

Re: Indo-European Languages and Gramatical Gender Loss

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- *From:* Trond Engen <trondnet@xxxxxxxxxxxxxx>
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Andrew Woode skreiv:

On 14 Jun, 06:03, VK <schools_r...@xxxxxxxxxx> wrote:

Metaphorical and other associations seem usually to trump the historical genders where semantic gender is overruled; I'd be unsurprised to read English poetry with the sun as 'he' and the moon as 'she', following the Romance pattern, but the other way round – with a masculine moon and feminine sun as in OE – is more unusual these days.

I've been told (in an other group by a professional translator who had found it a point to be aware of in his work) that the British refer to any dog as "him" and any cat as "her". AFAIK both pronouns are in accordance with the genders of the OE nouns. It may still well be metaphorical, of course.

Countries are "her". That would be in accordance with the historical gender for many Latin names, but the Germanic 'land' is neuter so it's probably either metaphorical or generalised. I've also seen people in this group refer to a field of science with the feminine possessive pronoun "her", which at least would be in accordance with the gender of these words in Romance and German. It seems that medieval intellectuals made a point of placing loanwords in the same gender in the receiving language.

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Trond Engen
– struggling to save the third gender

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