Avtandil Israfil Mammadov, Sumgayit State University, Azerbaijan in *Universidad y Sociedad, Scientific Magazine of the University of Cienfuegos*, v.15, no. 3, May-June 2023.

But was this a tradition restricted to the Germanic peoples? Among the people of northern Portugal, it is considered bad luck to cut down elder trees. The explanation given for this belief is that the cross of Christ was made from elder wood, and therefore it is a sacred tree. The juice of its fruits is the colour of Christ's blood.<sup>36</sup> Once again, the colour red is associated with something sacred, in this case, the elder tree.

There are three species of elderberry, *Sambucus canadensis* is North American. It has a thicker trunk, but did not exist in Europe and Judea. The second species is the dwarf elder (*Sambucus ebulus*), which is a shrub without a trunk. Without a trunk, there is no wood for the cross. And the third is *Sambucus nigra*, which is the European elder. It also exists in North Africa. I found no information that it existed in Judea.

But even if the European elder existed in Judea 2,000 years ago, there is a big problem: its wood is weak and soft. It cannot support the weight of a tortured person's body. Why would the Romans make the cross from a tree that may not have existed in Judea, and if it did exist, from weak wood, when they could use other native trees with harder and more durable wood that would be suitable for many crucifixions?

Therefore, this Portuguese tradition of crucifixion on a cross made of elder wood does not make sense from a Christian perspective but may be a pre-Christian belief. The juice of the elder fruit is red in colour. There is a Galician tradition about the ancient oak tree at the town of Santa Marinha das Águas Santas (Alhariz), through whose trunk flows not sap, but blood.<sup>37</sup> Therefore, there is much to be explored concerning the significance of the red colour in the Celtic cosmology.

In the Breton legend from the Louannec region mentioned above, red hair is a curse that punishes those who attack a Christian. That is, from a sacred Celtic colour, possibly associated with life and wisdom, the colour red became cursed in the Christian era, which may explain the prejudice that existed until recently in English-speaking countries against redheads. Before the Christianisation of Ireland, red hair may have had some religious ritual significance that bothered Christian evangelists to the point of creating legends about hereditary curses against people with hair of that colour.

Throughout their thirty-page article on the possible association between the colour red and mushrooms and psychotropic trances caused by *Amanita muscaria*, Erynn Rowan and Timothy White line up several arguments in favour of their proposal.<sup>38</sup> The colour red has a special place in Celtic mythology, as we see in countless examples of clothing (red caps), fruits (the red apple) and nuts, which may include the hazelnut, which is not red but brown in colour, sometimes with reddish hues. Red hair represents fire on the head. The reddish colour of the hair, the red colour of some elves' caps and the red colour of certain mushroom hats could perhaps be related to trances. These trances were explained as journeys to the afterlife to gain wisdom through communication with the deceased and to combat physical and spiritual evils.

The Pole Józef Kopec (1762-1833) was a brigade commander in the army of the Kingdom of Poland. Captured by the Russians in the battle of Dubienka (1792), he was exiled to Siberia, where he lived for some time on the Kamchatka peninsula. One day, suffering from a high fever, he sought out the local Orthodox Christian priest. The priest recommended that he consume some "miraculous mushrooms" to be cured:

*"I ate half of my medicine and immediately lay down, as a deep sleep overtook me. Dreams came one after another. I found myself magnetised by the most attractive gardens, where only pleasure and beauty seemed to reign. Flowers of different colours, shapes and scents appeared before my eyes; a group of beautiful women, dressed in white, walking back and forth, seemed to be busy with the well-being of this earthly paradise. As if satisfied with my arrival, they offered me various fruits,*

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<sup>36</sup> Lebução de Valpaços, the Land, the People and Life in

<https://web.archive.org/web/20250410191848/https://lebucaodevalpacos.blogspot.com/2015/05/reza-lenda-que-da-madeira-de-sabugueiro.html>

<sup>37</sup> Dictionary of Galician Mythical Beings, p.73, Xoán R. Cuba et al, Edicións Xerais de Galicia, Vigo, 2023.

<sup>38</sup> Speckled Snake, brother of Birch, *Amanita muscaria* motifs in Celtic legends, Erynn Rowan Laurie and Timothy White, Shaman's Drum, no. 44, 1997.

*berries and flowers. This well-being lasted throughout my sleep, which was a few hours longer than my usual rest. After waking up from such a pleasant dream, I discovered that this pleasure was an illusion.*<sup>39</sup>

This could well be a description of Tir na Taimgire, the Welsh Promised Land, or another of the several Paradises described in Celtic legends. However, Józef Kopec's diary continues with an unusual account:

*I can only mention that, since the period when I first became aware of the notions of life, everything I had seen before me from my fifth or sixth year (of life), all the objects and people I had known over time and with whom I had had some relationship, all my games, occupations, actions, one after another, day after day, year after year, in a word, the image of my entire past became present in my vision. Regarding the future, different images followed one another and will not occupy a special place here, as they are dreams. I should only add that, as if inspired by magnetism, I came across some mistakes made by my evangelist [i.e., the Orthodox priest] and noticed that he received these warnings almost as the voice of the Apocalypse.*<sup>40</sup>

Józef Kopec describes a paradisiacal place with fairies, fruits, and flowers. Then came the vision of all the events of his life since he was five or six years old. He also visualised what seemed to him to be the future. If the Druids consumed *Amanita muscaria*, could it be that these experiences gave them wisdom and supposed premonitions about the future? Also, the vision of all the events of a life since he was 6 years old in a clear way and short time seems to me to be similar to some of the visions described by people who have had near-death experiences (NDEs).

And what is most unusual is that it seems that the Polish soldier, "inspired by magnetism," somehow knew of the mistakes (sins) committed by the priest who had given him the "miraculous mushrooms." Even more unusual is that when the Polish soldier mentioned this to the priest, the priest took the soldier's warnings against his sins seriously "as if it were the voice of the Apocalypse". It may be that the priest was gullible or that the Polish soldier somehow learned beforehand of the priest's "sins." In a place with few inhabitants, everyone knows each other, and someone may have commented to the soldier about the priest's mistakes, and he, sleeping under the effects of the mushroom, saw these sins of the priest. At no point does this account state that the "miraculous mushrooms" were *Amanita muscaria* mushrooms, but this mushroom exists widely in Eurasia and is used in shamanic rituals in Siberia, although it is important to note that *Amanita muscaria* is toxic and highly dangerous for human consumption.

**The dew.** When Amairgen invokes the powers of dew for himself, he incorporates one of the most potent forces in the universe. Dew heals diseases and fertilises all things, according to Galician tradition.<sup>41</sup> Irish medieval legends tell that dew fertilises the earth. In Irish tradition, it is called Dew of the Goddesses (Druth Déa), and is produced by the Earth when fertilised by the sun god (Lug).<sup>42</sup> The earth is the wife of the Sun (Lug), according to several Irish legends, especially mentioning the deity Cailleach, who is the winter moon, but like her younger sister Áine, also a telluric deity who names hills and mounds in Ireland.

In Galicia and Ireland, dew is rubbed on the body and face, preferably at sunrise. The dawn of St. John's Day is most conducive to this ritual. But, why at dawn? I think that at dawn the sun is "young" and

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<sup>39</sup> Józef Kopec's diary of a journey all along Asia, by flight from the port of Okhotsk by ocean through the Kuril Islands to Lower Kamchatka, and from there [!] back to the port on dogs and deer, M. Frydlender, Wrocław, 1837.

<sup>40</sup> Józef Kopec's diary of a journey all along Asia, by flight from the port of Okhotsk by ocean through the Kuril Islands to Lower Kamchatka, and from there [!] back to the port on dogs and deer, M. Frydlender, Wrocław, 1837.

<sup>41</sup> Las huellas de Santiago en la cultura de Finisterre, p.5, Benjamin Trillo Trillo, Gráficas do Castro, O Castro, 1982.

<sup>42</sup> An Bó Bheannaithe: Cattle Symbolism in Traditional Irish Folklore, Myth, and Archaeology, Amy Sherwood, McNair Online Journal, v.3, art. 21, 2009.pdf



more vigorous. Dawn is the moment when dew sparkles in the sunlight. But beware, when rubbing dew on the skin to achieve healing and blessings, according to my interpretation of Galician traditions, it is not the water that works the magic. It is the ray of sunshine (Lug) trapped in the dew that heals and blesses. In Figure 2, we see how the dew seems to trap the rays of the morning sun, as if they were tiny golden drops.



**Figure 2:** At dawn, the rays of the young and vigorous Celtic sun god Lug, captured by the dew and ready for harvest. ©jplenio @pixabay

Therefore, I believe that along with the “excipient” dew, we pass on the active ingredients (the sun's rays, the powers of Lug, of light, of life, of Dies Pather, the powerful god of gods) to the skin, to the body. We absorb the sun, life, fertility and, therefore, promote prosperity. An Irish legend tells us that one day, a priest was walking through the grounds belonging to his church. It was early on a summer morning, and he saw an elderly lady collecting dew from the grass, which was tall and lush. She repeated her mantra:

*"Come to me! Come to me!"*

The priest, annoyed by this pagan ritual that had survived after a thousand years of Christianisation efforts, muttered: *"And half for me!"*

The next morning, he found out that there was three times more butter than usual in his pantry. They went to investigate the elderly lady's house and found three large barrels full of fresh butter, even though she only had one goat. Therefore, she was a "witch," the legend concludes.<sup>43</sup> This legend was collected in a 1913 book called *Irish Witchcraft and Demonology*. In fact, there is nothing about witchcraft or demonic about it, but rather a Celtic cosmology where everything has its logic: dew comes from the intercourse between the Sun and Earth and therefore it brings fertility to humans that bath themselves with it. Dew brings health, prosperity, because it traps the rays of the rising sun and the sun is the powerful god Lug. It is just a cosmology different from the Christian one, no demons, no witchery.

The dew (fertility, healing, blessing) collected at dawn, butter (from milk, abundance, wealth), and the number three and its multiple nine. All of this has special meaning in Celtic culture and is often found in Galician traditions. In Portugal, the dew on St. John's night blesses the herbs.<sup>44</sup> In Galicia, washing the body with dew must take place the following morning to St. John's eve, just as the sun rises. Take the water in your hands and splash it on your face...facing the sunrise.<sup>45</sup> Once again, it seems that it is not the herbs or the dew that matter, but the sun's rays captured by the dewdrops "just as the sun rises" (= when it is at its most young, therefore more powerful). Other Celtic traditions in Ireland and Portugal<sup>46</sup> mention that girls who wash their faces with dew are more sexually attractive to boys.

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<sup>43</sup> *Irish Witchcraft and Demonology*, p.242, John Seymour; Hodges, Figgis Co, Dublin, 1913

<sup>44</sup> *Cyclical Festivities in Portugal*, pp. 107-110, Ernesto Veiga de Oliveira, Etnográfica, 2020 (1995).

<sup>45</sup> *Dictionary of Galician Mythical Beings*, p.127, Xoán R. Cuba et al, Edicións Xerais de Galicia, Vigo, 2023.

<sup>46</sup> *Cyclical Festivities in Portugal*, p.108, Ernesto Veiga de Oliveira, Etnográfica, 2020 (1995).



Therefore, when the druid Amairgen Mac Miled proclaimed, "*I am the dew*," he was not claiming for himself a useless drop of water, but the potent powers of the young sun god Lug, whose morning light is imprisoned in the dew, and the fertility of the goddess Earth, which Irish legends mention that is the tectonic deity Cailleach. Lug fertilises the Earth and thus makes all life on it possible. For the Celtic peoples, children of the night,<sup>47</sup> each morning meant rebirth.

Eamonn P. Kelly suggests that the Irish deities Áibell, Áine and Cailleach, who rules winter, represent the same single deity at different ages since her rebirth in spring.<sup>48</sup> I speculate that they could be associated with the *Matribus Gallaicis* mentioned in Roman writings, whose cult was strongly present in large parts of the Iberian Peninsula. Hundreds of effigies of the three *Matribus Gallaicis* have been found by archaeologists and are usually represented as three women: the young woman (with loose hair), the mature woman (with tied hair) and the elderly woman. Could the *Matribus Gallaicis* be the lunar trinity of Áibell, Áine and Cailleach?

The Scandinavian ritual of walking barefoot on dew-covered grass, collecting dew with cloths, or for the more enthusiastic, rolling naked in the dewy grass at the Scandinavian festival of Midsommar (Midsummer, the summer solstice), may be traces from an ancient Nordic belief on the power of dew. There, this is attributed to the healing power of water, but I think that Celtic tradition has better preserved the meaning of dew mythology: dew captures the sun's rays and when applied to the skin transmits the benefits from the sun-god. More recent Germanic rituals such as dancing around the maypole are accompanied by songs and cheerful music, but dew bathing in Sweden must be practised in silence, without singing or music.<sup>49</sup> This dew bathing is therefore a solemn ritual and not a festive dance.

In Nordic traditions, dew does not seem to have preserved the mythological significance that exists in Celtic traditions. Jacob Grimm, in his book *Deutsche Mythologie*, reports that in Germanic tradition, the Valkyries ride through the air and fertilising dew falls on the earth from their stallions. Germanic dew, in the Old Germanic language *der thau*, modern German *der Tau*, also fertilises the earth. But it does not come from the enjoyment of the Earth deity, fertilised by the Celtic sun god Lug.<sup>50</sup>

#### 4. CONCLUSIONS

This study has undertaken a comparative mythological analysis of the Song of Amairgen, contextualizing its verses within selected Celtic traditions of Ireland, Galicia, Wales, and Brittany. Through a detailed examination of symbolic motifs and cosmological assertions, the research demonstrates that Amairgen's invocation functions as a powerful mytho-cosmological declaration of identity, and spiritual authority. The repeated "I am" majestic formula aligns Amairgen with divine archetypes found in Egyptian, Greek, and Proto-Indo-European traditions. Researchers may reconsider the role of myth contained in ancient Celtic poetry under the light of surviving legends from the several Celtic countries and use mythic texts to interpret how ancient peoples ritualized their environment. The investigation into the persistence of Ancient Celtic mythic elements in modern rituals and oral traditions, is an enticing subject.

Beyond methodological constraints, a broader limitation of this study lies in the interpretative nature of mythological sources. The Song of Amairgen, like several ancient texts, exists in multiple versions and translations, often influenced by Christian redactions or later interpolations. However, even if we do not believe in the total or partial veracity of the legend of the last invasion of Ireland, analysing Amairgen's Song

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<sup>47</sup> De Bello Gallico, book 6, chapter 18, Julius Caesar, 58-49 BC.

<sup>48</sup> Áine, her Sacred Sanctuary and Enchanted Lake, Eamonn P. Kelly, Irish Lives Remembered, v.58, Autumn-Winter, pp. 24-36, 2022.

<sup>49</sup> Midsummer – a celebration of life, love and magic, The Nordic Times, 3 July

<sup>50</sup> <https://web.archive.org/web/20240703113833/https://nordictimes.com/culture/midsummer-a-celebration-of-life-love-and-magic/>

<sup>50</sup> Deutsche Mythologie, v.1, p.274, Jacob Grimm, edited by Elard Hugo Meyer, Ferd. Dümmlers Verlagsbuchhandlung, Berlin, 1875.

Sobota J.M. *The powerful Song of Amairgen Mac Miled of Brigantia (Spain)....*

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from the perspective of Irish, Welsh, Breton and Galician Celtic mythology opens up new points of view that could be explored further.

Amairgen moved the forces of the Celtic Universe against the treacherous three kings of Ireland. He, Amairgen Mac Miled, is powerful and victorious because he knows how to mobilise the powers of nature and the Beyond. He is a true leader in every sense, in the World of the Living and the Afterlife too. The Song of Amairgen is proof of this, when we analyse the possible mythologic meaning of its text. If I were his adversary in a battle in 600 BC, the estimated year of Amairgen's saga, and heard this invocation to the sound of a crowd of Gaelic warriors from Galicia banging their swords on their shields and playing their *karnix* trumpets in the style of Galician musician Abraham Cupeiro, I would not stay in that apocalyptic place.<sup>51</sup>

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<sup>51</sup> A Celtic kárnix roars, Abanca Balaídos by Abraham Cupeiro, December 2024, in [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RIWcd0ITp78&list=RDRIWcd0ITp78&start\\_radio=1](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RIWcd0ITp78&list=RDRIWcd0ITp78&start_radio=1)

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