

## APPENDIX 2

### A SELECTION OF CELTIC AND AFRICAN TEXTS

#### 1. African Texts

##### 1.1 *Igbo Morning Prayer:*

Nna anyi ha unu abola chi-ee?	Our father, have you seen a new day?
Amadi Oha Egbe Eluigwe	Amadioha, of the thuder bolt, the canon in the sky.
Ekelelam Gi OO	I salute you.
Chi Nwem ni, ekele O	My personal <i>Chi</i> who owns me, greetings.
Ala Nekede, Ekeleo	The landof Nekede (Earth) greetings.
Ala Okwu umuoma, Ekele O Otamiri	Otamiri (the river) of Nekede greetings.
Nekede Ekele O	
U nu abola chi ee?	Have you all seen a new day
Ubochi ta, Ekele O.	The soul of this day, greetings.
Eke Orié Afo Nkwo	Eke, Orié, Afo, Nkwo (names of days)
OOO Aah (Okorocho 1987: 56).	

##### 1.2 *Igbo Prayer for life and Protection*

<i>Nwa bialu uwa nnoo</i>	New-born baby, welcome
<i>Chukwu Onye Okike, anyi</i>	God the Creator, we
<i>Ekenée gi O</i>	give you thanks
<i>Imekakwo O O</i>	You did well.
<i>Ndichie Chebekwonu</i>	Ancestors, we implore you
<i>Nwa ofuu nkea</i>	To protect this child.
<i>Nyenu ua ndu</i>	Give him life.
<i>Nyenu ya ahu isi ike</i>	Give him good health
<i>Oya gabialu ya</i>	The sickness that will come
<i>Ya sikwo na nsi</i>	To him, let it go out throug
<i>Na mami li puo</i>	faeces and urine
<i>Nya tokwaa bulu</i>	Let him grow and be a full-

*Okolobia mmadu*  
*Nya abukwana nhe mmo*  
*Isse.*  
(Okoroichi 1987:64-65).

fledged and useful man.  
Let him not be a prodigal son.  
So be it.

### ***1.3 Was it all Worthwhile?***

Yiya wo! Was it all worthwhile?  
This land of the Baca  
This land of ours  
We were nourished on it,  
We were brought up on it,  
We have grown old upon it, we and our fathers.

Listen to a story of that time.  
There came a European  
Wearing trousers and fine clothes.  
He said, 'Take off  
All this rubbish'.  
So we threw away our skins.  
Yiya wo! Was it all worthwhile?

### ***1.4 Kru War song (from Liberia)<sup>1</sup>***

On guard! The battle is coming!  
Whoever runs away will get the whip!  
The warriors say, go quickly to the military!  
Bring in all the women from the fields!  
The enemy are coming on the right side!  
They are now on the other side of the river!  
Gather warriors on the left! Prepare! They are approaching!  
They are not falling back! They are coming!  
Come here quickly, quickly! Run, run, run quickly!  
The guns, the guns fire! The guns are firing now!  
Good! They get them! They get them!  
They get them! They get them! They are getting them now!

### ***1.5 Nuer Prayer for a Woman in Labour<sup>2</sup>***

God, what is it? Why can the woman not bear? It is thou who has ordered the woman to bear children, that she may create descendants, that the man's family may be preserved.

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<sup>1</sup> Recorded in Coulander (1996:89)

<sup>2</sup> Recorded in Coulander (1996:519)

### **1.6 Animal Proverbs from the Grebo People of Liberia**<sup>3</sup>

Alligator says: 'We know the war canoe from the peace canoe'  
(one can distinguish between hostility and good will)

Red deer says: 'If you are a coward, your horns will not wear'  
(one who meets challenges can be identified, so can one who avoids them)

Snake says: 'Do not strike at me after I have passed you'  
(Do not indulge in gratuitous actions)

Monkey says: 'If you keep your child in front of you, you can see what is the matter with it'  
(You are responsible for your own affairs.)

Boa constrictor says: "After eating, one's skin shines"  
(A person's successes are apparent)

Hog says: "Muddy roads are plentiful"  
(If one is not successful going one way, he tries another)

Chicken says: "We follow the one with something in her mouth"  
(If you need a thing, go to the place where it is to be found)

Mosquito says: "If you want a person to understand you, speak in his ears"  
(Don't send a message but go yourself if you want to be persuasive)

Dog says: "An old man begs not by words but with his eyes"  
(A person's face says as much as his words)

Colobus says: "It is for wisdom that people travel together"  
(An interchange of views produces wise actions)

Sheep says: "To report a thing promptly avoids embarrassment"  
(Don't wait to have the unfavourable facts dragged out of you)

Ant says: "Nothing surpasses a swarming crowd"  
(There is safety and strength in numbers)

Cock says: "If there is no-one to praise you, praise yourself"  
(One must speak up on one's own behalf)

### **1.7 Venda Rain Song**

Nga I vhuye mulobilo  
Kolongonya  
Ndu khulu dzi na biko  
Kolongonya

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<sup>3</sup> Recorded in Coulander (1996: 88-89).

Ri tshi imba mulobilo  
Kolongonya  
Gondo fulu li na thophe  
Kolongonya  
Thumba dzashu dzi na shotha  
Kolongonya  
Ri do lala munangoni  
Kolongonya

Translation:       Come rain in fullness  
                          Our big huts had been too hot  
                          The pathway is muddy  
                          Our huts are drenched  
                          We shall sleep by the doorside  
                          Rain while in joy  
                          We sing mulobilo <sup>4</sup>.

### *1.8 Praise poem for a Venda Warrior*

Makhado ndi tshilwa-vhusiky tsha ha Ramabulana  
Ene ha koni u dia nga swiswi Makhado  
U dia nga ndwedai murwa Libulana  
Vha ri o dia lari makhuwa  
IO kunda Mamphodo, a thuba na dzimbongola dza mokhuwa  
Magota othe zwanda -nguvhoni, ri luvha Makhado  
Magota othe –the a lwisa Thikokomba  
Vha lwisa thisele vhukati ha matombo  
Phunguhwe ya lila Muledzhi.

Translation:       Makhado is a night fighter of Ramabulana  
                          He doesn't conquer in darkness  
                          He conquers in moonlight – the son of Libulana  
                          He defeated even the whites.  
                          He defeated Mamphodo, and possessed the donkeys of the whites.  
                          All headmen pay homage to Makhado  
                          All headmen fight against Tshikokomba.  
                          The hyena has raised an alarm  
                          The whole of Madala (Matlala) is annihilated<sup>5</sup>

## **2. Celtic Texts**

### *2.1. Prayer for protection on a journey<sup>6</sup>*

May this journey be easy, may it be a journey of profit in my hands!  
Holy Christ against demons, against weapons, against killings!

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<sup>4</sup> Quoted in Milubi (1997:31)

<sup>5</sup> Quoted in Milubi (1997:44).

<sup>6</sup> Quoted in Davies (1999:300).

May Jesus and the Father, may the Holy Spirit sanctify us!  
May the mysterious God not hidden in darkness, may the bright King save us!

May the cross of Christ's body and Mary guard us on the road!  
May it not be unlucky for us, may it be successful and easy!

Comment: The Celts saw every aspect of life as being under the control and protection of God. Therefore, it was natural for them to offer prayers before a journey.

## 2.2 *The Breastplate of Laidcenn*<sup>7</sup>

Help me, Unity in Trinity  
Trinity in Unity, take pity.

Help me, I beseech you, since I am  
As if in peril on the great sea, So that this year's plague does not  
Drag me off, nor the world's vanity.

And this too I ask of the high powers  
Of the host of heaven,  
Not to leave me to be torn by the enemy  
But to defend me now with powerful arms.

Let them go before me in the battle -line,  
The armies of the heavenly host:  
Cherubim and seraphim in their thousands,  
Gabriel and Michael and their like.

I beseech the Thrones, Virtues, Archangels  
Principalities, powers, and Angels  
To defend me with their massed ranks  
And to scatter my enemies.

Then I beseech the other champions,  
The Patriarchs and the sixteen prophets,  
The Apostles, pilots of the ship of Christ,  
And all the martyrs, athletes of God.

That with their aid safety may surround me  
And every evil pass from me.  
May Christ make a firm covenant with me.  
Let fear and fright fall on the foul fiends.

O God, defend me everywhere  
With your impregnable power and protection.  
Deliver all my mortal limbs

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<sup>7</sup> Quoted in Davies (1999:289-292).

Guarding each with your protective shield.  
So the foul demons shall not hurl their darts  
Into my side, as is their wont.

Deliver my skull, hair-covered head, and eyes,  
Mouth, tongue, teeth, and nostrils,  
Neck, breast, side and limbs,  
Joints, fat, and two hands.

Be a helmet of safety to my head,  
To my crown covered with hair,  
To my forehead, eyes and triform brain,  
To snout, lip, face, and temple,

To my chin, beard, eyebrows, ears,  
Chaps, cheeks, septum, nostrils,  
Pupils, irises, eyelids, and the like,  
To gums, breath, jaws, gullet,

To my teeth, tongue, mouth, uvula, throat,  
Larynx and epiglottis, cervix,  
To the core of my head and gristle,  
And to my neck may there be merciful protection.

Be then a most protective breastplate  
For my limbs and innards,  
So that you drive back from me the unseen  
Nails of the shafts that foul fiends fashion.

Protect, O God, with your powerful breastplate  
My shoulders with their shoulderblades and arms,  
Protect my elbows, cups of the hand and hands,  
Fists, palms, fingers with their nails.

Protect my spine and ribs with their joints,  
Back, ridge, and sinews with their bones;  
Protect my skin and blood with kidneys,  
The area of the buttocks, nates with thighs.

Protect my hams, calves, femurs,  
Houghs and knees with knee-joints;  
Protect my ankles with soles and heels,  
Shanks, feet with their soles.

Protect my toes growing together,  
With the tips of the toes and twice five nails;  
Protect my breast, collarbone and small breast,  
Nipples, stomach, and navel.

Protect my belly, loins, and genitals,  
Paunch and the vital parts of my heart;  
Protect my three-cornered liver and groin,  
Pouch, kidneys, intestine with its fold.

Protect my tonsils, chest with lungs,  
Veins, entrails, bile with its eruption,  
Protect my flesh, loins with marrow,  
And spleen with twisting intestines.

Protect my bladder, fat, and all  
The rows beyond number of connecting parts;  
Protect my hair and the remaining members  
Which I have perhaps omitted.

Protect the whole of me with my five senses,  
Together with the ten created orifices,  
So that from soles of feet to crown of head  
I shall not sicken in any organ inside or out.

In case the life should be forced from my body  
By plague, fever, weakness or pain,  
Until I grow old, if it be God's will,  
And expunge my sins with good deeds.

So that leaving the flesh I may escape the depths,  
And be able to fly to the heights,  
And by the mercy of God be borne with joy  
To be made anew in his kingdom on high.Amen.

### ***2.3 Rune for sleeping***

Thou Being of marvels  
Shield me with might  
Thou being of statutes  
And of stars

Compass me this night  
Both soul and body,  
Compass me this night  
And on every night.

Compass me aright  
Between earth and sky,  
Between the mystery of Thy laws  
And mine eye of blindness;

Both that which mine eye sees  
And that which it reads not;

Both that which is clear  
And is not clear to my devotion.<sup>8</sup>

#### *2.4 Blessing of the Kindling*

I will kindle my fire this morning  
In presence of the holy angels of heaven,  
In presence of Ariel of the loveliest form,  
In presence of Uriel of the myriad charms,  
Without malice, without jealousy, without envy,  
Without fear, without terror of any one under the sun,  
But the Holy Son of God to shield me,  
Without malice, without jealousy, without envy,  
Without fear, without terror of any one under the sun,  
But the Holy Son of God to shield me.

God, kindle Thou in my heart within  
A flame of love to my neighbour,  
To my foe, to my friend, to my kindred all,  
To the brave, to the knave, to the thrall.  
O Son of the loveliest Mary,  
From the lowliest thing that liveth  
To the name that is highest of all.<sup>9</sup>

#### *2.5 Hymn to Michael*

O Michael Militant,  
Thou king of the angels,  
Shield thy people  
With the power of thy sword,  
Shield thy people  
With the power of thy sword.

Spread thy wing  
Over sea and land,  
East and west,  
And shield us from the foe,  
East and west,  
And shield us from the foe.

Brighten thy feast  
From heaven above;  
Be with us in the pilgrimage  
And in the twistings of the fight;  
Be with us in the pilgrimage  
And in the twistings of the fight.<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> From Alexander Carmichael, *Carmina Gaelica*, (1960:13), quoted in Streit (1984:80).

<sup>9</sup> From Carmichael (1960:3) quoted in Streit (1984:83).

<sup>10</sup> From Carmichael (1960:107) quoted in Streit (1984:84)



## ***2.6 A Prayer to the Archangels for every day of the week***<sup>11</sup>

May Gabriel be with me on Sundays, and the power of the King of Heaven.  
May Gabriel be with me always that evil may not come to me nor injury.

Michael on Monday I speak of, my mind is set on him,  
Not anyone do I compare him but with Jesus, Mary's son.

If it be Tuesday, Raphael I mention, until the end comes, for my help.  
One of the seven whom I beseech, as long as I am on the field of the world.

May Uriel be with me on Wednesdays, the abbot with high nobility,  
Against wound and against danger, against the sea of rough wind.

Sariel on Thursdays I speak of, against the swift waves of the sea,  
Against every evil that comes to us, against every disease that seizes us.

On the day of the second fast, Rumiël – a clear blessing – I have loved,  
I say only the truth, good the friend I have taken.

May Panchel be with me on Saturdays, as long as I am in this yellow-coloured world,  
May sweet Mary, with her friend, deliver me from strangers.

May the Trinity protect me! May the Trinity defend me!  
May the Trinity save me from every hurt, from every danger.

## ***2.7 Alexander's Breastplate***<sup>12</sup>

On the face of the world  
There was not one born  
His equal.  
Three-person God  
Trinity's only Son,  
Gentle and Strong.  
Son of the Godhead,  
Son of humanity,  
Sole Son of wonder  
The Son of God is a refuge,  
Mary's Son is a blessed sanctuary,  
A noble child was seen.  
Great his splendour,  
Great Lord and God  
In the place of glory.  
From the line of Adam  
And Abraham

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<sup>11</sup> Recorded in Davies (1999:264-265)

<sup>12</sup> From the Book of Taliesin, quoted in Davies (1999: 269-270)

We were born  
But from the line of David  
- the fulfilment of prophecy –  
The host was born again.  
By his word he saved  
The blind and the deaf,  
From all suffering.  
The ragged,  
Foolish sinners,  
And those of impure mind.  
Let us rise up  
To meet the Trinity,  
Following our salvation.  
Christ's cross is bright,  
A shining breastplate  
Against all harm  
And all our enemies,  
May it be strong:  
The place of our protection.

### *2.8 Hymn of Praise to the Trinity*<sup>13</sup>

I praise the threefold  
Trinity as God,  
Who is one and three,  
A single power in unity,  
His attributes a single mystery,  
One God to praise.  
Great King, I praise you,  
Great your glory.  
Your praise is true;  
I am the one who praises you.  
Poetry's welfare  
Is in Elohim's care.  
Hail to you, O Christ,  
Father, Son,  
And Holy Ghost,  
Our Adonai.  
I praise two,  
Who is one and two,  
Who is truly three,  
To doubt him is not easy,  
Who made fruit and flowing water  
And all variety,  
God is his name as two,  
Godly his words,  
God is his name as three,

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<sup>13</sup> Recorded in Davies (1999: 268-269)

Godly his power,  
God is his name as one,  
The God of Paul and Anthony.  
I praise the one,  
Who is two and one,  
Who is three together,  
Who is God himself,  
He made Mars and Luna,  
Man and woman,  
The difference in sound between  
Shallow water and the deep.  
He made the hot and the cold,  
The sun and the moon,  
The word in the tablet,  
And the flame in the taper,  
Love in our senses,  
A girl, dear and tender,  
And burned five cities  
Because of false union.

### ***2.9 Maytime is the Fairest Season***<sup>14</sup>

Maytime is the fairest season,  
With its loud bird-song and green trees,  
When the plow is in the furrow  
And the oxen under the yoke,  
When the sea is green,  
And the land many colours.

But when the cuckoos sing on the tops  
Of the lovely trees, my sadness deepens,  
The smoke stings and my grief is clear  
Since my brothers have passed away.

On the hill and in the valley,  
On the islands of the sea,  
Whichever path you take,  
You shall not hide from blessed Christ.

It was our wish, our Brother, our way,  
To go to the land of your exile.  
Seven saints and seven score and seven hundred  
Went to the one court with the blessed Christ,  
And were without fear.

The gift I ask, may it not be denied me,  
Is peace between myself and God.

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<sup>14</sup> Recorded in Davies (1990:276).

May I find the way to the gate of glory,  
May I not be sad, O Christ, in your court.

### *2.10 Litany of the Creation*<sup>15</sup>

I beseech you by the tenth order on the compact earth, I beseech praiseworthy Michael to help me against demons.

Together with Michael, I beseech you by land and by sea unceasingly; I beseech you respectfully by every quality of God the Father.

I beseech you, O Lord, by the suffering of your body, white with fasting; I beseech you by the contemplative life, I beseech you by the active life.

I beseech the people of heaven, with Michael, for my soul; I beseech the saints of the world to help me on earth.

I beseech the people of heaven with bright-armed Michael; I beseech you by the triad of wind, sun and moon.

I beseech you by water and the cruel air; I beseech you by fire, I beseech you by earth.

I beseech you by the threesome of the vaulted and fiery zone, I beseech you by the two temperate zones, I beseech you by the two frozen zones.

I beseech you by the compass of the harmonious firmament; I beseech every order dignified in its divisions, the host of the bright stars.

I beseech you by the kings with the ir royal and mighty line of kings; I beseech all mysteries, I beseech the glories of Michael.

I beseech you by every living creature that ever knew death and life; I beseech you by every inanimate creature because of your fair and lovely mystery.

I beseech you by your love, deeper than the ocean; I beseech your very self, O King of the fierce sun.

Every saint that is, was and shall be, and every holy virgin without deceit with Michael the fair guardian, to help me without.

May this host protect me! I beseech you, Father, I beseech you.

I beseech you, Father, that I may be in your ranks; this in summary the wise “broom of devotion”

Though brief in words, it is a pure, brightly ordered song; it is full of devotion, it is perfect in learning.

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<sup>15</sup> Recorded in Davies (1999:298- 300)

It is a summons to saints, it is a ... to elements, it is an entreaty to angels, ... breastplate.

It is a breastplate to my soul, it is a fortress to me, body and heart, it is a pleasant and prompt proximity, it is praise to the King of Heaven.

It is sanctification to those who recite it continually; it is a judgement of those who recite it; it is devotion and suffering.

It is partaking of the body of Christ and it is bitter conflict; it is fair and perfect faith, it is converse with angels.

Every angel, every song, every creature under your power, every saint of fair colour, by them I beseech you, O Father, I beseech you.

I beseech you by time with its clear divisions, I beseech you by darkness, I beseech you by light.

I beseech all the elements in heaven and earth that the eternal sweetness may be granted to my soul.

Your infinite pity, your power over battles, your gentleness to your debtors, O beloved and swift King.

To help me out of every conflict, by them I beseech you, O Father.

I beseech you.

### *2.11 The Saints' Calendar of Adamnan<sup>16</sup>*

The saints of the four seasons,  
I long to pray to them,  
May they save me from torments,  
The saints of the whole year!

The saints of the glorious springtime,  
May they be with me  
By the will  
Of God's fosterling.

The saints of the dry summer,  
About them is my poetic frenzy,  
That I may come from this land  
To Jesus, son of Mary.

The saints of the beautiful autumn,  
I call upon a company not unharmonious,

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<sup>16</sup> Quoted in Davies (1999:263 – 264)

That they may draw near to me,  
With Mary and Michael.

The saints of the winter I pray to,  
May they be with me against the throng of demons,  
Around Jesus of the mansions,  
The Spirit holy, heavenly.

The other calendar,  
Which noble saints will have,  
Though it has more verses,  
It does not have more saints.

I beseech the saints of the earth,  
I beseech all the angels,  
I beseech God Himself, both when rising and lying down,  
Whatever I do and say, that I may dwell in the heavenly land.

### ***2.12 New Year ceremonial song from South Wales<sup>17</sup>***

Here we bring new water from the well so clear  
For to worship God with, this happy New Year.  
Sing levy dew, sing levy dew, the water and the wine,  
With seven bright gold wires, the bugles that do shine;  
Sing reign of fair maid, with gold upon her toe,  
Open you the west door, and turn the old year go,  
Sing reign of fair maid, with gold upon her chin,  
Open you the east door, and let the New year in.

### ***2.13 Poem by a Celtic Monk, Tribute to a Cat<sup>18</sup>***

I and Pangur Ban, my cat  
'Tis a like task we are at;  
Hunting mice is his delight,  
Hunting words I sit all night.

Better far than praise of men  
'Tis to sit with book and pen;  
Pangur bears me no ill will,  
He too plies his simple skill.

'Tis a merry thing to see  
At our tasks how glad are we,  
When at home we sit and find  
Entertainment to our mind.

Oftentimes a mouse will stray  
In the hero Pangur's way;

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<sup>17</sup> Recorded in Rees (1992:43)

<sup>18</sup> Recorded in Gougaud (1992:250).

Oftentimes my keen thought set  
Takes a meaning in its net.

'Gainst the wall he sets his eye  
Full and fierce and sharp and sly;  
'Gainst the wall of knowledge I  
All my little wisdom try.

When a mouse darts from its den,  
O how glad is Pangur then!  
O what gladness do I prove  
When I solve the doubts I love!

So in peace our task we ply,  
Pangur Ban, my cat, and I;  
In our arts we find our bliss,  
I have mine and he has his.

Practice every day has made  
Pangur perfect at his trade;  
I get wisdom day and night,  
Turning darkness into light.

#### ***2.14 The Gorsedd Prayer, from the Book of Trahaiarn the Poet<sup>19</sup>***

Grant, God, Thy protection;  
And in protection, reason;  
And in reason, light;  
And in light, truth;  
And in truth, justice;  
And in justice, love;  
And in love, the love of God;  
And in the love of God, gwynvyd.  
God and all goodness.

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<sup>19</sup> Quoted in Morgannwg, I and Williams, J. (1997:207-210)