Imagining the Celts: The Celtic image as known from historical, linguistic and archaeological sources, compared to the view on the Celts in the British (popular) media of the last five years (2010-2015)

F.L. Vleeshouwer (s0919934)

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Supervisors: Prof. Dr. H. Fokkens; Dr. M.H. van den Dries

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1. Theoretical background and research questions

1.1. The "Celts": European heritage

The "Celts" must be the most well-known prehistoric European people. Say "Celt", and many people will at least have one or two images coming to mind. These images might feature a blue-painted warrior, fighting the Romans; a cloaked Druid, cutting mistletoe; a bard, singing songs in a mystical language; a monk, decorating his manuscripts with elaborate, Jugendstil-like patterns; or an Irish fiddler, playing an upbeat reel. Needless to say, this picture of the "Celt" is very diverse, containing both ancient and more modern elements.

It is clear that the "Celtic" culture, whatever is understood by it, is immensely popular. "Celtic" music is played throughout the world (Chapman 1992). "Celtic" language and history courses can be followed at universities and schools, from Australia to the USA (Haywood 2004). The presumed "Celtic" religion, Druidism, is still practiced, and many countries have their own chief Druid (druidry.org; Green 1997). Moreover, a huge amount of (popular-)scientific books and articles is written on the subject every year; documentaries and museum exhibits on "the Celts" are guaranteed to draw a lot of attention (Collis 1997). The label "Celtic" is applied to almost everything to come out of the modern "Celtic" countries, or countries with a presumed "Celtic" heritage (James 1999).

This interest in the "Celts" is not something new. Greek and Roman writers already described the "Celtic" people they encountered as far back as the sixth century BC. During the Renaissance and Romantic era, too, the "Celts" were intensively studied, which resulted in the eighteenth century Celtomania. Scholars and scientists have also contributed to the picture. The "Celts" have had a long history, not only during their own day, but also long after that. The image of them has been formed and reformed, and has been used and reused for multiple purposes (Chapman 1992; Collis 2003).

But, the question remains: who exactly were the "Celts"? This question is much harder to answer than it seems. Of course, there is a traditional view on who the "Celts" were: a prehistoric European people of the Iron Age, speaking a "Celtic" language and leaving a specific material culture behind, of which the art style is most well-known. These ancient people originated in Central Europe, and were eventually pushed into the fringes of the European continent, surviving only in the outer Western regions such as Ireland, Wales, and Brittany (Filip 1962; Piggott 1968; Powell 1958). However, it seems that this

traditional view is not at all as simple as it is sometimes presented; it has proven difficult to give an exact definition of *the* "Celt", a definition valuable and true for every area where and every period during which the "Celts" are encountered (Chapman 1992).
There are a few sources of information that can be and have been used to learn more about the "Celts": these are the Classical writings, as well as the medieval mythology of Ireland and Wales, and the linguistic and archaeological research on the subject. Besides that, the image of the "Celt" is also influenced by the Romantic Celtomania, the struggle for independence in self-proclaimed "Celtic" countries, and lastly by some more recent developments from the past century. These latter developments are a renewed interest in "Celtic" spirituality and music, as well as the influx of tourism in "Celtic" countries and areas (Chapman 1992; Collis 2003).
However, of late, it has been proven more and more difficult to combine the sources and present a straightforward, consistent picture of who the "Celts" were and are, despite multiple efforts to do just that. Each of the above mentioned sources and developments presents its own problems and difficulties when trying to interpret them. Moreover, when trying to combine all the information to get a complete image of the "Celts", even more problems come to the fore. It seems that the reality of "Celtic" history is much more complex, after all. This notion has stirred up a debate among scholars, some of them going as far as to completely deny the concept of the ancient "Celt" (Chapman 1992; Collis 2003; James 1999), while others strongly hold on to the idea of a group of ancient "Celtic" people ancestral to the modern "Celts" (Meid 2010).
Despite all the debate, however, the stereotypical image of the "Celt" still seems to persist in popular culture. It is so well-known and has proven to be such a strong concept, that it will take some time to adjust it – if it needs adjusting. The "Celts" present a lot of people with a national history, and a heritage of their own. It would be interesting to see *why* this concept of "Celticness" has proven to be so attractive to such a wide range of people, throughout such a large span of time. As this is too broad a subject to research all at once, I will mainly focus on the "Celtic" image as it is formed and conveyed in Great-Britain, as the debate on "Celticity" arguably originates here.

1.2. Research questions and methodology

My further research questions are as follows:

1. How was the image of the Celt conceived throughout the ages?

2. What do we know about the Celts from historical, linguistic, and archaeological research?
3. What are the problems we come across when trying to interpret and combine the historical, linguistic, and archaeological sources and evidence?
4. What is the image of the "Celts" as presented in British popular media of the last 5 years (2010-2015)?
5. What "Celtic" elements attract the most attention in the British popular media of the last 5 years (2010-2015)?
6. How does the popular "Celtic" image compare to the "Celtic" image as presented by historical, archaeological and linguistic research?

It is clear that the popular image of the "Celts" is still very much alive, but how does this popular picture compare to the scientific viewpoints on the "Celts"? What elements make the "Celts" so attractive to a wider audience, and where are these elements derived from? First of all, it is necessary to get a clearer picture of how the "Celtic image" has been formed throughout the centuries, which might answer the question of who the "Celts" really are and were. To do so, we need to take another look at the sources of information mentioned above, which will be done by means of a literature study. The sources have been studied extensively already, but only sparsely combined and put next to each other for comparison. By presenting a short overview of the way the "Celtic image" is formed throughout history, it might be possible to trace back where the popular ideas about the "Celts" find their origin. Moreover, by comparing these sources to one another and taking the problems regarding their interpretation into account, the discrepancies between them will easily come to light.
Secondly, a comparison must be made between the popular image and the scientific image of the "Celts". This will be done by analyzing the textual content of popular books, articles, documentaries and museum exhibits on the subject, all published or broadcasted in Great-Britain during the last five years. The results will be compared to the scientific view of linguists, archaeologists and historians. Hopefully, this will show in what way the popular image deviates from the scientific point of view. Moreover, by comparing the data to the historical overview presented in the earlier chapters, it might be possible to see where exactly the (popular) ideas about the "Celts" are derived from, and which ones are mentioned most.

2. The Celtic Image

2.1. Introduction

The image of the "Celt" has been constantly re-created and re-used for different purposes and causes. The earliest references to the "Celts" can be found in Classical Greek and Roman texts. Retrospectively, the medieval literary works from modern "Celtic" regions such as Ireland and Wales, are also used to gain insight into the "Celtic" world. Then, there is the linguistic and archaeological evidence linked to the "Celtic" people, first gathered during the Renaissance, Romantic era and nineteenth century. Lastly, the "Celtic image" is influenced by the Romantic movement, nineteenth century nationalism in modern "Celtic" areas, and some more recent developments (Chapman 1992; Collis 2003).

In this chapter, an overview will be given of how the "Celtic image" was formed throughout the ages. The next chapters will be dedicted to the interpretation of the different sources.

2.2. The Classical authors

Our oldest conception of the "Celtic" world comes from Classical sources: from Greek and Roman writers from around the sixth century BC up until the first few centuries AD (Collis 2003; Rankin 1987; 1995). I will briefly discuss the most important Classical authors to write about the "Celtic" people. For an oversight of all Graeco-Roman authors writing about the "Celts", see table 3 (in the appendix).

The first mentions of the term "Celts", or *Keltoi,* as the Greeks name them, are found in the works of the Greek writer Hecataeus of Miletus (c. 550-476 BC), as well as the historian Herodotus (c. 484-425 BC). These early sources seem to use the term in a geographical sense, distinguishing a group of *Keltoi* people around the Greek colony of Massalia (southern France) and near the Pillars of Hercules (the street of Gibraltar) (Collis 2003; Hdt. 2.33.3; Rankin 1987; 1995). Another reference to the "Celts" is found in Latin poem *Ora Maritima* by Rufus Festus Avienus (fl. fourth century AD), which could draw back on sources as old as 600 BC. The British Isles are also mentioned here, by the names of *Ierne* and *Albion* – terms regarded to be in an early form of a "Celtic" language (Collis 2003; Rankin 1987, 12; 1995).

From the fifth and fourth century BC onwards, the Greeks, as well as th Romans, become aware of the movements of and migrations of the *Keltoi* around the European mainland:

first into northern Italy, then further into Eastern Europe, as far as Greece, Anatolia and possibly even Egypt. Contemporary and later authors tell us about encounters with "Celtic" mercenaries, raiders and war-bands: important events of this era are the sack of Rome (390 BC) and the raiding of Delphi (third century BC) (Collis 2003, 110; Cunliffe 1997, 3-5; Rankin 1987; 1995).

Around this time, too, the first descriptive accounts of the *Keltoi* are written, mainly by Greek philosophers or poets such as Plato (c. 429-347 BC) and Aristotle (c. 384-322 BC), who linger on the strange, "barbarian" customs and war-like nature of the "Celts" (Collis 2003; Cunliffe 1997). "Celts" feature more and more in Graeco-Roman accounts, visual art and even mythology (Cunliffe 1997; Wells 2004, 76). None of the Classical authors of this time mentions the British Isles being inhabited by "Celts", however; these islands are populated by a different people called *Pritani*, a term coined by the Greek seafarer Pytheas of Massalia (c. 350-285 BC) (Collis 2003; Rankin 1987; 1995).

According to Cunliffe (1997), a Classical "Celtic stereotype" is formed around the fourth and third century BC, due to the intensifying contact with "Celtic" tribes and people. The *Keltoi*, or *Galli* and *Celtae* as the Romans call them, not only feature in historical accounts, but also in myths, poems, plays, and visual art (see figure 1). It seems that the "Celts" are no longer perceived as a threat, but also as "noble people" who provide an example for the Classical world in their bravery, hospitality and spirituality (Cunliffe 1997, 4-9).

Many ideas about the "Celts" seem to have been derived from the Greek historians Polybius (c. 204-122 BC) and, more importantly, the Syrian Greek philosopher Posidonius (c. 135-50 BC) (Collis 2003; Freeman 2002). From Polybius, we get our first more extensive accounts of "Celtic" warfare (Freeman 2002, 8). The work of Posidinius only survives in accounts of other, later authors, such as the Greek historians Diodorus Siculus (1st century BC), Strabo (c. 64 BC-AD 24), and Athenaeus (fl. c. AD 200). Still, it is sometimes said that he shaped the vision on the "Celtic" world thoroughly; he probably gave us the first "ethnographic" account of "Celtic" daily life and their so-called Druidic religion. Many writers often use his descriptions of "Celtic" habits as facts or as a way to explain behaviour they encountered themselves (Collis 2003, 19-20; Rankin 1987, 72-76; 1995).

Around the first century BC, by the time Roman authors start to write more extensively about the people they call *Galli, Celtae* or *Galatae,* a definite idea about the "Celtic" spirit seems to be in place (Cunliffe 1997). Roman writers, such as Livy (64 or 59 BC-

AD 17), describe the history of Rome, also going into encounters with Gallic people on the northern-Italian lands, in Celtiberia, and Galatia. The “Celts” also figure in political

Figure 1. The Dying Gaul - a Classical visual representation of a war-like, barbarian Celt. The original sculpture was made in the late third century BC in Asia Minor, to commemorate Greek victories over intruding "Celtic" tribes. This is a Roman marble copy made in c. 50-1 BC. On display in the Capitoline Museum, Rome. Marble; H 94 cm. (Farley and Hunter 2015, 20)

speeches (Collis 2003, 21; Rankin 1987, 103-122).

The most famous Roman encounter with Gallic people, is described by Gaius Julius Caesar (100-44 BC) in his *De Bello Gallico* (*The Gallic War*) (Freeman 2002, 13). Caesar tells us about his campaigns into northern France, Belgium and Britain. From this account, we get some new insights in the Gallic and British world. Apart from extensive descriptions of Gallic and British warfare, Caesar also gives some ethnographic details about the function of the Gallic priests or Druids, ritual behaviour, and daily life. He is the first one to establish a boundary between the Gallic peoples south of the Rhine, and the German people north of it. Lastly, he also links the people of northern France to the inhabitants of Britain, although he never calls the latter ones “Celtic” (Collis 2003, 23; Cunliffe 1997, 9; Rankin 1987, 124-127; 1995). Caesar arguably has had a huge influence

on later Roman authors writing about "Celtic" Gaul and Britain, such as Pliny the Elder (AD 23-79), Lucan (AD 39-65), and Tacitus (AD 56-c. 117) (Collis 2003).
Most of our information about the *Keltoi* and *Galli* of this time comes from Classical authors, but there are a few Roman authors who claim "Celtic" heritage or ancestry, or were born in "Celtic" lands, such as the Celtiberian poet Martial (c. AD 38/41-102/104). However, all these authors write in Latin, and inevitably grew up in an already truly Romanized world (Collis 2003, 22-23; Rankin 1987, 153-165; 185-187).
Later Classical writers from the first five centuries AD mainly mention the "Celts" in retrospect, drawing heavily on earlier sources (Freeman 2002; Collis 2003, 23-25).

2.3. Medieval sources

After the collapse of the Western-Roman empire in AD 400, the "Celts" largely seem to disappear from the written record. The term is sometimes still used in the Eastern Empire, ascribed to all people living to the west of Byzantium (Chapman 1992, 53). Likewise, the word *gallus* survives to eventually mean an inhabitant of Gaul or nothern France (Collis 2003, 27). Some early Christian authors mention Druids and Druidesses (Freeman 2004), but the term "Celtic" eventually seems to fall out of use around the 7th century AD (Collis 2003; Chapman 1992). Only later, the term is anachronistically used to describe medieval – Christian – remains found in the modern "Celtic" world: think of the Celtic church, Celtic saints, and Celtic crosses (Chapman 1992).
The British Isles are nowadays seen as essentially "Celtic", although they were never perceived as such during the Middle Ages (Chapman 1992). Medieval histories of the British Isles often tell about waves of migrants peopling Britain and Ireland, but the "Celts" are never mentioned. Rather, the medieval and early Renaissance historians – such as Geoffrey of Monmouth (fl. twelfth century) – draw heavily from Biblical and mythological sources (Collis 2003, 28-34).
In medieval Ireland and Britain, early written evidence of native languages is found. First of all, there is the *Ogham* script found on stones in Ireland, Wales, the Isle of Man, and probably Scotland (Redknap 1995; Renfrew 1990, 228); see figure 2. The earliest literary works in British and Irish vernacular languages are also written during the early Middle Ages. The body of medieval texts consists of poetry, the mythological cycles of – most importantly – Ireland and Wales, dating from around the tenth to twelfth century AD, as well as the early Irish annals, genealogies, and so-called *Brehon* law texts (Berresford Ellis 1992; Collis 2003; Mac Cana 1970; Meid 2010, 133-171). Early British and Irish

tongues are considered to be an early form of “Celtic”, a language group first distinguished some five centuries later (Collis 2003; MacAulay 1992). Because of this, the medieval texts are seen as an important source to learn more about early “Celtic” society (Jackson 1964; Meid 2010).

During the Middle Ages, Irish missionaries flock out over the European continent, establishing monasteries and abbeys along the way. In the Irish and Scottish homelands, beautiful manuscripts are written and decorated, such as the Book of Kells. The lives of saints – such as Saint Patrick, Saint Brigid and Saint Brendan – are written down and gain much popularity (Tanner 2004). The manuscripts are often seen as “Celtic”, as their decorations show elements and influences of the famed “Celtic” art (Megaw and Megaw 1989).

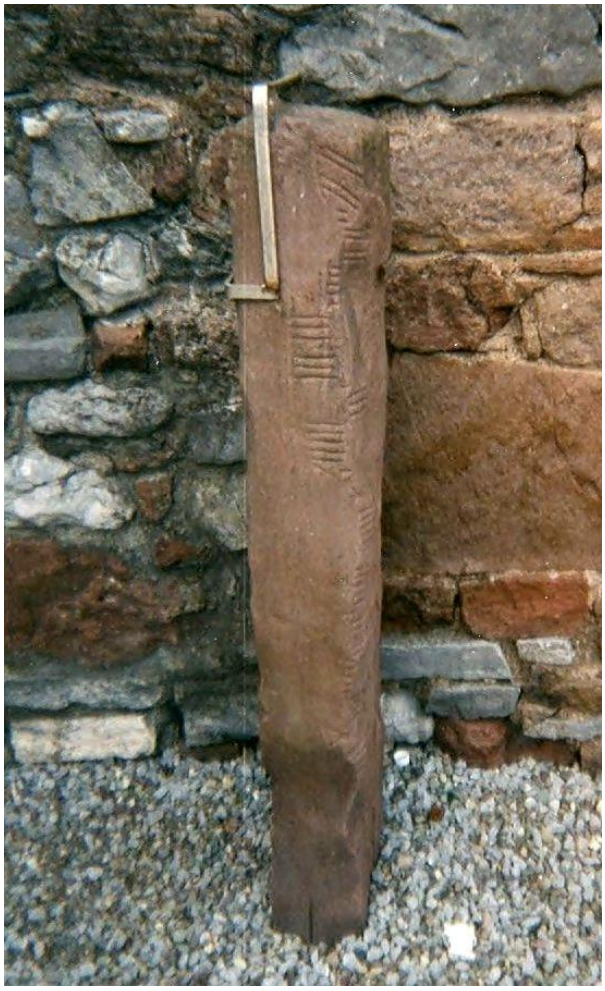

Figure 2. Example of an Ogham stone, found on the grounds of Ratass Church in Tralee, Kerry, Ireland (Wikipedia.org).

2.4. The first antiquaries and linguists of the Renaissance and Enlightenment era

2.4.1. Historical background

The "Celts" reappeared on the stage in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, when they were "rediscovered" during the Renaissance and the later Enlightenment ages (Collis 2003; Cunliffe 1997, 10). The first person to re-use the term "Celt" seems to have been a fifteenth century Italian monk, Annius of Viterbo, but his works are still heavily influenced by the Bible and Classical mythologies (Chapman 1992, 201-202).

During the Renaissance and Enlightenment eras, there was a renewed interest in the Classical world and the Classical values, art, and way of thinking. The period saw the first ever scholars and antiquaries conducting semi-scientific research, basing their theories on fact instead of mythologies or Biblical truths. It was also the time of overseas explorations and the European "discovery" of new continents and people, causing the beginning of ethnographical research (Cunliffe 1997, 10).

There was a need to learn more about the European past, as to create a factual European history. To do so, antiquaries could base themselves on Classical sources. Classical manuscripts had survived the Middle Ages, for they had been copied by scribes and monks and in this way preserved. Moreover, during the sixteenth century, these old texts became more widely available in printed copy. In Classical literature, as well as visual art, "Celts" were described and represented (Collis 2003; Cunliffe 1997, 10).

At the same time, the first archaeological research was carried out on prehistoric monuments scattered throughout Europe; the monuments gaining most interest were the standing stones of the British Isles and Brittany. Because the only known prehistoric British and Breton people known were the "Celts" and their "Druid" priests of the Classical sources, the monuments and megaliths were quickly seen as "Celtic" temples by antiquaries such as the English John Aubrey (1626-1697) and John Toland (1670-1722), even though the British were never explicitly called "Celts" in Graeco-Roman texts (Collis 2003, 71; Green 1997, 141).

As a result of the encounters with non-European people during these centuries, many of the earlier theories about the "Celts" seem to have been influenced by ethnographical data (Cunliffe 1997, 11). Lastly, it also became clear that the remnants of pre-Roman languages survived in historical names, place-names, and Classical sources; these languages, too, were eventually connected to the "Celts" (MacAulay 1992; Sims-Williams 2006).

2.4.2. The first linguists and a growing conception of Insular Celticness

The first scholars to connect the "Celtic" language to actual groups of people, basing themselves on Classical works, medieval histories, place-name evidence and language study, were the Scottish historian George Buchanan (1506-1582), the Breton Cistercian brother Paul-Yves Pezron (1639-1706), and the Welsh Edward Lhuyd (1660-1709) (Chapman 1992; Collis 2003). "Celticness" eventually became more restricted to western Europe and the British Isles (James 1999).

Buchanan argued that the British Isles are "Celtic", as they were populated by "Celtic"-speaking people from the Continent: Ireland and Scotland by the Celtiberians, Wales and England by the Gauls and Belgae, groups that were called "Celts" in ancient Classical sources (Buchanan 1582; Collis 2003, 37-40; James 1999, 44). Pezron took this notion further, arguing that Breton was the last surviving language of the *Galli* or *Celtae* mentioned in the Classical sources. He also recognised the similarities between Breton and Welsh, and claimed that Wales was populated by people from Gaul: therefore, the Welsh were *Celtae* too (Collis 2003, 48-49; James 1999, 45; Pezron 1703).

Taking Pezron's observations as a starting point, Edward Lhuyd was the first scholar to distinguish all ancient, as well as *modern* "Celtic" languages. His work *Archaeologica Brittannica,* published in 1707, is the first more or less scientific study of "Celtic" languages, with much of the information based on first hand research and comparisons between different vocabularies (Chapman 1992, 205-208; Collis 2003, 48-52).

Lhuyd showed that his Welsh mother tongue had a different origin and history than the English language. Moreover, he argued that Welsh was related to similar-sounding languages such as Irish and Scottish, as well as that these languages had a shared, ancient origin. The language group he called "Celtic", in line with Buchanan's and Pezron's earlier studies. Lhuyd, too, argued that the languages were brought into the British Isles by different waves of "Celtic"-speaking migrants from the Continent. Ireland and Scotland were populated from Spain, by the "C Celts" or "Goidels", while Wales and Southern Britain were colonised from Gaul, by the "P Celts" or "Brythons" (Chapman 1992, 205-208; Collis 2003, 48-52; Lhuyd 1707).

Lhuyd's work is seen as an important force behind the popularisation of the term "Celt" or "Kelt", which eventually came to mean *all* "Celtic"-speaking inhabitants of the British Isles. His distinction "Goidelic/Brythonic" is still widely used (Chapman 1992; Collis 2003; MacAulay 1992).

2.5. Romanticism and nationalism

2.5.1. Romantic Celtomania

At the end of the eighteenth century, Romanticism developed in Europe, as a reaction to the rationalistic way of thinking of the prior Enlightenment era. The Romantic movement placed emphasis on emotion and imagination rather than ratio, and individual expression rather than collectivism. Romanticists had a hankering towards the mysterious, the wild, the authentic and the exotic. "Primitive" and prehistoric cultures were very much idealised, as were the natural world and folk traditions (Chapman 1992; Haywood 2004, 183; James 1999, 128).

The "Celts" – known from Classical sources and recent antiquarian works – seemed to be a perfect vessel for, and embodiment of, the Romantic ideals. Still drawing on the Classical stereotypes, they were seen as highly spiritual, poetic and artistic. They were thought to have worshipped nature, and to have held poetry, storytelling and other presumed outings of individualism and imagination in high regard. As a result, the prehistoric "Celts" were hugely embraced, culminating in the nineteenth century Celtomania of, most prominently, Britain and France (Collis 2003; Cunliffe 1997; Haywood 2004, 183).

"Celtic" storytelling, spiritualism and Druidic religion inspired Romantic artists, scholars and writers especially. Because not much was known about Druidism, only from a few Classical sources, it was quickly picked up and transformed into an essentially Romantic religion or philosophy, that could be filled in with Romantic ideals and thoughts accordingly (Chapman 1992) – see also figure 3.

The Druidic rituals increasingly became connected with stone megaliths in the eighteenth and nineteenth century, drawing on the earlier misrepresentation described above. Of course, we now know that the megaliths pre-date the "Celtic" cultures of the Bronze and Iron Age. However, people from the Romantic era were not aware of this yet, and quickly started to carry out rituals at perceived sacred places such as Stonehenge. The first Druidic ritual probably even pre-dates the Romantic era, and is presumed to have been held in 1717, by the earlier mentioned John Toland (1670-1722) (Green 1997).

Druidic religion and its association with stone circles was popularised in Brittany by Jacques Cambry (1749-1807), and, more importantly, in England, by William Stukeley (1687-1765) (Green 1997). Stukeley, an English preacher, carried out an "archaeological" investigation of Stonehenge and Avebury. He was also the first person to identify himself as a Druid, adopting a Druidic name, and organise Druidic rituals. Being a Christian, he

tried to provide the Druids with a biblical ancestry (Green 1997, 142-143; Collis 2003, 72).

Stukeley is usually seen as the instigator of the Neo-Druidic movement, which took a huge flight during the Romantic era, and still lasts up to this day (Green 1997). As said before, the perceived Druidic religion seemed to fit in with the Romantic ideals so well, that people quickly took to it. Poets, artists and writers were very much inspired by Druidism, as well as many eccentric individuals identifying themselves as Druids. At this time, many Druidic orders were established, and Druidic rituals were carried out. The Ancient Order of Druids (AOD), an influential group which still exists in a slightly altered form today, was founded in 1781 (Green 1997, 142-148).

Figure 3. George Henry and Edward Atkinson Hornel, The Druids: Bringing in the Mistletoe, 1890. Nineteenth century representation of a Druidic procession. Oil on canvas: 152.4x152.4 cm, Glasgow Museums (after Farley and Hunter 2015, 236).

Influenced by the earlier linguistic research, modern "Celts" were now mainly seen as the inhabitants of "Celtic"-speaking areas in the British Isles and France. Modern "Celtic" countries were seen as quite traditional and "unspoilt", which, to the Romanticists, made

them just as interesting as the prehistoric “Celts” (Chapman 1992).

Druidic festivals, “traditional” ritual and other festive events were “reinstalled” in this new-proclaimed “Celtic” world. In Wales, Edward Williams – better known by his “bardic” name, Iolo Morganwg (1747-1826) – re-established the Eisteddfod, a medieval Welsh literature, music and arts festival, in 1792. In medieval times, bardic poets would gather to declamate their poetry and compete against each other. Morganwg mixed these medieval festivals with neo-Druidic rituals, creating a whole new ceremony in the process (Green 1997, 152-157; James 1999, 129). Eisteddfods became hugely popular in Romantic era Wales; the first national Eisteddfod was carried out in 1860, and has been a yearly event ever since (Green 1997).

Similar *gorsedds*, or conventions of bards and artists, were established in other parts of Europe. Théodore Hersart le Villemarqué, or Hersart Kervarker (1815-1895), founded the Breton Brotherhood, which in 1900 led to the establishment of the Breton *gorsedd* (Cunliffe 1997, 12), see figure 4. In Scotland and Ireland, too, “Celtic” festivals and traditions were “rediscovered” and Romanticised. The Scottish Highland Games are arguably a nineteenth century invention, as is the kilt. Irish nationalists and revivalists focused on traditional “Celtic” sport games such as hurling and Gaelic football, leading to the establishment of the Gaelic Athletic Association (GAA) in 1884 (Chapman 1992; Tanner 2004).

Figure 4. A Breton gorsedd from the Collège des Bardes de la Bretagne-Armorique, in Brignogan, Northern Brittany. 1903 (Green 1997, 154).

"Celtic" literature began to draw a lot of attention: old mythological cycles and folk tales were "rediscovered", and collected by Celtic revivalists (Cunliffe 1997, 12). During this time, too, many scholars translated the Bible into the vernacular Celtic languages (Tanner 2004).

An earlier work that arguably had a huge influence on the Romantic Celtomania was the Ossian poetic cycle "discovered" and "translated" from Gaelic by the Scottish writer James Macpherson (1736-1796), which later turned out to be forged. The Breton counterpart of this cycle was the *Barzaz Breizh* (1839) written by De Villemarqué. Many other "authentic" poems and works of literature collected by revivalists such as Iolo Morganwg, were later discovered to be forgeries, but still had a huge influence on the growing popularity of the "Celts" (Chapman 1992, 121-124; James 1999, 128).

There was also a more scientific and scholarly interest for "Celtic" literature and poetry during the Renaissance and Enlightenment era. For example, Matthew Arnold (1822-1888), an Oxford scholar, famously held a series of lectures on the subject of "Celtic" literature. There are many other linguists, philologists and literature scholars who laid the basis for modern Celtic studies during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Lhuyds theory of the British Isles being populated by successive waves of "Celtic"-speaking migrants was further developed by John Rhys (1840-1915) in *Early Britain: Celtic Britain*, published in 1882 (Collis 2003).

The "rediscovered" and medieval works seem to have inspired many artists, poets and writers, who wrote poems and novels drawing back on Celtic folklore. In Ireland, a whole new generation of Irish writers during the nineteenth century, of which Lady Augusta Gregory (1852-1932) and William Butler Yeats (1865-1939) are the most well-known, was inspired by Irish mythology and fairy tales (Chapman 1992, 217; Tanner 2004). The revival of Celtic literature went hand in hand with a renewed interest in the Celtic languages, which in turn played a huge role in the nineteenth and twentieth century Celtic nationalistic movements (Chapman 1992, 217-219).

2.5.2. Celtic nationalism of the nineteenth and early twentieth century

The nineteenth century saw the emergence of nation-states, and these states were in need of a national history. France seems to have been the forerunner when it comes to Celtic nationalism (Collis 2003; Cunliffe 1997). Influenced by Romanticism, as well as the

Revolution of 1789, the French incorporated the *Galli*, or Gauls – which they saw as the first "French" freedom fighters – into their national history. Many tribal leaders known from Classical sources, such as the "French" Vercingetorix and the "British" Boudicca, were seen as heroes and symbols of freedom and rebellion (Cunliffe 1997, 13) – see figure 5.

"Celtic" nationalism became more confined to the "Celtic"-speaking areas of Europe throughout the course of the century. The popularity of the "Celts" inevitably rubbed off on the inhabitants of the modern "Celtic"-speaking countries, who had always seen themselves as being different than the English and French. Their "Celtic" heritage presented them with a new, deeply rooted ancient history and identity, as opposed to the dominating "Germanic" cultures of their neighbours. (Chapman 1992; Collis 2003; Haywood and Cunliffe 2001, 129; James 1999, 47; Tanner 2004). It brought forward a new "Celtic" self-consciousness and pride. The concept of "Celticness" was firmly incorporated into the national identities of the modern, "Atlantic" Celts (James 1999, 56). Influenced by the academic ideas of the time, the "Celts" were soon seen as a distinguishable race, different from the suppressing "Germanic" races in England and France (James 1999, 49). Throughout the course of the century, these presumed racial differences became increasingly political, due to major upheavals in the modern "Celtic" world such as the Highland Clearances and the Irish potato famine. The picture of the since ages oppressed "Gael" was used to illustrate the mistreatments of the Irish, Scots and Welsh by the English government (Haywood 2004; James 1999; Tanner 2004).

The way the nationalistic feelings were vented, differed from country to country. However, language, cultural tradition, as well as religion, played a huge role in shaping the "Celtic" identities of the British Isles and Brittany. "Old" traditions, such as the earlier mentioned Welsh Eisteddfod and the Scottish Highland Games, were "restored"; language schools, as well as sportive and recreational associations, were established, as well as some more pronounced nationalistic movements; the religious traditions of the areas became more pronounced; and literary revivals took place. In short, the modern "Celtic" cultures got Romanticized, just like their prehistoric counterparts (Chapman 1992, 138-145; Haywood and Cunliffe 2001, 128-130; Tanner 2004).

"Celtic" nationalistic movements were established in Ireland, Scotland, Wales, Cornwall, the Isle of Man, and Brittany; the Cornish and Manx movements only gained momentum during the 20th century (Tanner 2004).

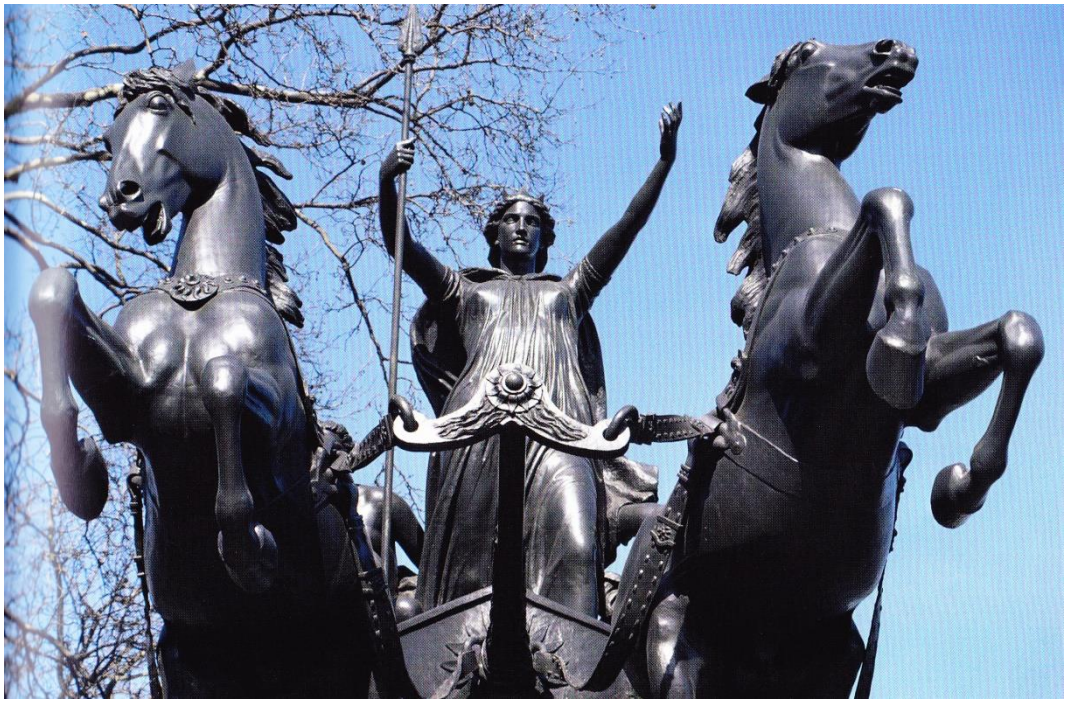

Figure 5. Thomas Thorneycroft, Boadicea and her Daughters, 1902. Sculpture in bronze. Westminster Pier, London Embankment (Farley and Hunter, 259).

In Ireland, "Celtic" nationalism led to rebellions, revolts, and the eventual partition and independence of the island in 1920 and 1921. The country was historically divided along religious lines, with a poorer, Catholic population on the one side, and a (generally) richer Protestant majority of Anglo-Norman descent on the other side. While both the Catholic and Protestant population played a huge role in 19th century Irish nationalism and revivalism – indeed, many of the most prominent Irish freedom fighters and language revivalists had a Protestant background – the debate on Irish, "Celtic" identity eventually became dominated by the Catholic majority during the late nineteenth and twentieth century. The Catholics identified themselves with the "Celt" and its rich history, tracing back their heritage to prehistoric times. Protestants played no part in this, as many Protestant families had usually only arrived in Ireland during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, and therefore had an "English" instead of a "Celtic" background. As a result, the religious divides in Ireland became more pronounced, alienating the Protestant population from the Catholic majority, and "forcing" them to take a more pro-British stance. These divides are, of course, still very much visible in Northern-Ireland today (Haywood 2004, 187-189; Haywood and Cunliffe 2001, 129-130; Tanner 2004, 69-98; 120-128).

A more international political movement is said to have found its origin in nineteenth century nationalism, as well. This is Pan-Celticism: the idea that the modern "Celtic" countries share the same background and should unite to get more home rule and achieve independence. The first Pan-Celtic project was carried out in the 1820s, and comprised the translation of the Bible in Breton by the scholars Thomas Price (1787-1848) and Jean-François le Gonidec (1775-1838). From then on, some Pan-Celtic festivals and gatherings were organised, and provided the modern Celts with a sense of common identity; but the movement never seems to have become really politically relevant or influential (Cunliffe 1997, 16; Haywood 2004, 189-190; Tanner 2004).

2.6. Archaeology and art

2.6.1. The first archaeologists: finding Hallstatt and La Tène|

Another source of information about the "Celtic" world are the archaeological remains and finds. Archaeology is a relatively recent player in the field of Celtic studies; there are some early "archaeologists", as mentioned above, but the first scientific and more empirical archaeological research was carried out during the nineteenth century. When archaeology developed, it was put in a predetermined "Celtic" framework (James 1999, 56).

The first archaeological theories, dating from the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century, were very much influenced by linguistics, and the rather vague concept of "race": the idea that groups of people, both ancient and modern, could be clearly defined by their physical characteristics and other particularities such as language. Races were seen as homogenous and static; changes in their development were external, caused by invasions of other groups. The "Celts", in line with linguistic theories, were seen as such an "invasionist" race, bringing about change across Europe through migration. A defining factor in the debate about the "Celts" was their language, which showed their presence and movements along the continent (Chapman 1992, 16-20; James 53-55; Renfrew 1990, 213). Thus, nineteenth century scholars such as the French Henri d'Arbois de Jubainville (1827-1910) argued that parts of Europe were colonised by waves of a "Celtic"-speaking race, who also left a specific material culture behind (Collis 2003, 63-66).

The nineteenth century saw the discovery of two sites that became most closely related to the "Celts": Hallstatt and La Tène, the former dating from the Bronze Age to Early Iron Age (1200-475/450 BC), and the latter a true Iron Age complex (450-50 BC). The type site of Hallstatt was discovered by Johann Georg Ramsauer (1795-1874) in 1844, near an

Austrian town of the same name, and consisted of more than 2,500 burials, both cremations and inhumations (Cunliffe 1997). The type site of La Tène was found in Switzerland at Lake Neuchâtel, and first published about by Ferdinand Keller (1800-1881) in 1868. Here, deposited weapons and ornaments, together with some skeletal remains from men, women and children, were discovered (Cunliffe 1997).
According to Cunliffe (1997), the sites were almost immediately associated with the "Celts", on the assumption that Classical writers such as Herodotus had placed the "Celtic" heartlands in Central Europe: precisely the place where the Hallstatt and La Tène sites were found.
During this time, it became clear that the long-used Biblical time-scale was not sufficient to account for all archaeological finds and sites. A more detailed and deeper chronology was set up by different scholars, by means of detecting changes in technologies, and distinguishing so-called type artefacts specific for a certain time or area. A division between a Hallstatt and La Tène periods was established, and further subdivided by Otto Tischler (1843-1891), who distinguished an Early, Middle and Late La Tène period, and by Paul Reinecke (1872-1958), who set up an Iron Age chronology ranging from the Hallstatt C to a La Tène D period (Collis 2003, 73-80).

2.6.2. Celtic art: art history and links with archaeology

Objects showing an art style we would now distinguish as "Celtic" or "La Tène" were found in the British Isles and on the European mainland, even before the discovery of the Hallstatt and La Tène sites. Before the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, most of the European finds that would now be called "Celtic" were seen as imports from the Classical world (Collis 2014). Most likely, there was no sense of ancient "Celtic" art yet; as Collis (2014) argues, the term originally just meant contemporary or medieval art from modern "Celtic"-speaking countries.
The British historian John Mitchell Kemble (1807-1857) and the antiquary Augustus Franks (1826-1897) were, arguably, some of the first scholars to use the term "Celtic art" to indicate prehistoric finds found on the British Isles. The "Celtic" roots of the British Isles were, of course, already established by linguists and philologists; it was only logical to call the prehistoric art of these areas "Celtic", too (Collis 2003; 2014; Megaw and Megaw 1989, 13).
Other British scholars built further on this term, such as John Romilly Allen (1847-1907), who published the first book on the subject, *Celtic Art,* in 1904. Romilly Allen

distinguished an early "Celtic" art style, originating in the Bronze Age and linked to the arrival of the so-called Beaker people, and a late "Celtic" art style of the Iron Age, linked to the arrival of Belgic or Brythonic people on the British Isles. The two styles he also linked to the mainland complexes of Hallstatt and La Tène (Collis 2014; Romilly Allen 1904).

On the European mainland, the term was picked up by the French archaeologist Joseph Déchelette (1862-1914), the first to combine the existing theories in archaeology, linguistics and art history (Collis 2014). He changed the focus from the British Isles to the areas we now see as the "Celtic heartlands": Northern France, Southern Germany, Switzerland, and Austria, the areas from which he thought the prehistoric "Celts" had spread across Europe. Moreover, he also developed a new La Tène chronology, in addition to the ones already set up by Otto Tischler, Paul Reinecke, and Arthur Evans (Collis 2003, 87-92; 2014; Megaw and Megaw 1989, 12-14).

Another influential scholar of this time was the Oxford-based German Paul Jacobsthal (1880-1957), who investigated the influence of Greek ornaments on La Tène art styles in his work *Early Celtic Art* (1944). He subdivided the La Tène phase into four different styles, a division still being used today (Collis 2003; Jacobsthal 1944; Megaw and Megaw 1989, 16).

2.6.3. Archaeological theories of the later nineteenth century

The above mentioned scholars arguably laid the basis for the study of "Celtic" art and archaeology. At first, the terms Hallstatt and La Tène probably mainly functioned as a chronological division, but near the end of the nineteenth century, they seem to have become more and more associated with a certain "Celtic identity" (Collis 2003; James 1999). By then, it was usually assumed that the prehistoric world consisted of specific "cultures" or "culture groups", linked with ethnicity, a specific material culture, and a specific language (James 1999). These theories were first coined by the German scholar Gustav Kossinna (1858-1931) and the Australian V. Gordon Childe (1892-1957) (Collis 2003, 84-87; James 1999, 59-62; Renfrew 1990, 215).

In line of this, the "Celts" were seen as a specific ethnic group of people using La Tène art and speaking an early form of "Celtic". The spread of "Celtic" La Tène art was seen as a proof of the great "Celtic" migrations described in Classical accounts (Collis 2003, 151).

2.7. Modern developments

2.7.1. The modern world

As said earlier, the "Celts" are very well known worldwide and can be seen as the most popular ancient people nowadays. But how did the "Celtic" world gain such a status? During the early twentieth century, the interest in the "Celtic" world lay low for a while. After the Second World War, however, a new Celtic revival took place which lasts up to this day (Tanner 2004). This revival is most likely influenced by a few post-war twentieth century developments. The first is a renewed interest in spirituality, mysticism and authenticity that finds its origin in the 1960s youth cultures, and is continued by later "New Age" movements, and other alternative cultures today. Druidism gained popularity again, as well as "authentic" folk music (Chapman 1992, 219-220; Haywood 2004, 211-212; Tanner 2004; Reiss 2003).

Another development is emergence of mass tourism, which caused the modern "Celtic" regions to re-invent their "Celtic" heritage and apply the term "Celtic" to almost everything to come out of or originate in their country. Increased globalisation also made sure this renewed Celticism could spread out over the world quickly, connecting people from all around the globe with Celtic history and heritage. These developments, however, did not have a positive influence on the native "Celtic" languages: increased contact with the mainly English-speaking world ensured their rapid decline (Haywood 2004; Tanner 2004).

2.7.2. Modern Celticism

Modern outings of Celticism are not only found in "Celtic"-speaking countries or areas with a presumed "Celtic" heritage, but also at communities of descendants of "Celtic"-speaking people in the United States, Canada, Australia and so on. Even people with no "true" link to the "Celts" can feel connected to the "Celtic" heritage. The term "Celtic" is now widely used as a cultural label to describe almost everything that has to do with modern Celtic people, or with the distant past of the modern Celtic-speaking nations (James 1999, 20; Tanner 2004).

A few important aspects of modern Celticism are nationalism, language, music, Druidic religion, art and sport (Tanner 2004). There are still "Celtic" nationalistic parties and movements to be found, not only in the older "traditional Celtic" regions, but also in areas that have recently "discovered" their "Celtic" roots, such as the Czech Republic and Galicia (Collis 2003, 202; Haywood and Cunliffe 2001, 138). Political parties, for

example the Welsh *Plaid Cymru* or the Cornish *Mebyon Kernow*, defend the traditional "Celtic" languages and traditions, and sometimes opt for independence and self-rule (plaid.cymru; mebyonkernow.org; Tanner 2004). As Collis (2003) argues, the "Celts" are sometimes also seen as the ancestors of Europe and the European Union.
It could be said that a new language revival is taking place. Language schools, courses and organisations are established throughout the modern "Celtic"-speaking world and outside; some "Celtic" languages, such as Cornish, are even re-created. In Ireland, Wales, Scotland and Brittany, you can come across multi-language traffic signs (see figure 6); there are radio stations, TV channels and newspapers using the indigenous language; and the languages are sometimes even compulsory in (primary) school (Haywood and Cunliffe 2001, 130-131, 136; Tanner 2004).

Figure 6. Example of a multi-language traffic sign in Irish and English, Moneygall, Co. Offaly and Tipperary (irishjournal.ie).

"Celtic" music gained much popularity during the folk revival of the 1960s and 1970s, and has remained well-known ever since (Chapman 1992; Tanner 2004; Reiss 2003). Especially Ireland is known for its distinctive music style, consisting of many local traditions, and has exported its brand of "Celtic" music all across the world (Reiss 2003). The style is without a doubt only called "Celtic" because it originates in modern "Celtic"-speaking countries, but it shows influences from many different areas and other musical traditions (Reiss 2003). The traditional "Celtic" instruments were commonly used

throughout Europe up to the nineteenth century; others have been adopted from other countries, or were re-"invented" during the folk revival (Reiss 2003, 153; Tanner 2004). Likewise, many traditional "Celtic" song and dances are derived from popular European tunes, and traditional Irish or Scottish dances show influences from all around the continent (Tanner 2004, 108-109). In short, the "Celtic" music style was once part of a European-wide tradition that has only survived in the "Celtic"-speaking areas as a probable result of both the nineteenth and twentieth century Celtomania (Chapman 1992; 1994). This is not to say that "Celtic" music is not original or distinctive; it just serves to show that it does not stand on its own. "Celtic" music has been very important to "Celtic" identity and nationalism, and has also had a profound influence on the preservation of the "Celtic" languages, as many older songs are written in the native tongues and are still remembered today (Chapman 1992, 116-118; 1994; Tanner 2004).

A third outing of modern Celticism is neo-Druidism (see figure 7), re-installed in the 1960s and 1970s as a part of the neo-paganistic movements of the time (Green 1997). There are now a few modern Druidic organisations, such as the Order of Bards, Ovates and Druids (OBOD) and the re-established Ancient Order of Druids (AOD). Modern Druidism is is not necessarily linked to a "Celtic" identity or the "Celtic" heritage, although many neo-Druids do base themselves on Classical descriptions of the "Celtic"-Gallic religion. The spiritual movemement further contains elements derived from philosophy, psychology, environmentalism, shamanistic or animistic belief systems, and alternative worldviews. It also shows traces of the Romantic Druidism, especially when it comes to appearance and the focus on individualism (druidry.org; Green 1997).

There are many other aspects to modern Celticism. "Celtic" patterns and motifs, derived from La Tène art, are used in tattoo, textile, and jewellery design, as well as modern art (see figure 8). There are typical "Celtic" sports, such as hurling, shinty, and Gaelic football. Irish and Welsh mythological elements, as well as some aspects of "Celtic" musical traditions, are used in less mainstream music styles. In a nowadays popular literary genre, the fantasy novel, elements of "Celtic" mythology are found throughout. Lastly, alternative festivals and "fantasy fairs" show a lot of modern Celticism, ranging from "Celtic"-influenced music, art and writing, to "Celtic" spirituality, and a particular love for everything else to come out of the modern "Celtic" countries (Chapman 1992, 220; Haywood and Cunliffe 2001; Tanner 2004).

Figure 7. Modern Druids at Stonehenge (Green 1997, 173).

Figure 8. A modern "Celtic" motif on textile, sold at a gift shop in Edinburgh (Farley and Hunter 2015, 23).

2.7.3. New theories and Celtoscepticism

The scholarly study of "Celtic" history and languages still continues. Modern Celtic Studies usually focus on everything traditionally related to the "Celts", from archaeology to modern "Celtic" identity, although the language usually makes up the larger part of the discipline (Sims-Williams 1998). An international Congress of Celtic Studies is held every four years (celticstudiescongress.com). Needless to say, the "Celts" are apparently still a very popular subject of research. Nevertheless, there are different views on who the "Celts" exactly were.

In linguistics, the "Celts" are seen as a group of people speaking modern "Celtic" languages, descendants of the ancient "Celts" speaking an early form of these tongues. Recent publications, such as Meid's (2010), present the traditional view of a group of "Celtic"-speaking Iron Age people spreading out across Europe.

In archaeology, however, the idea of the "Celts" as a specific group of prehistoric people, with a specific material culture and language that spread by means of invasions and mass migrations, has largely been abandoned (Diepeveen-Jansen 2001; James 1999, 36).

From the 1950s onwards, it became clear that the ancient "Celtic" world was probably much more complex than it had always been assumed. It was put forward that prehistoric Europe was probably not inhabited by fixed "culture groups", but by many different tribes or clans. There were no firm boundaries between these groups (Collis 2003, 154; James 1999, 62-65): exchange of goods, values, ideas and people was common. As a result, the spread of La Tène artefacts is usually no longer seen as a result of migrations by an ethnic "Celtic" group, but rather as a result of long-distance trade between multiple groupings (Diepeveen-Jansen 2001). This view is sometimes labeled as "Celtosceptic", as it doubts the existence of a specific "Celtic" culture (Sims-Williams 1998).

There is much debate going on about the actual origins of "Celts". A new theory, most recently put forward by Barry Cunliffe (2012) and John T. Koch (2012; 2014), argues that they originated in the west of Europe, along the Atlantic façade; "Celtic" cultural elements and language spread along the Atlantic coast by means of trade (Henderson 2007). Theories and ideas about the "Celtic" migrations are now being investigated by geneticists, although recent research has proven that there is no such thing as a specific "Celtic" gene, at least not in the British Isles (Leslie *et.al.* 2015).

3. Who Were the Celts? History, Mythology, Linguistics and Archaeology

3.1. Introduction

In this chapter, I will discuss the scientific aspect of the Celtic image in more detail. I have already touched upon the scientific branches that investigate and research the "Celtic" heritage, namely (art) history, linguistics and archaeology: the term "Celtic" is used to describe languages, archaeological remains and mythological cycles.
Because the research spans multiple decades and centuries, I will try to give a brief overview of the current ideas on "Celtic" archaeology and linguistics, as well as an brief description of the Classical sources and medieval mythologies concerning, or thought to concern, the "Celts". In this way, it might be possible to find out what their influence has been on the creation of the popular Celtic image.

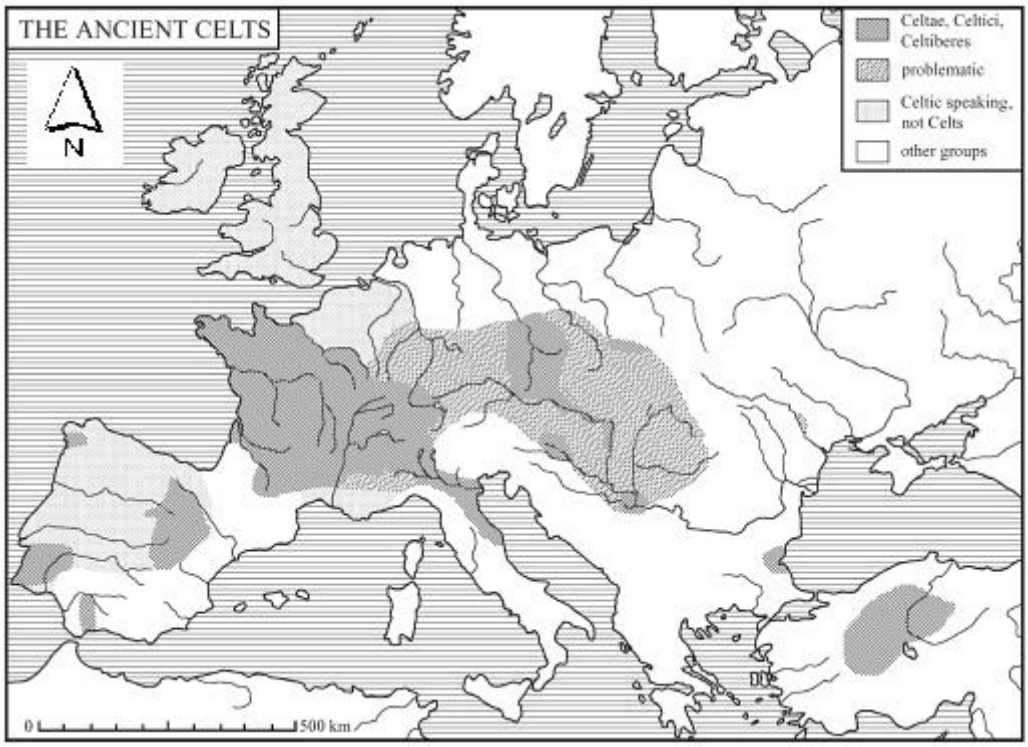

Figure 9. Areas occupied by the "Celts", according to Classical authors (Collis 2008, 50).

3.2. Historical accounts: The Classical image

Looking at the earlier mentioned Greek and Roman sources, a very distinctive Classical "Celtic stereotype" can be put together. Although the Romans distinguished a few

different “Celtic” areas in Europe (see figure 9), for clarity's sake, I will present a generalised “Classical” view on the “Celts” or “Gauls”. I have mainly focused on the authors that have written about the “Celts” most thoroughly, which are, in my opinion, Caesar, Polybius, and Posidonius (through Diodorus Siculus, Athenaeus and Strabo). The Romans and Greeks usually thought of the *Keltoi, Galli,* and *Celtae* – and, indeed, other non-Classical people living in Europe – as barbarians, or uncivilized savages. In later accounts, the “Celts” are sometimes praised for their spirituality and bravery, and provided as an example to the “corrupted” civilized world; yet, they are still seen as uncultured and savage (Cunliffe 1997, 2-10).

In Classical sources, the society of the “Celts” is presented as quite hierarchical. The chieftain was the head of the tribe, with warriors or knights, and priests or Druids slightly below him (Caes. B Gall. 6, 13-14). Most tribes lived on defended hill-top towns, which the Romans – especially Caesar, throughout his *The Gallic Wars* – called *oppida*. In Strabo's *Geography* (Str. 4, 4, 3), amongst others, the “Celts” are described as a rural people, living in “dome-shaped” houses.

The authors sometimes say that women were more equal to men in in “Celtic” society than they were in the Classical world: they were fierce, and sometimes fought alongside their husbands (Amm. Marc. 15, 12, 1), although they were still subjected to their husbands (Caes. B Gall. 6, 19). According to Aristotle (Aristot. Pol. 2, 1269b), and Posidonius (Diod. Sic. 5, 32, 7), the “Celts” had a very loose sexual morale, sometimes going as far as to practice homosexuality.

To the surprise of the Classical writers, “Celts were very keen on their appearance, careful not to become fat, “pot-bellied” (Str. 4, 4, 6) or dirty (Amm. Marc. 15, 12, 2). “Celts” were different than the Greeks or Romans; they were tall, had loud voices (Amm. Marc. 15, 12, 1-2), light hair and bright eyes – the noble men shaved off their beards, but grew large moustaches. The hair of both sexes was usually long and braided, and warriors sometimes 'spiked' their hair with lime. “Celtic” people were clad in woolen, striped cloaks, fastened with a pin, and the men wore checkered trousers ('bracae'). Both sexes were adorned with jewellery: torcs, armbands, anklets, hair-pins and brooches (Diod. Sic. 5, 27, 3; 5, 28, 1-3; 5, 30, 1; Str. 4, 4, 3; 4, 4, 5).

“Celtic” tribes are described as particularly war-like, violent, and brutish, continually waging war on each other and changing sides (Chapman 1992, 174-182; Freeman 2002, 1; Str. 4, 4, 2). They intimidated their enemy by shouting, making noise, and blowing their war-trumpets. When going into battle, they sometimes appeared in colourful

clothing or naked, wearing gold necklaces or torcs, and blue war-paint applied on their body. The weaponry consisted of a long, oblong shield, a short dagger or knife, a long sword, and sometimes a spear or war-axe; a few men wore helmets adorned with figures or horns. Warriors moved around in swift, two-wheeled war-chariots (Diod. Sic. 5, 29, 1-3; 5, 30, 2-4; Pol. 2, 29-30; 2, 29, 33; Str. 4, 4, 3). Warriors often boasted loudly of their prowess, skills, and accomplishments (Diod. Sic. 5, 29, 3).

The "Celtic" warriors are usually described as disorganized and quick-tempered, running into battle without any apparent tactic or strategy (Str. 4, 4, 2). While they were brave and apparently strangely fearless (Aristot. Eth. Nic. 3, 7), they were also superstitious – afraid that the skies might fall on their heads (Str. 7, 3, 8); and volatile – ready to sell themselves to the highest bidder as a mercenary. Mentions of "Celtic" mercenaries can be found, amongst others, in Pausanias' *Description of Greece* (Paus. 1, 7, 2; 1, 13, 2). Named "Celtic", Gallic and British warriors or "freedom fighters" are, for instance, Brennus (Liv. 5, 48), Vercingetorix (Caes. B Gall. 7, 75-89), and the "warrior queen" Boudicca (Tac. Ann. 14, 31-37).

As some Classical texts say, a key concept of "Celtic" society was migration. When the tribe started to grow too big, or the chief's son was looking for his own place to settle, parts of the tribe would migrate to another part of the continent, warring, raiding and plundering on their way (Rankin 1987). According to the Greek and Roman sources, the "Celts" settled in northern Italy, the Balkans, Anatolia (Asia Minor or Galatia), and the Iberian peninsula in this way (Cunliffe 1997, 68-69; Paus. 141, 1-6; Rankin 1987); they plundered Delphi (Paus. 1, 4, 4) and captured Rome, as well (Liv. 5, 34-49).

For all their "barbarism", the "Celts" were often seen as hospitable people by the Classical authors (Diod. Sic. 5, 38, 6). They were also very keen on feasting, eating copious amounts of food and drinking undiluted wine until they pass out (Amm. Marc. 15, 12, 4; Chapman 1992, 166-170); amongst others, Posidonius (Ath. 4, 151, f-4, 152, d) and Diodorus Siculus (Diod. Sic. 5, 26, 1-3; 5, 28, 4-5) describe the "Celtic" eating habits in detail. During feasts, warriors would loudly boast of their prowess and their skills in battle, or challenged other fighters to single combat; the winner would have the right to eat the finest cut of meat (Ath. 4, 154, b-c).

The Celts were also seen as sentimental, melodramatic, and artistic; they were keen of songs, wordplay, and riddles. Story-telling, eloquence and poetry were held in high regard, and an important part of the "Celtic" society consisted of poet-singers or bards, who would perform during feasts or on the battlefield (Ath. 6, 246, e; Diod. Sic. 5, 31, 2;

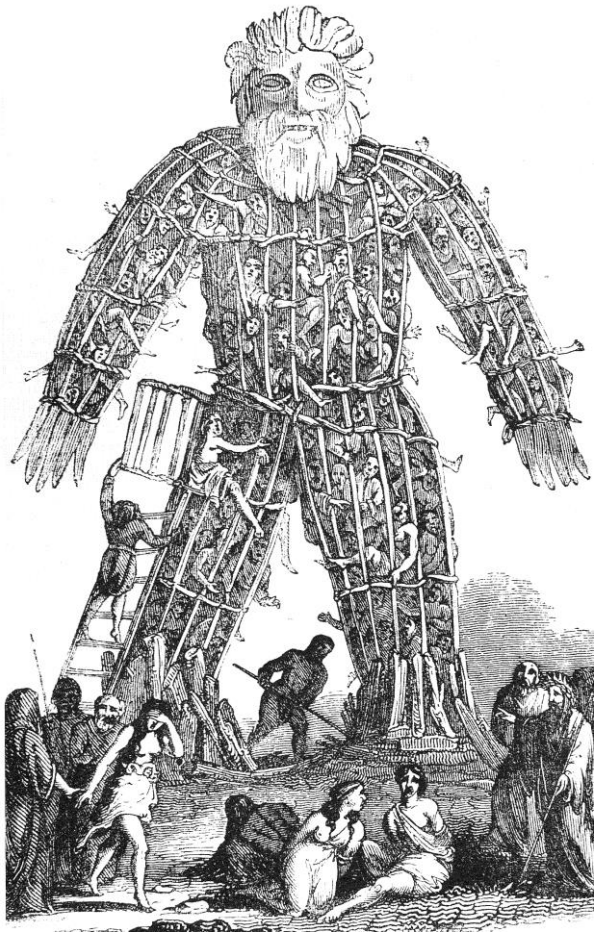

Figure 10. Nineteenth century gravure, an interpretation of the so-called "Wicker Man": an effigy vessel said to have been used by the ancient "Celts" to sacrifice humans (Green 1997, 75).

Str. 4, 4, 4).

Religion and spirituality seem to have played a large role in the life of the "Celt", too, and are discussed in a few Classical sources (Freeman 2002). According to Caesar (Caes. B Gall. 6, 13-14) and Posidonius (Diod. Sic. 5, 31, 2-5; Str. 4, 4, 4) Druids – priests or teachers – made up an important part of "Celtic" society, supervising rites and rituals, telling the future by reading bird flights or human entrails, settling political disputes, advising the chieftain of a tribe, memorizing the tribe's history, and teaching this wisdom to their apprentices. None of this wisdom was committed to script. The Druids were excepted from tax-paying and war-duty. It is thought that their practice originated on the islands of Britain (Caes. B Gall. 6, 13-14); female British Druids are described in Tacitus' *Annals* (14, 30).

The Roman sources tell us that the "Celts" believed in multiple gods and deities, which they revered at sacred (natural) places, and appeased by offerings, votive deposits, animal sacrifices, and sometimes even human sacrifices (Caes. B Gall. 6, 16-18; Diod. Sic. 5, 27, 4; 5, 32, 6; Mac Cana 1970; Str. 4, 4, 5) – see figure 10. "Celtic" tribes had a concept of reincarnation, and believed in life after death (Diod. Sic. 5, 30, 6). Ceasar (Caes. B Gall. 6, 19) gives a description of the lavish funeral ritual of the "Celts". Druids carried out sacred rituals in secreted oak-groves – the oak being their principal holy tree – where they cut off the sacred mistletoe (Plin. HN 16, 95). Another practiced "Celtic" cult is that of the severed head; warriors are said to have beheaded their enemies and kept the skull as a trophy (Diod. Sic. 5, 29, 4-5; Meid 2010, 109-131; Str. 4, 4, 5).

Although the Roman writers never called the British Isles "Celtic" (Freeman 2002, 61), the island of Britain and its inhabitants are extensively described by Tacitus in his *Agricola* (Tac. Agr. 1, 10-13), and Caesar in his *Gallic War* (Caes. B Gall. 4, 20–5, 23); they comment on the similarities between the "Celtic" Gauls and the Britons, and their war of waging war, using chariots and long swords. Ireland is discussed in a limited number of sources: the island is seen as the northernmost habitable land in the world, inhabited by cannibals and savages (Str. 4, 5, 4).

3.3. The mythological cycles of Ireland and Wales

The vernacular literature from Ireland and Britain can be used to put together an idea of what the medieval, or even prehistoric, "Celtic"-speaking world would have looked like (Jackson 1964; Meid 2010). However, we should keep in mind that the British Isles were *never* called "Celtic" during the Middle Ages, or even before that: the label "Celtic" was only applied to medieval British and Irish literature centuries after it was written, influenced by linguistic research (Chapman 1992; Collis 2003).

Here, I will focus on the mythological cycles written in Ireland and Wales, as, in my opinion, these mythologies are more thoroughly linked to the "Celtic" heritage than any other medieval sources of the British Isles (law texts, poetry, annals, genealogies). The most important mythological cycles are the *Fenian cycle* and *Ulster cycle* (Ireland) and the *Mabinogion* (Wales) (Meid 2010).

The mythological stories show that the early Irish and British world were built up of small tribal farming communities. These were hierarchical and kin-based, with a king or chieftain on top, followed by warriors, religious priests, other specialists (artists,

craftsmen), farmers, and slaves (Champion 1995; Jackson 1964; Mac Cana 1970; Meid 2010, 73-78). The medieval texts often tell of war or competition between the tribes, mostly based on possession of land and cattle (Champion 1995).

Kings were elected by means of sacred rituals (Mac Cana 1970, 117). They gained their status by means of patronage and clientship, and by displaying their wealth. A key concept to form clientships was to send away children to foster-families (Champion 1995; Jackson 1964).

Warriors seem to have been held in high regard and gained a special status, and many mythologies can be placed in a so-called "heroic tradition"; the myths tell of great, almost invincible heroes such as the Irish Cú Chulainn (Berresford Ellis 1992, 15; Jackson 1964; Mac Cana 1970; Meid 2010, 151) – see figure 11. Themes similar – but necessarily the same – to those in Classical writing are found in the medieval myths, such as the use of war-chariots and long swords, as well as the boasting about martial prowess and the challenging to single combat (Jackson 1964; Meid 2010).

Feasting and hospitality seem to have been important concepts in these early medieval societies, and the best warrior was always served the "champion's portion", or choice part of the food (Jackson 1964; Meid 2010, 96-106). Feasts were probably a way of confirming the king's position and showing the status of the guests (Jackson 1964; Champion 1995).

Looking at the mythologies, some women seem to have had a greater amount of independence and freedom, although society was very much patriarchical and both sexes were treated differently (Champion 1995). Females *could* hold great power and sometimes possessed great skill in battle; one such lady is the Irish queen Maeve encountered in the Irish tale of the *Táin Bó Cuailnge* (Mac Cana 1970, 85; Meid 2010, 150).

People similar to the Classical bards, seers, and druids are also found in the mythological texts, and they seem to have had a special status in early Irish and British society (Champion 1995; Jackson 1964; Mac Cana 1970). Druids serve as counselor to the king in matters of warfare and justice, and possess knowledge about religious rituals and ceremonies (Meid 2010, 88-92; Ross 1995); this function was sometimes also fulfilled by poets or bards (Champion 1995; Ross 1995). Bards were trained in schools and served to sing the praise of the kings or other aristocrats in society (Jackson 1964).

The tribal societies seem to have practised a pagan religion, with special significance put upon the changing of seasons and sacred watery places. There seems to have been some

conception of an otherworld, the realm of supernatural creatures such as fairies. Gods and goddesses were linked with nature, natural forces, or concepts such as war (Mac Cana 1970; Meid 2010, 160-161).

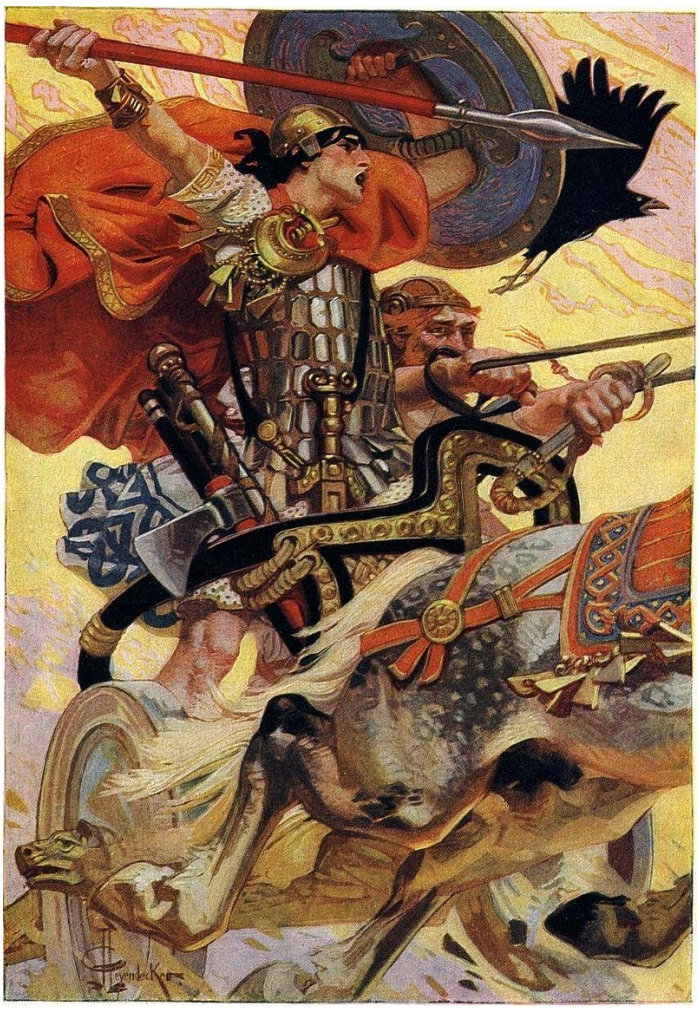

Figure 11. Cú Chulainn in battle, illustration by Joseph Christian Leyendecker (1874-1951) in T.W. Rolleston's *Myths and Legends of the Celtic Race* (Wikipedia.org).

3.4. Linguistics and philology

The label "Celtic" is used to describe a specific language group, the existence of which is attested by linguistic research: the term "Celtic languages", to linguists and philologists, is very valid indeed (MacAulay 1992; Sims-Williams 1998). Therefore, I will try to use the term here as it is used in linguistic and philological studies. Keep in mind, however, that the existence of a Celtic language group does not necessarily mean that this group can be linked to a certain ethnicity or certain archaeological remains (Collis 2003). In my

view, a *Celtic-speaking* person – someone who speaks a language we now distinguish as "Celtic" – is not necessarily the same as a *Celtic* person: someone who is described or describes himself as "a Celt". For an overview of the development of the "Celtic" languages, see figure 12.

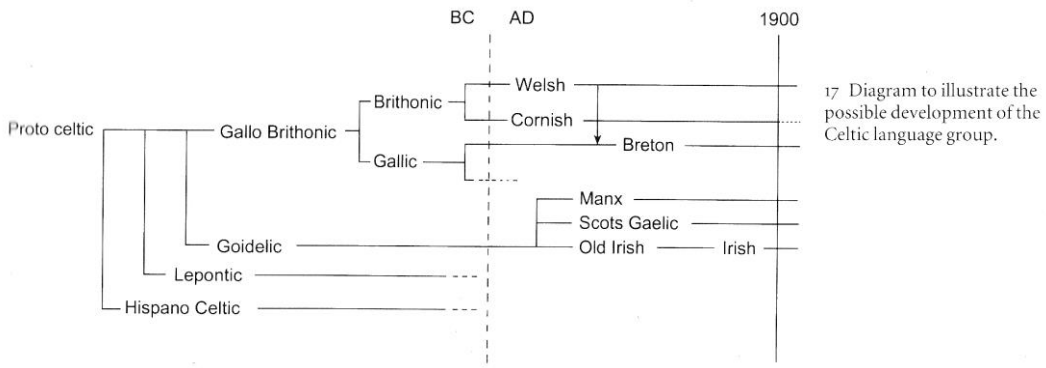

Figure 12. Diagram to illustrate the possible development of the "Celtic" language group, after Augustus Schleicher (Cunliffe 1997, 23).

3.4.1. The origins of the Celtic languages

Like the majority of the European languages, the Celtic tongues are thought to derive from an ancient – as well as entirely hypothetical – proto-language, which is called Indo-European. This language is thought to originate in fifth to third millennium BC Eastern Europe, and brought westward by groups of traveling bands. It branched out over the European continent, forming different dialects and language groups (MacAulay 1992, 3; Meid 2010, 13).

The modern languages now called Celtic are said to have derived from a hypothetical Proto-Celtic, closely related to Italic languages (MacAulay 1992; Meid 2010). The origins and "homeland" of the language are unknown, and much debated. Likewise, it is not clear when the Celtic languages were first truly developed. It is thought that Proto-Celtic spread out over Europe and replaced earlier, pre-Celtic languages spoken here (Rankin 1987). The Celtic tongues eventually split up into a Continental and an Insular branch, although it remains unclear exactly how strict the barrier between these two is (MacAulay 1992, 4; Meid 2010, 16).

In linguistics and philology, the distinguished Continental Celtic languages are Lepontic from Northern-Italy, Celtiberian from Spain, possibly Galatian from Anatolia (although no evidence survives), and Gallic or Gaulish from Northern-France (MacAulay 1992;

Meid 2010). It is said that they had all died out by the first millennium BC, and we rely on scarce evidence to reconstruct them. Most linguistic evidence – the majority written in Gaulish – consists of short inscriptions or memorials, and no long texts survive (Chapman 1992, 7-8; Freeman 2002, 85; MacAulay 1992, 2; Meid 2010, 15-16; Renfrew 1990, 225-233). Interestingly, it has recently been argued that the oldest Celtic language is Tartessian, found in Portugal; the Tartessian inscriptions pre-date both the Hallstatt and La Tène cultures, which are traditionally linked to the Celts, and died out long before coming into contact with the Roman world (Koch 2012; 2014, 11-13).

The Insular Celtic languages are further subdivided into P-Celtic and Q-Celtic, depending on whether the original Indo-European sound of **p* is replaced by a **q* or a softer **p*-sound (MacAulay 1992; Meid 2010; Rankin 1987). P-Celtic is usually called Brythonic, and harbours Welsh, Cornish, old British, and Breton. The Q-Celtic, or Goidelic, languages are Irish, Scottish and Manx (MacAulay 1992; Meid 2010, 17; Rankin 1987, 21).

It is generally assumed that P-Celtic is the older of the two, although it is not clear when or where the p/q division actually occurred; the languages might also have developed simultaneously (Chapman 1992, 9; Hamp 1962; Renfrew 1990, 245). To make things more complex, it is sometimes thought that the earliest languages spoken in Ireland – and maybe Scotland, too – were part of the P-Celtic language group, or an even older Indo-European language, only to be replaced by a Q-Celtic language around 500 BC (Meid 2010, 34). Whether this language found its origins in the native Irish inhabitants themselves or was brought in by a wave of Q-Celtic immigrants, remains a subject of debate (Renfrew 1990, 246-248).

The history of the Celtic languages is a difficult one, and sometimes hard to trace. As mentioned before, we do have some inscriptions dating from Roman times, and the early Middle Ages. Other means of tracing back the earlier development of the Celtic languages is done by the study of place names, river names, Celtic loan words in Latin, and Celtic personal names found in Classical accounts and Gallo-Roman inscriptions. Surviving place-names sometimes show elements which are seen as typically Celtic, such as the suffixes *-briga* or *-durum* (see figure 13). Celtic language elements are found throughout Europe, from the Celtiberian peninsula to the British Isles and the Balkans (Parsons 2012; Renfrew 1990, 225-233; Sims-Williams 2006).

Other sources regarding the older Celtic languages come from medieval times. According

to linguists, medieval Celtic languages are without a doubt related to the modern Celtic languages spoken in the same areas (MacAulay 1992; Meid 2010; Renfrew 1990, 228).

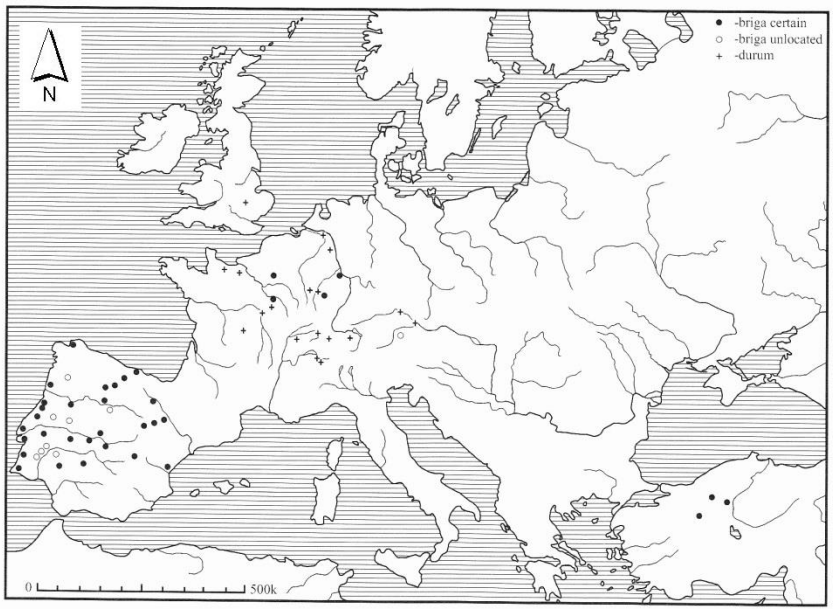

Figure 13. Distribution of place-names ending in -briga (hill fort) and -durum (fort). After Collis (2003, 130).

3.4.2. Modern Celtic languages

The modern languages we distinguish as Celtic – Irish, Welsh, Scottish, Manx, Cornish, and Breton – are now only spoken along the Atlantic west coast (Meid 2010, 15). Although these languages are most probably descended from the known early medieval tongues, the links with died out Continental languages are harder to establish. Continual movements of people during both prehistoric and historical times have made it even harder to find the origins of particular languages (MacAulay 1992).

It is now thought that Scottish-Gaelic was brought into northern Great-Britain by an Irish tribe; the Manx language is also derived from Irish, and was probably introduced by Irish settlers on the island. Similarly, Breton is seen as an insular Celtic language because it finds its origins in the British or Brythonic language of south-western England (Chapman 1992, 9-13; MacAulay 1992; Meid 2010, 15). Throughout the centuries, the Celtic languages have been subject to foreign influences, due to the fact that the British Isles and Brittany have been in contact with many different other groups and people (MacAulay 1992; Meid 2010, 65-71).

Speakers of the modern Celtic – all insular – languages have been constantly declining in

number. Cornish and Manx have already died out as a first language, in 1777 and 1974 respectively (MacAulay 1992). The remaining tongues are on the brink of extinction, even though they have been subject to revivals from the Romantic era onwards. The Christian clergy, who sometimes held masses in the vernacular languages of the Celtic-speaking regions, possibly had a more profound influence on preserving the Celtic languages, although this influence has long since been diminished (Chapman 1992; MacAulay 1992; Price 1995; Tanner 2004).

The number of habitual Celtic-speakers continued to fall back from the nineteenth century onwards. This is due to a number of reasons. First of all, during the nineteenth century, the public schooling system in these areas usually favoured the English or French language in spite of the indigenous tongues; there are a few accounts speaking of public shaming of children who *did* converse in their native language. Moreover, the Church eventually moved away from using local languages (Chapman 1992; Tanner 2004).

However, this does not account for all. It has become clear that the acquittal of the English or French language is also largely a development from within (Chapman 1992). nineteenth century industrialism and an increasingly globalised world made the knowledge of English or French more and more favourable; these were the languages spoken in the big cities and the industrialised centers. Many people migrated away from the poorer Celtic-speaking countryside to work in largely Anglophone or Francophone areas, thus having to speak English or French on a daily basis. Celtic languages were more and more associated with poverty and even backwardness, a source of shame rather than pride: it was better to see your children learn English or French so they could move up in the world (Chapman 1992, 99-110; Collis 2003, 198; Tanner 2004).

Still other forces eventually drew out the Celtic languages during the nineteenth and twentieth century. Modern inventions made for an increasingly smaller world, and mass tourism took a huge flight. Formerly isolated areas and cultures could now get in touch with the outside world. English was, and is, omnipresent in modern media. The connection with the local languages died out, as many people forced their children to speak English and go to English schools. In short, the bigger part of the Celtic-speaking population willingly adapted to speaking English or French, and has not reverted to the native or original language since (Chapman 1992, 110; Tanner 2004).

At the height of “Celtic” nationalism, during the nineteenth century, a small group of people tried to revive the indigenous languages, and Celtic language revivals have come

up on a regular basis ever since. However, as said before, the revivalists are usually outsiders. During the nineteenth century, for instance, they were usually intellectuals with a high-class, well-educated – mostly Protestant or even English – background. Many modern revivalists come from "non-Celtic" countries, such as the USA, and, again, England, or have a purely academic background (Chapman 1992; Tanner 2004, 10-20). It is thought that there are no more than 800,000 non-English and non-French speakers in the modern "Celtic" lands today (Tanner 2004, 25). However, Irish, Scottish and Welsh have gained some status in the modern world during the last century, as a result of renewed nationalism and a focus on cultural heritage. Irish Gaelic is the official first language of the Republic of Ireland, and is taught at schools. There are a few areas which are designated for native Gaelic speakers (*Gaeltachts*), although it is unclear how many of the inhabitants use the language in daily conversation. In Ireland, as well as Scotland and Wales, you can come across multi-lingual traffic-signs, radio and tv programmes, as well as newspapers, all in the "native" Celtic language of the area. Welsh continues to be the Celtic language with the highest number of habitual speakers, even though there is a possibility that Breton is actually spoken most. Lastly, while the Cornish language has long died out, it has been reconstructed by a few enthusiasts, although there remains a debate on how the language would have sounded, and there are no native speakers at all (Chapman 1992, 9-13; Meid 2010, 65-71; MacAulay 1992; Price 1995; Tanner 2004).
Apart from the areas in Europe which are Celtic-speaking, there are also a few parts in the New World where descendants of Celtic-speaking people survive. These are, notably, the Welsh-speaking colonies in Patagonia, and the Scottish-speaking parts of Canada. However, just as is seen in the languages' "homelands", the number of everyday speakers continues to fall back (MacAulay 1992, 3; Tanner 2004).
Still, there is a slightly positive development to be seen. A few people growing up speaking English are now sending their children off to Celtic-speaking schools; a new revival that could be seen as more internally driven than the earlier ones. However, it is clear that there remains a gap between Celtic-speakers of two or three generations earlier, and the new generation. As shown above, the language has to be re-installed, and sometimes even re-created (Price 1995; Tanner 2004).

3.5. Archaeology and art

3.5.1. Some general remarks

The two complexes usually associated with the "Celts" are Hallstatt and La Tène

(Cunliffe 1997). The idea of them being "Celtic", however, is an outdated concept still resting on early nineteenth century "culture group" theories (Chapman 1992; Collis 2003; James 1999). Still, they are still widely known as "Celtic", and have been linked to a certain "Celtic" ethnicity, identity or language – therefore, we cannot ignore their influence on the making of the "Celtic image".

Below, I will give a short overview of both the Hallstatt and La Tène "cultures", focusing on the more well-known aspects of both complexes. The "heartlands" of both Hallstatt and La Tène are traditionally considered to be located in Central Europe, with regional traditions expanding to the west, east, and south of these areas, although this, too, is an assumption derived from earlier eighteenth and nineteenth century theories (Collis 2003). Well-known Hallstatt and La Tène burial complexes are, for instance, found in southern Germany (Hunsrück-Eifel Kultur) and northern France (Marne-Moselle and, later, the Champagne area) (Collis 1984; 2003; Diepeveen-Jansen 2001).

Later Hallstatt phases and La Tène proper are usually placed in the Iron Age, a European-wide time period which is, above all, characterized by the development of iron-working technologies (Collis 1984). In general, bronze, iron, and gold played an important role in Iron Age society, and were used to make tools, artefacts, jewellery and weaponry, as well as eating and drinking containers (Manning 1995; Northover 1995; Wells 1995).

It is good to keep in mind that most Iron Age people probably lived in farmsteads in agricultural and rural communities, raising cattle and harvesting crops (Reynolds 1995), even though the research focus on exceptional sites – hill forts, rich burials – might suggest otherwise.

3.5.2. Hallstatt: "Kings and princes"

The Hallstatt type site is located in Austria, and was discovered in 1844. Burials of more than 2,500 individuals were found, both inhumations and cremations, from both female and male adults and children. Apart from this, several artefacts and grave-goods were unearthed that could be associated with the graves. The Hallstatt center seems to have been connected to a nearby salt-mine, after which the modern town is probably named (Cunliffe 1997, 28). See also figure 14.

The early "Hallstatt period" is sometimes seen as a local, Central European branch of the Urnfield tradition. Elements of the latter are seen throughout Europe from around 1300 BC onwards. Urnfield sites show many regional differences, but one main trend to be seen is that the remains of the deceased were cremated; the ashes were then put into an

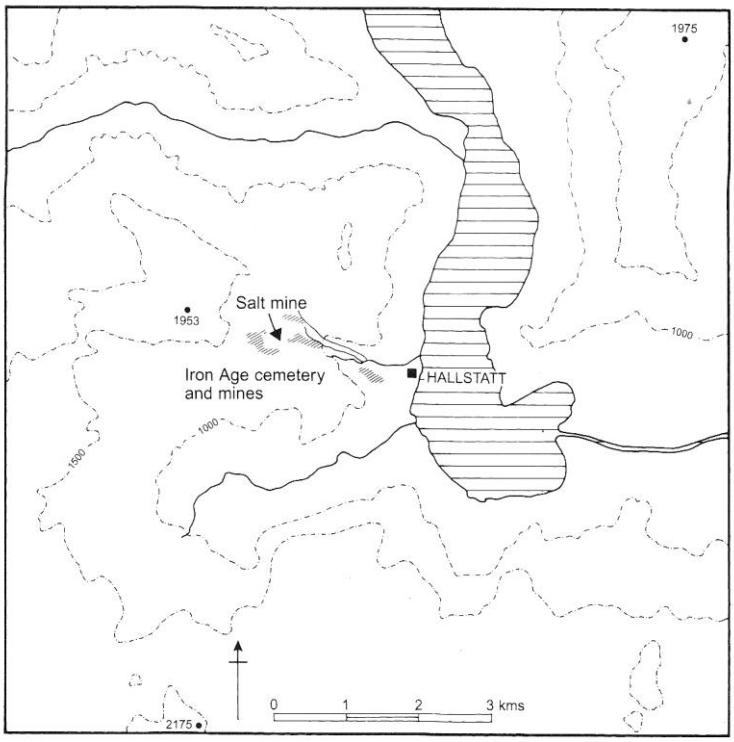

Figure 14. The location of the settlement, mines, and Iron Age cemetery of Hallstatt, Austria (Cunliffe 1997, 28).

urn in association with two or three ancillary vessels, and sometimes buried under a *tumulus* or barrow (Cunliffe 1997, 43; Collis 1984, 74; Green 1986; 1995, 5; Vitali 2008). Many practices typically associated with Hallstatt and La Tène are already apparent in the Urnfield culture, and likewise, there is a continuity to be seen between Hallstatt and La Tène traditions (Collis 1984, 74; Harding 2007; Uenze 1993).

Hallstatt is divided into four different phases, mainly looking at type artefacts and the way of burying. During the first two Bronze Age phases (ca. 1200-800 BC), Urnfield cremation is the main funerary rite, but during the Iron Age phases, Hallstatt C and D (ca. 800-450 BC) inhumation returns. However, cremation and inhumation are used side by side for a long time, and inhumation never really becomes the main funerary ritual. In poorer graves especially, cremation survives up to the Iron Age phases (Harding 2007, 19; Vitali 2008). See also table 1.

Hallstatt-type artefacts, settlement sites and burials are found throughout Europe, although not all phases are represented everywhere, in the same way, or in the same amount. Overall, there are many regional differences to be seen in the Hallstatt "world"

(Collis 2003; Cunliffe 1997; Diepeveen-Jansen 2001), Ireland, for instance, a country typically seen as "Celtic", shows no Hallstatt finds (Raftery 1995).

Table 1. Hallstatt phases, after Reinecke (1902)

Period	**Date**
Hallstatt A (HaA)	c. 1200-1000 BCE
Hallstatt B (HaB)	c. 1000-800 BCE
Hallstatt C (HaC) (Early)	c. 800-620 BCE
Hallstatt D (HaD) (Late)	c. 620-450 BCE

Archaeologically, the Hallstatt "world" is subdivided in a western zone, with the Hallstatt type site situated roughly in the middle: see figure 15. The western zone is traditionally characterized by the occurrence of the distinctive long sword, while the type artefact of the eastern zone is the socketed axe (Megaw and Megaw 1989, 25-47).
It is thought that an extensive trade network was already in place during the Hallstatt period, ranging from the Atlantic to the Mediterranean and beyond (Henderson 2007); Greek trading ports were established throughout western Europe. Mediterranean imports, such as pottery and wine-drinking gear, are found in Hallstatt graves (Cunliffe 1997; Collis 1984; Green 1995, 5; Henderson; Vitali 2008; Wells 1995a).

3.5.2.1. Burial ritual

There is a wide range of inhumation graves dating from Hallstatt C and D, from poorer graves containing no gifts at all to richly furnished graves traditionally referred to as "warrior graves" or "princely graves" (*Fürstengräber)* – see also figure 16. There are many regional variations and customs to be seen when it comes to burial practices, however, and rich graves are not encountered everywhere. In some regions, cremation, and, possibly, excarnation prevails (Champion 1995, 87; Collis 1984; 2003; Diepeveen-Jansen 2001; Wait 1995).
From the Hallstatt C phase onwards, the rich graves and inhumations can be found near cemeteries, principally concentrated in southern Germany, and are marked by a great array of grave-goods. Rich graves are sometimes concentrated around bigger

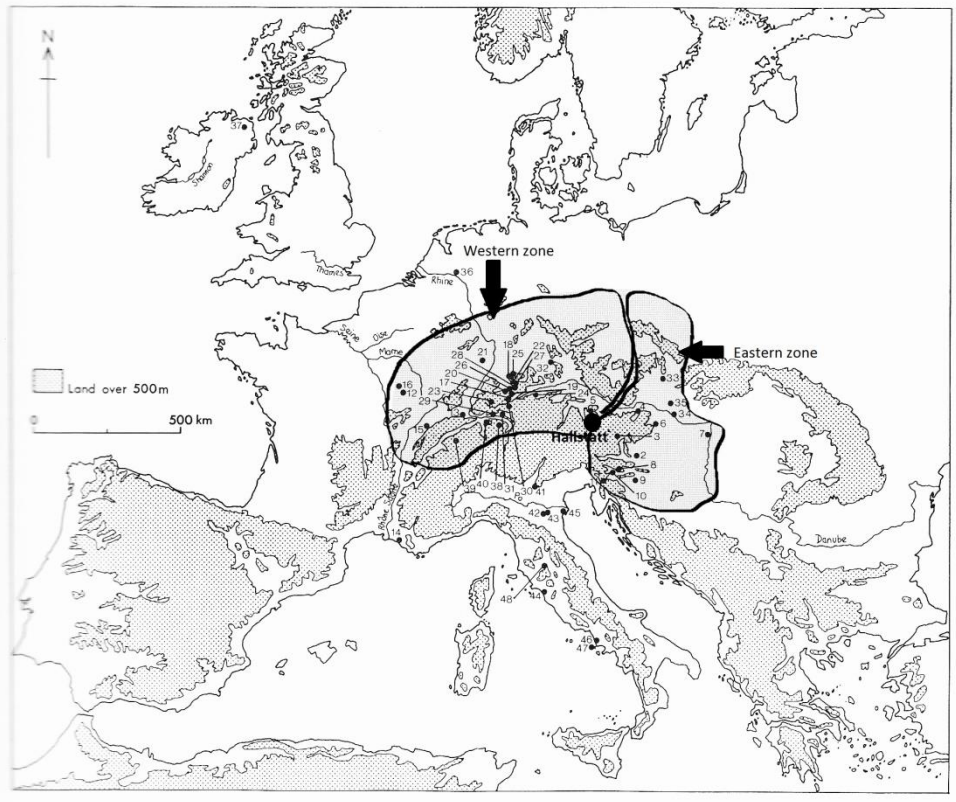

Figure 15. Map of Hallstatt sites, with the eastern and the western zones indicated. After Megaw and Megaw 1989 (31).

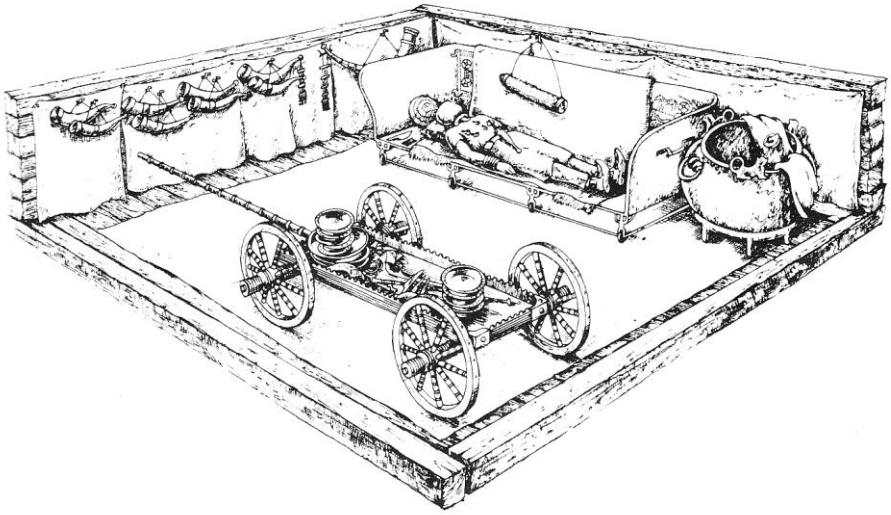

Figure 16. Reconstruction of the interior of a Hallstatt "chieftain's grave", or wagon grave. The grave was found in Hochdorf, Stuttgard, Germany, and is dated to the 6th century BC (in Cunliffe 1997, 59).

settlements in eastern France and south-western Germany, so-called *Fürstensitze*, although the relation between the graves and settlements is unclear (Cunliffe 1997, 51-57; Diepeveen-Jansen 2001; Wait 1995, 501; Vitali 2008).

Rich inhumation graves are usually found in wooden chambers, sometimes covered by a grave-mound or tumulus. These tumuli mostly contain only one inhumation during the Hallstatt C phase, but during the Hallstatt D period, as much as three or four burials can be found in one mound. The graves sometimes contain secondary burials or are surrounded by smaller barrows (Wait 1995, 501; Vitali 2008).

Some male, as well as female, graves see the deceased laid out on or next to a four-wheeled wagon, or have the body surrounded by grave-goods that are associated with carriages or horse-riding, such as horse-bits and horse-trappings. Most of the time, the body is laid out on its back, with the arms stretched out on both sides. In some cases, a double burial is found (Diepeveen-Jansen 2001; Vitali 2008; Wait 1995).

It is interesting to see that both male and female graves can be richly furnished with grave-goods. There is a slight difference between the male and female gifts, and again, there is much regional variation to be seen. There seems to be no pronounced difference in status between the sexes (Diepeveen-Jansen 2001; Vitali 2008; Wait 1995).

Female grave goods consist of jewellery: fibulae or cloak-fasteners, necklaces, bracelets and anklets made of bronze or gold, sometimes adorned with amber beads. The men are presented with weaponry and hunting-gear. Personal attire such as razors, mirrors and combs are in a few cases found, too, both in male and female graves. Besides these personal gifts, most rich burials also show a wide array of eating and drinking equipment, suggesting that feasting was an important part of the funerary rite. Bronze drinking vessels, wine craters, cauldrons and drinking horns are found, as well as plates and cooking pots – many of them imported from the Mediterranean world (Diepeveen-Jansen 2001; Vitali 2008; Wait 1995).

The inhumations, especially the *Fürstengräber*, have sparked a lot of inspiration throughout the ages: they are seen as the graves of kings, princes, or chiefs from the Hallstatt society. The wide array of luxurious, rare, and valuable grave goods show their high status. The Mediterranean imports indicate that the “princes and princesses” could have gained their position by the manipulation of the European trade networks (Cunliffe 1997, 61; Diepeveen-Jansen 2001; Meid 2010, 24; Vitali 2008).

3.5.2.2. Settlements and structures

Besides burials, some settlement sites and fortifications are attributed to the Hallstatt period. Just as is the case with burial practices, settlement patterns show remarkable differences and diversity throughout the Hallstatt zone, from open settlements and farming communities to defended sites (Collis 1984; 2003; James 1999, 88).

The structures most closely linked to Hallstatt are the so-called hill-forts, enclosures found on hill-tops or artificially heightened places. These forts are not found everywhere throughout the Hallstatt zone, however, and show many regional differences (Collis 2003, 141-142). Although the hill-forts are traditionally seen as defended places or the seats of chieftains, their function is still not entirely clear. They could also have been used as ceremonial gathering places, pastoral lands, places of refuge, pre-urban centers, or indeed chiefly residences: most probably, they had multiple functions (Diepeveen-Jansen 2001; Ralston 1995).

Some of the hill-forts are associated with cemeteries; especially towards the later Hallstatt phases, they become more and more linked to particular rich graves. During this time, a more pronounced settlement hierarchy is seen, with some bigger enclosures functioning as power centers (the *Fürstenstitze*), while others were used as production, distribution or trade centers (Vitali 2008).

3.5.2.3. Ritual practice

Another trend we see during the Hallstatt period, is that of deliberately placing valuable goods – jewellery, weaponry, cauldrons – in hoards, favouring natural, remote, or watery places such as rivers. A few presumed sanctuaries are found near wet areas, mainly in northern France and southern Germany (Cunliffe 1997, 194-197; Green 1986; 1997; Webster 1995). The depositing practice is not only typical for the Hallstatt zone and possibly finds its origins in the Neolithic, although it was not practiced everywhere, nor continuously (Collis 2003, 140; Wells 2004, 70).

Votive offering has traditionally been interpreted as a ritual practice, an offering to deities or spirits residing in sacred places, especially because the votive deposits are usually found in isolated areas. Moreover, some of the finds – especially weapons – seem to have never been used or especially made with the purpose of depositing them; casting them off could have been a way of showing wealth and gaining status. A more practical component of the practice cannot completely be ruled out, such as the safekeeping or discarding of objects, although the amount of objects found, the ritual-like treatments of

artefacts, and the regularity of the depositing seems to point in a different direction (Fontijn 2002; Green 1986, 138-140).
Another ritual or ceremonial practice originating during this time is that of communal feasting and drinking, attested by finds interpreted as banquet utensils and heaps of animal bones. This tradition continues into the La Tène period (Harding 2007, 30-31).

3.5.2.4. Art style

The Hallstatt period has its own art style, as well, foreshadowing the La Tène style of the later Iron Age. The Hallstatt type motifs are usually geometrical and semi-stylized, and are mostly found on metal objects such as jewellery, cauldrons, and weaponry, although they also appear on pottery. Stone sculptures are found in the western Hallstatt zone.
The art style seems to be symbolic and spiritual, and a few "Celtic" celestial- and animal deities can already be identified. An example is the sun-disk, and other symbols associated with the so-called Hallstatt "sun-god" (Harding 2007, 34-37; Megaw and Megaw 1989, 25-49).

3.5.3. La Tène: "Warriors and migrations"

Around 500 BC, a major shift in settlement occurs in the European heartland. It is usually seen as a power shift, for the Hallstatt centers get abandoned in favour of the newly established La Tène sites in the Marne-Moselle and, later, the Middle Rhine areas in France and Germany. The La Tène complex is named after the type site found at Lake Neuchâtel, Switzerland (Cunliffe 1997) – see figure 17. See for rough dates on La Tène, table 2.

Table 2. Rough dates for La Tène (not including regional variations), following Reinecke (1902) and Déchelette (1914)

Period	**Date**
La Tène A / Early La Tène I	c. 460-400 BCE
La Tène B1 / Middle La Tène I	c. 400-320 BCE
La Tène B2 / Late La Tène I	c. 320-260 BCE
La Tène C / La Tène II	c. 260-150 BCE
La Tène D / La Tène III	c. 150-30 BCE

There is virtually no overlap to be seen between the La Tène and Hallstatt centers, although in some places, Late Hallstatt and Early La Tène phases could have been contemporary, and there is no doubt that there was a high degree of continuity between Hallstatt and La Tène society. The latter is usually seen as hierarchical, with a "warrior elite" on top and much emphasis placed on warfare, martiality, and individual status and prestige. This warrior elite is thought to have replaced the earlier elite of "kings and princes" (Collis 1984; Cunliffe 1997; Green 1995, 5-6; Vitali 2008, 52; Wait 1995).
La Tène type finds and sites can be found in southern Germany, eastern France, Belgium, Switzerland, Austria, the Balkans, and Poland; finds interpreted as La Tène are also found in England, Ireland, northern Italy, Spain, Portugal and Turkey (Cunliffe 1997).
The Mediterranean trade continued throughout the La Tène period, eventually focusing on the Roman empire instead of the Greek world (Collis 1984; Wells 1995a).

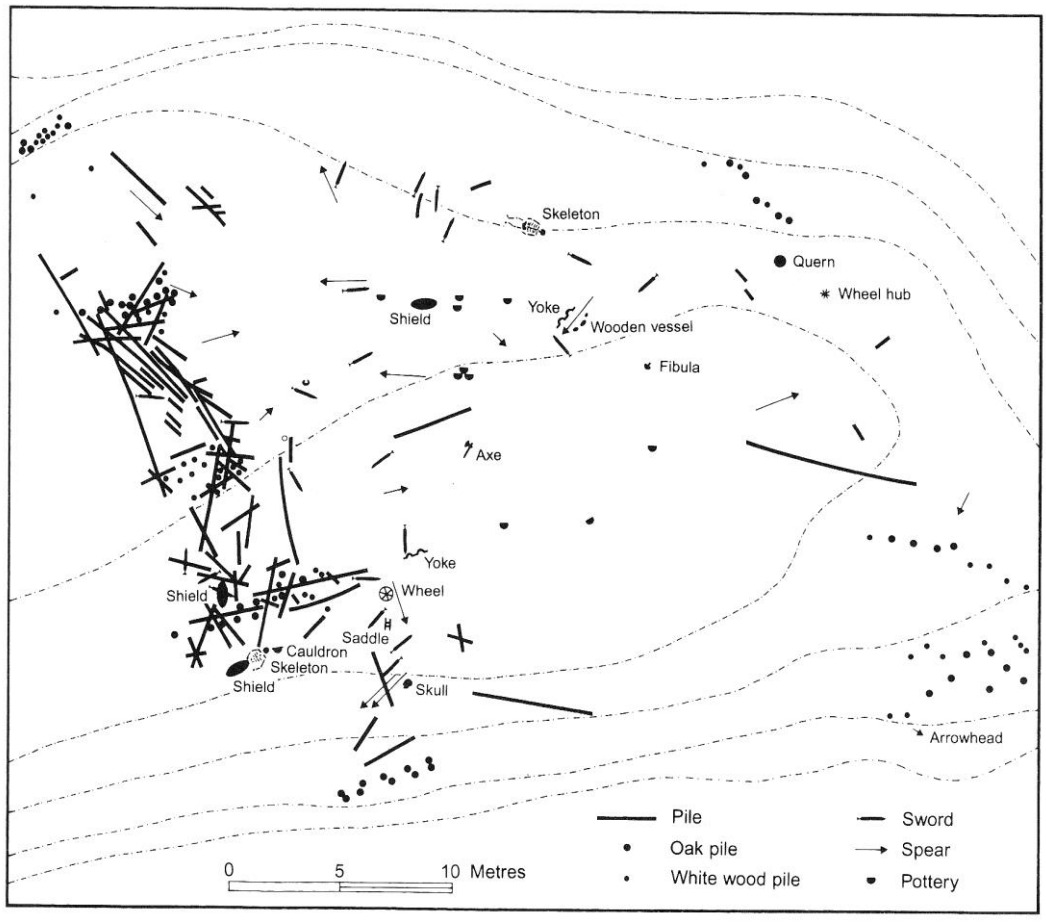

Figure 17. Overview of the La Tène type site, based on Paul Vouga's original excavation plan published in 1923 (Cunliffe 1997, 31).

3.5.3.1. Art and symbolism

One of the most well-known aspects of La Tène archaeology is the art style, which is divided up into four phases; the La Tène site itself provided the dating and phasing of the different styles. The patterns and motifs are found on luxury or "elite" items such as jewellery (see figure 18), weaponry, drinking and eating gear, and the distinctive sword sheats and scabbards of the period. It is therefore usually seen as a marker of social status and wealth (James 1999, 92; Megaw and Megaw 1989).

Following Jacobsthal (1944), the first, or early, phase resembles the earlier geometrical patterns of the Hallstatt style, combined with zoomorphical elements influenced by Etruscan art (fifth century BC). In the fourth century BC, the Waldalgesheim, mature, or Vegetal style is developed. This style shows intermingling plant- and leaf motifs, and is heavily influenced by Mediterranean elements. A century later, the rich Plastic Style is visible: a distinctive feature of this phase is the three-dimensional nature of the adornments. A subdivision of this style is the Hungarian Sword Style, found in the east of the La Tène influence zone, and consisting of Greek-influenced engravings on weaponry and scabbards (see for these styles figure 19). The last style is developed when the La Tène world comes into close contact with the Roman world; the second and first century BC see the emergence of, for instance, Gallo-Roman art, a mix between the two material cultures. The division into those phases is not quite as strict as is presented above, for across the La Tène "world", there are much regional variations, changes and developments to be seen. Moreover, not all styles are encountered everywhere (Meid 2010, 31; Harding 2007; Megaw and Megaw 1989; 1995; Vitali 2008).

There is an influx of ritual or spiritual symbolism to be seen in La Tène art and artefacts, especially towards the end of the later phases. The earlier Hallstatt "sun-god" is represented, as well as a horned deity which is identified as the god "Cernunnos", a horse goddess later called "Epona", and three so-called mother-goddesses which are thought to have represented fertility; the names are derived from Classical sources (Green 1986; 1995a; 1997, 26-30; Mac Cana 1970).

Binary oppositions, triplits and triskeles, abstract and stylized forms, geometric patterns, (fantastical or mythical) animal figures, a focus on the head or face, and "hidden" or concealed designs are important themes and symbols in La Tène art (Green 1995, 6; Harding 2007; Megaw and Megaw 1989).

Apart from decorated objects, La Tène artistry also manifests itself in stone or wooden sculpture and small metal figurines (Megaw and Megaw 1989).

Figure 18. Gold jewellery - a torc and bracelets - from Waldalgesheim, Rheinland-Pfalz, Germany. Gold; torc 21.1 cm. Rheinisches Landesmuseum, Bonn (Farley and Hunter 2015, 69).

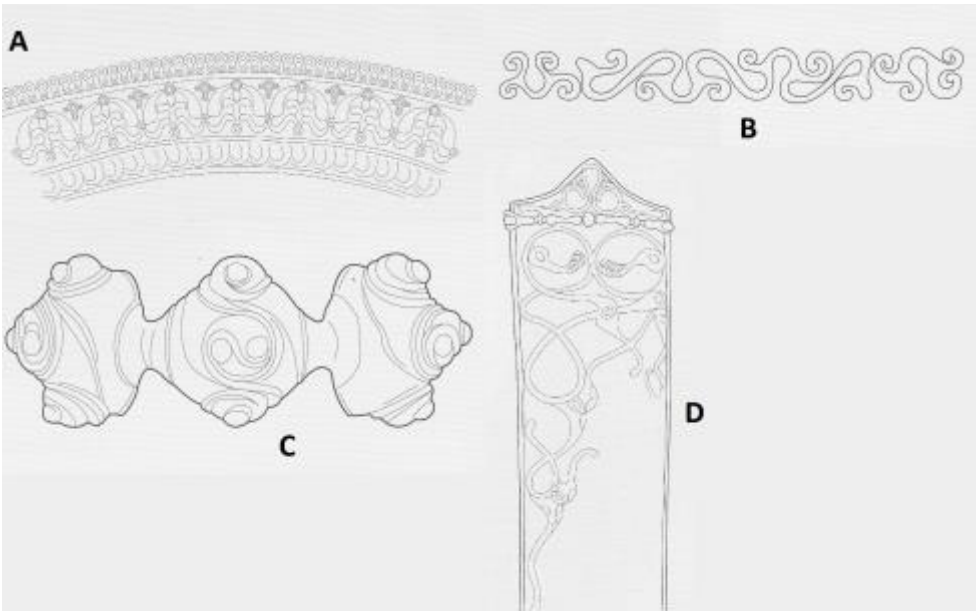

Figure 19. Examples of the La Tène art styles: geometric styles and Greek-Etruscan influences in the "Early Style" (A), the Vegetal or Waldalgesheim style, typefied by the sinuous line and flowing tendrils (B); the three-dimensional Plastic Style (C); and the Sword Style, characterised by curvilinear designs with hints of plants and animal forms (D). After Fraser and Hunter (2015, 55-56).

3.5.3.2. Ritual practices

There is no direct evidence for the existence of Druids or religious priests, as we know them from Classical sources. The only finds that might be associated with Druidic behaviour are the ritual or sacrificial sites mentioned below, as well as British "divination spoons", bronze "headdresses", and some burials interpreted as "priestly" graves (Aldhouse-Green 2001, 195-197; Green 1997, 58-63).

The practice of votive depositing in watery areas and the use of ritual places continues during the later Iron Age La Tène periods. Huge hoards of valuable items – especially metalwork, jewellery and weaponry – are found all over Europe, as well as temple-like places such as the *Viereckschanze* found in Germany, and the sanctuaries found on the British Isles (Cunliffe 1997, 200-205; Green 1986; 1997, 24-25; 64-67, 110-111; Webster 1995).

So-called "war sanctuaries" or "temples" are encountered, mostly in France and Switzerland. Here, deposited swords, "war trophies" and presumed offerings are found, in combination with skeletal remains of both human individuals and animals (Vitali 2008, 102-103; Webster 1995).

Some of the found animal, as well as human, remains show injuries and wounds. Therefore, they are sometimes seen as sacrifices, but the archaeology of human sacrifice is not easy to interpret. It is not at all clear whether the wounds and injuries on human remains were inflicted before or after death, and whether they were of a ritual nature or rather the result of warfare or fights. There are more La Tène or Iron Age finds that are sometimes interpreted as evidence for human sacrifice or ritual killing, such as bog bodies and ritually treated skulls, although these might also show prehistoric punishments or ancestor veneration, respectively (Aldhouse-Green 2001; Green 1997, 67-85).

There also seems to have been a concept of a "ritual year", during which seasonal festivals were held. The Coligny calendar, found in the north of France, gives an example of the way Iron Age people celebrated the passing of the seasons. The practice of communal feasting, drinking and gathering is still continued, as well (Green 1997, 34-37).

3.5.3.3. Burial ritual

The La Tène "world" sees a development towards a more uniform burial rite. During the earlier La Tène phases, however, extended inhumations as seen in the later Hallstatt period are still to be found in France and Germany. In central Europe, flat inhumations

are the usual way of burying. During the later phases of La Tène, cremation becomes dominant again in western Germany, northern France and southern England. Overall, the practice of lavish burials declines around 400 BC, and the distribution of wealth in graves is much less differentiated (Collis 1984; 2003, 137-139; Wait 1995, 502-506; Wells 2004, 68).

Rich graves and wagon-graves are still encountered in some areas. The ceremonial four-wheeled wagon of the Hallstatt period gets replaced by a two-wheeled chariot, which was presumably used on the battlefield. The array of grave-goods remains the same, only now the weaponry is usually made of iron instead of bronze. Moreover, a new type of fibula or safety-pin is added, and the men are now presented with an iron longsword typical for La Tène. Bronze cutlery, cookery and drinking gear are also present, and the influence of Mediterranean imports (and copies) is still to be seen. Greek and Etruscan imports are especially abundant, with an addition of Roman wine amphorae towards the first century BC (Cunliffe 1997; Diepeveen-Jansen 2001; Vitali 2008; Wait 1995, 502-506; Wells 1995a).

3.5.3.4. Migrations

The presumed war-like spirit of the La Tène elite is thought to have caused the Celtic migrations of the fourth and third centuries BC (see also figure 20). Backed up by historical accounts of Greek and Roman writers, it is thought that the Celtic people spread out over Europe from their heartlands in France, Germany and Switzerland (Collis 2003; Vitali 2008). The traditional theory is that a first wave of migrants crossed the Alps during the fourth and third centuries BC, and settled into the Po Valley and Northern-Italy. Around the same time, but over a longer period, Gallic migrants are thought to have settled on the Iberian peninsula. Another wave of migrants moved eastwards, into the Carpathians and the Balkan area. This wave continued in the following century, pushing forward into the Balkans, Greece, and Anatolia; mercenary bands would even have reached Egypt (Megaw and Megaw 1989, 107; 123-126; Meid 2010, 33-53; Vitali 2008, 77). Yet another group is said to have moved to the British Isles, around 450 BC, replacing earlier cultures such as the Picts (Megaw and Megaw 1989; Meid 2010). However, large-scale migrations and movements are not attested by archaeology. La Tène elements, such as hill forts, typical artefacts and burials, are found throughout Europe – from the Balkans and Asia Minor to the Iberian peninsula and the British Isles – but show considerable regional variation (Collis 1984; 2003). Moreover, in some regions, there are

gaps to be seen in the archaeological record: some areas might have La Tène type artefacts, but lack other elements seen as typical for the La Tène period (Collis 1984; 2003). Ireland, amongst others, presents a difficult picture, as the Irish La Tène type finds often lack a datable context and are therefore hard to interpret (Raftery 1994; 1995).
It is now seen as more likely that artefacts and practices spread by means of trade and, possibly, small-scale physical movements of groups and people (Diepeveen-Jansen 2001), and were locally adapted by indigenous populations (Collis 2003).

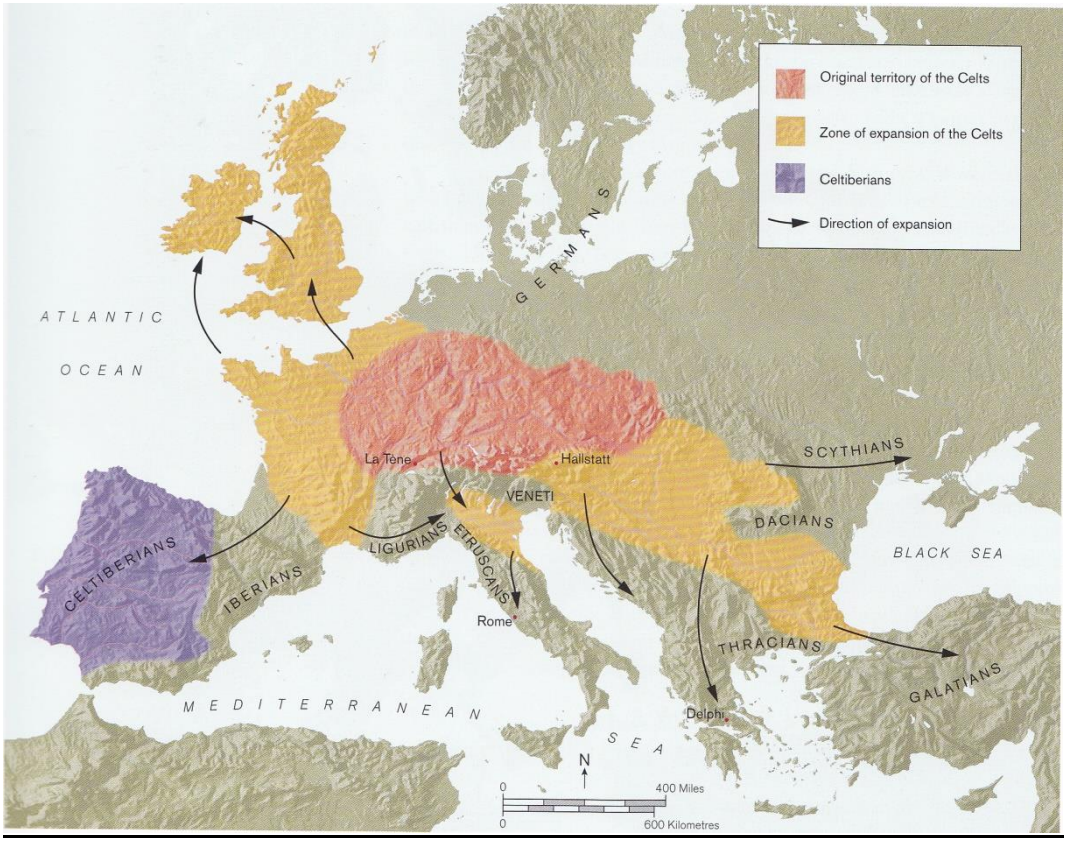

Figure 20. Location of La Tène and Hallstatt in Europe - and the traditional view on the "Celtic" migrations and expansions (Farley and Hunter 2015, 27).

3.5.3.5. The second and first century BC

During the second century BC, a new power shift is seen in the so-called "Celtic" world, usually explained as a result of pressure from without – the expansion of the Roman empire – as well as from within – the increase of population (Megaw and Megaw 1989). The "warrior elite" seems to get replaced by a new "elite" of merchants, tradesmen and craftsmen. A new type of hill-fort or defended settlement site, the *oppidum*, emerges, and

these centers can be seen as early urban areas or towns. The *oppida* are usually heavily fortified with stone or earthen walls, dividing the urban center from the surrounding countryside. The settlement pattern became more hierarchical, with bigger *oppida* surrounded by smaller trade centers, production centers and residential areas (Collis 1995; Megaw and Megaw 1989; Meid 2010, 31; Vitali 2008).

There is a development to be seen towards specialised trades and the intensification of land and exchange (Cunliffe 1997, 211). Artefacts adorned by La Tène artisans are found throughout Europe, and were probably traded, or commissioned by other ruling "elites" (Cunliffe 1997, 231). In this period, we also see the emergence of Celtic coins (see figure 21), made after Roman and Greek examples and depicting local rulers or rich tradesmen. The Roman empire becomes a major trade partner of the "Celts", exporting wine and wine-drinking equipment to the "Celtic" areas (Megaw and Megaw 1989, 153-158; Vitali 2008; Wells 1995a; 2004).

Figure 21. Gold coins from Brittany (left) and the Moselle Valley (right), France, c. 150-50 BC. Gold, 2.1 cm. After Farley and Hunter 2015 (115).

The last few centuries BC are a particular time of movements and unrest. The Roman empire emerges and expands: areas now seen as "Celtic", such as Celtiberia, Gaul in northern France, south-western Britain, and Galatia in Turkey, are all subjugated under Roman rule (Cunliffe 1997, 211-221; 238; 252). In eastern Europe, too, new groups seem to have settled and mixed with the local population (Cunliffe 1997, 221-223).

Needless to say, this appears to have been a period of much change. The areas under Roman rule are influenced by the culture of the empire; the material culture mixes and

merges, and the society adapts to Roman ways of life (Cunliffe 1997, 251, 258-261; Harding 2007, 211-237). Even in the areas we now see as "Celtic", but were never part of the Roman empire, such as Ireland, Scotland, and parts of Wales, there is possible evidence of trade with the Romans (Cunliffe 1997, 256).

Nevertheless, not all local practices, rituals and habits are abandoned; a strong local culture seems to persist even under Roman rule, especially when it comes to burial rites (Cunliffe 1997; Wells 2004). In Gaul and Britain, the Romans have to deal with local unrests, revolts and rebellions up to the first few centuries AD, although there was never a truly united national resistance (Cunliffe 1997; James 1999, 100-105).

Figure 22. Early medieval interlaced decoration from the Book of Kells - Kells, Co. Meath, Ireland AD 750-850. Vellum: H 33 cm. Trinity College Dublin (Farley and Hunter 2015, 22)

3.5.4. Survivals of "La Tène art"

The western Roman empire collapses around 400 AD. Although it is thought that this left a void on the western European lands, it is also said that the local population much reverted to their former way of living (Cunliffe 1997). An eastern Roman empire continues in Byzantia, in modern-day Turkey. The term "Celt" or *Galatae* seems to have survived for a few centuries here, now meaning the local population living to the west of

Byzantium in general (Chapman 1992).

The La Tène art style seems to have "died out" when Roman forces left "Celtic" and Gallic territories. It could be argued that the remnants and survivals of this style are to be found in Ireland and Britain, especially, most prominently in medieval manuscript illustrations and stone sculpture (see figure 22). However, although this medieval British-Irish style might contain elements of prehistoric, possibly La Tène, patterns and symbols, it also shows influences of Anglo-Saxon, Arabic, Oriental, and Mediterranean art (Harding 2007; Megaw and Megaw 1989, 253-257). There is also a large hiatus between the end of the Roman era and and the start of these early Christian times, spanning over 500 years, during which these possible La Tène motifs were not used at all (Chapman 1992; Harding 2007, 239).

The early Christian art of the British Isles is now usually seen as typically "Celtic", because it is thought to contain elements of the "Celtic" La Tène art style (Megaw and Megaw 1989).

4. Problems regarding interpretation of the sources

4.1. Introduction

In this chapter, I will go into the problems of interpreting and combining the historical, archaeological and linguistic sources and theories regarding the Celts. I will explain more about Romantic and modern misconceptions about the "Celtic" heritage. Moreover, I will try to give my own conception of who the Celts are and were.

4.2. Problems regarding the Classical accounts

It is clear that the Greek and Roman accounts can give us a lot of information about the "Celtic" culture and people. However, it is good to treat the Classical works with caution, like every other historical account: not everything the early historians wrote is automatically true or factual. There are a few things to keep in mind when reading the Classical authors.

4.2.1. A one-sided view

First of all, it is good to remember that the above mentioned view on the "Celtic" word is very one-sided and limited. We know about the "Celts" from Classical authors first and foremost, and only from a small number of direct sources: many works are partially lost, and only survive in the writings of later authors or the copies of medieval Christian monks (Collis 2003, 13, 25).

Without the Greek and Roman descriptions of the prehistoric "Celts", it would have been entirely possible that we would have never distinguished them as we do now, ascribing many archaeological finds and historical events to them (Collis 2003, 13; Cunliffe 1997, 1). Moreover, the descriptions are not always geographically accurate, especially when looking at the earliest Greek accounts (Chapman 1992; Collis 2003, 16-19).

The group of people named "Celts" by the Greeks and Romans did not leave many accounts of their own behind (Berresford Ellis 1992, 8; Collis 2003; Cunliffe 1997).

4.2.2. The origin and meaning of the name Keltoi

It is not clear where the word *Keltoi* actually came from, and there are many different theories about its meaning. It is not known whether any prehistoric people called themselves "Celts" (Chapman 1992, 30; Collis 2003, 99; Meid 2010, 12; Renfrew 1990, 223), although the possibility cannot be entirely ruled out (Koch 2014, 8). For instance,

Caesar (Caes. Bell. Gall. 1, 1) tells us that the Gauls called themselves "Celts" in their own language.

Of course, the word could be a Classical transcription of a tribe name, later used to distinguish all tribes that were similar to those "original Celts" (Meid 2010). It can also be argued that it is a Greek word (possibly derived from a "Celtic" language), meaning something like "the eminent ones" (Meid 2010, 11; Sims-Williams 1998). Others again say it is derived from an even older Indo-European root, meaning "enemy" or "foreigner" (Chapman 1992, 30). If the latter translation is accurate, it is, of course, not likely that the name is an ethonym.

To make the picture even more complex, we cannot say with absolute certainty that the Greek *Keltoi* and the Latin *Galli* meant the exact same thing, although the Roman world is without a doubt influenced by the Greek term (Wells 2004). Some authors argue that the terms *Keltoi* and *Galli* are mainly used in a general and geographical sense, describing "the barbarians in the north or west" instead of a specific ethnic group (Chapman 1992; Fitzpatrick 1996). Specific tribal names were sometimes used interchangeably or inconsistently, and a distinction between Germans and Celts was not always made (Renfrew 1990; Sims-Williams 1998).

Lastly, neither the term *Keltoi* nor *Galli* was ever used to describe inhabitants of the British Isles (Chapman 1992; Collis 2014; James 1999). However, this does not mean that the British people could not have felt related to the Classical Gauls – moreover, some Classical authors imply that the British and Gauls had similar customs and spoke a similar language (Sims-Williams 1998).

4.2.3. Identity

It can be said, to a certain degree, that the Classical authors – especially the Romans – shaped the "Celtic" identity. These writers are the first to distinguish a certain type of people living in central and western Europe. As said before, it cannot be proven that anyone called themselves "Celtic" before they got into contact with the Greek and Roman world, let alone that there was a sense of "pan-Celticism" (Champion 1995, 88; Chapman 1992, 30; Fitzpatrick 1996). Identity was probably much more tribe- or clan-based (Champion 1995, 88; Wells 2004).

We are touching on a very precarious subject here, for identity is not a straight-forward thing: a person's, even a group's, identity or ethnic identity is multiverse and changes in relation to other people and groups, or over time. Likewise, a group can be known by

multiple names throughout time and space. A sense of common identity is usually only formed when people get in contact with "outsiders" (Chapman 1992, 25-34; James 1999, 76-77; Wells 2004). The prehistoric people might have gathered they were called "Celtic" by the Greeks and Romans, and might have started calling themselves as such when the contact with the Classical world intensified (Chapman 1992, 49; Sims-Williams 1998; Wells 2004).

4.2.4. Outsider's view: misinterpretations, embellishments, and propaganda

The Greek and Roman authors were outsiders. They had a different social background, and came from a different civilisation than the "Celts", and have therefore undoubtedly misinterpreted many of the "Celtic" habits and traits, as well as their language and manner of speech (Chapman 1992; Green 1986; Wells 2004). Their view is subjective and biased, logically, and sometimes even deliberately so: for nationalistic and propagandist purposes, it was good practice to show the "Celts" as fierce barbarians, as primitive peoples who could only be conquered by an outstanding, highly civilized society such as that of the Romans (Fitzpatrick 1996, 47; Wells 2004).

It is common practice to regard "the other" as less civilized or educated than your own people. It functions as a way of distinguishing yourself from the foreign people around you, reaffirming your own national identity in the process (Chapman 1992; Wells 2004). Myth-making and propaganda play a huge role in this process, too. Many Classical accounts of certain events are written down only years or centuries after the actual event took place (Collis 2003, 26). In this time gap, the story has undoubtedly been embellished (Wells 2004). Authors also constantly re-used each other's ideas and descriptions in their own works, presenting them as hard facts (Collis 2003, 26). Some popular notions about the "Celts" seem to have been born from propagandist ideas, such as Caesar's thought that the Rhine formed a natural barrier between the "Celtic" and the "Germanic" tribes, or that the Druids held remarkable power (Wells 2004, 116).

Still, as Megaw and Megaw (1996) say, we should keep in mind that the fact that the "Celts" are only known from the account of outsiders, does not mean that the people described by the Classical authors were not real.

4.2.5. Other problems

There are more problems when it comes to examining the Classical accounts. For instance, most accounts on the "Celts" dwell on warfare and warriors, due to the fact that

the Greeks and Romans usually encountered the "Celts" in specifically war-like situations (Wells 2004, 82). Greek and Roman accounts also seem naturally biased towards the – in Classical eyes – more peculiar and strange habits of the "Celts" (Collis 2003, 14).
The accounts on the "Celtic" world take place in a very narrow time-frame (especially when it comes to the more "ethnographic" works), as well as in very specific areas. Caesar's *De Bello Gallico* is a good example: it only shows the habits of a few tribes in northern France and Britain, during the span of only a few years. It is impossible to use Ceasar's description of these people as an example for *all* "Celtic" people *everywhere* throughout their long history (Chapman 1992).
Another problem in this matter is that the Classical accounts span a huge time period – from the sixth century BC to around the fourth AD. It should be evident that the European world changed very much during this time, and likewise would the perceived "Celtic" tribes have been subject to changes and developments (Chapman 1992).
In addition to all of the above, there is still the danger of seeing the Greek and Roman people as *completely* different from the prehistoric people they conquered or encountered. Although they did come from a different background, as said before, they were also a product of the same era and area as the "Celts" or "Germans". We often think of the Greek or Roman world very like our own, with the same values, ideas and even scientific ways of thinking. The truth is that the Greeks and Romans had probably more in common with the prehistoric people that surrounded them, than they have with us (Chapman 1992). They undoubtedly recognised certain habits of the people they conquered (Haywood and Cunliffe 2007, 19; Chapman 1992). This does not mean, however, that the insights of the Roman and Greek authors about the "Celts" should be disregarded on account of their "unscientificness". They can still give us valuable information on the prehistoric way of life, but do have to be seen in the light of time and treated critically.

4.3. Problems regarding the medieval literature

It is true that the Irish and Welsh mythologies give us an interesting glimpse into the early medieval world, and maybe even into the eras before that. It is also remarkable that some descriptions seem to match the accounts of the Classical authors (Jackson 1964).
However, this could also be because the medieval writers were very much aware of the earlier literary historical works, and re-used the ideas of the Greek and Roman authors as they pleased (Cunliffe 1997, 25). Most importantly, it should not be forgotten that the mythological cycles and legends are works of fiction first and foremost (Chapman 1992).

It is sometimes said that the mythology of the British Isles provides us with a view on prehistoric, "Celtic" culture (Jackson 1964; Meid 2010). The idea that the medieval mythologies are "Celtic", is, of course, derived from the fact that they are written in a Celtic language. If these languages would never have been called "Celtic" by eighteenth century scholars, the myths and legends of Ireland and Wales might never have been seen as "Celtic" in the first place (Collis 2003).

Ireland and Wales have a rich folklore, enhanced by the Celtic revivals of later periods, when several writers and collectors began to take interest in folk tales (Berresford Ellis 1992, 12-14). It is true that myths and legends can go back many centuries, as they are traditionally told orally from generation to generation; the oral tradition of the British Isles was probably very strong (Jackson 1964). However, this very nature also ensures that the tales are constantly re-told and re-written, adapted and changed throughout the ages: for instance, myths and legends written down during the early Christian period are, without a doubt, influenced by Christian values and ideas. Some myths are only written down for the first time in the seventeenth to nineteenth centuries, if not later, when they already had been in existence for a very long time. Even the legends in the *Ulster* and *Fenian cycles* probably had a long history already, before they were written down (Mac Cana 1970; 1995).

It is hard, indeed almost impossible, to trace back which elements of mythology are "authentic" or "original", and which ones are added by the person who told the story and the person who wrote it down (Mac Cana 1995). Moreover, the themes in Irish or Welsh mythology are by no means particular for this area; the same ideas and thoughts can be found in many other European mythologies (Mac Cana 1970).

In short, this makes the medieval sources dubious at least, although they cannot be wholly disregarded – in combination with archaeology or linguistics, they *could* give some insights into the prehistoric world and its values (Jackson 1964). We should keep in mind, however, that these insights cannot be projected on or linked to the "Celts".

4.4. Problems combining the historical, archaeological and linguistic sources

It is only fair to discuss the problems regarding the interpretation of the both linguistic and archaeological record together, as they have influenced each other over the years. I will also shortly go into more detail regarding the historical accounts and their influence on both archaeology and linguistics.

4.4.1. Some general remarks

First of all, there are a few general things we have to keep in mind. We must consider that in archaeology, linguistics, as well as history, we can rely only on the evidence that survives to the present day and is seen as relevant. A large part of the picture is left out because perishable materials and long forgotten place names do not remain, and there are considerable gaps in the archaeological, linguistic, and historical record (Chapman 1992, 7; Collis 2003, 133, 146). Some information was never written down by Classical authors, and the survival of vernacular literature is just as arbitrary (Cunliffe 1997, 25; Collis 2003). Another problem concerns place name evidence: the origin or age of certain place names cannot be established (Sims-Williams 1998; 2006).

Secondly, we should be aware that changes in language or material culture (e.g. the change from non-Celtic-speaking to Celtic-speaking, or from Hallstatt to La Tène) are by no means as sudden and unexpected as the theoretical terms sometimes suggests, and there is much continuity to be seen. Briefly said, change is more gradual than sudden – even though rapid changes can occur. Some elements of the "new culture" and language are usually already apparent in earlier phases; many of the typical Hallstatt and La Tène customs find their origins in much earlier periods, as far as the Neolithic. The other way around, elements of the "old culture" and language sometimes survive into the new period (Collis 2003, 129, 156-158).

Thirdly, the "origin" or "starting point" of a certain language, place-name, or archaeological trend, cannot always be established, and it might be wrong to look for such a specific "area of origin" (Karl 2012; Pauli 1980). We should always remember that cultures, ideas or languages do not arrive somewhere "pre-packed", or develop at just one central point. They evolve over time and bear influences from many different places and areas, and some trends develop at different places simultaneously (Collis 2003, 147, 193; Karl 2012; Renfrew 1990, 245). Therefore, the boundaries between different languages or different cultures are often blurry (Collis 2003, 206; Karl 2012; Green 1995, 6).

4.4.2. The problem of circular argumentation

Another problem that is apparent when looking at "Celtic" linguistics, history, and archaeology, is that they rely heavily on circular argumentation (Chapman 1992; Collis 2003, 12; Cunliffe 1997, 16; James 1999). Most importantly, the notion of "Celtic

languages" and "Celtic art" might not even have existed were it not for the Classical accounts (Collis 2003).

To explain this, one might ask the question: why were Celtic languages called "Celtic" in the first place? Looking back at chapter 2, we see that the very term "Celtic" to distinguish a language (or language group) is derived from Classical sources (James 1999) – even though most Classical authors rarely distinguished people by means of their language (Chapman 1992, 70; Collis 2003, 15; Fitzpatrick 1996, 46; Renfrew 1990; Wells 2004). Likewise, "Celtic art" is named only so because the typical artefacts are found in areas deemed "Celtic" by Classical authors, or because they occurred in areas that were already seen as Celtic-speaking by linguists (Collis 2014; Collis 2003, 223). In short, this has linked the linguistic and archaeological evidence in such a way, that Bronze and Iron Age artefacts found in Celtic-speaking areas are usually automatically seen as "Celtic"; and the other way around, it is assumed that those areas where we find Hallstatt or La Tène art were Celtic-speaking during the Bronze and Iron Age. The connection between race, language, and material culture is still often made, be it explicitly or implicitly (Chapman 1992, 21).

The reality is, of course, much more complex. The linguistic and archaeological record do not always agree, and to take it further, both do not always agree with the historical accounts, either. Instead of a unchangeable, fixed "Celtic package" containing a specific language, material culture and ethnicity, we see different combinations of "Celtic elements" occurring throughout Europe (Karl 2012). There are Celtic-speaking areas where no evidence of the La Tène culture is found, and vice versa (Meid 2010, 23; Renfrew 1990, 240); there are areas that were never regarded as "Celtic" by Classical authors, such as Ireland and Britain, yet were and are Celtic-speaking (Collis 2003, 27). Some earliest inscriptions in a Celtic language pre-date archaeological "Celtic" evidence and historical accounts (Cunliffe 1997, 24; Koch 2012; 2014); some historical accounts pre-date the first occurrence of Hallstatt and La Tène styles (Harding 2007, 3).

Even though there are some similarities to be seen between Classical descriptions, vernacular sources, and the archaeological record, this does not necessarily prove the existence of a people called "Celts" in Europe. Rather, it shows that there are some continuing traditions on the European continent and isles; it does not necessarily mean that these traditions are particularly ethnically "Celtic" (Fitzpatrick 1996). We should also keep in mind that there are a few striking discrepancies to be seen between the sources: Classical descriptions of the "Celts" do not always match the "Celtic" archaeological

record (Cunliffe 1997).

4.4.3. Ethnicity and genetics

There is a danger of linking the specific material remains, the La Tène complex, to a specific "Celtic identity" or ethnicity. Neither archaeological material remains nor languages are ethnic signifiers; language and archaeological remains cannot be inherently linked, either (Chapman 1992, 22; Collis 2003, 214, 218; James 1999, 81-82; Renfrew 1990, 216). Linguistic groups, as well as groups using a specific material culture, are rarely homogenous (James 1999; Meid 2010, 173).

As said before, the spread of a culture is no longer automatically seen as the physical large-scale movement of an ethnically distinguishable group of people, but rather as the movement of ideas, fashions, and material through trade and smaller-scale migrations (Chapman 1992, 44; Diepeveen-Jansen 2001; James 1999, 37-40; Renfrew 1990, 241). The same can be said when it comes to the spread of a language. People adapt to a certain language or material culture for different purposes – such as communication along trading networks –, and make it their own (Henderson 2007). This theory is attested by the significant regional variation and non-uniformity of the "Celtic" Iron Age complexes, as well as the many regional variations within the Celtic language group (Diepeveen-Jansen 2001; James 1999, 41; MacAulay 1992).

Still, it should be evident that language and material culture do not equal ethnicity (Chapman 1992; Collis 2003; James 1999; and many others). A person using the "Celtic" La Tène material culture, or speaking a "Celtic" language, is not automatically an ethnic "Celt" (Fitzpatrick 1996; Megaw and Megaw 1996), much in the same way as a modern person speaking English and using American material culture is automatically an ethnic American. Rather, people using this specific material culture can be seen as partaking to a dominant contemporary "trend" or "fashion" (Megaw and Megaw 1996).

Ethnicity, much like identity, is not a straight-forward concept, but consists of many different aspects and takes on different forms in different situations; moreover, not all "ethnic groups" are actively aware of their separateness and distinctiveness (Megaw and Megaw 1996; Renfrew 1990, 214-218). Such an abstract construct cannot always be traced back historically, let alone archaeologically (James 1999, 77; Renfrew 1990). Genetically, it is near impossible to link the any prehistoric people to the modern "Celts". There have been movements all around the European continent, and groups have mixed and merged; it is hard to single out certain specific "ethnicities", also because intermixing

groups did not always genetically differ that much. Most modern indigenous European people will have mixed ancestry, and are just as "German" or "Roman" as they are "Celtic". We should also keep in mind that the European population number has increased greatly since prehistory, making it likely that many indigenous European people will at least have *some* "Celtic" ancestry – if such a thing even exists. Up to now, it has proven impossible to single out a specific "Celtic gene", also because genetic evidence cannot be satisfyingly linked to identity, material culture or language (Chapman 1992; Leslie *et.al.* 2015; McEvoy and Bradley 2012; Oppenheimer 2012; Royrvik 2012).

4.5. Who were and are the Celts?

To conclude, I will try to answer the question I asked at the very beginning of the first chapter: who were and are the "Celts"? The image of the "Celts" seems to have been re-shaped, re-created and re-invented over the course of many centuries, for different purposes and reasons. The image is multiverse and has been derived from many different sources, as mentioned before. The terms "Celts" and "Celtic" have been used in various ways; as a general descriptive term by Greek and Roman writers, to a more theoretical term in archaeology and linguistics.

Who were the "Celts"? It seems clear that *the "*Celts", in the traditional sense of the word, did not exist. There was no ancient, unchanging, ethnically defined group of people speaking a Celtic language and using La Tène material; instead, there is a great regional diversity to be seen throughout the presumed "Celtic world", both archaeologically and linguistically.

Surely, however, all aspects of the "Celtic package" did and do exist: there *are* Classical descriptions of a people called "Celts", we *do* find "La Tène" artefacts and sites, Irish and Welsh *are* spoken today, and so on. It is in combining these elements, and seeing them as undeniably linked to one another, where the danger lies. The idea of a fixed "Celtic package" is not sustainable, for the theory underlining it rests on earlier misconceptions, circular argumentation and outdated concepts of "race" and "culture groups". We should see the aspects of "Celtic culture" as free-standing, only sometimes coming together in any combination possible.

Who are the modern "Celts"? This question seems easier to answer. The modern "Celts" are the ones living in modern Celtic-speaking countries, such as Ireland, Scotland, Wales, and Brittany. However, it can also be applied to anyone feeling connected to the "Celtic" heritage: from New Age Druids to "Celtic" musicians, and from the descendants of Irish

immigrants in the USA to modern “Celtiberians”.

Again, the image is very multiverse. The modern notion of Celticism seems to be heavily influenced by Romanticism and (political) nationalism – and embellished with concepts borrowed from history, archaeology and linguistics. In truth, as seen above, the links with the “modern” and “ancient Celts” are not always easy to maintain, not in the least because the term “ancient Celts” seems to have no real value anyway. The aspects of modern “Celtic culture” – language, music and literature, for instance – should also be seen as free-standing, rather than being part of a fixed “Celtic package” finding its roots in the Iron Age.

In short, the term “ancient Celts” covers a wide range of people: people speaking an ancient Celtic language, people using “La Tène” artefacts, or people identified as “Celts” by Greek or Roman authors; the “modern Celts” are just as multiverse, and this group mainly consists of people who feel connected to a perceived “Celtic heritage”. Even though the terms “Celtic”, “ancient Celts” and “modern Celts” might not have any real value to historians and archaeologists, the “Celtic heritage” is very valuable and true to those people who see themselves as modern “Celts”. It might be a wrong to deny them this sense of common identity and shared history, a notion I will discuss in more detail later.

5. The popular image of the Celts

5.1. Introduction

In this chapter, I will to explore the popular image of the Celts – the point of view found in popular media: popular books, articles, documentaries, museum exhibitions, and (news)websites. I will focus on publications from Great-Britain, as the debate on "Celtic identity" largely orginates here – "Celticness" and "Celticity" are less heavily contested terms on the European mainland (Collis 1997; Sims-Williams 1998). It would be interesting to see if the British "Celtoscepticism", for instance, has found its way into the popular discourse.

5.2. Methodology: textual content analysis of the sources

To find out more about the popular-scientific discourse on the "Celts", I will use the method of content analysis. This is a qualitative research method, used to analyse textual data – either written or spoken – in their specific contexts. It focuses on the characteristics in the way something is communicated, in regard of the content and contextual meaning of a text. Texts are analysed by means of dividing them up in different codes (specific words used) and categories (a body of these words roughly conveying the same meaning) (Krippendorff 1989; Hsieh and Shannon 2005). In this particular case, content analysis can show in what way the "Celts" are presented to the general public, by looking at what words are used to describe them, and what meanings are attached to certain "Celtic" elements.

There are three approaches to data analysis, as identified by Hsieh and Shannon (2005). These are 1) conventional data analysis, 2) directed content analysis, and 3) summative content analysis. All approaches roughly follow the same steps, although their interpretative methodology is somewhat different. For my research, I have chosen to establish the categories and codes in advance, using earlier done research, following the directive content analysis approach. Some other words and terms I will come across wil be added, too. As shown before, research on the "Celts" has had a long history, and there are already many theories about who the "Celts" were. Therefore, it should not be difficult to set up a list of words and categories that can be used to analyse the data.

5.3. Used data, codes and categories

My aim is to find out in if, and if so, in what way, the popular and popular-scientific

image of the “Celts” differs from the scientific point of view. In this way, I can show what stereotypes or ideas about the “Celts” still persist, and whether the Celtosceptic view and new theories about the “Celtic” homelands have influenced popular perception at all.

Because the “Celts” are immensely popular nowadays, and much is written and said about them, I have decided to narrow down my focus. I will explore in what way the “Celts” are presented in British (popular) media of the last five years (2010-2015). There are a few sources I will use: these are widely read newspapers, (news)websites, popular archaeology magazines, museum exhibitions, documentaries and programs broadcasted on national television, as well as some popular books. A list of all data used can be found in the appendix.

I have selected these sources as they are readily accessible to a wider audience, and are therefore most likely to influence the popular opinion. All sources are published during the period 2010-2015. A small exception is made for the newspaper articles, which are all published in the last year (2014-2015): the body of articles to analyse would become too immense otherwise.

The categories I have established are as follows; a complete word-list and word count can be found in the appendix. I have looked at words having to do with the “Celtic society” in general; words having to do with “Celtic warriors” and the supposedly war-like nature of the “Celts”; at words regarding the “Celtic religion”; words having to do with “Celtic artistry”; words regarding “Celtic regions”; and, lastly, at some other terms that cannot be put under one of these categories.

There are a few other things I have kept in mind, although I will not go into them in very much detail here. Firstly, I have looked at the way women are presented in the sources: is there still a profound notion of them being powerful and fierce? Secondly, I have looked at the way the “Celts” are described in comparison with their Roman “enemy”: are the Romans seen as more sophisticated, civilised and organised than the “Celts”, or is this a notion of the past? Thirdly, I have established what descriptive words are commonly used to picture the “Celts”: are they seen as mysterious, mystical, primitive, or fearsome?

5.4. Results

In total, I have analysed 14,546 words that can be connected to the “Celts”. Most of these had to do with warfare, religion, or artistry. A total of the words I have counted can be

found in the appendix. Some words can be linked to more than one category: if this is the case, that is explained in the table.

5.4.1. General observations

Many – but not all – of the authors and presenters of the articles, chapters and documentaries that have been analysed, have a professional background: they are archaeologists, historians or art historians writing for or presenting to a wider audience. However, this does not mean that they are all experts on the subject of the Celts, or that their point of view is automatically academically valid. The occupation of the author or presenter, if known, can be found in the appendix.

All sources have a different way of conveying their message: documentaries, for instance, rely much more on visual representations than book chapters; the museum catalogue makes extensive use of images; websites are more interactive than other sources (see also figure 23). It is interesting to see that documentaries and newspaper articles tend to oversimplify or even dramatise certain elements of "Celticness", while book chapters – by their very nature – can go into more detail, and give a more nuanced point of view. This is illustrated by comparing the documentary *A history of Celtic Britain* to the accompanying book – presented and written by the same person, Neil Oliver. While the documentary only sparsely touches upon the idea that "the Celts" were no single people, the book explores this in more detail, even saying that the notion of a "Celtic" British people is likely not valid.

"Celtosceptic" views are encountered in a few sources. The catalogue of the British Museum exhibition takes the lead, saying that the Celts were "no single people", and only using the term "Celtic" to describe art, or modern nationalism. This view is incorporated in newspaper articles on the exhibition, as well, although it is not always positively looked upon. Programs, articles and book chapters with an archaeological bias inevitably take a more sceptic stance, and make less extensive use of the word "Celts" or Celtic" than other sources (replacing it with "Iron Age", or tribal names). In some sources, the "Celtosceptic" view is briefly mentioned, and not discussed in much detail; the author or presenter than continues to explain more about "the Celts", without taking the Celtosceptic ideas into account. Other sources, especially the book *The Celtic Revolution* by Simon Young, never mention the Celtosceptic theories at all, or disregard them completely.

Lastly, the sources used are all produced or published in Great-Britain. Therefore much

emphasis is placed on British history and prehistory, and terms like “British Celts”, “Celtic Britain”, or – in more nuanced publications – “Britons” are extensively used. Only a few sources are dealing with the “Celts” in general. It is interesting to see that a few sources do mention that it is not clear at all whether the British Isles and Ireland could actually be called “Celtic”, only to continue placing the British and Irish firmly in a Celtic framework. See also the concluding remarks.

Figure 23. "The Celts", a game on the BBC website, shows many stereotypical ideas about the "Celts" (bbc.co.uk).

5.4.2. General: Time period

The time period mostly associated with the “Celtic” people is the Iron Age, which is mentioned the most – see table 4 in the appendix. The term “Iron Age” is sometimes used to describe habits, customs, and material culture; it is also encountered in combinations such as “British Iron Age” or “Celtic Iron Age”.

Other time periods mentioned are, for instance, the Middle and the Bronze Age. Modern periods, such as the Renaissance and the Romantic era, are only mentioned in the context of the “Celtic revivals” and the “rediscovery” of the “Celts”. In quite a few instances, too, the time indication is simply reduced to “ancient” or “during prehistory / prehistoric”.

Interestingly, the word “ancient” is often used in combination with “Greeks”, in a context such as “the ancient Greeks wrote about the Celts”.

It is interesting to see, too, that many newspaper articles do not give any time indication at all. Sources written or presented from a more archaeological point of view, however, such as Neil Oliver's *The History of Ancient Britain*, abundantly use the term “Iron Age”, but rarely mention the Middle Ages. The Middle Ages *are* mentioned often in sources concerning “Celtic” art or the history of “Celtic” Christianity, such as the British Museum Catalogue and website (see figure 24) on the *Celts: art and identity* exhibition, as well as Simon Young's *The Celtic Revolution.*

Figure 24. Website header for the British Museum exhibition "The Celts: art an identity" (britishmuseum.org).

5.4.3. General: Academics and Classical historians

Of all studies focusing on the “Celts”, archaeology (archaeological, archaeologist) is mentioned most – see table 5 in the appendix. It is usually used in a contexts such as “archaeological evidence indicates...”, or, in more popular newspaper articles, “archaeologists say...”. Archaeology is followed by history and linguistics. Other studies

or academic occupations – Classicist, art historian, Celticist, antiquarian – are only mentioned once or twice.
A few Classical writers are mentioned by name (see table 5 in the appendix), especially Caesar and Tacitus. Both Caesar's and Tacitus' quotes are often used to describe the or explain "Celtic", "Gallic" or "British" prehistoric behaviour. Other Classical authors mentioned are Diodorus Siculus and Livy.

5.4.4. Celtic regions: Cultures, countries, and language

When looking at the regions and groups associated with the "Celts", a few things are apparent (see table 6 in the appendix). Obviously, the "Celts", both prehistoric and modern, are seen as a European people: they come from the west, the center, or the north. Europe is used in combination with "Celtic", too (see table 18 in the appendix). Also mentioned – albeit sparsely – are the regions north of the Alps, along the Atlantic coast or seaboard, or along the Rhine or Danube. It is quite interesting to see that terms having to do with remoteness – "isolated", "distant", "fringe", "westernmost" – are not as abundantly present as one might think. Instead, there seems to be much more focus on the connectedness of the "Celtic" world (see also: tribal society).
The regions, cultures and groups associated with the "Celts" show a wide range, and mostly consist of places where "Celtic" archaeology is found or where the Classical authors placed the "Celts" – although most of the countries and regions are only mentioned sparsely, or in just a few sources. In some instances, specific (British) tribes are named, such as the Trinovanti, Catuvellani, or – most often – the Iceni.
There is much focus on insular groups: many words can be linked to insular Celticness, around four times as much as the words that can be associated with continental Celticness. Terms such as "Britain", "British" but also "British-Celtic", are mentioned often, obviously because the sources used are published in Britain, and many focus on British history. It is followed by "Ireland / Irish", "Scotland / Scottish", and "Wales / Welsh". These latter three, together with the Isle of Man, Cornwall, and also Brittany, are usually most often mentioned when it concerns medieval or modern "Celticity". The continental "Celts" most often mentioned are the "Gaul(s) / Gaulish" – Celtiberia and Galatia are only mentioned sparsely.
The word "Celt", "Celtic", or "Celtic-speaker" is, obviously, mentioned abundantly, although not in the same amount everywhere. The Time Team special *Boudica's Lost Tribe*, for instance, only mentions the "Celts" twice: here, the term "Iceni" seems to have

replaced the word “Celtic”. The term “Celtic” is generally used in combination with a wide range of words, from “heritage” to “identity”: most often mentioned are “Celtic art”, “Celtic warriors”,, “Celtic tribes”, “Celtic languages”, and “Celtic culture”. See table 18 in the appendix for more examples.

Apart from the “Celts” and “Celtic cultures”, other cultures are mentioned as well, most notably the Greeks and Romans. The Greeks are usually mentioned in the context of their literary works. Terms having to do with “Roman” are surprisingly abundant – indeed, most of the analysed sources mention the Romans. The terms are usually mentioned in combination with the “conquest”, “invasion” or “occupation” of the “Celtic” lands and Britain (see also table 19 in the appendix). While the term “Celtic” is often used to describe a tribal society (see below), the term “Roman” is used to describe a ruling civilisation: it is combined with terms like “rule”, “Empire”, and so on. Other terms describing the Graeco-Romans are “Classical” (mostly in combination with “texts” or “sources”) and “Mediterranean” (usually in a context having to do with trade).

There are a few words that can be linked to the modern sense of “Celticity”: see table 7 in the appendix. Examples are “(Celtic) heritage”, “(Celtic) revival”, and “(Celtic) nationalism”. As said above, the modern regions seen as “Celtic” are also often mentioned. However, most of the sources focus on prehistoric or medieval Celticity.

Lastly, there is a little focus on “(Celtic) languages”, see table 6 in the appendix. The word is mentioned a few times, and there is a small amount of words that can be connected to language (including “literature”). Sometimes, words like “Welsh” or “Irish” point to the specific language of the area.

5.4.5. Celtic society: tribal and local

There are quite a few words that can be associated to the “Celtic” society in general; see table 8 in the appendix. The society of the prehistoric “Celts” is presented as “tribal, mostly by sources with a more archaeological or historical view. Combinations such as “tribal leaders”, “tribal communities” and “tribal territories” are used. The society is seen as quite rural, too, but the fact that the “Celts” were illiterate and did not write anything down – a notion derived from both archaeology and Classical sources – is only mentioned a few times.

The “Celtic” communities are also seen as highly regional and local, bringing forth a local art style and local leaders, although there is also much emphasis on their connectedness with each other and the wider (often continental) world. Still, a word like

"civilisation" – that would indicate a centrally governed group of people with a shared history – is only rarely used in regard to the "Celts".
A few other interesting terms are used to describe the "Celtic" society. Many aspects of "Celtic" society are described as "mysterious" or "powerful". Secondly, the prehistoric "Celts" are sometimes represented as focusing on "independence" and "individuality", with high regard for individual prowess and power. The people are also seen as having a distinctive culture and "identity", setting them apart from other European people, and which they are willing to defend and fight for. These distinctive "identities" are used in regard to the "modern Celts", too.
Lastly, the "Celtic" society is sometimes also described as "primitive", "barbarian" or even "savage", but this is usually only when the Graeco-Roman sources are discussed. It is indicated that the "barbarian Celt" is a Classical image, that cannot be held on to today.

5.4.6. Celtic society: Material culture and settlement

Much emphasis is placed on material culture and used materials, probably because many of the analysed sources are concerned with "Celtic" archaeology or "Celtic" art. There are many words that can be linked to materials, jewellery, banquet utensils or weaponry; see table 9 in the appendix. I have chosen to discuss the artefacts and objects apart from other contexts, also because they can occur in different environments simultaneously (ritual, burial, war-like, and artistic). The word "artefact" and "object" are mentioned quite often. Artefacts are sometimes described as conveying a specific "symbolic" message.
The materials most often mentioned are "gold" and "bronze", but iron, silver, and the general term (precious) metal are often used, too. Pottery or ceramic is not often mentioned, and if it is, it is usually placed in the context of burial ritual, trade, or communal feasting (see below).
There is much focus on jewellery and weaponry. Weapons are mentioned abundantly, with especial attention for swords, shields, and helmets. In the case of the latter, there is a specific focus on "horned helmets".
Similarly, there is much focus on jewellery and precious objects. There are many words concerning jewellery and treasure. Especially torcs are mentioned abundantly, more than half of the time, and they are often described or pictured in detail. Other items gaining attention, are brooches and bracelets.
Lastly, there some attention for eating and drinking equipment, as well as and other artefacts and objects. Most often mentioned are coins , chariots, usually in a war-like or

burial context, cauldrons, usually in a ritual context, and drinking vessels, usually in a context of feasting or trade. Mirrors – typical artefacts of Iron Age Britain – are also mentioned a few times. Coins are mentioned quite a lot, as there has been much attention for the coin hoard find on Jersey.
There is but little attention for settlement sites and archaeological structures, see table 10 in the appendix. Most attention goes to hill forts and oppida, as well as the related walls, ditches, ramparts, and banks. The typical British roundhouses are also described. Less attention goes to farms, cairns, or fortifications. Words such as "town", "village" or "settlement" have been put together in one category, as they did not occur quite so often. Mostly, when a term like "fort" or "town" is encountered, it is preceded by the term "Roman" – these words have not been used in the analysis.
A few specific finds and sites are mentioned by name, such as the Battersea Shield found in London, the Gundestrup cauldron now on display in the British Museum, and the Llyn Fawr and the Llyn Cerrig Bach hoards in Wales (not mentioned in the tables).

5.4.7. Celtic society: Elite culture, feasting, and trade

There are a few words having to do with (high)-status, social division, importance, leadership and aristocracy, with an addition of words connected to trade and feasting – see table 11 in the appendix. Status is usually linked to trade, martial prowess or certain art, depending on the context of the source.
The words to describe the elite range from chieftains or leaders, to kings, queens, princes and princesses. Kings and princes are mentioned much more abundantly than queens and princesses, see also "women". Another word linked to the elite is "wealth".
There is much attention for elite burials (see "religion and ritual"), (ritual) feasting, and trade, the latter two thought to have been commissioned or overseen by ruling leaders. It is usually assumed that social divides were visible during feasts. Words connected to feasting and gathering usually overlap with words connected to trade or even grave ritual, making them sometimes hard to analyse. I have chosen to discuss the words linked to trade and feasting together here – *without* including some of the material culture (coins, banquet utensils, amphorae) that could be connected these categories. For an overview of these objects, see table 9 in the appendix.
All in all, that leaves about 366 words that can be connected to trade or feasting. Most often mentioned are words having to do with exchange goods, import or export, or food and drinks. Besides that, there are also a few ideas derived from Classical sources, such

as the idea that “Celtic” warriors were often drunk, ate the choice cuts of meat, and boasted of their prowess during feasts, although these views are not often mentioned, at all. Interestingly, “wine” is often mentioned as a prime luxury good, which was very much valued by the prehistoric “Celts”. The other way around, in some sources, it is told that the prehistoric “Celts” or British traded slaves in return. This idea is usually linked to the slave chain found in Llyn Cerrig Bach, Wales.

5.4.8. Celtic warriors and warfare

There is a significant amount of words that can be linked to warfare or the “war-like spirit” of the Celts (*not* including words having to do with weaponry and armoury), see table 12 in the appendix. The prehistoric – never the modern – “Celts” are seen as especially war-loving and fierce, and some sources describe historically attested “battles”, “raids” and fights in detail.

“Warriors” and “fighters” receive a lot of attention: these terms are mentioned much more often than the more orderly sounding “soldier”. The warriors are described as “brave”, “aggressive” / “bellicose”, or “intimidating”. There is some attention for a few Classical notions, such as the fact that the “Celtic” warriors beheaded their enemies, placed much emphasis on (individual) heroism, painted themselves blue or fought naked, made a lot of noise, and were versatile or undisciplined.

“Celtic” battles and fights, especially with the Romans, are mentioned often, as well as the “Celtic” raiding and plundering parties, which are thought to have roamed across Europe. Some war-leaders, such as Brennus, are mentioned by name. Another areas of interest are “horses” and “horsemanship”. Chariots and carnyxes or battle-horns are also mentioned, see table 9 in the appendix.

The prehistoric “Celts” are often depicted as freedom fighters, or, more specifically, as “rebellions”, who stood up against the Romans. There are quite a few words that can be connected to the “rebelliousness. In some instances, the “Celts” are even anachronistically described as fighting for the “soul of Europe” or the “future of Britain” (see *The Celts: Blood, Iron and Sacrifice*). The “rebels” receiving most attention are the British “warrior queen” Boudicca” (see also: “women”) and the Gallic leader Vercingetorix.

5.4.9. Celtic religion and ritual

There are many words that can be connected to “Celtic” religion and ritual, be it

prehistoric, medieval, or modern – see table 13 in the appendix. Most attention, however, is focused on prehistoric beliefs.

The prehistoric "Celts" are seen as highly spiritual, revering natural and watery places (see later), and venerating a multitude of deities, spirits, and gods. Not surprisingly, "Druids" – seen as "Celtic" priests, religious leaders, educators, and even politicians – are mentioned a lot. Especially Graham Robb revolves much of his writing around them in *The Ancient Paths*, coining terms such as "Druidic science" or "Druidic alignments".

The "Druids" are linked to a multiple of rituals and beliefs, such as the belief in regeneration or a spirit world, the practice of fortune-telling, aligning monuments to solar or lunar paths, practicing magic, venerating the oak and mistletoe, and speaking in riddles or puzzles (see table 13 in the appendix). They are often described as "mysterious", possessing a "secret knowledge". The game *Celts* on the website of BBC Wales presents a perfect stereotypical picture of a Druid, who is dressed in a white robe and an antler headdress.

More than half of the words linked to religion can be connected to ritual behaviour. Prehistoric rituals gaining much attention are the presumed votive deposits and offerings, found in watery places and hoards (the latter having a high count because of the interest in the Jersey coin hoard). Burial or funerary rituals receive some attention, too: for instance, the word "burial" alone is abundantly encountered. Mostly, rich burials and burial mounds are mentioned, with only sparse focus on cremation, excarnation, or "common" graves.

There is a slight focus on the sacrificial or ritual treatment of animals, and human skulls or heads, as well as on sacrificial rites– see also figure 25. Human sacrifice and so-called "bog bodies" are not mentioned quite so often, however.

Lastly, there is a small amount of words that can be linked to "Celtic" Christianity. Most often mentioned are "Christian" or "Christianity" itself, crosses and high crosses, and manuscripts or gospels. Another term linked to "Celtic" Christianity is "monks", especially mentioned a lot by Simon Young in *The Celtic Revolution.* It is often said that the "Celtic" (Irish, Scottish and Welsh) monks have had much influence on the spread of Christianity on the European mainland.

Figure 25. Header for an article on the Daily Mail website concerning "Celtic" rituals (dailymail.co.uk).

5.4.10. Celtic art, artists, and craftsmen

"Celtic" art and artistry receive a lot of attention; the word "art" alone is mentioned abundantly, see table 14 in the appendix. In total, almost ten percent of the counted words can be connected to "Celtic" art (including medieval art, but *not* jewellery or crafted artefacts: for those, see table 7 in the appendix).

Prehistoric "Celtic" visual art is only described in a positive sense, in terms such as "fantastic", "fabulous", or "strangely modern". The artisans and craftsmen are seen as having possessed great technical skill and sophistication.

There is much attention for the several techniques and designs used in "Celtic" art. Often mentioned are the "abstract", "ambiguous" and "stylised" nature of the depictions, the abundant use of (fantastical, mythological) animal forms, or the "swirly" or "curly" motifs. Also seen as typical of "Celtic" art are, for instance, the geometrical designs, the use of organic or vegetal forms, symmetrical motifs, circular patterns, depicted double-headed creatures (only in once source), labyrinthine forms, and the use of "hidden" or "concealed" designs, although these are mentioned not quite so often. The "Celtic" designs, patterns, motifs, and decorations are thought to have evoked a specific feeling or conveyed a specific message: the art is often described as "mysterious".

Apart from prehistoric art, there is also some focus on medieval designs, but only sparsely, and in a limited number of sources. The British Museum exhibition catalogue, for instance, has dedicated a whole chapter to medieval "Celtic" art and manuscripts. It is said that medieval "Celtic" manuscript and sculptural art is influenced by prehistoric "Celtic" styles, as well as Anglo-Saxon "interlace".

There are but a few words that can be connected to other artistic outings, such as music and song, story-telling, poetry, literature, or folklore. Words connected to mythology are mentioned most, followed by music. Only a few myths and legends are discussed in detail, and most attention goes to the (medieval) Arthurian legends and the Irish hero Cú Chulainn. Mythology is often connected to visual art, such as the depictions on the Gundestrup cauldron.

5.4.11. Celtic society: Common people

There is not so much focus on prehistoric "Celtic" rural life – see table 15 in the appendix. The life of farmers and common people is usually only discussed briefly. In total, there are only a few words that can be associated with farming life, with an addition of some terms that describe common house structures (farmsteads, roundhouses, homesteads – see table 10 in the appendix) and terms that describe the appearance of the "Celts".

Most attention is focused on farmer's fields, crops and grains, and cattle and livestock – other ways of substance (salt mining, hunting) are rarely mentioned. Farmer's settlements and hamlets are usually only briefly discussed, and mostly in sources that have an archaeological background. However, it is sometimes shown that "Celtic" people were farmers most of the time, such is the case in the game *Celts* found on the BBC Wales website.

Likewise, there is not much attention to the appearance of the prehistoric "Celts", although some documentaries show blue-painted warriors or tall, blonde people with braided hair, tartan cloaks, and checkered trousers. Most of these ideas about the "Celts'" appearance seem to have been derived from Classical sources.

5.4.12. Celtic society: Migrations

Interestingly, there is not much focus on migration and movements, as might have been expected. In total, not even one percent of the total words counted can be connected to emigration and immigration – see table 16 in the appendix.

Only in a few sources, it is said that the prehistoric "Celts" migrated on a large scale, or "invaded" countries like Britain and Ireland. One such source is Simon Young's *The Celtic Revolution*, which also focuses on "monkly migrations" during the Middle Ages. However, the migrations are usually discussed in a negative light, or it is said that only small-scale migrations took place.

5.4.13. Celtic society: Women

There is some attention for powerful, important and leading women in "Celtic" society, although not overly much (see table 17 in the appendix). Just one percent of the words counted can be connected to female power, leadership, and importance, female fighters, female burials, female (horse) goddesses, or even Druidesses and priestesses. It is seen as quite special that "Celtic" woman could hold "remarkable power" during the Iron Age. Following the Classical stereotype, female "Celts" are sometimes presented as fierce and slightly terrifying – see, for instance, the woman in the game *Celts.*

Figure 26. Boudicca, wearing a torc and painting herself blue. Still from the BBC documentary "The Celts: Blood, Iron and Sacrifice" (bbc.co.uk).

The most important prehistoric "Celtic" woman seems to have been Boudicca, who is mentioned a lot, but only in a few sources: the Time Team special is even completely focused on Boudicca and the Iceni tribe. Boudicca is usually associated with the words "warrior" and/or "queen", as well as "rebellion" and "revolt" (see also: "warfare"). Many sources concerning the British history name her as the first "British freedom fighter". Classical sources are used to describe her appearance, and in the documentary *The Celts: Blood, Iron and Sacrifice*, she is portrayed as having long red hair, being dressed in a tartan cloak and painted blue, and riding on a horse chariot (see also figure 26). Interestingly, this documentary is also the only source that admits that Boudicca might not even have existed, at all.

5.5. Analysis and discussion of the results

Looking at the results, there are a few concluding remarks to be made.

First of all, terms having to do with art, warfare, and spirituality make up quite a large part of the words counted. Of course, this is also because I have focused especially on these topics, but it is interesting to see that the "Celts" are still seen as having a highly artistic sense, practicing "mysterious" or even "gruesome" rituals, and possessing a war-like temper. Generally, the "Celtic" society is often presented as quite "obsessed" with wealth, status, and individual (martial) prowess or skill.

Some popular perceptions about the "Celts" are derived from archaeological ideas, however outdated, such as the idea that specific finds and material culture can be attributed to a "Celtic" culture. Archaeologists are sometimes "used" as authorities to justify certain statements, and some archaeological thoughts are presented as true and undeniable ("archaeologists say..."). Archaeological finds are often mentioned, especially the exceptional or "ritual" ones, such as large golden torcs, swords, or decorated cauldrons. There is much attention for the materials the finds are made of, especially gold. "Everyday" artefacts, or less elaborately decorated items, are rarely discussed. Similarly, more elaborate sites such as "princely" burials, votive deposits, coin hoards, and hill forts, seem to spark more interest from the general public than "plain" settlement sites or graves.

The artistry of the ancient "Celts" is regarded with amazement and wonder, and typical "Celtic" designs, decorations or artefacts are usually described – and shown – in detail. British Museum's *Celts: art and identity* has brought forward a stream of articles, reviews, and columns on the exhibition; these articles (see list 2 in the appendix) generally use similar words to describe the items on display, and it is clear that they have borrowed much of their vocabulary and ideas from the museum catalogue. It is interesting to see that "Celtic" art is always described in superlatives; there is no room for a more nuanced view.

The Classical image of the "Celts" is still persistent, even though it is usually discussed in a more negative light, in a sentence such as "the Greeks might have said that the Celts were barbarians, but *now* we know that they were *actually* quite sophisticated and advanced". However, this means that the old stereotypes are still mentioned in many cases: we hear of – and sometimes see – blue-painted trouser-wearing warriors drinking wine, tartan-cloaked chariot-riding women, mistletoe-cutting Druids telling the future from human entrails, and so on. Some Classical images have even intruded the popular

perception in such a way, that they are often presented as *true:* for example, the existence of "Celtic" Druids is sometimes still presented as fact, even though there is absolutely no (direct) archaeological evidence to support this. Classical authors, such as Caesar and Tacitus, are sometimes used as a reliable and objective source on the "ancient Celts" – even though they usually wrote for propagandist purposes.

The popular ideas of the "Celts" also seem to have been influenced by (implicit) nationalism or nationalistic feelings. The sources analysed were all published and broadcast in the United Kingdom, and therefore, there is much focus on British finds and history. Even though some sources acknowledge that the British Isles were never called "Celtic" by Greco-Roman authors, Britain and Ireland are still discussed in a "Celtic" light: the terms "Briton" and "Celt" are sometimes used interchangeably, for instance in *The Celts: Blood, Iron and Sacrifice.*

The modern "Celtic" nations and regions are often mentioned, and archaeological finds, (medieval) artefacts, and languages from these areas are usually seen as typically "Celtic". Most interestingly, some sources seem to regard the "ancient Britons" as freedom fighters and rebels, fighting against the Roman invasion and Roman influences, or even for the "soul of Europe"; this could also be the reason why the Roman conquest and "oppression" of Britain are so abundantly mentioned. The embodiment of the "struggle for Britain" is the so-called "warrior queen" Boudicca, even though the image of her is only known from Classical sources.

Some recent theories seem to have had an impact on the way the "Celts" are presented: for instance, the "waves of migration"-theory is often disregarded, and usually not even mentioned at all – although some sources perpetuate the theory in an almost absurd way, as is the case with Simon Young's *The Celtic Revolution*. Usually, however, there is more focus on the interconnectedness of the prehistoric "Celtic" world. Medieval Celticity also gains less attention, although it is still mentioned in connection to religion, art, and mythology.

Celtosceptic views are sometimes discussed: the links between archaeology, history, and linguistics are sometimes debated, as are the links between the "ancient" and "modern" Celts. Interestingly, the Celtosceptic view is only mentioned in regard to the British Isles and Ireland – Hallstatt and La Tène "cultures", as well as other Continental sites, are usually accepted as being "Celtic".

Most sources seem to add the Celtosceptic view as some sort of afterthought, remaining inherently "Celtomaniac". One exception to this rule could be the British Museum

exhibition, which is set up from a more explicit "Celtosceptic" view, explaining that material culture cannot be linked to ethnicity. However, the exhibition still conveys the message that there is such a thing as *typical* "Celtic" art.

Even when more recent theories and Celtosceptic ideas are discussed, in almost all sources, there remains an underlying assumption that "Celtic" art, "Celtic" languages, "Celtic" archaeology, "Celtic" history and "Celtic" ethnicity are undeniably linked to one another – after all, they are still discussed *together.* In this regard, the popular view deviates from the academic – and, especially, the archaeological – point of view.

6. Discussion: Do we have to abandon the term "Celt"?

It is clear that it is hard to establish both a group of "ancient Celts" as well as a group of "modern Celts", especially when looking at the archaeological record, historical accounts and linguistic evidence simultaneously. Moreover, there seems to be a difference between the academic and popular interpretation of who the Celts were and are. In this light, should we abandon the term "Celts" and "Celtic" altogether? All "Celtic" elements – for instance, archaeological finds, La Tène art, Celtic languages – are real, and have been called Celtic for a long time; terms like "Celtic art" still hold remarkable power, to both academics and laymen alike (Sims-Williams 1998). Moreover, there seems to be a strong feeling of "Celticness" to be found in the modern "Celtic" nations (James 1999); should we deny these modern Celts their sense of identity?

First of all, we could ask ourselves whether it is in the hands of the academic world to come up with a solution to these questions. Although historians and archaeologists do have the "power" and authority to research the past and convey their messages and findings to a wider audience, the interpretation of the past not only rests in their hands (Skeates 2004, 89). This is very clear when looking at the results of this research: some ideas that are not entirely proven, ambiguous, or downright untrue, persist in the public opinion.

Of late, it has become clear that the past cannot be exclusively "owned" and interpreted by archaeological scholars; there has been much more room for alternative interpretations of the archaeological record (Skeates 2004), such as the New Age "Druidic" interpretation of Stonehenge and other prehistoric monuments (Chippindale 1986, 42-43; Thomas 2008, 141). It has become clear that different people, or groups of people, all engage with the past in their own way, and for different purposes (Thomas 2008).

It has also been argued that, although archaeologists have been *trained* to interpret the past, and therefore possess a relative authority on the subject, their interpretations do not always have to be accurate. Nor are archaeologists – and other academic researchers – completely objective or infallible: their interpretations, just as well as any other interpretations of the past, are defined by time and place, politics, as well as personal views and opinions (e.g. Hodder 2012; James 1999, 140; McGuire 2008; Skeates 2004, 89; Trigger 2006, 467). When looking at the research conducted on "Celtic" history itself, these problems become apparent: the first theories on "Celtic" history, were influenced by the (racial) political ideas of the time, and are now seen as entirely inaccurate in academic circles. This makes you wonder what we would think of the recent theories in about fifty

years; we might also completely disregard them.

The public view on the past sometimes differs from the academic view, as we have seen. Should the fact that the stereotypical "Celtic" image still lingers in the public opinion, be seen as dangerous or wrong? I would argue that we could also see the public interest for the "Celts" as entirely beneficial, as seems to generate a lot of attention for academic research on the subject of "Celticism". Is it bad that the academic and public interpretation of the "Celts" differ, while persisting popular notions also means that there will be a continuing attention for the "Celtic world"? As Sims-Williams (1998) says, popular perception is not open to academic reason.

There are not many prehistoric people that receive so much attention and have gained so much popularity as "the Celts". If the term "Celtic" would be abandoned altogether, this popularity might come to an end. It is also likely that Celtosceptic ideas will not be accepted by the public at all – an example is presented by the public outrage that ensued when Simon James published *The Atlantic Celts* (Collis 2003, 225) – or, most probably, that the academic and popular views on the "Celtic" world will drift apart even further. For many people, "Celtic" history is very much a living history. The term "Celts" still contains a lot of emotional value. For the Irish, Scottish, and Welsh, Celticness is part of their distinctive culture, their cultural identity, and their sense of belonging. We cannot just deny them that, moreover: it would be impossible to do so (Chapman 1992, 251; James 1999). We should also keep in mind that the power of the term "Celtic" could be exaggerated in some cases – Chapman (1992, 260) shows that not *all* modern "Celtic" nations feel related to the label "Celtic". Moreover, the label could be seen as largely conveying a sense of "otherness" or "being different from the English / French" than anything else (Chapman 1992, 236).

As Chapman (1992, 252) says, there does not seems to be much harm in this modern concept of "Celticness" – however, many modern "Celts" trace back their ancestry to the past, and that is where the difficulty lies. It is also the exact point where the *danger* could lie (Collis 1997). The modern conception of "Celticness" on the British Isles and Ireland, especially, seems to have been forged on nationalistic ideas (James 1998; 1999). Therefore, it could turn out more dangerous than it might seem. It could be regarded as an historical falsification – as we have seen that there is no conclusive evidence for the idea that the prehistoric "Celts" *did* exist as a group, let alone that they lived in the British Isles (see chapter four).

The “Celtic history” and “heritage” of the Irish and British Isles could be seen as a national myth (James 1999), which is partly beneficial, as it presents people with a sense of common identity and ethnicity (Megaw and Megaw 1996). It is also partly dangerous, for the idea of belonging to a group automatically implies that there are people that do *not* belong to it, culminating in exclusion, conflict, or even racism (Collis 1997). However, *denying* people their heritage is in itself also racist, as Megaw and Megaw (1996) have put forward.

We have to keep in mind that archaeology plays an important role in the creation of nationalistic ideas and histories, and the archaeological record is open to political use and misuse (Díaz-Andreu and Champion 1996; McGuire 2008; Skeates 2004, 89). Amongst others, an example of the can be given by the way the idea about a “Germanic prehistory” of central Europe, developed by Gustav Kossinna, was idealised by nazi-Germany, and used to justify the extermination of “foreign elements” (Arnold 1990; Collis 1997; Van der Waals 1969).

In conclusion, do we have to abandon the label “Celt” or should we not? We could follow Sims-Williams (1998) by saying that the term “Celtic” is far too useful to abandon. We could follow Collis (1997) and others, by saying that the term has been abused for political purposes, and could therefore be seen as dangerous.

In my opinion, the term “Celtic” should not be rejected: it is a useful term and has important meanings attached to it. We cannot deny its existence. The best way would be to “work with” the Celtic concepts as they exist now: academics could use their relative authority to convey new theories and ideas about the “Celts” to the general public, using the popularity of the word “Celt” to attract attention. Moreover, they should also acknowledge and incorporate alternative theories and viewpoints about “Celtic” history, as well as the ideas about “Celticism” existing in the modern “Celtic” nations.

7. Concluding remarks: evaluation of methodology and results

The aim of this research has been to find out why the "Celts" have proven to be so attractive to such a wide range of people, focusing on the "Celtic image" in Great-Britain. First of all, it has been necessary to find out who the "Celts" were and are: how was the "Celtic" image formed, what do we know about them from historical, archaeological and linguistic research, and what are the problems encountered when trying to interpret and combine the results of this research? Secondly, the popular "Celtic" image has been analysed and compared to the historical, linguistic, and archaeological image of the "Celts".

The first three questions have been researched by means of a literature study. This has proven to be a rather extensive investigation, due to the huge amount of books and articles published on the subject of the "Celts". It has sometimes been necessary to focus on more recent, or influential, publications, rather than to try and incorporate *all* sources focusing on the "Celts". Moreover, the nature of the research sometimes forced me to look outside my main discipline (archaeology), to investigate (art) historical or linguistic sources. Combining the results from these different disciplines, however, can only be looked upon positively, as it gives a broader and more complete view of the subject; after all, linguistic, archaeological, and historical research often overlap, and not only in this particular case.

The popular image is investigated by looking at popular (news) articles, (news) websites, documentaries, books, and museum exhibitions published, organised or broadcasted in Great-Britain during the last five years. These sources are subjected to a context analysis. This research method is not used much in archaeological research, as it usually focuses on written and spoken texts. In this case, however, it has proven an excellent method to find out what "Celtic" elements attract the most attention, and possibly even *why*. It seems that context analysis not only shows how frequently some words are used, but can also lay bare the underlying assumptions in texts; it also shows what the (actual) main focus of a text is. For instance, some analysed sources present themselves in a "Celtosceptic" manner on the surface, yet continue to use terms and concepts presenting a stereotypical "Celtic" image.

The methods used have quite conveniently answered my questions as stated in the introduction, although not all issues are completely resolved. It is apparent that the question "who are or were the Celts?" cannot be answered in a simple manner. As seen in chapter 2, the "Celtic" image has been formed over a span of almost 3000 years, starting

with the earliest Greek sources in 600 BC, and continuing up to the present. Moreover, the "Celts" have been subject to continual recreations, revivals, and reinventions. Historical, archaeological and linguistic research all present their own view on "Celticism", and these do not always combine so well.

It seems that the term "Celtic" is quite multiverse, and can be used for multiple purposes. There is no such thing as a fixed "Celtic" package, consisting of a specific material culture, ethnicity, (cultural) identity, history, language, art style, and so on: instead, all "Celtic" elements seem to be free-standing, occurring in any combination possible. This holds true for both ancient and modern "Celticity".

In contrast to this, the popular British view on the "Celts" is far more straightforward, and often presents "the Celts" – both ancient and modern – as a fixed entity. "Celtic" artistry, spirituality, warfare and modern nationality continue to attract a lot of attention, as well as more exceptional archaeological finds or "gruesome" Classical descriptions. Many popular ideas about the "Celts" are derived from Classical sources, Romantic ideas, or outdated archaeological theories. However, some more recent or Celtosceptic archaeological ideas do seem to find their way into the popular discourse, although they are not always followed through.

To conclude, it is hard to establish exactly *why* the "Celts" gain so much attention, and why they are still so attractive to such a wide range of people. It could be *because* they have been researched for such a long time: the concept of "the Celt" has been around since the Renaissance, and has, in retrospect, been linked to Classical texts and prehistoric and medieval material evidence. This gives "the Celt" a long, unbroken history, an air of timelessness and of great antiquity: they are the "quintessential Europeans".

Moreover, many outstanding, distinctive, remarkable works of art, (religious) traditions, and literary works are ascribed to the "Celts". These objects and traditions are thought to convey important messages, still seem to speak to the imagination, are often seen as "mysterious", and are regarded with wonder and amazement.

Thirdly, even though it might not seem so, our knowledge of the "Celts" is actually still very piecemeal and vague: many aspects of "Celticism" elements are multi-interpretable. Therefore, the term "Celtic" can be used in any way possible: to describe a religion or an art style, but even to describe a nationality or everything Irish.

Lastly, the term "Celtic" is still firmly linked to ethnicity, nationality, and a strong feeling of freedom and independence. "Celtic" nationalism has been in existence for almost 200

years. This presents a wide range of (modern) people with their own distinctive, shared history and heritage, something you cannot dismiss easily.

In short, the term “Celtic” is still quite attractive because it is connected to concepts that speak to the imagination: timelessness, spirituality, artistry, nationality – and because it is such a broad and multi-interpretable word that can be used to describe almost anything.

Many works on the “Celts”, including mine, focus on the way the “Celts” are presented in academic sources; however, not much is known about the opinion of the “actual Celtic” people. Subsequent research on this subject could focus on the way the “modern Celts” – the Irish, Scottish, or Welsh – actually deal with the “Celtic” image and their “Celtic” heritage, and how they regard their own “Celticness”.

8. Abstract

The “Celts” are some of the most popular prehistoric people, but the question remains: who were they really? Of late, there has been a debate going on about the validity of the terms “Celt” and “Celtic”, with some people going as far as to completely deny the existence of the ancient, as well as modern, “Celts”. Nevertheless, the “Celts” remain immensely popular with the general public; here, I would like to find out why.

This thesis investigates where the image of the “Celts” is derived from: how was this image formed throughout the ages, what do we know about the “Celts” from historical, linguistic, and archaeological sources, and can we really speak of *the* ancient and *the* modern “Celt”? Moreover, it investigates the way the “Celts” are presented in the British popular media of the last five years.

I have investigated the academic view on the “Celts” by means of a literature study, which showed that it is almost impossible to distinguish both a fixed group of ancient, as well as modern “Celts”. Rather, the “Celtic package” consists of multiple free-standing aspects (language, archaeology, and so on) coming together in any combination possible.

The popular presentation of the “Celts” has been investigated by means of a content analysis of British popular media (newspapers, documentaries, and so on) of the last five years. This showed that many outdated theories, stereotypical Classical notions, and ideas seen as “wrong” by the academic world, still persist in the popular opinion.

The “Celts”, as encountered in popular British media, still seem to be so popular for a few different reasons: they are presented as timeless and old, they are associated with concepts that speak to the imagination, and they are linked to a specific feeling of identity and nationality. Lastly, the term is still so multi-interpretable, that it can be used to describe concepts ranging from music to neo-pagan religion.

The academic and popular view on and presentation of the “Celts” seems to be different, and therefore, we could ask ourselves the question: should we abandon the term “Celtic” altogether? The word “Celtic” still holds remarkable power to many people: instead of abandoning the term, we could also make good use of the attention it generates, to convey new ideas and theories to a wider public.

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Agricola

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10. Appendix

Table 3. Classical and early medieval authors mentioning the Celts or the British Isles

After Freeman, 2002.

Name of author	**Lived**	**Origin and occupation**	**Work mentioning Celts / British Isles**
Hecataeus of Miletus	c. 550-c. 476 BC	Greek historian	*Periodos ges*
Herodotus	c. 484-c. 425 BC	Greek historian	*The Histories*
Xenophon	c. 430-354 BC	Greek philosopher	*Hellenica*
Plato	c. 429-347 BC	Greek philosopher	*Laws*
Ephorus	c. 405-330 BC	Greek historian	*History* (lost, known from later sources)
Ptolemy	4th century BC	Greek army officer in Alexanders army	Fragments about the campaign in Thrace
Pytheas	fl. 4th century BC	Greek geographer	*On the Ocean*, a lost work
Aristotle	384-322 BC	Greek philosopher	*Nichomachean Ethics, Politics,* maybe a lost work called *Magicus*
Theopompus	c. 380-c. 315 BC	Greek historian	Lost work called *History of Philip*
Timaeus	c. 345-c. 250 BC	Greek historian	*The Histories*
Callimachus	c. 310/305-240 BC	Libyan-Greek poet	*Hymn* 4.
Anyte of Tegea	fl. early 3rd century BC	Greek poet	Poem collected in *Greek Anthology*
Phylarchus	fl. 3rd century BC	Greek historian	Work survives in Athenaeus and others
Polybius	c. 204-c. 122 BC	Greek historian	*The Histories*
Posidinius	c. 135-c. 50 BC	Syrian Greek historian	*Histories*, *Library*, surv. later authors
"Pseudo-Scymnus"	2nd century BC	Greek historian	*Periplus*
Nicander of Colophon	2nd century BC	Greek poet	Poem survived in Tertullian
Artemidorus of Ephesus	2nd century BC	Greek geographer	Works survive in Strabo

Cicero	106-43 BC	Roman philosopher and poltician	*On Divination*
Gaius Julius Caesar	100-44 BC	Roman army general and statesman	*De Bello Gallico*
Diodorus Siculus	fl. c. 60-30 BC	Greek historian	*Bibliotheca historica*
Strabo	c. 64 BC-AD 21	Greek historian	*Geography*
Livy	59 BC-AD 17	Roman historian	*Ab Urbe Condita*
Gnaeus Pompeius Trogus	1st century BC	Roman historian of Gaulish origin	Work surviving in *Epitome* by Justin
Pomponius Mela	fl. AD 43	Roman geographer	*De chorographia*
Pliny the Elder	AD 23-79	Roman philosopher	*Natural History*
Silius Italicus	c. AD 28-c. 103	Roman poet and statesman	*Punica*
Lucan	AD 39-65	Roman poet	*Civil War*
Martial	AD 40-c. 103	Celtiberian-Roman poet	Poetry
Tacitus	c. AD 40-after 117	Roman historian and statesman	*Annals, Agricola*
Plutarch	c. AD 46-120	Greek-Roman historian	*The Virtuous Deeds of Women*, from Polybius
Suetonius	c. AD 69-after 122	Roman historian	*Claudius*
Juvenal	Late 1st-early 2nd century BC	Roman poet	*Satire*
Ptolemy	c. AD 90-c. 168	Greek geographer	*Geography*
Pausanias	c. AD 110-c. 180	Greek historian	*Description of Greece*
Lucian	c. AD 125-after 180	Greek rhetorican	*Alexander*
Irenaeus	Early 2nd century-c. AD 202	Theologian and bishop in Gaul	*Against Heresies*
Tertullian	c. AD 155-c. 240	Roman Christian historian	*De anima*
Athenaeus	fl. c. AD 200	Greek rhetorican	*Deipnosophistae*
Aelian	c. AD 175-c. 235	Roman rhetorican	*On Animals* (fragment of earlier author Eudoxus of Rhodes)

Solinus	fl. 3rd century AD	Roman grammarian	*Collectanea rerum memorabilium* (Collection of Curiosities)
Justin	Unknown, probably 3rd/ 4th century AD	Roman historian	*Epitome*
Avienus	4th century AD	Roman poet	*Ora Maritima*
Ausonius	c. AD 310-c. 395	Roman poet	*Commemoratio*
Different authors, e.g. Vopiscus	4th century AD	Roman historians	*Historia Augusta*
Ammianus Marcellinus	c. AD 325/330-after 391	Roman historian	*History*
Symmachus	c. AD 345-402	Roman statesman and letter writer	*Epistle* 2.77
Saint Jerome	c. AD 347-420	Greek-Christian theologian and historian	*Adversus Jovinianum*
Saint Patrick	5th century AD	Romano-British Christian missionary	*Confessions*

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b. Introduction (pp. 17-19)

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Word and result list

Total word count: 14546

Table 4. Time period

Word	**Word count**	**Percentage**
Ancient(s)	167	25.5 %
Antiquity, antique	14	2.1 %
Bronze Age	25	3.8%
Iron Age	306	46.9%
Medieval, Middle Ages, Dark Ages	61	9.3%
Prehistory, prehistoric	60	9.2%
Pre-Christian	3	0.5%
Pre-Roman	4	0.6%
Renaissance	3	0.5%
Roman period	5	0.8%
Romantic(ism)	5	0.8%
Total	653	100%

Table 5. Academics, Classical historians

Sub-category	**Word**	**Word count**	**Percentage**
Academics	Archaeology, archaeologist(s), archaeological(ly)	230	48.8%
	Antiquarian	2	0.4%
	Art historians	1	0.2%
	Celticists	1	0.2%
	Classicists	1	0.2%
	History, historical, historian(s), prehistorian(s)	89	18.9%
	Linguist(s), philologist(s)	13	2.8%
Classical writers	Caesar	97	20.6%
	Diodorus Siculus	6	1.3%
	Livy	4	0.8%
	Tacitus	27	5.7%
Total		471	99.9%

Table 6. Regions, areas, languages, and cultures

Sub-category	**Word**	**Word count**	**Percentage**
General	Alps (north of the), Alpine	24	0.6%
	Atlantic	14	0.3%
	Balkan(s)	4	0.1%
	Celt(s), Keltoi, Celtic	1231	28.6%
	Celtic-speakers, Celtic-speaking	18	0.4%
	Continent, Continental(ly)	34	0.8%
	Danube, Rhine (along the)	5	0.1%
	Europe (across, central, north, west), (pan)-European *	195	4.5%
	Fringe, periphery, edge, recesses, isolated, remote, distant, end of the earth, outer marches	37	0.9%
	Hallstatt	22	0.5%
	Heartland, homeland	21	0.5%
	Insular, island, isles	67	1.6%
	Language(s), tongue	118	2.7%
	La Tène	21	0.5%
	Place names	8	0.2%
	Pyrenees	1	0%
	West(ern), to the west, westernmost	53	1.2%
Insular	Anglesey	13	0.3%
	Arras (culture)	6	0.1%
	Britain, Great-Britain, United Kingdom, Briton(s), British, British-Celtic, Brittonic	519	12%
	Cornwall, Cumbria, Cornish(man/men)	50	1.2%
	Dalriada	1	0%
	Devon	2	0%
	England, English	72	1.7%
	Gael(s), Gaelic, Goidelic	17	0.4%
	Highlands	2	0%

	Iceni	70	1.6%
	Ireland, Hibernia(n), Irish(man/men), Irish-Celtic	174	4%
	Isle of Man, Manx	14	0.3%
	Pict(s), Pictish	20	0.5%
	Romano-British, Romano-Celtic	8	0.2%
	Scotland, Caledonia(n), Scottish, Scot(s)	154	3.6%
	Trinovantes, Catuvellani	7	0.2%
	Wales, Welsh(man/men)	110	2.6%
Continental	Armorica(n)	9	0.2%
	Austria(n)	6	0.1%
	Belgium	5	0.1%
	Brittany, Breton(s)	40	0.9%
	Czech, Slovenia, Slovakia	3	0.1%
	Celtiberia(n), Iberia(n), Iberian peninsula	14	0.3%
	Champagne, Provence, Marne(-Moselle), Moselle-Rhine	9	0.2%
	France, French	77	1.8%
	Gaul(s), Gallic, Gaulish, Gallo-Roman, Gallo-Belgic	107	2.5%
	Germany, German	24	0.6%
	Italy, Italian	20	0.5%
	Portugal	4	0.1%
	Spain, Spanish, Spaniard, Galicia(n)	22	0.5%
	Switzerland, Swiss, Helvetii	11	0.3%
	Turkey, Anatolia, Galatia(n)	16	0.4%
Other	Anglo-Saxon, Saxon	23	0.5%
	Classic(al)	40	0.9%
	Etruscan	15	0.3%
	Greece, Greek(s)	73	1.7%
	Mediterranean	66	1.5%
	Roman(s), Rome	614	14.2%
Total		4310	99.9%

*Europe: across, spread through (19), Celtic (10), central (12), northern (11), western (13)

Table 7. Modern Celticity

Word	**Word count**	**Percentage**
Celticness, Celticity	6	5.6%
Eisteddfod	2	1.9%
Ethnic(ity)	7	6.5%
Halloween, Samhain	17	15.7%
Heritage, ancestry, shared history	31	28.7%
Nation(alism), nationality	20	18.5%
Revival, reinvention, rediscovery	25	23.1%
Total	108	100%

Table 8. General terms used in association with "Celtic" society

Word	**Word count**	**Percentage**
Barbarian(s), barbaric, primitive, backward(s), savage(s), wild	67	8.4%
Civilisation	7	0.9%
Common (culture), shared (culture), oneness, connected(ness), (inter)linked, network, contact(s), connection(s)	50	6.3%
Community, communities, communal	23	2.9%
Identity, identities (distinctive)	51	6.4%
Illiterate, oral tradition, wrote nothing down, etc.	15	1.9%
Independent, individual	38	4.8%
Kin-based (groups), kin, clan(s)	6	0.8%
Kingdom(s)	16	2%
Local, regional, native, indigenous	57	7.2%
Mysterious, mystic(al), mystery, elusive, enigma(tic)	65	8.2%
Powerful(ly), power	93	11.7%
Secret, secrecy	11	1.4%
Skill(ed), skilfully, technological skill, sophisticated, sophistication, advanced	49	6.1%
Territory, territories, -ial	40	5%
Tribal, tribe(s), tribespeople, tribesmen, inter-tribal	209	26.2%
Total	797	100.2%

Table 9. Material culture

Sub-category	Word	Word count	Percentage
General	Artefact(s), object(s)	199	8.4%
	Symbol (of power, of status), symbolical(ly), symbolise(s), symbolised	34	1.4%
	Treasure(s)	35	1.5%
Material	Amber	4	0.2%
	Bronze	112	4.8%
	Copper, tin, brass	32	1.4%
	Glass, enamel	8	0.3%
	Gold(en)	249	10.6%
	Iron(work)	66	2.8%
	Metal(s), precious metal(s), metalwork(s)	91	3.9%
	Pottery, ceramic	23	1%
	Silver(ware)	76	3.2%
Jewellery	Anklet	1	0%
	Bangles	1	0%
	Beads	1	0%
	Belt hook	1	0%
	Bracelet(s), armlet(s)	20	0.8%
	Brooch(es)	28	1.2%
	Jewel(s), jewellery	96	4.1%
	Pin(s), fastening pin(s), fibula(e)	14	0.6%
	Ring(s), finger ring(s)	9	0.4%
	Torc(s), neck ring(s), necklace(s), collar(s)	238	10.1%
Weaponry	Armour, arm(s)	20	0.8%
	Arrow(s), arrowhead(s)	3	0.1%
	Axe(s), axe-head(s)	11	0.5%
	Bow(s)	2	0.1%
	Dagger(s), shank(s)	5	0.2%

	Harness(-fittings)	1	0%
	Helmet(s), head-gear, horned helmet(s)*	65	2.8%
	Horse-bit, horse fitting(s), horse harness, pony cap	7	0.3%
	Knife, knives	8	0.3%
	Scabbard(s)	20	0.8%
	Shield(s)	75	3.2%
	Sling(s), sling stone(s)	3	0.1%
	Spear(s), spear-head(s), javelin(s), throwing spear(s)	46	2%
	Sword(s), sword-hilt(s)	102	4.3%
	Weapon(s), weaponry	65	2.8%
Other	Banquet utensil(s), tableware	3	0.1%
	Carnyx, war-horn(s), (war) trumpet(s)	22	0.9%
	Cauldron(s)	39	1.7%
	Chariot(s), war-chariot(s), vehicle(s), cart(s), wagon(s)	72	3.1%
	Coin(s), coin(age), stater(s)	361	15.3%
	Figurine(s)	2	0.1%
	Fire-dog(s)	11	0.5%
	Mirror(s)	23	1%
	Sculpture(s)	7	0.3%
	Slave chain(s)	8	0.3%
	Vessel(s), (wine) cup(s), (hanging) bowl(s), flagon(s), amphora(e), tankard(s), jug(s)	37	1.6%
Total		2356	99.9%

*horned helmets: 21 times

Table 10. Settlement and structure(s)

Word	**Word count**	**Percentage**
Broch(s), cairn(s), crannog(s), dun(s), rath(s)	22	7.5%
Circular (features)	5	1.7%
Ditch(es), rampart(s), wall(s), bank(s)	37	12.6%
Earthwork(s)	5	1.7%
Enclosure(s), banjo enclosure(s)	6	2%
Farmstead(s), homestead(s), hut(s)	9	3.1%
Fort(s), fortification(s), fortress(es), stronghold(s)	21	7.1%
Hill fort(s), oppidum, oppida	102	34.7%
Roundhouse(s)	24	8.2%
Settlement(s), hamlet(s), village(s), town(s)	63	21.4%
Total	294	100%

Table 11. Elite culture, feasting, trade

Sub-category	**Word**	**Word count**	**Percentage**
Elite culture	Aristocrat(s), aristocracy, royalty, elite	28	3.8%
	Authority	6	0.8%
	Chief(s), chieftain(s), headman, headwoman, leader(s), ruler(s)	111	15%
	Hierarchy, social division, social position, social standing	11	1.5%
	Important people, special people, top people, privileged, prominent, worthy, big man	41	5.6%
	King(s), queen(s)	94	12.7%
	Prestige, (high)status, respect	51	6.9%
	Prince(s), princess(es), lady, lord(s)	27	3.7%
	Wealth(y), rich(ness), substance, well-to-do	61	8.3%
Feasting, trade	Boasting, speech-making	2	0.3%
	Choice cuts of meat	3	0.4%
	Commodity, commodities, trade goods	5	0.7%
	Distribution, surplus	3	0.4%
	Drink(s), drinking, drunk(en)	22	3%
	Exchange(d), exchanging	11	1.5%
	Exotic good(s), prestige good(s), luxury good(s), valuable(s)	81	11%
	Export(ed), import(ed)	20	2.7%
	Feast(s), feasting	33	4.5%
	Food(s), foodstuff(s), eating	29	3.9%
	Merchant(s), trader(s)	6	0.8%
	Slave(s), slave trade	11	1.5%
	Trade(d), trading network	51	6.9%
	Wine	31	4.2%
Total		738	100.1%

Table 12. Warriors, warfare, and freedom fighters

Sub-category	**Word**	**Word count**	**Percentage**
Warfare, warriors	Anger, fury, rage	6	0.5%
	Archer(s), slinger(s)	2	0.2%
	Army, armies, force(s)	35	2.7%
	Attack(ed), attacking, offensive	21	1.6%
	Battle(s), battled, battling	90	7%
	Battlefield	13	1%
	Bellicose, bellicosity, aggression, aggressive, readiness, war-like, war-loving, lose temper, blood-thirsty	19	1.5%
	Blood, blood-soaked, bloodied, bloody	27	2.1%
	Brave(ry), valour, fierce(ness), fearless	18	1.4%
	Brennus	10	0.8%
	Brutal(ity), cruel(ty), violent, violence, vicious	40	3.1%
	Butcher(ed), slaughter(ed), massacre(d)	16	1.2%
	Champion(s), hero(es) -ine, -ism	40	3.1%
	Charioteer	1	0.1%
	Combat, single combat	9	0.7%
	Competition, competitive	2	0.2%
	Confrontation, clash	3	0.2%
	Conquer(ed), conquering{by Celts}	2	0.2%
	Decapitation(s), decapitate(d), beheading(s), head removed, head ripped off, cut off head(s), skull trophy, head-hunting, severed head	29	2.3%
	Defeat(ed)	6	0.5%
	Defend(ed), defensive, defending, defence(s)	41	3.2%
	Destroy(ed), destruction	7	0.5%
	Enemy, enemies, foe(s)	20	1.6%
	Fight(ing), fight(s) fought, fight naked	57	4.4%
	Honour, glory, pride	9	0.7%

	Horde(s), massed charge	6	0.5%
	Horse-riding, horse(s), horse-back, horse-drawn, steed, stallion, cavalry	52	4.1%
	Hostile, hostility	5	0.4%
	Indimitate, intimidating, fear(some), frightful, threatening, terrifying, dangerous, horrifying, scary	44	3.4%
	Kill(ing), kill(ed)	14	1.1%
	Martial prowess, military skill / prowess, swordsmanship	10	0.8%
	Mercenary, mercenaries, hired gun(s)	6	0.5%
	Military	2	0.2%
	Naked, nudity	10	0.8%
	Painted people, p. blue, tattooed blue	9	0.7%
	Raid, raiding, rampage, steal, plunder, maraud, mischief, loot, ravage	39	3%
	Shriek(s), shout(s), bellow(ed), war cry, howl(s), make noise	17	1.3%
	Soldier(s)	5	0.4%
	Tension, conflict, stress, strife, quarrel	27	2.1%
	Versatile, versatility	2	0.2%
	Victory	1	0.1%
	War(fare)	77	6%
	War-band(s), band(s)	11	0.9%
	War-dance	1	0.1%
	War-leader, war-lord, battle-leader	9	0.7%
	Warrior(s), fighter(s)	190	14.8%
	Undisciplined, chaos, crazy, disorder, mayhem, running wild	8	0.6%
Freedom fighters	Boudicca, Boudican	84	6.6%
	Freedom fighter(s)	2	0.2%
	Insurgent(s), resurgent, insurrection, rebel(s), rebellion(s), rebellious, resist(ance), revolt(ed), etc.	76	5.9%

	Revenge, vengeance, vengeful(ness)	6	0.5%
	Troublemaker, unrest, upstart	5	0.4%
	Vercingetorix	41	3.2%
Total		1282	100.1%

Table 13. Religion and ritual

Sub-category	**Word**	**Word count**	**Percentage**
Religion	Abbey(s), monastery, monasteries	7	0.4%
	Alignment(s), aligned	8	0.4%
	Ancestor(s)	18	0.9%
	Animal(s), monster(s), creatures, dragon(s)	77	4%
	Another world, other world, next world, afterlife, world of the dead	19	1%
	Astronomy, astronomical, celestial, cosmic	5	0.3%
	Belief(s), faith, religion, religious	69	3.6%
	Bible, gospel, manuscript(s)	25	1.3%
	Calender	4	0.2%
	Christian(ity), Christendom	72	3.7%
	Church(es)	10	0.5%
	Cross(es), cruciform, high cross(es)	33	1.7%
	Curse, spell, enchantment(s)	6	0.3%
	Divining, telling future, seeing, intermediating	9	0.5%
	Druid(s), Druidess, Druidic	97	5%
	Fortune-teller, seer, diviner, prophet	5	0.3%
	God(s), goddess(es), mother goddess(es), spirit(s), deity, deities	98	5.1%
	Headdress	9	0.5%
	Holy, sacred, divine	25	1.3%
	Knowledge, wisdom, secret knowledge, education, learning	20	1%
	Magic(al)	24	1.2%
	Missionaries	1	0.1%
	Monk(s), monkish, monkly, abbot(s)	14	0.7%
	Monument(s), sacred place(s), special person, important person, sanctuary, -ies, temple(s)	45	2.3%

	Natural, nature	3	0.2%
	Neo-paganism	2	0.1%
	Pagan(ism)	13	0.7%
	Priest(s), -ess, holy man/men	16	0.8%
	Regeneration, reincarnation, rebirth, soul survives death	4	0.2%
	Riddle(s), puzzle(s), hinting darkly, wordplay	8	0.4%
	Robe, long robe	2	0.1%
	Saint(s), martyr	8	0.4%
	Sect, cult	2	0.1%
	Shrine(s), altar	9	0.5%
	Solar, lunar, (winter/summer) solstice(s), moon, stars, midwinter, midsummer	34	1.8%
	Spiritual(ity)	11	0.6%
	Supernatural	2	0.1%
	Totem(ic)	4	0.2%
	Transformation, intermediate, trans-human, in between, half-human etc.	7	0.4%
	Venerate(d), honour(ed), worship(ped), revere(d), consecrate(d)	16	0.8%
Ritual	Barrow(s), mound(s)	23	1.2%
	Bog body, bog bodies	11	0.6%
	Burial(s), grave(s), funeral(s), funerary, funereal	177	9.2%
	Bury, -ied, -ying	71	3.7%
	Celebrate(d), celebration	7	0.4%
	Cemetery, cemeteries, graveyard(s), burial ground(s)	22	1.1%
	Ceremony, ceremonies, ceremonial	17	0.9%
	Cist, burial chamber, tomb	15	0.8%
	Cremated, cremation	2	0.1%
	Deliberately (broken, bent, placed)	10	0.5%
	Deposit(s), deposition(s), votive deposit(s), devotional, offering(s), gift(s) to the gods	51	2.6%

	Excarnation	2	0.1%
	Festival(s), seasonal festival(s), gathering(s), annual event(s)	15	0.8%
	Grave goods	10	0.5%
	Grove ritual, woods, woodland	9	0.5%
	Hoard(s), pit(s)	289	15%
	Human remains, bone(s), skeleton(s)	17	0.9%
	Human skull(s), head(s)	83	4.3%
	Human entrails	1	0.1%
	Lake(s), loch(s), spring(s), stream(s), river(s), bog(s), meadow(s), marsh(es), pond(s), well(s), watery place(s)	143	7.4%
	Oak, mistletoe	20	1%
	Ritual(s), rite(s)	54	2.8%
	Sacrifice(s), sacrificed, sacrificial, human sacrifice(s) *	36	1.9%
Total		1926	100.1%

*Human sacrifice: 10

Table 14. Art, artists, and craftsmen

Sub-category	**Word**	**Word count**	**Percentage**
Art and artists	Abstract(ion), abstracted, stylised	27	2.1%
	Ambiguous, shape-shifting	15	1.2%
	Adornment(s), adorn(ed), decorate(d), decoration(s), ornament(ed), ornaments, ornamentation(s), ornate, embellished, embellishments	154	12%
	Animal(s), animal head(s), creature(s), beast(s), bull(s), swan(s) etc. {in art}	82	6.4%
	Art(s)	239	18.7%
	Artist(s), artisan(s)	12	0.9%
	Artistic, artistry	19	1.5%
	Artwork(s), work(s) of art	19	1.5%
	Blacksmith(s), smith(s), goldsmith, metalworker(s)	24	1.9%
	Carving(s), carved, engravings, engraved	14	1.1%
	Circle(s), circular, disc(s)	22	1.7%
	Craft(s), crafted	4	0.3%
	Craftsman, craftsmen	18	1.4%
	Craftsmanship	12	0.9%
	Design(s), motif(s), pattern(s)	125	9.8%
	Double-headed, double-faced, two-headed, two-faced	8	0.6%
	Dragon(s), dragon pair, monster(s), monstrous	11	0.9%
	Face(s)	13	1%
	Geometry, geometric(al)	12	0.9%
	Hidden (faces, designs), concealed	12	0.9%
	Illustrate(d), illustration(s), illumination(s)	4	0.3%
	Interlace(d)	11	0.9%
	Labyrinthine, serpentine	5	0.4%
	Organic forms, vegetal, vegetation, plant (leaves)	7	0.5%
	Style(s)	74	5.8%
	Symmetry, symmetrical	4	0.3%

	Swirl(s), curl(s), spiral(s), scroll(s), whorl(s), knot(s), plait(s), etc.	67	5.2%
	Tattoos, tattooed	16	1.3%
	Triskele(s), three-point, three-legged	16	1.3%
Other	Bagpipes	3	0.2%
	Bard(s)	7	0.5%
	Bodhrán	1	0.1%
	Cúchulainn	6	0.5%
	Harp(s)	4	0.3%
	Instrument(s)	13	1%
	King Arthur, Arthur, Arthurian etc.	32	2.5%
	Legend(s), legendary	46	3.6%
	Literature, literary work(s)	5	0.4%
	Lore, folklore, folk memory	6	0.5%
	Music(al), musician(s)	21	1.6%
	Myth(s), mythology, mythic(al)	35	2.7%
	Poem(s), poetry, poet(s)	6	0.5%
	Song(s), sing(ing), singer(s)	13	1%
	Story, stories, tale(s)	32	2.5%
	Story-teller(s)	3	0.2%
Total		1279	99.9%

Table 15. Common life

Sub-category	**Word**	**Word count**	**Percentage**
Common life	Agriculture, agricultural	4	1.5%
	Cattle, livestock (pigs, sheep, cows)	32	12.3%
	Crops (grain, wheat, barley, corn)	39	15%
	Farmer(s), farm(s), farming, harvesting	35	13.5%
	Field(s), pasture, land(s)	88	33.8%
	Hunting (dogs)	9	3.5%
	Mining, salt mining	10	3.8%
	Storage, storage pit	8	3.1%
Appearance	Cloak(ed), cape	5	1.9%
	Braided hair, long hair, tousled hair, red hair, blonde hair	11	4.2%
	Moustache, moustachioed	7	2.7%
	Tall	2	0.8%
	Tartan, checks and stripes	7	2.7%
	Trousers, trouser-wearers	3	1.2%
Total		260	100%

Table 16. Migrations

Word	**Word count**	**Percentage**
Colonist	1	1.4%
Expand, expansion	2	2.8%
Invader(s), invade(d), invasion(s), incomer(s)	26	36.1%
Moving, on the move, movement(s), spread	18	25%
Migration(s), migrate(d), migrant(s), emigrant(s), immigrant(s), emigrate(d), immigrate(d), emigration, immigration	21	29.2%
Travel(s), traveller(s)	4	5.6%
Total	72	100.1%

Table 17. Women (words already incorporated in above tables)

Word	**Word count**	**Percentage**
Boudicca	84	60.9%
Druidess, priestess	2	1.4%
Female burial, burial of young woman, etc.	6	4.3%
Female fighter, female warrior	7	5.1%
Goddess, horse goddess	9	6.5%
Important woman, rich woman, etc.	20	14.5%
Queen, lady, princess, headwoman	10	7.2%
Total	138	99.9%

Table 18. Words associated with "Celtic" 5 times or more (most frequent to less frequent)

Word	**Times mentioned**
Art(s)	91
Warrior(s)	27
Language(s), tongues	24
Tribe(s)	23
Culture(s)	22
People(s)	15
World	14
Coin(s)	12
Europe	11
Homeland(s), heartland(s)	11
Revival(s)	11
Identity	10
Nation(s)	9
Britain, Briton	8
Christian(s), Christianity	8
Iron Age	8
Past	8
Society	7
Army	6
Chief(s), chieftain(s)	6
King(s)	6
Leader(s)	6
Name(s)	6
Prince, princess	6
Heritage	5
Sword(s)	5

Table 19. Words associated with "Roman" 5 times or more (most frequent to less frequent)

Word	**Times mentioned**
Empire	23
Invasion(s), invader(s)	13
Writing(s), writer(s)	10
Army, armies	9
Conquest	7
Rule	7
Fort(s), fortification(s)	6
Occupation	6
Coin(s), coinage	5
History, historians	5
Legion(s)	5
Period	5
Way(s), way of life	5