Out of the Past: Pictish Culture and Language

David Syvitski, Major in Anthropology

The Pictish people have fascinated scholars and historians since they were first encountered by Romans in the First Century CE. An independent people who lived in the north-eastern region of the British Isles, they have been defined by the various groups who interacted with them. What we know of them is what others have written of them. They left very little archaeological evidence of their existence; a very small corpus of stone carvings and perhaps some settlement sites. Can the opinions of outsiders be used exclusively to provide an authentic picture of a people now lost to history?

The first recorded account of these people came from the Roman historian Ptolemy in the first century CE, whose remarkably accurate map of Scotland described four separate tribes living in the region (Henderson 15-16). Between the third and fourth centuries, the historians Cassius Dio and Ammianus Marcellinus found that there were now two major tribes who had "absorbed all the other tribes" (Henderson 18). They each applied various names to the groups, but what is clear is that "from the second to the fourth century the main Pictish area was divided into two political [groups]" (Henderson 18).

The collapse of the Roman Empire in the beginning of the 5th Century CE would have a profound effect on the future of what would later be known as Scotland. Soon, the Irish-Scot kingdom of Dalraida would be established in the South-western corner of the Pictish lands, and Britons began to establish the control of territory to the south of the Picts (Henderson 39-40). Angles also began to land on British shores and by 550 CE had established the kingdom of Northumbria (Henderson 40). Reacting to this chaos, a unified Pictish kingdom was formed under the rule of Bridie (Henderson 40). The unified kingdom maintained its borders with the other groups in relative equilibrium – the four peoples constantly shifting alliances but no significant changes occurring – until the sudden and violent arrival of the Norse in the Ninth Century. At this point "the whole perilous balance collapsed and the ancient kingdom of the Picts was lost in the wreckage" (Henderson 41).

There is very little doubt that the Picts were a combination of the Bronze Age inhabitants of Britton and Celtic refugees being forced from Continental Europe due to Roman expansion into the north from the Italian peninsula (Henderson 20). This would have begun around 100 BCE and by the time Rome began to conquer Britain in the first century CE, a new people were emerging who would eventually be called the Picts. The name Pict itself is likely a reference to the Latin word Picti, and meant "painted people" (Keys 43), but it also may be linked to Prettani, the name – meaning "people of the design/symbols" – which was used to describe all the peoples of pre-Roman Britain (Keys 43). Both names may implicitly refer to the practice of tattooing which was one of the characteristics associated with the Picts (Keys 43). It is impossible to know how factual this association is. Scholars have found that "few of these accounts are independent and how little direct knowledge lies behind any of them" (Henderson 33). However, there is enough evidence to suggest the "possibility" (33) that the practice was brought north by the

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Jane Cahill resides in the department of Classics. She teaches courses in Latin and Greek, as well as *Greek and Latin in Today's English* and *The Classical Roots of Medical Terminology.*

Amy Desroches (Psychology) uses cognitive and brain imagining methods to examine reading and language development. In particular, her work focuses on the role of phonology in learning to read, and the impact that reading development has on spoken language processing.

Lois Edmund is a Clinical Psychologist who teaches Conflict Resolution Studies. Her interest is in using communication for effective prevention and resolution of conflicts.

George Fulford is an Anthropological linguist, specializing in Cree and Algonquian languages. He is especially interested in problems related to grammaticalization, language origins, and semiotics and structuralism.

Zbigniew Izydorczyk teaches at the Department of English. His areas of special interest include Old and Middle English, history of English, history of Latin, and palaeography.

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Jorge Machín-Lucas (Modern Languages) is a specialist in XXth and XXIst Century Spanish Literature, and teaches courses in Spanish Normative Grammar and History of the Spanish Language.

During her career in linguistics **Karen Malcolm** (English) has used Communication Linguistics (a development of Halliday's System Functional Grammar) and its descriptive framework, phasal analysis, to analyze and explore a great variety of texts: spoken and written, literary and non-literary.

Liliane Rodriguez (Modern Languages) teaches Linguistics, Comparative Stylistics and Translation. Her main research is in Lexicometry, Geolinguistics and Bilingualism. She is the author of several books and of many articles in Linguistics and Translation Studies.

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Students

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Spring 2015		
LING 2003 / ANTH 2403 / ENGL 2802 Syntax	Tu-Th (May) 10 -02 PM	K. Malcolm
Fall/Winter 2015/16		
LING 1001 Introduction to Linguistics	MWF 01:30-02:20 PM	I. Roksandic
LING 3311 / FREN 3111 Comparative Stylistics and Translation	MW 04-5:15 PM	L. Rodriguez
Fall 2015		
LING 2002 / ANTH 2402 / ENGL 2805 Morphology	MWF 11:30-12:20 PM	I. Roksandic
LING 2004 / ANTH 2405 / ENGL 2806 Semantics	Tu-Th 10:00-11:15 AM	G. Fulford
LING 2301 / FREN 2202 Phonetics	MW 02:30-03:45 PM	L. Rodriguez
CLAS 2850 The Classical Roots of Medical Terminology	MW 04-05:15 PM	T. Sukava
CRS 2252 Conflict and Communication	M 06-09 PM	C. H. Morris
PSYC 2620 Psycholinguistics	Tu-Th 02:30-03:45 PM	A. Desroches
LING 3006 / 4006 / ANTH 3400 / 4400 Language Typology	MWF 09 :30-10 :20 AM	I. Roksandic
DEV 3300 Speech and Language Disorders in Children	Th 05:30-08:30 PM	J. Simpson
RHET 3236 Orality and Literacy	MW 04-05 :15 PM	R. Byrnes
Winter 2016		
LING 2001 / ANTH 2401 / ENGL 2803 Phonetics and Phonology	Tu-Th 02:30-03:45 PM	S. Tulloch
LING 2103 / ANTH 2400 Method and Theory in Linguistic Anthropology	Tu-Th 10:00-11:15 AM	G. Fulford
LING 2101 / ANTH 2406 / ENGL 2804 Language and Culture	W 06-09 PM	K. Malcolm
LING 2103 / ANTH 2404 Languages of the World	MWF 11:30-12:20 PM	I. Roksandic
LING 2208 / CLAS 2800 Greek and Latin in Today's English	W 06-09 PM	J. Cahill
CRS 2252 Conflict and Communication	MW 04-05:15 PM	L. Edmund
LING 3001 / ANTH 3405 / ENGL 3800 Textual Analysis	Tu-Th 10:00-11:15 AM	K. Malcolm
LING 3101 / ANTH 3407 Institutional Discourse	Tu-Th 01:00-02:15	K. Malcolm
RHET 3151 Critical Studies of Discourse	Tu-Th 02:30-03:45 PM	C. Taylor
PSYC 3480 Interpersonal Communication	M 06-09 PM	W. Josephson
LING 4005 / ANTH 4401 Semiotics and Structuralism	W 2:30-5:15 PM	G. Fulford

Celtic refugees and was still in widespread use during the First Millennium CE.

Unlike all other Celtic cultures, which dominated and replaced the earlier peoples they encountered on the British Isles, the Picts appear to have absorbed, or been absorbed by, the original inhabitants (Henderson 32). They were matrilineal, and likely a polyandrous, society. Bede makes note of this in his Ecclesiastical History of the English People written in the 8th Century CE (Henderson 31). There are also two lists of kings that were produced by Irish chroniclers in the twelfth and fourteenth centuries that demonstrate the matrilineal lineage (Anderson 2). It is interesting that with the lists of kings, those listed before the historic period are portrayed as being of patrilineal descent, whereas those listed afterwards were clearly of matrilineal descent. It is probable that the Irish chroniclers added the earlier names and based them on their own lineage system in order to make the lists more complete (Henderson 35).

The Picts spoke a variant of the P-Celtic – or Brittonic – branch of the Celtic languages, but this language did not overwhelm the original inhabitants of the region. This branch is distinct from other Brittonic branches as it shares certain features with the Gaulish branches that are not found in other Brittonic lines and has therefore been called Gallo-Brittonic (Radford 148, Henderson 30). Linguists have determined that many northern place names are not of a Celtic origin and are likely based on the non-Indo-European language of the original inhabitants (Radford 148).

The Irish Ogham alphabet was introduced to the Picts by the Irish-Scots during the Eighth Century (Henderson 31) and this led to the production of the Pictish Symbol Stones. It is from these stones – around 450 found so far (Keys 41) – that scholars have the most direct evidence of Pictish culture (Radford 148). Their language is still undeciphered and the images found on the stones combine the Ogham-style alphabet with images of men, known animals, mythic creatures and abstract symbols. Most of the Symbol Stones are thought to represent individual or place names which may also add to the difficulty in being able to decipher the language fully (Henderson 31).

A group of people known to history as the Picts did indeed exist in the North Eastern portion of Scotland during most of the First Millennium CE. They were likely a rare combination of Celtic refugees from Europe and the pre-Celtic inhabitants they encountered while fleeing Roman expansion. They appear to have formed various tribes and were eventually united under a single kingdom once the Roman Empire collapsed. The evidence seems to show that they fought both against and with their various neighbors until they were utterly destroyed during the Viking invasions. It is precisely due to the scant, but alluring, information about them that the Picts have captured the imaginations of both classical writers and current historians. The descriptions of them as wild and violent tattooed barbarians may have been exaggerated, but this perception likely started with some elements of truth. It is always diffi-

cult to separate fact from fiction when the recorded history of a people comes from outside sources. As limited as these sources are, as scant as the archaeological evidence they left is, a picture does emerge through the fog of time of a proud and independent people who have been now lost to history.

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A fanciful Giclee print of a Pictish warrior with spear and shield http://www.historyfiles.co.uk/FeaturesBritain/RomanGwynedd01.htm

Evidence of Embedding in Pirahã

Mathieu Paillé, Major in Linguistics

Pirahã, the only survivor of the Múra language family, is spoken by 360 (of 1,500) Pirahã people in the Brazilian state of Amazonas, along the Maici and Autaces rivers. It is a tonal language that can be spoken, hummed, or whistled (Ethnologue 2014). Pirahã caused a highly publicized controversy after Daniel Everett, the linguist who does fieldwork in Pirahã communities, argued that Pirahã lacks a number of qualities that are viewed as universal, including embedding and even recursion. These allegations led Everett to argue that Noam Chomsky's view of Universal Grammar (UG) was incorrect, and indeed that UG does not exist at all. I argue, however, that Everett's evidence for Pirahã's lack of embedding is based on faulty analyses of the data.

In 2005, Daniel Everett published an article about Pirahã containing a number of controversial claims. The article argues that Pirahã lacks any numbers (or even "a concept of counting" or "any terms of quantification" such as words for 'one' or 'all'), lacks any colour terms, has the simplest known pronoun inventory and kinship system, has no embedding, and indeed, lacks recursion entirely (Everett 2005:621, 634). Everett also argues that Pirahã culture has no "creation myths and fiction" or even any "collective memory of more than two generations past," has no "drawing or other art," and has "one of the simplest material cultures documented" (Everett 2005:621). He claims that these peculiarities in Pirahã language and culture should not be viewed as individual aberrations, but as a systematic result of Pirahã culture's 'immediacy of experience principle':

Grammar and other ways of living are restricted to concrete, immediate experience (where an experience is immediate in Pirahã if it has been seen or recounted as seen by a person alive at the time of telling), and immediacy of experience is reflected in immediacy of information encoding—one event per utterance (Everett 2005:622).

He therefore concludes that "if the form or absence of things such as recursion, sound structure, word structure, quantification, numerals, number, and so on is tightly constrained by a specific culture … then the case for an autonomous, biologically determined module of language is seriously weakened" (Everett 2005:634). In other words, Everett argues that Universal Grammar does not exist. This claim, however, is easily cast aside, as Nevins, Pesetsky, and Rodrigues (2009a:357 henceforth NP&R, following the literature) explain: the term [UG], in its modern usage, was introduced as a name for the collection of factors that underlie the uniquely human capacity for language … there is no general universal-grammar model for which the claims of [Everett 2005] could have consequences—only a wealth of diverse hypotheses *about* UG and its content.

The claims of Everett 2005 are therefore "irrelevant" to the argument that language is biologically determined (NP&R 2009a:358). Hence, I focus on Everett's comments about embedding and recursion.

These comments refer to recent remarks made by Noam Chomsky, in places such as an article written by Marc D. Hauser, Chomsky, and W. Tecumseh Fitch (henceforth HC&F), called "The Faculty of Language: What Is It, Who Has It, and How Did It Evolve?" (2002). They argue that linguists must distinguish between the faculty of language in the broad sense (FLB) and in the narrow sense (FLN); FLB contains mechanisms that are necessary for language and is comprised of the "'sensory-motor' and 'conceptual-intentional'" systems (roughly, 'sound/signs' and 'meaning,' respectively), as well as FLN itself (HC&F 2002:1570–1571). FLN, in turn, is defined as those mechanisms that are used in language *and* are unique to human beings; HC&F (2002:1569) "hypothesize that FLN only includes recursion." However, HC&F are open to the possibility that the conceptual-intentional interface is also uniquely human, and thus part of FLN—a point they emphasize enough to make Everett's claim that they said FLN was *only* recursion to be somewhat misleading (HC&F 1576). Everett (passim) argues against HC&F's claims, pointing to Pirahã's perceived lack of recursion—which he mostly tries to demonstrate by analyzing Pirahã syntax as lacking embedding.

A significant focus in Everett's

proof for Pirahã's lack of embedding comes from his view that Pirahã subordinate clauses—which he had analyzed as such in 1986—are actually not subordinate at all, but cases of "paratactic conjoining" (Everett 2005:629). Because such clauses, which are marked by a nominalized verb, do not occur in the usual direct-object position (Pirahã is SOV), he claims they are best interpreted as independent sentences, or "as a type of comment" (Everett 2005:629).

    (1)   hi   obáa'áí   kahai kai-   sai
            3   [see]   arrow make [nomlzr]
          'He knows how to make arrows well' (Everett 2005:629).

Note that, in (1), 'kahai kaisai' does not occur between S and V, where non-clausal objects would be positioned. Therefore, the argument goes, it cannot be a subordinate clause.

However, this analysis is wrong for three reasons. First, as NP&R (2009a:374) point out, Everett has already argued that due to a "stylistic mechanism to avoid overcrowding of the space between S and V," oblique objects that are "larger than five or six syllables tend to undergo movement to postverbal position" (Everett 1986:206). As such, it is conceivable that entire clauses would *also* be prevented from occurring between S and V due to this mechanism. Second, it is usual among the world's languages for clausal complements to be linearized differently from nominal complements, so the entire argument is poorly informed (NP&R 2009b:673). Finally, Everett (2005:629) proves his own thesis wrong when he points out that "multiple nominalized or other types of subordination [*sic*] [cannot] occur in any sentence." If these are mere "comments," then why not? It is sounder to analyze these clauses as subordinate, with a Pirahã ban on multiple such cases of embedding.

Another of Everett's arguments against embedding pertains to what he had previously analyzed as temporal clauses (clauses whose verbs are marked by -*so* or, as an allomorph, -*áo*). These too, he says, are actually separate sentences. He reanalyzes -*so* as marking completed events, so that what Everett 1986 had translated as "When I finish eating, I want to speak to you" should actually read "I finish eating; I speak to you":

    (2)   kohoai   -kabáob   -áo   ti   gí   'ahoaisoogabagaí.
            eat   finish   temporal [*sic*] 1   2   [want to speak]
          'When [*sic*] [I] finish eating, I want to speak to you' (Everett 2005:630).

The analysis of -*so* as marking completion is shaky because the only example Everett gives, (2), *already includes* a morpheme that means 'to finish,' namely 'kabáob.' As for Everett's view that these clauses are separate sentences, he relies on prosody, saying only that "there is almost always a detectable pause between the temporal clause and the 'main clause'" (Everett 2005:630). In later work, however, Everett (2009:423) rejects, while discussing another matter, the idea that prosody can be used at all to discuss these issues in Pirahã: work in prosody and intonation has enough trouble coming up with results for English, never mind even trying with a language as poorly studied as Pirahã. Thus, Everett's "sole argument that temporal clauses are unembedded [*sic*] … disappears if we accept [his] skepticism about the relevance of such data in light of the current state of research on Pirahã intonation" (NP&R 2009b:676).

A third argument Everett makes regards relative clauses: he claims Pirahã does not have any, because they are in fact unembedded correlative clauses. As NP&R (2009a:380) explain, "a correlative construction consists of a subordinate adjunct clause that contains a relative or interrogative phrase, and a main clause that contains a nonrelative, noninterrogative *counterpart* to the relative or interrogative phrase" (NP&R 2009a:380). Here is one such Pirahã example:

    (3)   ti   baósa- ápisí 'ogabagaí.   Chico hi   goó   bagáoba
            1   [hammock]   want.   name 3   what   sell
          ['I want the hammock that Chico sold'] (Everett 2005:630).

Everett (2005:630) analyzes this sentence thus:

There is a full sentence pause between the verb *'ogabagaí* 'want' and the next clause. The two sentences are connected contextually, but this is not embedding … The second sentence, on its own, would be a question, 'What did Chico sell?' In this context, however, it is the co-relative.

In regards to prosody, see my comments above. Further, the Pirahã example actually fits the usual description of correlatives perfectly well; there is no syntactic need to interpret the text as consisting of two sentenc-

es. Indeed, "the fact that the string *Chico hi goó* [*bagáoba*] may function as an interrogative sentence may be no more relevant to Pirahã than the comparable English fact about the substring *who left the room* in *The man who left the room was asleep*" (NP&R 2009a:381). Everett's argument, as such, does not hold.

Another argument in favour of seeing such clauses as embedded, argued by NP&R (2009a:380), comes from Everett's (1986:277) earlier assertion, which Everett 2005 does not discuss or disprove, that "Pirahã only relativizes direct objects and subjects." As NP&R (2009a:380) point out, "there is no reason to expect such a restriction to hold of distinct sentences that are merely juxtaposed." Everett (2009:413) later argues against this claim, saying that "the real generalization is not that only subjects and objects can be relativized," but that "only topics may be relativized" and "only subjects and objects may be topics." Maybe so, but again, if these correlative clauses are separate sentences ("comments"), then why would there be any restriction at all, topic or otherwise?

Thus, Everett's evidence that Pirahã lacks embedding is consistently based on weak analysis. The phrases he had identified as embedded in 1986 are indeed embedded, not separate sentences or comments. This undermines his more general points about recursion, which in turn undermines his points about UG. Of course, a longer essay would also have critically examined dubious claims about other peculiarities in Pirahã, such as the perceived lack of colour terminology. All in all, it is unfortunate that many linguists have accepted Everett's conclusion that Pirahã presents a challenge to UG when the analysis he uses to reach this conclusion is so poor.

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Students' Corner

During his undergraduate years at the University of Winnipeg, **Ryan Winning** was a keen student, with a passion for French. As an anglophone, he learned French as a second language, mostly in the Department of Modern Languages and Literatures. He was selected as an exchange student in the UW-Bordeaux Program, for one academic year, which he brilliantly completed. He then returned to the University of Winnipeg to graduate, in 2014, as an Honours student in French Studies. While acquiring advanced competence as a French Honours student, he steadily developed a strong interest for linguistics and translation. Ryan took most of my courses in those two fields, consistently obtaining the highest marks, as he also did in the French literature courses he took with my colleagues. When he started orienting himself towards graduate studies in linguistics, he became a student in the University of Winnipeg Interdisciplinary Program in Linguistics, and took all the courses necessary for graduate school. He was very successful in his applications, and opted for the Master's Program at the University of Paris III-Sorbonne Nouvelle. Now starting his second year, to write a thesis in sociolinguistics, he has just won a 10,000-euro bursary from the Université Sorbonne-Paris Cité, in a competition open to promising foreign graduate students attending a French university. All his professors congratulate him on this recognition from the University of Paris.

Liliane Rodriguez, Professor, Modern Languages and Literatures

The Red Dragon of Wales

Katharina Klassen, Major in Linguistics

In discussing the potential causes for the realization of dragons in mythology, Richard B. Stothers argues that "ancient art and literature are peppered with depictions of huge serpents of various kinds. Certain similarities among all these serpents, however, occur across many cultures…" (2004, p.220). In the case of the Indo-European language family, these commonalities are particularly prominent, and are exemplified in the various local mythologies of I.E. daughter languages in which giant serpents are personified and exaggerated originally for the purpose of explaining phenomena in nature such as droughts. However, over time, the mythologies of more contemporary Indo-European daughter languages have begun to separate from their original purpose by developing details which no longer serve to depict natural happenings, and therefore hold different meanings for the people amongst whom the stories are told. The purpose of this paper is to determine the development of the story and characteristics of *Y Ddraig Goch*, the red dragon featured on the national flag of Wales, from the Celtic and Proto-Indo-European dragon-slaying mythologies.

Using the *typological* Comparative Method, initially explicated by Antoine Meillet (1925) and further developed by Calvert Watkins (1995), several commonalities between the Indo-European daughter languages may be noted as being characteristic of the Proto-Indo-

European dragon-slaying myth. Firstly, the dragon character may be portrayed as a dragon or, in earlier texts, as a serpent which particularly symbolizes chaos when some natural resource, often water, is being restrained. The second characteristic of the Proto-Indo-European dragon-slaying myth is that the dragon typically conducts battle with a hero who symbolizes order and is often a storm god who utilizes a thunderbolt. As West describes, "the defeat of [the dragon] by the thunder-god is in essence a nature myth: thunderstorms release torrents of water that had previously been pent up" (2007, p.255). The hero defeats the dragon in nearly all cases, an act which restores the balance of resources within the community and symbolizes the defeat of chaos by order. In later texts, the dragon, once dead, is left to lie in a deep, dark location, which reinforces the "rightful", symbolic positioning of chaos out of the typical earthly habitat of order. The hero has a tendency to live following the battle, but there are some stories in which the hero dies shortly after the final fight.

But how do the dragon-slaying mythologies in the Celtic traditions fit with the rest of its Indo-European family? The majority of mythological texts in Welsh are preserved in *Llyfr Gwyn Rhydderch* (1300-1325 A.D.) and the *Llyfr Coch Hergest* (1375-1425 A.D (Ellis, 1999, p.11). The etymology of the Welsh word for 'story' suggests that at this time

the myths which may have come from P.I.E. were now largely being used as stories to teach about morals. Also, many of the texts were altered by the Christian scribes who were recording them. Ellis states that "because of this Christian bowdlerisation of the stories, some scholars have argued that our knowledge of Celtic mythology is highly fragmentary" but also that "…examining these stories from an Indo-European viewpoint, the pre-Christian motifs can be discerned" (1999, p.5).

The Celtic dragon-slaying mythologies are depicted in various ways. In one popular account, a winged serpent called a *bych* was killing many people until it was challenged and slain by *Sion y Bodian*, "Sion of the Thumbs", who had two thumbs on each hand (Jones, 1976, p.83). The note of physical features is not typically present in P.I.E. dragon-slaying myths, and is rather unique to this story. In other Celtic tales, there is also the first appearance of pride, which is not seen in the heroes of earlier P.I.E. myths. By including this fallible human trait, the stark dichotomy of good versus evil which is seen in the Proto-Indo-European dragon-slaying myth is not as distinct.

The story of *Y Ddraig Goch* (Markov 2010) differs greatly from other Welsh and Celtic dragon-slaying ythologies. Here, the dragons do not embody the quintessential image of chaos as the P.I.E. dragons did, but rather

cause acts of chaos, such as ravaging the land and terrifying the locals. Additionally, the natural element of water has been almost entirely removed. It may be that the luring and burying of the two dragons using mead is reminiscent of the P.I.E. dragons' typical fall into a body of water, but this fact is uncertain. Thus, the majority of the remaining narrative elements appear to be unique additives. While the red dragon in this tale symbolizes the Welsh king and the white dragon represents the leader of the Anglo-Saxons, their relationship to each other does not symbolize a "man" versus "nature" battle, as was found in the P.I.E. texts, but rather a dragon versus dragon battle which was noted in a few other Celtic dragon-slaying mythologies. Furthermore, neither one of the dragons particularly resembles a "hero" role, although the red dragon was later championed as a hero-like figure by the Welsh people. There is some use of bystanders, as in other Celtic mythologies. Like a handful of other Celtic myths, the character Vortigern also teaches a moral lesson about being prideful, as some accounts suggest that he had an inflated ego which later led to his demise and the downfall of his people (Britannia, 2001). Finally, these dragons are not guarding treasure nor otherwise blocking any resources, such as water, from the community. Indeed, the red dragon may symbolize the blocking of land from the white dragon; however, the blockage is not overtly implied as it was in the P.I.E. texts.

Sandra Unerman argues that "[dragons] live on in popular culture and in fiction, not as a static symbol but as images which may be used in different ways and given different functions" (2002, p.94). Thus, while a few characteristics of the tale of *Y Ddraig Goch* can still be linked to its Celtic and Proto-Indo-European ancestors, the story mostly utilizes novel features which have transformed the dragon from a mythological creature in an old folktale to a national emblem of pride and strength.

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Thoughts on Language

The magic of the tongue is the most dangerous of all spells. (E. G. Bulwer-Lytton)

Language is an organism. To digest it one must be, paradoxically, swallowed up by it. (Shemarya Levin)

When I cannot see words curling like rings of smoke round me I am in darkness, I am nothing. (Virginia Woolf)

Language is a finding-place, not a hiding-place. (Jeanette Winterson)

Personally I think that grammar is a way to attain beauty. (Muriel Barbery)

Language has no legs but runs over thousands of miles. (Korean proverb)

Language is the main instrument of man's refusal to accept the world as it is. (GeorgeSteiner)

Man was given the gift of language in order to be able to hide his thoughts. (Talleyrand)

The limits of my language mean the limits of my world. (Ludwig Wittgenstein)

Language is a poor bull's-eye lantern wherewith to show off the vast cathedral of the world. (R. L. Stevenson)

Language is man's deadliest weapon. (Arthur Koestler)

Language is half-art, half-instinct. (Charles Darwin)

Language is a city to the building of which every human being brought a stone. (R. W. Emerson)

Language is the house of Being. In its home man dwells. (Martin Heidegger)

The unconscious is structured like a language. (Jacques Lacan)