

PALIMPSESTS

There is an island off an island off an island- Thrice Blessed Holy Isle.
Before that there was a white palimpsest of ice when there was no island.
One block of ice, silent as sleep, just fifteen thousand years ago.
The ice was the palimpsest wiping the past clean, starting again.
Then the ice began to crack. Huge bellows of sounding torment raged unheard.
Underneath no trace of what had been before.
Then people returned- new people with new tongues came from the open southern seaways.
Rifts in the now floating ice attacked by angry water suppressed for too long.
Prydein drifted from Europe. Ireland broke off. And Ellan Vannin, Ynys Mon, Holy Island.
Mesolithic beachcombers on Penrhos, their shells still hidden in our sands.

For millennia history was passed down by minstrel and bard.
Foundation myth contains its own truth. Magic, myth and memory coalesce.
Cunedda and his eight sons divided between them the land of Cymru.
The bards kept the secret of who Cunedda was. But for those with ears to hear... we know.
His first great grandson, Maelgwyn wledig, the Dragon of the Island, predominant in all the
lands of the Cymraeg.
Near a thousand years of glory until the Plantagenet came. From London it was said.
Was there such a place? Or were these weavers of new magic webs, dangerous to know?

A road followed, built by a man called Telford
Which it was said (again) stretched all the way from London to our home here in Caer Gybi.
An arch was built to match one in London which was made of marble.
An arch of marble? More magic tricks from those Plantagenets?
Beware the Plantagenet, the genista, the yellow broom.
That colour, the hair of Boris Plantagenet. Beware.
Now Hannon's trucks cross our bridge over Telford's road.
They tell on their sides they link us back with Europe.
The Europe we left a second time. Boris the Palimpsest.
We need the Irish trucks.
May they not be tempted instead to sail round the Lizard bound for distant Rotterdam,
A Holyhead bypass hundreds of miles long.
This is our town, our people, our houses and our shops.
This is our sea, the Irish Sea.
We will survive, we will prosper, alone or with others.
The Kingdom changes, the King changes, but the people remain.
You'd be surprised how many here in Holyhead still carry the DNA
Of the palimpsest of ice.
Of the first Iberians, of the first separation, of the first post palimpsest days.