

The Unnamed Queen

Session 2

1. Manchán Magan, *The Irish Times*, July 14, 2018:

What if we've been looking at Irish through the wrong lens all these years? Rather than it being a subject that causes heartache in schools might it actually be a periscope into our psyche and our souls? A path towards an entirely fresh way of seeing reality, transforming existence from a predictable and quantifiable 3-D dimension into a vacillating, multi-dimensional realm with the potential of bleed-throughs from other parallel worlds.

2. Llywarch ap Llywelyn, Excerpt from *The Threatening Gruffydd ap Cynan*, c.1200, (CBT V, p. 80):

*Arddaly nef, arddunia fy nlid,
Arglwydd Dduw, yn Ddyn y 'th enid,
Erglyw fi am funer, osid
'Yng nghaniad o 'th rad, o 'th rydид.
Na ddos, Hael yn helw dy Ddwydid,
I wrthyf, na mi i wrthyd.
A 'm parabl o 'th ddawn y 'm perid
Parhawd o nebawd ei nid; . . .*

Heaven's maintainer, raise up my abilities,
Lord God, you were born a man,
Hear my plea for a gift, if my song
Issues forth from your blessing, from your message.
Do not leave me, generous lord who is in possession of Sanctity,
nor let me leave you.

With my turn of phrase through your grace was I made,
Its light persists about a person; . . .

3. Llywarch ap Llywelyn, Excerpt from *The Praise of Llywelyn the Great*, c.1200, (CBT V, p. 181):

Gair fy ngair o'r pair yn perthyn – ar bawb

*O bobloedd dyffestin,
Mau aur rhudd i'm rhoddion yngly^n,
Mi Lywarch, tithau Lywelyn!*

My word is a word from the cauldron that is concerned with all
of the people that approach here swiftly,
I posses red gold amongst my gifts,
I am Llywarch, you are Llywelyn!

4. Speech Interlaced.

	1st	2nd	3rd	4th
<i>Magical Speech</i>		Bendigeidfran's head		Gwydion calling the eagle
<i>Special Speech</i>	Pwyll's 'ystyr hud'	Branwen interprets the vision; starling's speech		
<i>Restricted Speech</i>	Pwyll's silence in bed for a year	Cauldron-born	Pryderi / Rhiannon at the bowl	Math can hear all words spoken in the wind
				Gwydion to Pryderi, 'I can free you from those words.'
<i>Naming</i>	Gwri / Pryderi			Gwydion / Gilfaethwy's sons; Lleu
<i>Unnamed</i>	Annwfn's Queen; Teyrnion's wife		Mouse Mother	Young Lleu

5. Restricted Speech.

‘I will increase your compensation, too,’ said Bendigeidfran. ‘I will give you a cauldron, and the property of the cauldron is that if you throw into it one of your men who is killed today, then by tomorrow he will be as good as ever except that he will not be able to speak.’ Matholwch thanked him for that, and was extremely happy on account of the cauldron.

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. . . he could see in the middle of the floor, as it were, a well with marble-work around it. At the edge of the well there was a golden bowl fastened to four chains, over a marble slab, and the chains reached up to the sky, and he could see no end to them. He was enraptured by the beauty of the gold and the fine workmanship of the bowl. And he went to the bowl and grabbed it. But as soon as he grabs the bowl, his hands stick to it and his feet stick to the slab on which he was standing, and the power of speech is taken from him so that he could not utter a single word. And there he stood.

6. Magical Speech.

Then Bendigeidfran ordered his head to be cut off. ‘And take my head,’ he said, ‘and carry it to the Gwynfryn in London, and bury it with its face towards France. And it will take you a long time; you will feast in Harlech for seven years, with the birds of Rhiannon singing to you. And you will find the head to be as good company as it ever was when it was on me. And you will stay for eighty years in Gwales in Penfro. And so long as you do not open the door towards Aber Henfelen, facing Cornwall, you can remain there and the head will not decay. But as soon as you open that door you can stay no longer. Make for London to bury the head. And now set off across the sea.’

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Then they went to Harlech, and sat down and were regaled with food and drink. As soon as they began to eat and drink, three birds came and began to sing them a song, and all the songs they had heard before were harsh compared to that one. They had to gaze far out over the sea to catch sight of the birds, yet their song was as clear as if the birds were there with them. And they feasted for seven years.

At the end of the seventh year they set out for Gwales in Penfro. There was a pleasant royal dwelling for them there, above the sea, and there was a large hall, and they went to the hall. They could see two doors open; the third door was closed, the one facing Cornwall.

‘See over there,’ said Manawydan, ‘the door we must not open.’ That night they stayed there contented and lacking nothing. And of all the sorrow they had themselves seen and suffered, they remembered none of it nor of any grief in the world. And there they spent eighty years so that they were not aware of ever having spent a more pleasurable or more delightful time.

It was no more unpleasant than when they first arrived, nor could anyone tell by looking at the other that he had aged in that time. Having the head there was no more unpleasant than when Bendigeidfran had been alive with them. Because of those eighty years, this was called The Assembly of the Noble Head.