



BASQUE MYTOLOGY:

IRATXO

Course: Basque History and Culture

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Nowadays, in general, we call in Basque Iratxo, an allegorical creature or spirit. We could translate it into English as "goblin" or "elf" but, according to the old Biscayan legends, Iratxo is a special mythological figure, creature: similar to a fairy or demon, frequently described in folklore and superstition.

Ira (Iratz) + txo= fern + smallness

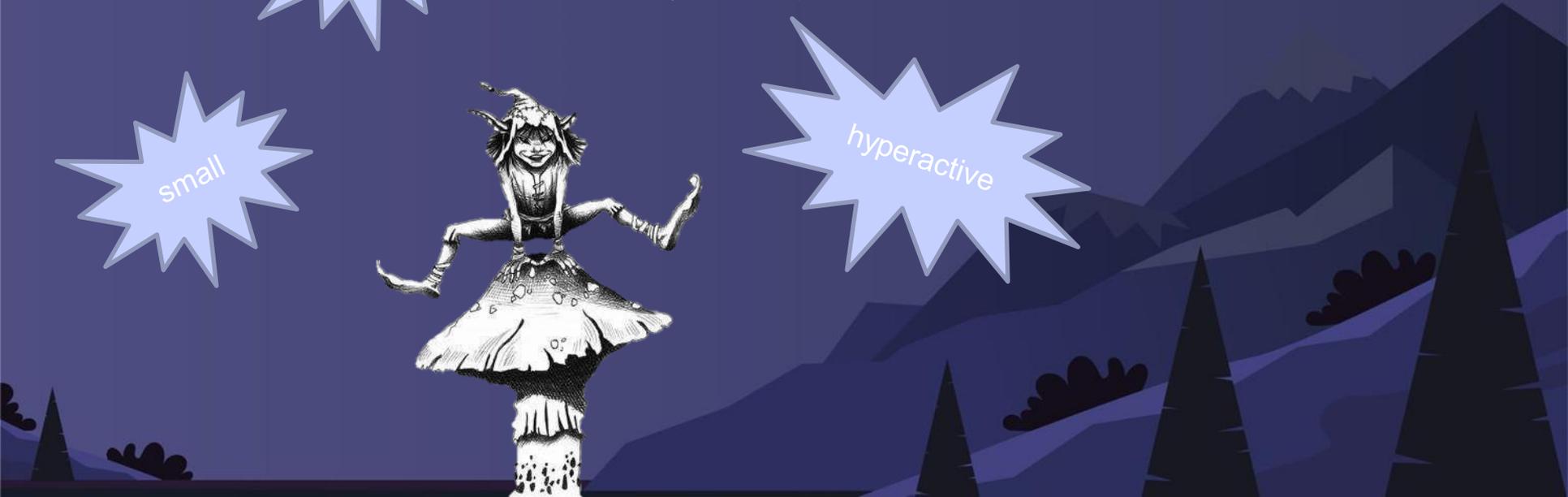


small

restless

Naughty

hyperactive





Iratxo is particularly popular in Bizkaia.

He lives in caves and wells and appear at night. Driven by curiosity, he forces the people who follow him to pass through a cliff or a dangerous places.



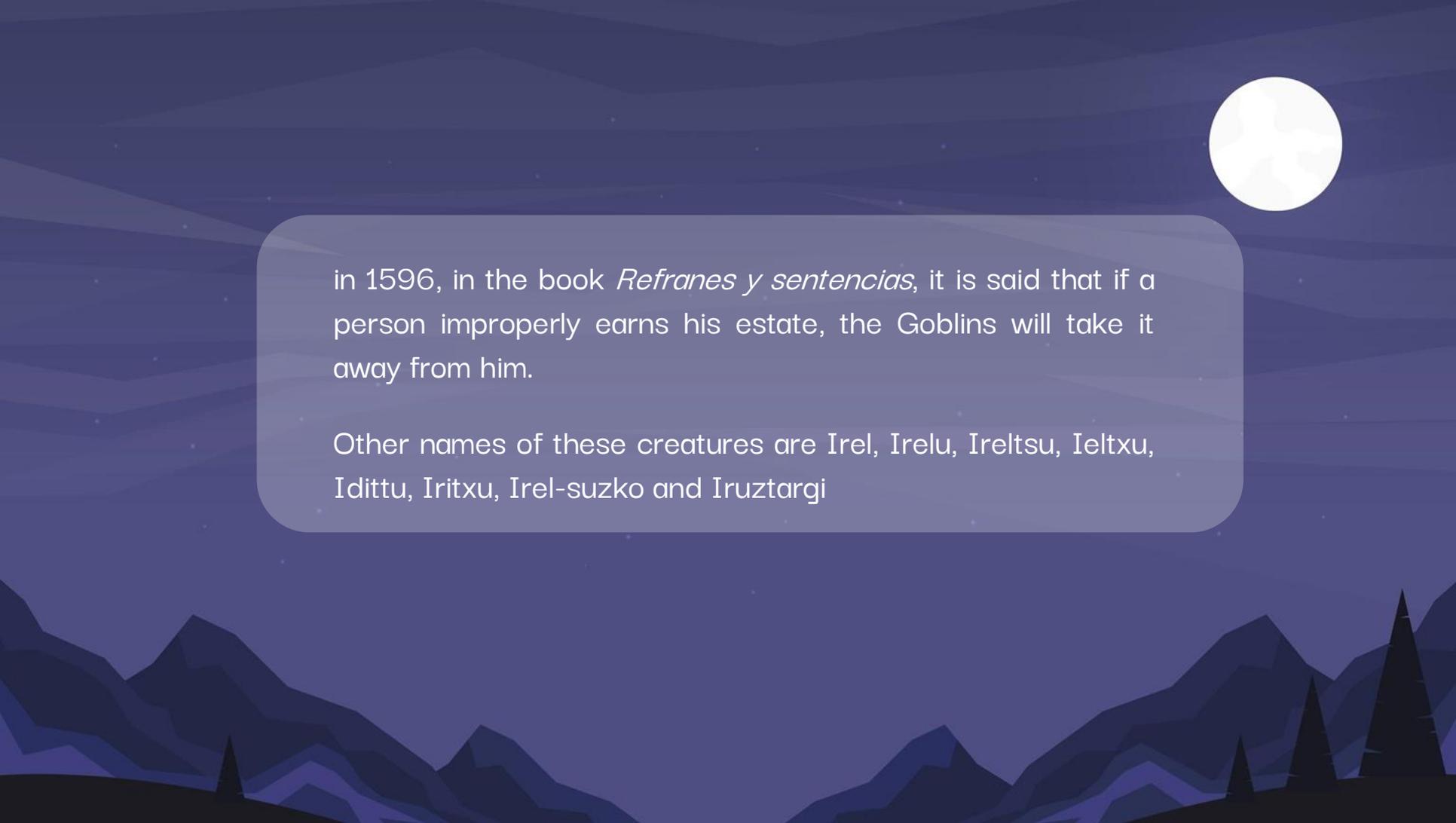
Iratxo helps with farming labors in the night, if given presents of food. They have extraordinary strength and are always ready to perform any task assigned to them, even if it is an impossible task.



There is one specific kind of iratxoak: Galtxagorriak. The tiny geniuses who have great strength and wear red trousers. In some places also known as Familiarrak or Mamarruak.



Mostly they are represented in human form, but they can adopt the form of domestic animals like for example: a donkey, a black ram, pig or, often a bird that throws fire out of its mouth- a firebird.



in 1596, in the book *Refranes y sentencias*, it is said that if a person improperly earns his estate, the Goblins will take it away from him.

Other names of these creatures are Irel, Irelu, Ireitsu, Ieltxu, Idittu, Iritxu, Irel-suzko and Iruztargi

USEFUL LINKS

<https://sites.google.com/a/amaroa.com/basque-mythology/mythologic-characters/iratxo?authuser=0>

<https://eu.wikipedia.org/wiki/Iratxo>

<https://sites.google.com/a/amaroa.com/mitologia-vasca/personajes-mitologicos-de-vasconia/iratxo>

https://erasmusu.com/es/blog-erasmus/general/mitologia-vasca-792623?__cf_chl_jschl_tk__=pmd_DXo5_x4AYbQYSPWXZ9WZD0y_5Kt8VBhsh0bkBiPJd1Y-1634803602-0-gqNtZGzNAmWjcnBszQtl