Classical Literature and Learning in Medieval Irish Narrative



Edited by Ralph O'Connor

Studies in Celtic History XXXIV

CLASSICAL LITERATURE AND LEARNING IN MEDIEVAL IRISH NARRATIVE

STUDIES IN CELTIC HISTORY

ISSN 0261-9865

General editors
Dauvit Broun
Máire Ní Mhaonaigh
Huw Pryce

Studies in Celtic History aims to provide a forum for new research into all aspects of the history of Celtic-speaking peoples throughout the whole of the medieval period. The term 'history' is understood broadly: any study, regardless of discipline, which advances our knowledge and understanding of the history of Celtic-speaking peoples will be considered. Studies of primary sources, and of new methods of exploiting such sources, are encouraged.

Founded by Professor David Dumville, the series was relaunched under new editorship in 1997. Proposals or queries may be sent directly to the editors at the addresses given below; all submissions will receive prompt and informed consideration before being sent to expert readers.

Professor Dauvit Broun, Department of History (Scottish), University of Glasgow, 9 University Gardens, Glasgow G12 8QH

Dr Máire Ní Mhaonaigh, St John's College, Cambridge CB2 1TP

Professor Huw Pryce, School of History, Welsh History and Archaeology, Bangor University, Gwynedd LL57 2DG

For titles already published in this series
see the end of this volume

CLASSICAL LITERATURE AND LEARNING IN MEDIEVAL IRISH NARRATIVE

Edited by
RALPH O'CONNOR

D. S. BREWER

© Contributors 2014

All Rights Reserved. Except as permitted under current legislation
no part of this work may be photocopied, stored in a retrieval system,
published, performed in public, adapted, broadcast,
transmitted, recorded or reproduced in any form or by any means,
without the prior permission of the copyright owner

First published 2014
D. S. Brewer, Cambridge

ISBN 978-1-84384-384-9

D. S. Brewer is an imprint of Boydell & Brewer Ltd
PO Box 9, Woodbridge, Suffolk IP12 3DF, UK
and of Boydell & Brewer Inc.
668 Mount Hope Ave, Rochester, NY 14620-2731, USA
website: www.boydellandbrewer.com

A catalogue record of this publication is available
from the British Library

The publisher has no responsibility for the continued existence or accuracy of URLs for
external or third-party internet websites referred to in this book, and does not guarantee that
any content on such websites is, or will remain, accurate or appropriate

This publication is printed on acid-free paper

CONTENTS

Acknowledgements vii

List of abbreviations viii

1. Irish narrative literature and the Classical tradition, 900–1300 1
   Ralph O'Connor

PART I: THE IRISH CLASSICAL SAGAS

2. *Imtheachta Aeniasa* and its place in medieval Irish textual history 25
   Erich Poppe

3. History and *historia*: uses of the Troy story in medieval Ireland and Wales 40
   Helen Fulton

4. The uses of exaggeration in *Merugud Uilixis Meic Leirtis* and in *Fingal Chlainne Tanntail* 58
   Robert Crampton

5. The medieval Irish *Wandering of Ulysses* between literacy and orality 83
   Barbara Hillers

PART II: THE DYNAMICS OF CLASSICAL ALLUSION

6. Demonology, allegory and translation: the Furies and the Morrígan 101
   Michael Clarke

7. Reconstructing the medieval Irish bookshelf: a case study of *Fingal Rónáin* and the horse-eared kings 123
   Michael Clarke

8. 'The metaphorical Hector': the literary portrayal of Murchad mac Bríain 140
   Máire Ní Mhaonaigh

PART III: CLASSICAL MODELS FOR VERNACULAR EPIC?

9. Was Classical imitation necessary for the writing of large-scale Irish sagas? Reflections on *Táin Bó Cúailnge* and the 'watchman device' 165
   Ralph O'Connor

10. 'Wrenching the club from the hand of Hercules': Classical models for medieval Irish *compilatio* 196
    Abigail Burnyeat

Bibliography 208

Index 230

Studies in Celtic History 245

ILLUSTRATION

Fig. 1. MS St Gall, Stiftsbibliothek 136, p. 230 (Prudentius, *Hamartigenia*), reproduced by permission of the Stiftsbibliothek St Gallen (Switzerland) through the e-codices project (www.cesg.unifr.ch/en/) 107

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The nucleus and springboard for this book was a small workshop on 'Medieval Irish Sagas and the Classical Tradition' held at the University of Aberdeen on 28 May 2011, hosted and funded by the university's Research Centre for Irish and Scottish Studies (RIISS) in association with the Centre for Cultural History. I am most grateful to RIISS's Acting Director, Michael Brown, for making it happen, and to all the participants for their contributions and discussions. The publication of this book was assisted by a grant from the Chadwick Fund at the University of Cambridge, with thanks to Máire Ní Mhaonaigh and Cambridge's Department of Anglo-Saxon, Norse and Celtic for assistance; and by grants from the School of Language and Literature and the School of Divinity, History and Philosophy at the University of Aberdeen, whose contributions are here gratefully acknowledged.

From first to last, this book has been the product of discussion and lively debate among its various contributors. Specific advice is acknowledged within the individual chapters, but I wish to thank Michael Clarke and Erich Poppe in particular for their insightful and constructive comments on several of the chapters. I am deeply indebted to the series editor, Máire Ní Mhaonaigh, for her support, enthusiasm and advice at every stage of the planning and publication process. I also wish to thank Caroline Palmer, Rohais Haughton and Rob Kinsey at Boydell & Brewer for their patience and care in seeing the book through the press, and especially the book's anonymous reader for a wealth of helpful suggestions and painstaking attention to detail, from nuances of translation down to the last accidentally italicized full stop. I am grateful to Karen Bek-Pedersen at Salix Lingua for her invaluable help in preparing the index, and to Lisa Wotherspoon for helping me prepare the bibliography. Special thanks are due to Clémence and Owen O'Connor for bearing with my unsocial hours during the final stages.

ABBREVIATIONS

For full references, see Bibliography.

Aeneid	Fairclough, *Virgil*
DIL	Quin, *Dictionary of the Irish Language*
Heldensage	Thurneysen, *Die irische Helden- und Königsage*
ODNB	Matthew and Harrison, *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*
Odyssey	Murray, *Homer: The Odyssey*

For a chronology of the classical adaptations discussed, see pp. 13–16.

1

IRISH NARRATIVE LITERATURE AND THE CLASSICAL TRADITION, 900–1300*

Ralph O'Connor

Ireland, like Scandinavia, was one of the few regions of Western Europe which never came under the official control of the Roman Empire, or even saw a Roman legion. Latin was not established in Ireland until after the island's conversion to Christianity and the establishment of monasteries, a process which began in the fifth century AD. Yet Ireland has long been famed as a bastion, indeed a wellspring, of Classical learning in the early and central Middle Ages. According to one still-popular view, a significant number of Classical texts and authorities owe their survival today to Irish scholars doggedly pursuing their calling amid the social and political turmoil of the Dark Ages, untroubled by the heathen content of the stories they preserved.[1] Like the Scottish 'invention of the modern world' a millennium later,[2] this story of how the Irish 'saved civilization' is too simple and too chauvinistic. It leaves out all the Frankish, Italian, German and other scholars who performed no less important and no less enlightened roles in the transmission of Classical literature and learning during the same period. Furthermore, the identification and significance of so-called 'Insular' symptoms in manuscript copies – scribal features pointing to an Irish or British stage of transmission – has become a matter of controversy once again, because features described as 'Insular symptoms' can often be explained as traces of much earlier stages of transmission on the Continent.[3] Irish scholars were not working alone.

Nevertheless, Ireland's status as an 'island of scholars' is not solely the creation of modern mythmakers. This same image haunted Anglo-Saxon and Frankish scholars of the seventh, eighth and ninth centuries, and claims on behalf of English learning had to be pitted against Ireland's acknowledged eminence in this regard.[4] The understanding of the Bible and the Church Fathers, rather than of the Greek and Latin classics, was the primary focus and goal of all this scholarship; but it included secular learning as well, in the tradition of Classical rhetoric and *grammatica*, to judge from

* I am very grateful to Michael Clarke, Helen Fulton and Barbara Hillers for their comments on earlier drafts of this chapter.

1 An early and influential example of this view was offered by Meyer, *Learning in Ireland*; a recent popular account is Cahill, *How the Irish Saved Civilization*.

2 The Enlightenment is the usual focal point: see Herman, *How the Scots Invented the Modern World*.

3 Reynolds & Wilson, *Scribes and Scholars*, 90–2; for discussion and full references, see Dumville, *Early Mediaeval Insular Churches*, which is a revised edition of Dumville, 'The early mediaeval Insular churches'.

4 Herren, 'Classical and secular learning', 4–9; Miles, *Heroic Saga*, 17–18.

allusions made by Aldhelm of Malmesbury in the seventh century (among others).[5] As Michael Herren has shown in his survey of early medieval Irish Classical learning, Ireland was far from being a cultural backwater in the pre-Carolingian period. Its scholars had access to as wide a range of Latin commentaries, grammars, treatises and encyclopaedias as anywhere in Europe. They also played a vital role in the transmission of some of this literature to other parts of Europe: for example, the works of Martianus Capella, so important to the intellectual history of the Middle Ages, were studied in Ireland long before they became known to the rest of Europe.[6]

Early medieval Ireland clearly had an unusually lively tradition of learning and literary activity in the late-antique Classical tradition. However, this is not what most people mean today when they talk about knowledge of the classics. What our age, in good Victorian style, calls 'Classical literature' tends not to include late-antique and classicizing Christian commentaries, textbooks and treatises (however florid), but instead denotes the pure and un-annotated texts of the epic, lyric, dramatic and rhetorical works of earlier Roman and Greek authors: Virgil's *Aeneid* and *Eclogues*, Ovid's *Metamorphoses* and *Heroides*, Statius's *Thebaid*, the poetry of Horace, Catullus and Seneca, the prose of Cicero and Julius Caesar, and the works of Homer and the Athenian dramatists which loom behind the Roman tradition. Of the pre-Christian Greek authors Irish scholars knew little, although some studied the Greek of the Bible and at least one scholar became an internationally renowned master of Greek.[7] As for the study of Classical Roman literature, there is still no unambiguous evidence that Ireland was ahead of its neighbours before the ninth century, by which time the European Classical revival associated with the court of the Frankish emperor Charlemagne had gathered pace (thanks to the work of scholars from Ireland and elsewhere). Both in Ireland and elsewhere in Europe, only a tiny proportion of the texts now seen as canonical were well known (or known at all). Virgil was the most widely studied of the authors I have just listed. Closer study of Irish scholastic writings has suggested more extensive knowledge of the text of Virgil's *Aeneid* in Ireland than was previously thought; yet Herren's conclusion that Irish knowledge of Classical literature (in the restricted sense) at that time 'compares unfavourably with that of England in the age of Aldhelm and Bede' still stands.[8] Irish monasteries, and Gaelic foundations in north Britain, may have provided many of the raw materials for the learned renaissance which took place in Bede's Northumbria in the late seventh and early eighth centuries; but no known Irish scholar of this period could match Bede's knowledge of the *Aeneid*, let alone Aldhelm's mastery of Classical Latin metre.[9] Leaving aside the language of cultural one-upmanship (employed by medieval scholars as well as by modern commentators), the priorities of these various scholars were different from each other – and were still more different from the priorities of the scholars and educationalists who consolidated the modern Western classical canon.

This profile changes dramatically when we move into the central Middle Ages, the ninth, tenth, eleventh and twelfth centuries, a period in which the form of the

[5] These accounts are summarized by Bieler, 'The island of scholars', 216–18.

[6] Herren, 'Classical and secular learning'; see also Miles, *Heroic Saga*, 15–50. On Martianus Capella see Herren, 'The commentary'.

[7] On Johannes Scottus Eriugena, see, for example, Herren, 'The commentary', and Michael Clarke's chapter 6 in this volume.

[8] Herren, 'Classical and secular learning', 37. On Irish knowledge of Virgil in this period see now Hofman, 'Some new facts', and Miles, *Heroic Saga*, 40–6.

[9] Wright, 'Bede and Vergil'; Orchard, *The Poetic Art of Aldhelm*. See also Miles, 'Irish evidence', and, on the vagaries of manuscript survival, Michael Clarke's chapter 7 in this volume.

Gaelic vernacular known as Old Irish underwent a series of metamorphoses and simplifications which go by the collective term Middle Irish. In this later period, Irish scholars' intensely learned engagement with the Classical tradition flowered into a remarkable literary movement which is still little known outside the field of Celtic studies. They produced a range of narrative texts which retold stories from Graeco-Roman antiquity in vernacular Irish prose, sometimes on a grand scale, by creatively adapting Latin epics and legendary histories in the light of their continued study of commentaries and other scholastic sources.[10] Simultaneously, the equally learned and increasingly self-aware authors of other vernacular genres on Irish topics – especially the prose narratives known as the 'sagas' – began to make more confident and playful use of Classical allusions and techniques, drawing on their own study of Classical texts and also on the new corpus of vernacular adaptations. In these two closely related bodies of vernacular narrative, Classical learning became a literary resource and Classical literature became a tool of learning.

These linked interactions between Classical texts, Irish narratives on Classical themes and Irish narratives on native themes are the subject of this volume. The present essay has three purposes: to introduce and recommend the field to non-specialists, to situate the individual chapters of this book within the wider areas of interest which currently exercise scholars in this field, and to offer some theoretical and methodological challenges against which individual chapters may be read. The views presented here are not to be taken as normative, any more than are the individual chapters of this book. Several of the contributors to this volume would disagree with one or another of the observations made in this introductory essay; but they would disagree with each other on some of the same issues, too.

The point of this book, like the workshop at the University of Aberdeen from which it emerged, is to present and provoke debate and to encourage further investigation, not to present a monolithic consensus. In recent years, the study of medieval Irish engagement with Classical literature has been marked by increasing contact and conversation between investigators from very different backgrounds: Hiberno-Latinists, Classicists, folklorists, Irish philologists, literary theorists, historians and scholars of comparative literature. Such a diverse group is hardly likely to speak in unison, but some of the most important contributions to the field in recent years have been marked by a willingness to take account of more than one of these perspectives, stepping outside one's intellectual comfort-zone where necessary, and to explore possibilities rather than (as happens all too often in medieval studies) to attempt to prove one particular approach to be the revealed truth. Prominent examples include Erich Poppe's comparisons of Classical adaptations in Ireland, Wales and Iceland, combining codicology with narratology and translation theory in three cultural areas; Michael Clarke's revisiting of the notion of a 'heroic age', using recent approaches to Homeric narrative to explore the Classical resonances of analogous texts from Ireland and Anglo-Saxon England; and, in particular, Brent Miles's masterful bringing together of his Hiberno-Latin expertise with the close reading of Classical Latin epic to reveal a hitherto under-appreciated Classical aesthetic at the heart of the Irish Classical adaptations and sagas on native themes.[11] Studies like these have set the field on a new footing: rather than foreclosing debate, they have opened up new

[10] Miles, *Heroic Saga*, is now an essential reference-point for the scholastic dimension of the Classical adaptations.

[11] Poppe, 'The Matter of Troy'; Poppe, 'Mittelalterliche Übersetzungsliteratur'; Clarke, 'Achilles, Byrhtnoth'; Clarke, 'An Irish Achilles'; Miles, *Heroic Saga*.

vistas of potential exploration. This book follows some of the diverse paths which may be pursued through this landscape.

In the rest of this essay, I will set the Irish Classical compositions within their European literary contexts, arrange them into a rough and provisional chronology, survey the ways in which they vary from or resemble each other, and outline some of the ways in which they and their Latin sources were brought into dialogue with other Irish narrative compositions.[12]

Ireland and the retelling of Classical narratives

In the standard narrative of Western literary history, the vogue for Classical translations and adaptations is generally associated with the French and Anglo-Norman poets who, in the third quarter of the twelfth century, produced verse adaptations of late-antique narratives about Alexander, Statius's *Thebaid*, Virgil's *Aeneid* and the fifth-century *De excidio Troiae historia* (History of the Destruction of Troy), an alleged eyewitness account of the Trojan War attributed to one Dares Phrygius.[13] These *romans d'antiquité* (romances of antiquity) were among the very first romances in Continental literature: the word *romanz* initially denoted a translation from Latin *en romanz* ('into the vernacular'), and the ease and speed with which the word came to denote original compositions in the vernacular reflects the freedom with which the 'translators' had treated their material in the first place, as well as the remarkable catalysing effect which Classical narratives had on French romance. The *romans d'antiquité* are widely held to have started the European fashion for adapting Classical narratives: 'they paved the way for . . . the equivalents of the "romances of antiquity" in other literary traditions', as Jan Ziolkowski has put it in a recent survey.[14] As far as it goes, this is quite true: translation-movements in Germany, the Low Countries, Scandinavia and elsewhere took their cue from the French and Anglo-Normans, whether at first or second hand.

However, the way had already been paved in Ireland. Here a parallel translation-movement had begun, certainly by the eleventh century and probably by the tenth.[15] By the end of the twelfth century Virgil's *Aeneid*, Statius's *Thebaid* and *Achilleid*, Lucan's *Bellum civile* (The Civil War) and *De excidio Troiae historia* were only the most prominent of the various Classical texts circulating in Middle Irish adaptations; the last-named adaptation (*Togail Troí*, The Destruction of Troy) existed in at least four different Irish versions.[16]

Medievalists' failure to take sufficient account of the Irish phenomenon has been mirrored by a tendency among Celticists and Irish scholars to exaggerate Ireland's priority in this arena. The Irish Classical adaptations were claimed by the Irish Classicist W.B. Stanford as 'the earliest vernacular translations in existence' of the Latin texts in question, and this claim is often repeated today.[17] It certainly holds true

[12] Other surveys with different foci of interest include Stanford, 'Towards a history', 33–9 (dated but still useful); Myrick, *From the* De Excidio, 69–80; Cronin, *Translating Ireland*, 8–46; Ní Mhaonaigh, 'Classical compositions'; Miles, *Heroic Saga*, 51–66; Poppe, 'Mittelalterliche Übersetzungsliteratur'.

[13] On the *romans d'antiquité*, see Mora-Lebrun, *Mettre en romanz*'; Baswell, 'Marvels of translation'.

[14] Ziolkowski, 'Middle Ages', 24.

[15] Insightful reflections on the Irish-French parallel are offered by Miles, *Heroic Saga*, 247–8.

[16] The various adaptations are listed below in a tentative chronology. For surveys see note 12 above.

[17] Stanford, 'Towards a history', 37, echoed by Ní Sheaghdha, 'Translations and adaptations', 109, Hillers, '*In fer fiamach firglic*', 15, and Poppe, '*Imtheachta Aeniasa*', section 1.

for *Togail Troí* and several shorter adaptations, but it is not watertight when applied to the adaptations of Roman epics, namely *Imtheachta Aeniasa* (The Adventures of Aeneas), *In Cath Catharda* (The Civil War, based on Lucan) and *Togail na Tebe* (The Destruction of Thebes). Grand claims for Irish priority ignore several prominent Anglo-Norman and Icelandic translations,[18] and dating vernacular Irish texts is not straightforward, especially for those from the Middle Irish period and later.[19] *Imtheachta Aeniasa*, for example, survives (in manuscripts from the fourteenth century onwards) as a text whose language points to a date of composition before the thirteenth century, possibly as early as the late eleventh century but probably during the twelfth. We cannot rule out the possibility that the Anglo-Norman *Roman d'Énéas* (Romance of Aeneas), probably composed between 1150 and 1165, predates it. The Anglo-Norman *Roman de Thèbes* (Romance of Thebes) was probably composed in the 1150s, but we cannot know whether it predates or postdates the twelfth-century Irish *Togail na Tebe*.[20] Nor is it certain that the probably twelfth-century *In Cath Catharda* predates the briefer Icelandic adaptation of Lucan's *Bellum civile* which forms the third part of *Rómverja saga* (The Saga of the Romans), probably composed around 1180.[21]

The important point here is not that all these classics were adapted in Ireland first (although several indubitably were), but that the movement as a whole developed in Ireland independently of translation-movements on the European continent. It did so within a learned culture which was already familiar with a wide range of Classical texts and techniques.

Yet Irish scholars' promptness in producing literary adaptations of Classical narratives may seem puzzling, given what has already been observed about the paucity of evidence for a specifically literary (in the restricted sense) engagement with Classical epic in the early Middle Ages. If Anglo-Saxon England, unlike Ireland, could boast a tenth-century manuscript of the *Aeneid*, why was the *Aeneid* not adapted into Old English long before the Irish made their own version?[22] To formulate the question in this way does, admittedly, ignore the possibility that *Aeneid*-manuscripts *were* made in Ireland in the tenth century or earlier, but have not survived.[23] However, if we allow the question to stand and restrict ourselves to the positive evidence, an answer may be found in the existence of another body of literature seemingly unique in early medieval Europe: the vast corpus of legendary, mythological and historical narrative in Irish vernacular prose known as the sagas.

[18] Stanford, 'Towards a history', 37, asserted that the earliest vernacular translations of the *Bellum civile*, *Aeneid* and *Thebaid* outside Ireland were written in 1380, 1428 and 1570 respectively, and made no mention of the twelfth-century *Rómverja saga*, *Roman d'Énéas* and *Roman de Thèbes*.

[19] Mac Eoin, 'The dating'.

[20] *Togail na Tebe* does not survive in manuscript until the end of the Middle Ages, but its language is late Middle Irish, and it has been suggested by Myrick (*From the* De Excidio, 70) that the reference to *Togail Larisa* (The Destruction of Larissa) in the tenth- or eleventh-century Tale-list B (Mac Cana, *Learned Tales*, 55) may refer to a version of *Togail na Tebe*.

[21] On *Rómverja saga* and other Icelandic Classical adaptations, see Würth, *Der Antikenroman'*.

[22] As Ní Mhaonaigh points out ('Classical compositions', 5 n. 37), the situation is slightly different with the Alexander material: Anglo-Saxon England produced what is currently accepted as the earliest known adaptation of parts of the legendary history of Alexander into a vernacular language, in the late ninth century (Tristram, 'Der insulare Alexander'). This is the only substantial example of Classical adaptation to survive from Anglo-Saxon England.

[23] This possibility has been raised by Miles, *Heroic Saga*, 21–3, drawing on Hofman, 'Some new facts'. See also Clarke's discussion in chapter 7 of this volume.

Before exploring this possible causal link, the word 'saga' needs defining and, indeed, defending. Cognate with the German *Sage*, the word comes from the Old Norse *saga* meaning a story or reported event, and it is more commonly associated with the Norwegian and (mostly) Icelandic sagas, narratives written in the vernacular in the later Middle Ages, from the late twelfth century onwards.[24] The semantic range of *saga* overlaps with the Irish *scél*, meaning a story or piece of information in narrative form and of unspecified length; but in scholarship since the late nineteenth century it has become common to apply the Germanic term to the equivalent body of Irish narrative prose, in preference to the native label *scél*.[25]

This adoption of the Germanic term has not gone unquestioned, and sagas as a separate category are tacitly omitted from some recent surveys (which often use, instead, the even vaguer label 'tale').[26] To make too much of the category (by whatever name) risks cordoning off one already heterogeneous body of narratives – the tales or sagas – from other narratives written by the medieval Irish: saints' Lives, chronicles, historical verse, place-name lore or *dindshenchas*, biblical narrative. On the other hand, the Irish sagas (broadly defined) share certain features with their Scandinavian counterparts which set them off, as a group, from the other kinds of narrative just listed, many of which clearly belong to wider and well-established European genres. The important links between sagas and these other, better-defined genres would be obscured rather than illuminated if we were to stop using a separate term for the sagas. The best alternative so far offered, 'secular (pseudo-)historical narrative prose', is cumbersome, as well as blurring the significant differences between Latin and vernacular narrative traditions.[27]

In favour of using the Norse label instead of *scél* or 'tale' is the fact that many Scandinavianists take it as a given that, because the word *saga* is a Norse coinage, the only sagas worthy of the name are Norse – as if there could be no dramas outside Greece or dinosaurs outside England. It is important to challenge such exceptionalism. Norse and Irish sagas are very different in many ways, but they share enough basic similarities in their putative origins and their narrative procedures to justify use of the same term. It is also worth reminding ourselves of the intriguing literary-historical coincidence (if such it is) of the parallel emergence of these two bodies of vernacular prose narrative from learned cultures (part-)Romanized only after the Roman Empire had come to an end, but that is another story.

Both Norse and Irish sagas are (as a rule) anonymous; they are all framed as prose but frequently contain (sometimes lengthy) embedded verses allegedly composed by their chief characters. At least in their initial phases of composition, both Norse and Irish sagas share an overriding primary interest in stories of their own lands: most of the best-known sagas from Scandinavia and Ireland purport to be based on indigenous historical tradition, either about kings and nobles of the legendary past or about pivotal events and prominent personages in the more recent history of

[24] For an overview of this literature, see the various chapters on prose narrative in McTurk, *Companion*.

[25] An influential example is Thurneysen, *Heldensage*. Old Norse has a specific term for a short narrative, *þáttr* (literally 'strand', also denoting self-standing stories), but the word *saga* (like *scél*) was not restricted to long narratives; *saga* and *þáttr* were sometimes interchangeable.

[26] Ní Mhaonaigh, 'The literature'. See also the warning by Poppe, *New Introduction*, 15 n. 51, against applying the term 'saga' to Classical adaptations.

[27] Poppe, 'Reconstructing medieval Irish literary theory', 33 n. 1, in an article which contains much perceptive discussion of the terminological difficulties I allude to here (as does Poppe, *Of Cycles*).

Scandinavia or Ireland. In both cultures, the sagas' stance is essentially historical, which is not inconsistent with their liberal use of imaginative and dramatizing techniques (sometimes in ways which bring the stories close to what we would today call fiction).[28] This broadly historical stance links sagas (in this textual sense) with their oral equivalents which German-speaking folklorists denote using the cognate term *Sage*: this means 'folk legend', a tale intended to tell a true story reflecting historical tradition, as opposed to the fictive *Märchen* or fairytale.[29]

Sagas are not the same as chronicles or the more ambitious forms of national and global historiography which seek to narrate the history of an entire nation, church or civilization.[30] The latter cover a very large timespan covering many generations, but sagas are defined by plot: they focus primarily on a single sequence of linked events with a limited number of central protagonists, although the longer ones sometimes begin with stories about the protagonists' ancestors. In this respect sagas are more like ancient dramas or modern novels than the longer forms of medieval historiography. Some related sagas were subsequently compiled into long chronicle-like sequences or cycles,[31] but the component sagas are usually easy to tell apart because of their distinctive narrative styles and concerns (and, usually, by their titles as separate sagas), for all that some redactors imposed a degree of unity on their larger structures. The most famous and artistically accomplished of these compilations, the *Heimskringla* or 'History of the Kings of Norway' attributed to the thirteenth-century Icelander Snorri Sturluson, was never referred to as a 'saga', because for its medieval author and audiences it was self-evidently made up of several kings' sagas, albeit thoroughly recomposed in the process and unified on both thematic and stylistic levels.[32] Meanwhile, the compilers of large-scale histories sometimes made use of the art of the saga-teller (or perhaps borrowed from existing sagas) to narrate individual episodes in a national history, as may be seen in the massive work of late Middle Irish 'synthetic history' known as *Lebor Gabála (Érenn)* (The Book of the Settlements / Invasions [literally 'taking'] of Ireland);[33] but in its procedure and overarching structure this compilation, too, is quite different to even the longest of the sagas.

Finally and most controversially, both bodies of saga literature testify to a creative fusion between two traditions of organizing information in narrative form: vernacular and orally delivered narrative sponsored by kings and lords, and a culturally distinctive but internationally rooted practice of literate Latinity based initially in monasteries, much of it secular in content and emphasis. Monasteries were the primary home of saga-writing in Ireland until the twelfth-century Church reforms pushed secular learning outside the Church and into the hands of learned families (whose personnel, however, displayed considerable continuity from the monastic

[28] Many Scandinavianists and some Celticists would go further and view a large part of the saga corpus simply as 'fiction', but this view is increasingly questioned. See Meulengracht Sørensen, 'Some methodological considerations'; Toner, 'The Ulster cycle'; Poppe, 'Literature as history'; Poppe, *Of Cycles*; O'Connor, 'History or fiction'. See also Clarke's and Fulton's chapters in this volume.

[29] For the classic dichotomy, see Lüthi, *Das europäische Volksmärchen*, 8–12; for critique in a literary context, see O'Connor, '*Bárðar saga*'.

[30] On the latter forms, see Hay, *Annalists and Historians*, 38–86. On the distinction between sagas (or 'legends') and chronicles in Ireland, see Radner, 'Writing history', who nevertheless identifies some texts as hybrids drawing on both kinds of narrative.

[31] Poppe, *Of Cycles*.

[32] For an overview see Whaley, *Heimskringla*.

[33] This late eleventh-century compilation is based on lost earlier histories dating from the ninth century or earlier: see Carey, *Irish National Origin-Legend*.

period; the distinction between orality and literacy does not map in any simple way onto the secular-monastic dichotomy).[34] These oral and literate practices are already intimately interlocked in our earliest surviving saga-texts. How and when they came together in the first place is still very obscure, but is of the first importance to literary historians and, for this reason, will remain the subject of debate until more groundwork is done.[35] Here is not the place to intervene in this debate, but two points need to be made.

First, in speaking of such a fusion I am referring solely to the literary tradition as preserved in manuscripts; I am not making a general claim about orality and literacy in the culture as a whole. The rise of literacy among the educated did not do away with practices of oral storytelling and oral learning in Scandinavian or Irish culture generally: these practices, especially poetic composition, appear to have remained vibrant and authoritative long after the rise of literacy among the educated, although their authority was now contested rather than assumed.[36] For example, the prestige of the traditional custodians of oral learning in Ireland, the *filid* (usually translated 'poets'), was polemically reasserted during the Middle Irish period in (written) lists of Irish narratives or *scéla* which the true *fili* was supposed to know from memory, classified by event-type (*tána* or cattle-raids, *togla* or destructions, *tochmarca* or wooings, and so on). These tales include many of the stories which Celticists recognize as sagas extant in manuscript (and written in monasteries), such as *Táin Bó Cúailnge* (The Cattle-Raid of Cooley), *Togail Bruidne Da Derga* (The Destruction of Da Derga's Hostel) and *Tochmarc Étaíne* (The Wooing of Étaín), but are listed as if they were stories recited from memory.[37] The tenth- or eleventh-century 'List B' even includes the Middle Irish adaptations of Dares's *De excidio* and the Alexander legend alongside all the sagas on Irish themes,[38] showing that Classical narratives had been assimilated so fully into the indigenous narrative tradition that they could be claimed by the *filid* (or their associates) as part of the traditional heritage of oral learning as well as part of the monastic repertoire of written sagas. The effect of such lists is to reassert the authority of the *filid* over this kind of subject-matter, and over the past more generally.[39] At the same time, the lists' very existence in writing confirms the evidence of Old Irish poetico-legal tracts indicating considerable overlap, from an early date, between secular and sacred learning.[40]

Second, it is important to emphasize that the sagas which survive in manuscripts cannot be taken as the simple record of any orally transmitted tale, as if they were modern transcriptions of stories made by trained folklorists. For all their undoubted oral-traditional content, they are recognized by most scholars today (including

[34] On the last point, see Johnston, *Literacy and Identity*.

[35] Landmark contributions include Stevenson, 'The beginnings of literacy'; Charles-Edwards, 'The context'; Ní Mhaonaigh, 'The literature', 36–7; Johnston, *Literacy and Identity*. For later developments, see Mac Cana, 'The rise'; Simms, 'Literacy and the Irish bards'; Caball & Hollo, 'The literature', 77–81.

[36] Mac Cana, 'The rise', 143–6; Stevenson, 'Literacy and orality'; Johnston, *Literacy and Identity*, 131–76.

[37] Mac Cana, *Learned Tales*, 41–65. For further examples of storytelling presented in this way, see Nagy, 'Close encounters'.

[38] *Ibid*., 52–5; for discussion see Myrick, *From the* De Excidio, 74–7; Miles, *Heroic Saga*, 96–7.

[39] Mac Cana, *Learned Tales*, 128–31.

[40] On manifestations of this overlap during different periods, see Stevenson, 'Literacy and orality'; Ó Cathasaigh, 'The literature', 17–22; Ní Mhaonaigh, 'The literature', 36–7; Caball & Hollo, 'The literature', 77–81; Johnston, *Literacy and Identity*. Among the most important Old Irish sources is Breatnach, *Uraicecht na Ríar*; see also Ó Corráin *et al.*, 'The laws of the Irish', 400–4.

folklorists) as literary compositions. If the stories cited in the Middle Irish tale-lists really existed in oral form, they may have borne very little resemblance to the stories preserved in manuscript under the same titles; it is always possible that the resemblance was closer in some extant sagas than in others, but we have no means of testing this possibility. Recognizing the fundamentally literary identity of the *extant* sagas nevertheless leaves plenty of room for debate about the extent to which the saga-authors preserved, transformed or simply made up their presumed oral-traditional materials; about the purposes of the resulting texts; and about the balance of literate and oral-traditional influence on their narrative techniques and delivery.[41]

Even Classical adaptations – on the surface, the most obviously 'literate' of sagas – are open to both strands of interpretation. This may be seen in the contrasting discussions of *Merugud Uilixis* (The Wandering of Ulysses) by Robert Crampton and Barbara Hillers in this volume.[42] Hillers's analysis, bringing together folkloristic and philological approaches, demonstrates how folklorists' mapping of motifs across space and time can illuminate the individuality and local purposes of a single text. Like stemmas, such maps can aid the appreciation of a text's features relative to wider patterns. Like other forms of scholarship which look beyond the boundaries of one cultural zone, folkloristics is of particular value when we are discussing the relationship between medieval Ireland and the culturally and textually distant worlds of Classical Greece and Rome, as a powerful complement to philologically informed literary analysis.

The oldest manuscript containing Irish sagas, *Lebor na hUidre* (The Book of the Dun Cow), was probably compiled around the turn of the twelfth century, but the language of the sagas found within this and many other medieval Irish (and a few Scottish) manuscripts points to some of them having been composed, in some form, much earlier – possibly as early as the eighth century. Once again, the difficulties of dating Irish texts make it impossible to be certain that these narratives really go back to such an early date, but it is uncontroversial within Celtic studies to state that the first sagas we know about were probably composed in the eighth century and took their extant forms in the ninth or early tenth (the late Old Irish and early Middle Irish periods, according to the standard chronology). It is also clear that by the tenth and eleventh centuries, as Middle Irish gained ground, a very large and varied body of sagas existed, ranging from short anecdotes to extended novel-length stories, and including new compositions as well as adapations and compilations based on existing sagas.[43] It is possible that among these tenth-century compositions were the first of the Classical adaptations, although these survive only in reworkings likely to date from the eleventh century and later.

In short, it would appear that the move to adapt Classical narratives into Irish took place as part of an existing upsurge in the writing of sagas and other kinds of vernacular historiography and mythography on Irish topics: the vigour of that tradition encouraged authors to try their hands at adapting foreign material.[44] The two movements were not precisely simultaneous, as is sometimes implied.[45] To judge from

[41] For a flavour of the debate on the sagas' preservation of antique materials, compare Mac Cana, 'Conservation and innovation', with McCone, *Pagan Past*. Important questions are raised by Ó Coileáin, 'Irish saga literature', 174–8, but not answered.

[42] See also Hillers, 'Ulysses'. On oral style in other Classical adaptations, see Mac Gearailt, 'Change and innovation', 492; Harris, *Adaptations of Roman Epic*; Mac Gearailt, '*Togail Troí*', 81.

[43] For these developments, see Ó Cathasaigh, 'The literature', 24–6, and Ní Mhaonaigh, 'The literature'.

[44] Poppe, 'The Early Modern Irish version', 79.

[45] See the discussion by Fulton, this volume.

the distribution of surviving texts, it was only after two centuries of saga-writing on native themes that Irish scholars were ready to bring stories from Graeco-Roman antiquity into the saga corpus. A considerable time-lag is likewise visible in the vernacular French literary record, albeit in verse rather than prose. Elevated secular historical narrative in the vernacular appears first during the eleventh century in the form of the *chanson de geste*, like the Irish sagas closely tied to oral tradition but written or composed by clerics. Then, perhaps a century and a half after this genre had arisen, the first *romans d'antiquité* appeared in its wake. Albéric de Pisançon's *Roman d'Alexandre* and the *Roman de Thèbes*, the two earliest of the Classical adaptations, are often seen as hybrids between the still-popular *chanson de geste* (with its detailed battle-narratives) and the romance proper (with its invented love-episodes and internal monologues).[46]

In France as in Ireland, the development of an elevated vernacular form of secular (legendary-) historical narrative, written using a blend of oral and literate techniques, encouraged the subsequent incorporation of prestigious Classical narratives into that genre. Once introduced into the culture's literary system, they transformed existing narrative genres in diverse ways. In France, the combination of *chanson de geste* with Classical material catalysed the rise of a nascent genre, the romance (many literary historians hold that it gave birth to the romance).[47] In Ireland, the combination of sagas with the same material – producing what might be called 'Classical sagas'[48] – helped to transform saga-writing on Irish subjects during the Middle Irish period. Exactly how much the Classical adaptations contributed to these changes remains open to question, but among their possible effects are the birth of a new sub-genre known as the *cath* or battle-tale, the increasing use of an ornamented, alliterating prose style in heightened passages, and most famously the development of new (or newly confident) large-scale forms and techniques for sagas set in Ireland.[49]

The old assertion that the *Táin* is Ireland's answer to the *Aeneid* has recently been made with renewed force and sophistication by Miles,[50] and the contributions of Abigail Burnyeat and myself in this volume discuss different aspects of the same underlying question: the former by exploring the Virgilian resonances of *compilatio* in medieval Ireland and its implications for the making of large-scale narratives, and the latter by reassessing the evidence for the imitation of Classical epic in the *Táin* and other Irish sagas. Even if we were to doubt the large-scale influence of translation texts on these Irish narratives, the latter were already being enriched by the study of the classics themselves, typically mediated via late-antique and early medieval scholastic writings.[51] Clarke's second chapter in this volume explores these possibilities via two case-studies, one looking at the possible Senecan influence on the celebrated tragic saga *Fingal Rónáin* (Rónán's Kin-Slaying), the other examining the mythographic

[46] Baswell, 'Marvels of translation', 32; Roncaglia, 'L'*Alexandre*'.

[47] Vinaver, *Rise of Romance*, 23–4; Holmes, *History of Old French Literature*, 133–42; Krueger, 'Introduction', 2; Mora-Lebrun, *Mettre en romanz'*.

[48] The capital C helps distinguish such a label from the very different use of 'classical' in the notion of the 'classical Icelandic sagas', where 'classical' has no reference to Graeco-Roman antiquity, but instead functions to valorize a select group of sagas held to belong to the pinnacle of the genre's literary evolution. For helpful critique, see Sävborg, 'Den "efterklassiska" islänningasagan'.

[49] On the *cath*, see Mac Cana, 'La Traduction', 80; Mac Gearailt, '*Togail Troí*: ein Vorbild'. On stylistic influence, see Mac Gearailt, 'On textual correspondences', 351; Miles, '*Togail Troí*', 84. On large-scale formal influence, see Tristram, 'The "Cattle-Raid"'; Miles, *Heroic Saga*, 145–244. For critical discussion of these three hypotheses, see Ní Mhaonaigh, 'Classical compositions', 9–19.

[50] Miles, 'The literary set piece'; Miles, *Heroic Saga*, 145–244; Miles, 'Irish evidence'.

[51] See, for example, Miles, *Heroic Saga*, 46–8.

parallels to the story of the king with horse's ears found in various Gaelic narratives. All these studies meet, in different ways, the methodological challenge posed by the lack of detailed evidence for the contents of the libraries of medieval Irish saga-writers, beyond the suggestive but sometimes ambivalent evidence of the sagas themselves.

Classical adaptations seem to have been readily accepted as part of the saga 'canon' despite their foreign subject-matter. In the mid-twelfth-century Book of Leinster, and in various codices from the fourteenth century onwards, we see classical adaptations incorporated into manuscripts alongside sagas and other Irish narrative texts; in the Middle Irish tale-lists, as we have seen, they were even made to masquerade as oral narrative. The cultural distance between Classical Graeco-Roman antiquity and medieval Ireland was bridged in three ways. First, the Classical source-texts were subjected to considerable Gaelicization, being adapted not only to the Irish language but also to Irish narrative norms, a process studied in depth by Leslie Diane Myrick, Uáitéar Mac Gearailt, Poppe and John Harris (among others) and discussed briefly below.[52] In this volume, diverse aspects of the Classical sagas' adaptation to Irish expectations are examined in the chapters by Crampton, Hillers, Fulton and Poppe. Second and by contrast, one of the most important achievements of Miles's book *Heroic Saga and Classical Epic* is his demonstration that the authors of the Classical adaptations not only Gaelicized their source-material, but equally made use of a repertoire of international 'classicizing' techniques learned from late-antique and early medieval commentaries and handbooks as well as from the study of Classical literature itself.[53] These techniques already formed part of the basic rhetorical toolkit of the Irish literate classes, so were not necessarily viewed by them as an 'external element' alien to the narrating of indigenous history. Furthermore, as Miles points out, several of the source-texts had been familiar to the Irish learned classes (albeit not always in their original form) long before they were adapted into Middle Irish prose. My own chapter in this volume explores the methodological challenges involved in distinguishing Gaelicization from classicization by using the test-case of the 'watchman device', a descriptive technique equally popular in both Classical and Gaelic heroic narrative as well as the Irish Classical compositions themselves.

Third, the act of bridging two cultures was mediated by explicit cross-cultural comparisons. Irish authors in the Middle Irish period increasingly presented the world of Graeco-Roman (pagan) antiquity as a natural point of comparison and emulation for the legendary past of Ireland, in a similar way to the better-established use of Old Testament reference-points in legal as well as literary texts. As Clarke's research has shown, aligning the Irish past with the Graeco-Roman past helped Irishmen to reshape the terms on which their historical memory operated, and to negotiate a prestigious position for both Ireland and the Irish language in relation to the rest of Europe.[54] This habit of cross-cultural comparison and emulation is most famously exemplified by the Classical interlude in the late twelfth-century historical poem on the Ulster kings, *Clann Ollaman Uaisle Emna* (The Children of Ollam are the Nobles of Emain), in which the chief personages of the legendary Ulster court Emain Macha are placed side by side with their Trojan equivalents:

[52] Myrick, *From the* De Excidio; Mac Gearailt, '*Togail Troí*: an example'; Mac Gearailt, 'Change and innovation', 454–5, 458 and 484–5; Harris, *Adaptations of Roman Epic*; Poppe, *New Introduction*, 17–30; Poppe, '*Imtheachta Aeniasa*'.

[53] Miles, *Heroic Saga*.

[54] Clarke, 'Achilles, Byrhtnoth'; Clarke, 'An Irish Achilles'. See also Poppe & Schlüter, 'Greece, Ireland'.

Comoirrdeirc Asia re hUlltaib
im écht, im allad, im uaill:
Priaim ainm Conchobair Codail
borrfadaig im Thoraig thuaid.

Coimfhedma Treóil is Cú Chulainn
im chomlonn, im ré is im rath;
Fergus Énias re luad loingse
glé-dias buan nar choimse i cath.

Alexandair Naíse nertmar –
rena néim Troí ocus Táin;
Echtair mar Chonall cert Cernach
nert ro-garb re hernach n-áig.

Cosmail gach áen-fher d'iath Emna
d'fhir ar Tróe muirnig na máer:
ropo data a n-áirem uile,
gach sáir-fher don chuire cháem.

Asia is as famous as Ulster
in deed, in fame and in pride:
Priam is the name of Conchobar of Codal
who rages around northern Tory.

Troilus and Cú Chulainn are equivalent
in battle, in lifespan and in fortune;
Aeneas is Fergus where exile is considered,
a bright constant pair who were not moderate in battle.

Powerful Noísiu is Alexander –
their beauty caused [the siege of] Troy and the Táin;
Hector is like honest Conall Cernach,
a fierce strength against the iron of conflict.

Every single man of Emain's land
has a counterpart in tumultuous, lordly Troy:
it would be pleasant to count them all,
every nobleman of the fair company.[55]

The last stanza makes the direction of the emulation clear, but it is interesting to see that this sequence of stanzas begins, in the first line, by setting the terms of the comparison the other way around: it is almost as if the Trojans are the ones needing to be lent dignity by alignment with Ulster, rather than vice versa.[56]

[55] Byrne, '*Clann Ollaman*', 61–2; translation slightly adapted from Byrne's (*ibid*., 76). Byrne renders *sáir-fher* in the last line somewhat loosely as 'hero'. For commentary, see Byrne's edition. I am grateful to Máire Ní Mhaonaigh for sending me her unpublished paper 'The Hectors of Ireland' which contains valuable discussion of the propagandistic purpose of this poem. See also Ó hUiginn, 'The background', 37–41; Poppe, *New Introduction*, 28–30; Clarke, 'An Irish Achilles', 247–8.

[56] Compare the examples of similar equivalences in *DIL*, s.v. *fri* IV (a).

Similarly unexpected play on these juxtapositions is to be found in other cross-cultural comparisons in Irish literature, and two chapters in this book pay special attention to this. Clarke's first chapter explores a religious dimension of this practice, analysing the far-from-simple equivalences drawn by Irish authors between the deities of Classical paganism and those of pre-Christian Ireland, in which the Furies touch down on Irish soil and the Irish war-goddess finds herself presiding over ancient Thebes and Rome. He views this practice as an Irish application of the allegorical and cross-linguistic mythography practised by the late-antique Christian scholar Fulgentius. Máire Ní Mhaonaigh's chapter examines a climactic passage in the elaborate twelfth-century saga *Cogadh Gáedhel re Gallaibh* (The War of the Irish against Vikings) in which a figure from relatively recent history, Brían Bórama's son Murchad, is compared to Hector of Troy.[57] Instead of a simple equivalence, Murchad appears as the last of a line of six warrior-heroes of decreasing valour, beginning with the warrior *par excellence* Hector, in a degenerationist pattern drawing on the learned ecclesiastical scheme of the 'six ages of the world'. Murchad is the pinnacle of present-day valour, but his achievement is dwarfed by his Greek predecessor. Yet, as Ní Mhaonaigh shows, any sense of cultural cringe before the Graeco-Roman past is more than compensated for by the virtuoso display of Latin learning and world history with which the author has woven this portrait of Murchad, setting the Greek–Irish comparison within a world-historical context familiar from *Lebor Gabála*. Cross-cultural play of this kind reveals both the cultural self-confidence of the Irish authors and their awareness of the unquestioned authority and grandeur of the tradition with which they are engaging – a tense combination which is perhaps the very essence of emulation.

Irish Classical adaptations: an overview

The following is an attempt to list the surviving medieval Irish adaptations of Classical narratives – both sagas and poems – in a very loose chronological order. In view of the challenges discussed earlier, chronologies like this are necessarily provisional. The dates given are based chiefly on the views of the scholars who have worked most closely with the texts in question. It is likely that some of the texts dated here to the 'twelfth or thirteenth century' existed earlier, but I have signalled this possibility only in the case of two tales which survive in linguistically fairly late forms but are cited by name in a linguistically earlier text (*Togail na Tebe*).

Tenth century:

- [*Togail Troí* (The Destruction of Troy): a lost prose text on which the extant adaptations are ultimately based][58]

[57] The *Cogadh* is not usually included among the 'sagas' because of its annalistic and chronicle-like features: it has been described as a chronicle by Radner, 'Writing history', 320–1, and as a 'literary narrative which draws heavily on annalistic material' by Ní Mhaonaigh (*Brian Boru*, 39), while others including the latter (this volume) use terms like 'pseudo-history' (which are arguably no less applicable to sagas in general). In my view, it represents an important new generic development in the continually evolving repertoire of saga-writing in Ireland. See Ní Mhaonaigh's discussion in chapter 8 of this volume, from which my translation of the title is taken.

[58] On the date, see Mac Eoin, 'Das Verbalsystem', 200–2. The most sustained attempt to characterize this lost text is Mac Gearailt, 'Change and innovation', 460–70.

- [*Scéla Alaxandair* (The Alexander Saga): a lost prose text or texts on which the extant adaptation is based][59]

Eleventh century:

- *Togail Troí*: Recension 1, a prose adaptation of *De excidio Troiae historia*, preserved in two manuscript-texts from the fourteenth to sixteenth centuries[60]
- *Scéla Alaxandair*: a prose account of Alexander the Great's career, adapting the fifth-century historian Orosius's *Historia adversum paganos* (History against the Pagans) alongside two apocryphal correspondence-texts attributed to Alexander, preserved in divergent versions in one fourteenth- and one fifteenth-century manuscript[61]

Late eleventh or twelfth century:

- *Togail Troí*: Recension 2, a longer text extant in considerably divergent versions in five manuscripts from the twelfth, fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, and two further fragments[62]
- *Imtheachta Aeniasa* (The Adventures of Aeneas), a prose adaptation of Virgil's *Aeneid*, preserved in three fourteenth- and fifteenth-century manuscripts[63]

Twelfth century:

- *In Cath Catharda* (The Civil War), a prose adaptation of Lucan's *Bellum civile*, preserved in two fifteenth-century manuscripts and six manuscripts from the seventeenth century onwards, as well as a collection of glossed extracts in a fifteenth- or sixteenth-century manuscript[64]
- *Togail na Tebe* (The Destruction of Thebes), a prose adaptation of Statius's *Thebaid*, preserved in three fifteenth-century manuscripts[65]
- *Luid Iasón ina luing lóir* (Jason Went in His Spacious Ship), a 102-stanza verse narrative about the Trojan War based on a lost prose version of *Togail*

[59] On the date, see Peters, 'Die irische Alexandersage', 94–5. See, however, the critique by Ní Mhaonaigh, 'Classical compositions', 1 n. 3.

[60] Editions and translation: Stokes, 'The destruction of Troy'; Mac Eoin, 'Ein Text'. Detailed commentary: Mac Eoin, 'Das Verbalsystem'; Meyer, 'The Middle-Irish version of the story of Troy'; Myrick, *From the* De Excidio; Mac Gearailt, '*Togail Troí*: an example'; Mac Gearailt, '*Togail Troí*: ein Vorbild'; Mac Gearailt, 'Change and innovation', 453–70; Poppe, 'The matter of Troy'; Miles, *Heroic Saga*, 66–144; Fulton, this volume.

[61] Editions of each version: Peters, 'Die irische Alexandersage'; Meyer, 'Die Geschichte'. Detailed commentary: Tristram, 'Der insulare Alexander'.

[62] Editions and translation: Stokes, *Togail Troí*; Best *et al*., *Book of Leinster*, IV, 1063–1117; Best & O'Brien, *Togail Troí*. Detailed commentary: Campion, 'Córas briathartha'; Mac Gearailt, 'Zur literarischen Sprache'; Mac Gearailt, 'Change and innovation', 470–93. Ongoing work by Michael Clarke on divergences between these texts has problematized their conventional grouping as a single 'recension' (pers. comm.): I am grateful to Michael for letting me see his unpublished research on this.

[63] Edition and translation: Calder, *Imtheachta Æniasa*. Detailed commentary: Meyer, 'The Middle-Irish version of the *Aeneid*'; Poli, 'L'*Eneide*'; Poppe, *New Introduction*; Kobus, '*Imtheachta Aeniasa*'; Harris, *Adaptations of Roman Epic*, 81–117; Poppe, '*Imtheachta Aeniasa*'; Poppe, this volume. Most scholars consider this adaptation to be twelfth-century, but possible indicators of a late eleventh-century date are discussed by Poli, 'L'*Eneide*', and Poppe, 'A Virgilian model', 176.

[64] Edition and translation: Stokes, *In Cath Catharda*. Detailed commentary: Sommerfelt, 'Le système verbal' (he dates the text to either 1100 or 1150); Meyer, 'The Middle-Irish version of the *Pharsalia*'; Harris, *Adaptations of Roman Epic*, 119–57.

[65] Edition and translation: Calder, *Togail na Tebe*. Detailed commentary: Meyer, 'The Middle-Irish version of the *Thebaid*'; Harris, *Adaptations of Roman Epic*, 159–99; Miles, '*Riss in mundtuirc*'.

Troí, preserved in one fifteenth-century manuscript and attributed there to Flann Mainistrech[66]

- *Robo maith Aichil mac Péil* (Good was Achilles son of Peleus): a fourteen-stanza poem listing the boyhood deeds of Achilles from Statius's *Achilleid* (possibly based on a lost prose adaptation, and related in content to the prose retelling of Achilles's birth and boyhood in Recension 3 of *Togail Troí*), preserved in a fourteenth-century manuscript (but in a gathering which may be later)[67]
- [Twelfth century or earlier: lost versions of *Fingal Chlainne Tanntail* and *Riss* (or *Scél*) *in Mundtuirc* as cited by the author of *Togail na Tebe*: see below on these two texts]

Twelfth or thirteenth century:

- *Togail Troí*: Recension 3, a still longer version, extant in two fifteenth-century manuscripts[68]
- *Don Tres Troí* (On the Third Troy), a prose account of the re-founding of Troy by Hector's son Astyanax, based on a range of late-antique and early medieval commentaries on Classical Troy-narratives, extant in the same two fifteenth-century manuscripts as those containing Recension 3 of *Togail Troí* and presented as an appendix to that work[69]
- *Fingal Chlainne Tanntail* (The Kin-Slaying of the Family of Tantalus), a prose retelling of the family history of the Tantalids and the house of Atreus, source(s) unknown (but probably based on mythographic accounts), extant in the same two fifteenth-century manuscripts as those containing Recension 3 of *Togail Troí*[70]
- *Sgél in Mínaduir* (The Story of the Minotaur), a prose retelling of the Cretan saga of Minos, Pasiphae, Daedalus and Icarus, based mainly on Servius's commentary on the *Aeneid* and preserved in one of the fifteenth-century manuscripts which also contains Recension 3 of *Togail Troí*[71]
- *Riss in Mundtuirc* (The Tale of the Necklace), a prose retelling of episodes concerning the Theban and Argive royal houses, based on Statius's *Thebaid*, Ovid's *Metamorphoses* and mythographic commentaries, preserved in the same fifteenth-century manuscript as in the previous entry[72]
- *Merugud Uilixis* (The Wandering of Ulysses), a prose retelling of the story of Odysseus / Ulysses's return home from Troy, sources unknown, preserved in one fourteenth-century manuscript and the same two fifteenth-century manuscripts as those containing Recension 3 of *Togail Troí*[73]

[66] Edition, translation and commentary: Mac Eoin, 'Dán'.

[67] Edition and translation: Ó hAodha, 'The Irish version', 127–34.

[68] Edition in preparation by Michael Clarke; edition of prologue forthcoming in Clarke, 'The extended prologue'; edition and translation of section based on Statius's *Achilleid* entitled *Geinemain Aichil 7 a Macgníma* (The Birth and Boyhood Deeds of Achilles) by Ó hAodha, 'The Irish version'. Clarke's ongoing research (note 62) has problematized any clear distinction between Recensions 2 and 3 (pers. comm.). See also Mac Eoin, 'Dán', 20–5.

[69] Edition in preparation by Brent Miles. Detailed commentary: Miles, 'The Irish history' (based on a paper he gave at the workshop at the University of Aberdeen from which the present volume emerged).

[70] Editions and translations: Byrne, 'The parricides'; Crampton, '*Fingal Chlainne Tanntail*'. Detailed commentary: *ibid*.; Crampton, this volume.

[71] Edition: Meyer, 'Mitteilungen', 238–40. Detailed commentary: Hillers, '*Sgél in Mínaduir*'.

[72] Edition with detailed commentary: Miles, '*Riss in mundtuirc*'.

[73] Editions: [Robert T.] Meyer, *Merugud Uilix*; [Kuno] Meyer, *Merugud Uilix* (with translation); Hillers, *Medieval Irish* Odyssey. Detailed commentary: Ahl, '*Uilix*'; Stanford, 'Studies'; Stanford, *The*

Fourteenth and fifteenth centuries:

- [translations of various Continental and English non-Classical narratives in Latin and English][74]
- [the making of most of the surviving manuscripts of the Classical adaptations listed above]

Late fifteenth and sixteenth centuries:

- *Stair Ercuil ocus a Bás* (The History of Hercules and his Death), an Early Modern Irish prose adaptation of William Caxton's prose *Recuyell of the Historyes of Troye* (printed in England in 1474–5 and itself an adaptation from a French history of Troy), extant in a single fifteenth-century manuscript which also contains two adaptations of English romances and one saga on an Irish subject[75]
- 'A story about Hercules', an anonymous 22-stanza verse retelling of the Garden of the Hesperides episode from *Stair Ercuil*, in Early Modern Irish[76]

The chronology presented here represents only the extant texts and, in a few cases, what can be deduced about their immediate textual predecessors. Given the high probability that other adaptations were made which have since been lost, any conclusions drawn from a list like this must be tentative. Nevertheless, it is striking that the only texts here which can be confidently attributed to before the twelfth century are not adaptations of prestigious hexameter epics by Statius, Lucan and Virgil, but adaptations of (primarily) late-antique prose histories, namely Orosius's *Historia adversum paganos* and Dares's *De excidio Troiae historia*. Only after late-antique historical prose had been successfully adapted into the vernacular, it seems, did Irish authors turn confidently to the riskier enterprise of adapting narratives which were much longer and older, were written in hexameter verse rather than prose, and were venerated as models of Latin style.

It is striking, too, how many more texts were adapted during the late Middle Irish period. The much larger number of adaptations extant from the twelfth century includes two verse texts, although these appear to be based on existing prose adaptations and are brief compared with the prose texts. In terms of legendary-historical setting, all these texts treat either the heroic age of Greece or the Matter of Rome. The latter theme is the primary subject of *In Cath Catharda*, which tells of the Roman civil war between Julius Caesar and Pompey in the first century BC. Apart from *Imtheachta Aeniasa*, which bridges the worlds of Greece and Rome, all the other adaptations circle around two wars in the Greek heroic age: the fratricidal conflict between Oedipus's sons Eteocles and Polyneices, drawing Thebes and Argos into deadly conflict, and the Greek siege and capture of Troy. The longer adaptations, *Togail na Tebe* and *Togail Troí*, thus emerged as centres of gravity for emergent Theban and Trojan cycles, attracting the composition of further, shorter adaptations around those focal points – much as the pre-eminent Irish saga *Táin Bó Cúailnge* came to attract around

---

Ulysses Theme; Hillers, '*In fer fiamach firglic*'; Hillers, 'Ulysses'; Crampton, this volume; Hillers, this volume.

[74] Ní Sheaghdha, 'Translations and adaptations', 109–11; Williams & Ford, *Irish Literary Tradition*, 136–40; Poppe, 'Narrative structure'; Caball & Hollo, 'The literature', 124–7.

[75] Edition and translation: Quin, *Stair Ercuil*. Detailed commentary: Ross, *Bildungsidol – Held*; Ross, 'The transformation'; Poppe, '*Stair Ercuil*'; Mac Eoin, 'The Greek background'.

[76] Edition: Knott, *Irish Syllabic Poetry*, 62–6. Brief discussion in Quin, *Stair Ercuil*, xiv and xxix.

itself a constellation of sequels and shorter 'prequel' tales known as *remscéla*. In several manuscripts these groupings of Classical texts are preserved together in a kind of chronology, reinforcing the notion of an incipient cycle.[77]

The late fourteenth, fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries saw a second wave of adaptation-texts. This time the source-texts were Continental and English histories and romances, adapted into Early Modern Irish by scholars within hereditary learned families to instruct and entertain their aristocratic patrons. Several powerful lords acted as sponsors to a large-scale revival of literature and learning during this period, not least the now thoroughly Gaelicized Anglo-Norman lords, and the adaptations from English and French were made in this context.[78] Only one of these adaptations was on a Classical subject, *Stair Ercuil*, although its source-text is at several removes from any Greek or Latin source. This renewed interest in translation literature is further reflected in the large collections of older, Middle Irish Classical sagas found in manuscripts such as the Book of Ballymote.[79] In fact, most of the extant manuscripts of the Middle Irish Classical sagas date from this period, and the same is true of Middle Irish sagas more generally. It is hard to resist the conclusion that the revival in copying old adaptations was somehow linked with the contemporary move to compose new adaptations. Miles has suggested that one reason why the author of *Stair Ercuil* left out Caxton's long narrative of the Trojan War in Book 3 of the *Recuyell* was that this part of the story had already been covered in *Togail Troí*, and that the author intended his adaptation of Caxton to fill that gap.[80]

Translation or adaptation? History or literature?

To leave out an entire book of the source-text from its translation may sound like scholarly vandalism to a modern reader. But omission was a very small matter compared with the creative liberties and transformations exercised over their source-texts by the authors of the Irish Classical sagas, from the first recension of *Togail Troí* all the way through to *Stair Ercuil*. As elsewhere in medieval Europe, the process of adaptation was not like modern translation: verbal fidelity to the original was not the chief priority, and authors were free to abridge, expand, insert completely new episodes or passages, and generally recompose as they saw fit, wherever such an intervention helped them to communicate the content more effectively to their target audience and to achieve the desired rhetorical effect. For this reason the writers of these texts may indeed be seen as authors as well as translators.[81]

The Latin source-texts thus underwent considerable transformations of style, structure and content during the adaptation process. In the case of epic, it was necessary to

[77] For wide-ranging discussion see Poppe, *Of Cycles*. On groupings of Classical tales in manuscripts, see Poppe, *New Introduction*, 3–11; Miles, '*Togail Troí*', 87–9; Poppe, 'The matter of Troy'.

[78] On the dynamics and productions of this revival, see Williams & Ford, *The Irish Literary Tradition*, 122–6; Carney, 'Literature in Irish', 690–2; Henry & Marsh-Micheli, 'Manuscripts and illuminations'; Simms, *From Kings to Warlords*, 16–17; Simms, 'Literacy and the Irish bards', 250; Caball & Hollo, 'The literature', 112–13. On translation-texts sponsored by Anglo-Irish lords, see Poppe, 'The Early Modern Irish version', 97–8; Poppe, '*Stair Ercuil*', 38–9; Caball & Hollo, 'The literature', 124–7.

[79] Poppe, *New Introduction*, 3–11; compare Miles, '*Togail Troí*', 87–9.

[80] Miles, '*Togail Troí*', 90–1. For further evidence of the author's study of Irish Classical sagas, see Quin, *Stair Ercuil*, xxvi–xxvii; Miles, *Heroic Saga*, 51.

[81] On this principle, see Cronin, *Translating Ireland*, 21–2; Poppe, '*Stair Ercuil*', 65–8. For valuable theoretical reflections in a medieval Irish context, see Luft, 'Translation theory'.

use a different medium altogether, to produce what Fulton in her chapter calls 'remediations': prose was the dominant vehicle in Irish for substantial narratives about the legendary past, so the hexameter verses of Statius, Lucan and Virgil were 'remediated' in Irish prose. But the prose of Middle Irish saga was stylistically varied, and the Classical sagas made use of the full range, by turns terse and tight-lipped, ornate and verbose.[82] Favourite narrative devices from the sagas were employed in the Classical adaptations, especially techniques of description, dialogue and focalization, with a characteristic range of Irish stock epithets and idioms; longer texts, such as *Imtheachta Aeniasa*, made much use of alliterating doublets and triplets.[83] Conversely, techniques which were unfamiliar to Irish audiences were often omitted or replaced: as Poppe has shown for *Imtheachta Aeniasa*, Virgil's famously 'subjective style' was rendered in a more detached and often concise manner, while many of his epic similes were either omitted altogether or replaced by equally elaborate descriptions of a kind more familiar to Irish audiences.[84] By contrast, *Togail Troí* adds elaborate epic similes to adorn the bare narrative of the *De excidio*, inventing some along Classical lines and taking others from the *Aeneid* and *Thebaid*.[85] There was no single rule for how one should translate: the texts listed above represent an extremely varied body of literature, both stylistically and in terms of their narrative procedures and purposes. Poppe's chapter in this volume demonstrates that it was possible for the same passages from the *Aeneid* to be adapted in quite different, but equally artful, ways by different authors.

These authors' attitudes towards their sources, and the kinds of sources used, likewise varied greatly. As well as drawing on existing indigenous literature, the Irish texts discussed in this volume used a wide range of materials to access the Classical narratives they wished to adapt, including whole Classical texts (Poppe, Fulton), quoted extracts, anecdotes and summaries preserved in commentaries, *florilegia* and other secular scholastic writings (Clarke, Burnyeat), ecclesiastical treatises (Ní Mhaonaigh, Fulton) and other Classical adaptations into Irish (Ní Mhaonaigh, Hillers, O'Connor). Sometimes it is simply not possible to tell what sources have been used, but the evidence for borrowing from a Classical text at some remove is too pressing to ignore: new evidence is presented here for Homeric learning (in some form) by the author of *Merugud Uilixis* (Crampton) and Senecan learning (in some form) by the author of *Fingal Rónáin* (Clarke).

All the authors of Classical adaptations, to a greater or lesser extent, felt free to introduce sources other than the primary text being adapted, and here Irish scholars' dexterity and familiarity with the Classical commentary-tradition came to the fore.[86] Many of the authors drew on commentaries and mythographies as well as the Latin poets to provide further information, explain an event's causes or narrate what happened next. If carried out at length, the result could transform the original beyond recognition. For example, the mythological digressions in later recensions of *Togail Troí* overturn the pseudonymous Latin author's intention to de-mythologize

[82] On the range of prose styles available, see Ní Mhaonaigh, 'Classical compositions', 12–16; Ní Mhaonaigh, 'The literature', 41–4. On the ornate style, see Mac Gearailt, 'Forbairt'; Mac Gearailt, 'Change and innovation', 453–92.

[83] Poppe, '*Imtheachta Aeniasa*'; Mac Gearailt, '*Togail Troí*: an example'.

[84] Poppe, '*Imtheachta Aeniasa*'.

[85] Clarke, 'Achilles, Byrhtnoth', 267; Miles, *Heroic Saga*, 130–40.

[86] This is one of the main contentions of Miles, *Heroic Saga* (especially 66–144).

the Homeric account:[87] this is only one of several ways in which *Togail Troí* might be described as more Classical – and certainly more epic – than its source-text.[88]

Meanwhile, *Riss in Mundtuirc*, which begins as a fairly close adaptation of part of Statius's *Thebaid*, uses a range of commentaries and parts of Ovid's *Metamorphoses* to give a completely new dénouement to its account of the kin-slayings and revenges within the royal houses of Thebes and Argos.[89] This composite approach is taken still further in *Fingal Chlainne Tanntail*, which (as far as we know) is not an adaptation of any one source: its author drew on a wide range of learned commentaries and sources unknown to us to compose a learned and bloodthirsty saga of the house of Atreus and his ill-starred ancestors.[90] Adaptations like these, transforming commentary into saga-like narratives, fed back into other, longer Classical adaptations: *Togail na Tebe*, often seen as one of the less free-spirited adaptations, drew on the two Irish texts just mentioned as if their authority were equal to that of Statius himself.[91]

At the extreme end of this spectrum, *Merugud Uilixis* is generally viewed as a kind of free fantasia on Classical themes: no Latin source has yet been identified for its unusual story of Ulysses's return from Troy, which – as Barbara Hillers shows in her contribution to this volume – draws heavily on folklore and the conventions of Irish sagas, as well as on *Imtheachta Aeniasa*.[92] The author's learned credentials and the question of lost intermediary sources cannot be dismissed, as Crampton's contribution makes clear; but in any case there seems no obvious reason why an Irish author composing a saga would not wish to draw on oral as well as literary sources if they suited his purpose.[93] Either way, it is hard to envisage this author as a 'translator' in the conventional modern sense of the word. In their relative brevity and their freedom with their sources, both *Fingal Chlainne Tanntail* and *Merugud Uilixis* were more amenable than the longer adaptations to being shaped as tales with clear, specific moral messages. Crampton's comparison of these two tales in this volume suggests that techniques of exaggeration and idealization were applied in opposite directions, but with similar moral purpose, to both texts.[94]

In the adaptations of Roman epic, the shift from verse to prose entailed a shift towards a more explicit insistence on historical veracity. In the Middle Ages, the concept of poetic licence – bending the truth for the sake of literary effect, inviting the audience to become complicit in a game of make-believe – was much less readily applicable to prose writers than to poets, from Homer, Ovid and Virgil to their medieval Latin imitators.[95] By contrast, to write in prose was to tell nothing but the truth, or at least to appear to do so.[96] The sagas on Irish themes exemplified this stance, for all their artistry: in taking on saga-like form, the Classical adaptations were made to assume saga-like truth-value, adding an ancient Graeco-Roman dimension to the rich

[87] Clarke, 'An Irish Achilles', 244.
[88] For other aspects of this see Mac Gearailt, '*Togail Troí*: an example'; Miles, *Heroic Saga*, 104–44.
[89] Miles, '*Riss in mundtuirc*'.
[90] Crampton, '*Fingal Chlainne Tanntail*'; Miles, *Heroic Saga*, 60; Crampton, this volume.
[91] For these citations see Miles, '*Riss in mundtuirc*', 70, 77–8, 82.
[92] Hillers, '*In fer fiamach firglic*'; Hillers, 'Ulysses'; Hillers, this volume.
[93] This point is emphasized in my own contribution to this volume.
[94] See also Crampton, '*Fingal Chlainne Tanntail*'; Hillers, 'Ulysses'. On moral meanings in the adaptations generally, see Poppe, 'Mittelalterliche Übersetzungsliteratur', 37–8.
[95] On the construction of poets' 'licence to lie', see Zeeman, 'The schools'; Green, *The Beginnings*, 1–23.
[96] For evidence of this truism elsewhere in medieval Europe, see Lacy, 'The evolution', 167–8; Green, *Medieval Listening*, 265–9; O'Connor, 'History or fiction'. Prose historians might flirt with fictionality in special circumstances, but without compromising their basic claim to literal veracity: for twelfth-century examples, see Otter, *Inventiones*.

tapestry of Irish legendary and synthetic history.[97] Within this very broad category of *historia*, however, divergent types of text co-existed, as Helen Fulton shows in this volume. Sagas, chronicles, synthetic histories and the various branches of the Latin historical tradition operated as very different forms of historiography, each with their own distinct ideologies concerning the shape and meaning of history.[98] At a more local level, Fulton's comparison of the Welsh and Irish adaptations of Dares's *De excidio* demonstrates how the same source-text could be used in two cultures to serve quite different local historical and political contexts, even if both adaptations shared the same underlying 'theory' of history. The propagandistic function of Classical heroic icons is also discussed by Ní Mhaonaigh in this volume. This kind of analysis, unearthing the specific historical circumstances of composition, has been applied widely to the sagas on Irish themes, but less so to the Classical compositions.[99]

As Clarke emphasizes in his first chapter in this volume, the Middle Irish adaptations were rooted in practices of historical explanation of the kind found in glossaries and commentary-texts. In other words, these tales formed an integral part of the *study* of Graeco-Roman antiquity by Irish scholars, at the same time as they re-invented it as narrative for their own people.[100] *Sgél in Mínaduir*, for example, can be seen as an aid to the understanding of Virgil's *Aeneid* and the events portrayed in it, drawing primarily on Servius's commentary on the *Aeneid* to present a connected narrative of Cretan legendary history.[101] By contrast, the Early Modern Irish *Stair Ercuil* makes less sustained use of this form of learning,[102] yet its historiographic stance remains visible in its title's inclusion of the word *stair* (an Irish calque on Latin *historia*): *Stair Ercuil* is the history of Hercules, but the same author's *Stair Bibuis* (The History of Bevis [of Hampton]) could be seen as historicizing a chivalric romance, a genre that is conventionally (if somewhat simplistically) viewed as fictional by modern literary historians.[103]

Not only their medium, but also the structure of the Classical source-texts was rearranged to fit the canons of Irish historiography. The *in medias res* technique of epics like the *Aeneid* and *Thebaid*, beginning in the middle of their action, was replaced in their Irish adaptations by an arrangement which began at the beginning, although flashbacks were not unknown (these appeared in other sagas, too).[104] Historiographic prologues were sometimes added, reinforcing the veracity of the events narrated and distancing them from the realm of poetic invention or fable.[105] Stories from Graeco-Roman mythology were particularly vulnerable to accusations of fabling, since they were the stories most commonly referred to as *fabulae* by Classical, late-antique

[97] On the historical stance of medieval Irish narrative prose, see Toner, 'The Ulster cycle'; Poppe, *Of Cycles*, 44–61; Poppe, 'Literature as history'. On the historical function of Classical adaptations, see Myrick, *From the* De Excidio, 70–1; Poppe, *New Introduction*, 5–17; Clarke, 'An Irish Achilles', 244–51; Miles, *Heroic Saga*, 95–9.

[98] On this point, see also Hay, *Annalists and Historians* and, in an Irish context, Radner, 'Writing history'.

[99] Brief discussions are offered by Poli, 'L'*Eneide*', 1001–2; Mac Gearailt, '*Togail Troí*: an example', 17; Poppe & Schlüter, 'Greece, Ireland', 140–3.

[100] This point is emphasized by Miles, *Heroic Saga*, 52.

[101] Miles, *Heroic Saga*, 60; on the Servian component, see Hillers, '*Sgél in Mínaduir*', 140–2.

[102] For scattered examples suggestive of 'stray learning', see Quin, *Stair Ercuil*, xxviii.

[103] For cautious reflections, see Poppe, 'The matter of Troy', 254–8. On the historical significance of the term *stair*, see Poppe, *Of Cycles*, 51–6.

[104] Meyer, 'The Middle-Irish version of the *Thebaid*', 693; Ó hAodha, 'The Irish version', 85; Miles, *Heroic Saga*, 163–4.

[105] Poppe, *New Introduction*, 5–6.

and medieval commentators, so this historical framing was a necessary defensive mechanism. This historiographical function is further underlined by the potentially cyclic arrangements of Classical sagas into larger chronologically ordered compilations in manuscripts such as the Book of Ballymote.[106] This arrangement may seem to be undermined by contradictions between certain individual texts which were left unchanged by the compiler;[107] but perhaps the compiler wished to present the sources as he had them, not as a coherent chronicle or cycle, but as a 'basis' for the study of Graeco-Roman antiquity – to use the modest formulation employed by the seventeenth-century historian Geoffrey Keating in the title for his much more coherent (because single-authored) history of Ireland.

Classical sagas, sagas on Irish themes and other prose writings about the past in medieval Ireland, then, all display clear *learned* purposes. As with the history–literature dichotomy, however, this does not mean that they were not literary texts. Miles calls *Sgél in Minaduir* 'a piece of classical learning pure and simple',[108] but the modern distinction between learning and literature is hard to sustain when we are dealing with the composition of polished narrative texts like this.[109] Historiography in the Middle Ages was plainly a branch of high literature, composed using the same technical skills and poetic devices and with the aim of entertaining as well as instructing. Some authors displayed their learned credentials more than others, and Miles conveys an important aspect of the narrative procedure of *Don Tres Troí* when he writes that its author proceeded 'in the manner of a scholar rather than of a *scélaige* [storyteller]'.[110] Yet the underlying dichotomy must be questioned. In a medieval Irish context, the *scélaige* was always a scholar. Even in the portrait of oral-traditional storytelling which Irish prose writers continually invoked, the *fili* was seen as a man of profound learning, albeit of a different kind from the Classical learning displayed in these compositions.

I suggest that there is no credible basis for drawing a line in the Irish narrative corpus between 'literary' and 'non-literary' narratives, unless one makes the unworkable assumption that all 'literature' must be fictional.[111] Even a tale which reads at first glance like a hotchpotch of learned lore, rattling through its Classical matter with more concern for completeness than aesthetic quality, can be seen on closer reading to show considerable artistic coherence, purpose and skill, as Crampton's study of *Fingal Chlainne Tanntail* in this volume shows. Less controversially, the longer narratives, from the earliest recension of *Togail Troí* onwards, are among the most accomplished literary productions of the central Middle Ages, while still

[106] *Ibid*., 27–30.
[107] *Ibid*., 9–10.
[108] Miles, *Heroic Saga*, 60. Compare Hillers, '*Sgél in Minaduir*', and Miles, '*Riss in mundtuirc*', 70.
[109] A different challenge is posed by mythographic texts without an overarching narrative framework, such as the late Middle Irish collection of Classical lore associated with constellation-names, *Ranna an Aeir* (The constellations of the sky) (Anderson, 'The constellations'). One could deny this text literary status and call it mythography pure and simple, but (in the absence of any close analysis of this text) such an assumption would seem unwise, given the manifest literary creativity associated with more mundane and native placename-lore, the *dindshenchas*.
[110] Miles, '*Riss in mundtuirc*', 69.
[111] Some scholars would prefer that we abandon the notion of 'literature' altogether when dealing with sagas on native legendary-historical themes, since it is all essentially historiography (see Toner, 'The Ulster cycle'); but refusal to use the word 'literature' in this context risks being misunderstood as implying that such narratives were not composed with any aesthetic purpose at all. For helpful deconstructions of the history-literature dichtotomy, see Poppe, 'Literature as history', and Fulton, this volume.

being a form of historiography. As Miles has shown, the author of the first recension of *Togail Troí* used every creative and rhetorical resource at his disposal in transforming what Mac Gearailt calls 'the lifeless narrative of Dares' into an elaborate, dramatically poised prose epic.[112] No wonder it became one of the most popular of all Irish sagas, to judge from the number of surviving texts. And, despite Toner's demonstration of the obvious historical intent of the *Táin*, this in no way diminishes its literary value, nor that of other sagas.[113]

For all the diversity of their goals and procedures, the authors of the Classical narratives, sagas and other vernacular histories discussed in this book were both learned and imaginative individuals. In exploring the work of these authors, the chapters in the present volume overlap in their approaches and coverage, but fall into three sections depending on their primary focus. The first section, containing chapters by Poppe, Fulton, Hillers and Crampton, analyses the making of the Irish Classical sagas themselves; appropriately enough, it begins with the towering figure of Virgil. These chapters examine two long adaptations of Roman epic (*Imtheachta Aeniasa* and *Togail Troí*, alongside the latter's Welsh equivalent) and two shorter adaptations of largely unknown sources (*Merugud Uilixis* and *Fingal Chlainne Tanntail*). The second section, featuring two chapters by Clarke and one by Ní Mhaonaigh, explores the uses of Classical allusion in vernacular Irish narratives (including *Táin Bó Cúailnge*, *Cath Maige Rath* 'The Battle of Mag Rath', *Inní dia tá cuslinn Brighde* 'The Origin of Brigid's Pipe', *Fingal Rónáin* and *Cogadh Gáedhel re Gallaibh*) and Irish allusions in adaptations of Classical epic (*Togail Troí*, *In Cath Catharda*, *Togail na Tebe*), and unearths the learned intellectual framework within which allusions like these had their meaning. The third section, containing chapters by Burnyeat and me, explores the possibility that Classical compositional and organizational techniques were used in a sustained manner in the writing of large-scale Irish sagas and other forms of historiography, focusing on *Táin Bó Cúailnge*, *Togail Bruidne Da Derga*, *Lebor Gabála* and the ubiquitous *Togail Troí* alongside a range of Latin learned texts. The book thus ends, as it began, with Virgil; but whereas Poppe's opening chapter focuses on how the *Aeneid* was adapted into Irish, Burnyeat in closing reflects on how Virgil became a byname for acts of compilation in medieval Ireland. Classical 'influence', as we often glibly call it, may have reached well beyond the imitation and adaptation of individual Classical texts to become part of the intellectual fabric of an entire literate community.

As the contributions to this volume make clear, medieval Irish authors' engagement with the Classical tradition was marked by consummate and purposeful artistry. They wove together diverse strands of learning and allusion and balanced the competing claims of vernacular and Latin discourses into a complex, finely tuned and often beautiful counterpoint. In the Middle Ages, indeed well into the twentieth century, this corpus was unknown outside the Gaelic-speaking world except by vague report. Modern readers, by contrast, may now appreciate what a substantial and multifaceted contribution it made to the vernacular literature of medieval Europe.

[112] Miles, *Heroic Saga*, especially 95–144; Mac Gearailt, 'Change and innovation', 455; Clarke, 'Achilles, Byrhtnoth', 265–71.

[113] Toner, 'The Ulster Cycle'.

Part I

The Irish Classical sagas

2

IMTHEACHTA AENIASA AND ITS PLACE IN MEDIEVAL IRISH TEXTUAL HISTORY

Erich Poppe

Few statements about the status of literary texts in their respective textual cultures would appear to be uncontroversial, but one of the uncontroversial ones concerns the status of Virgil's *Aeneid* as an epic. Much more controversial are the status of *Táin Bó Cúailnge* (The Cattle-Raid of Cooley) as national epic in medieval Irish textual history and its relationship to Classical models in general and to Virgil's *Aeneid* in particular. This chapter has two points of departure, first the assumption that *Táin Bó Cúailnge* represents an Irish equivalent of Virgil's *Aeneid*, discussed in detail in Abigail Burnyeat's chapter to this book under the perspective of *compilatio*,[1] and second the fact, which is often ignored in this context, that there existed in medieval Irish textual culture an Irish *Aeneid* proper in the form of *Imtheachta Aeniasa* (The Adventures of Aeneas), the medieval Irish 'translation' of Virgil's *Aeneid*.[2] Burnyeat usefully reminds us that it was 'the historical and genealogical material [of Classical narrative] which was of great interest and significance to medieval readers and adaptors', more so than its heroic and personal aspects, and that 'among the grammatical and rhetorical expositions which make up the greater proportion of the discussion [of Virgil's work] we also find evaluations of genre, and historical and chronological discussion that makes it clear that the basic critical categorization of the *Aeneid* in particular was as *historia*'.[3] This is true also of *Imtheachta Aeniasa*, at least in its extant manuscript form and transmission: its positioning within a larger historical cycle is effected by *compilatio*, the addition of a historical prologue derived from Dares, and of a historical epilogue.[4]

In his recent ground-breaking study *Heroic Saga and Classical Epic in Medieval Ireland*, Brent Miles has successfully argued that the rhetorical strategies of what he calls 'medieval Irish classicism' inform both *Togail Troí* (The Destruction of Troy), the Irish adaptation of Dares's *De Excidio Troiae Historia* (History of the Destruction of Troy), and *Táin Bó Cúailnge*.[5] Questions concerning a reflection of this classicizing style in the Irish version of the *Aeneid* and the implications of its

[1] See also Burnyeat, '*Córugud* and *compilatio*', for some technical aspects of the application of the concept of *compilatio* to the manuscript tradition of *Táin Bó Cúailnge*.

[2] For some background to this text, see Miles, *Heroic Saga*, 57–8, Poppe, *New Introduction*, 30–3; for some general background, see Ní Mhaonaigh, 'Classical compositions'.

[3] Burnyeat, this volume, 000, 000.

[4] See Poppe, *New Introduction*, 4–15, 30–3. On other features of *compilatio* in *Imtheachta Aeniasa*, see Miles, *Heroic Saga*, 57; Kobus, '*Imtheachta Aeniasa*', 79–81.

[5] For recent discussions of conceptual similarities between *Togail Troí* and *Táin Bó Cúailnge*, see Clarke, 'An Irish Achilles'; Poppe & Schlüter, 'Greece, Ireland'.

author's stylistic choices for the position of this text within medieval Irish textual history form the immediate starting points for my chapter. Miles has shown that with regard to the translational and compositional strategies employed, *Togail Troí* is a creative interpretation and retelling of the *De Excidio* in response to the Classical epic tradition, motivated by the ambition to reproduce a corresponding aesthetic in Irish prose, 'a virtual restoration in prose of the Troy of the *poetae* of Greece and Rome'.[6] The principal formats required in order to realize this intention are *imitatio,* specifically the imitation and transformation of the model of the epic, and *amplificatio* or expansion: 'The author [of *Togail Troí*] consistently picks up on brief cues in Dares and expands them to "epic" proportions, in imitation [. . .] of the epic poets'.[7] *Amplificatio* is accomplished by 'the employment of elaborate ekphrastic set pieces, and expansion at the level of the prose itself [. . .], such as the employment of heroic similes'.[8] Miles's close analysis of phraseology and rhetorical devices in the *Táin* demonstrates that 'features of narrative and iconography which derive ultimately from *imitatio* of classical epic permeate *Táin Bó Cúailnge*',[9] and asserts its status as epic in the perception of medieval authors and audiences.

In order to exemplify Miles's approach and to show its relevance for a literary analysis of *Imtheachta Aeniasa*, I present in some detail his arguments for the suggestion that 'the *epic model* for the preparations and geographical enumeration [in the description of all Greece rising to arms in preparation for the war against Troy in *Togail Troí*] [. . .] is Virgil's description of the muster of the Italian forces to meet Aeneas's Trojans in *Aeneid* 7'.[10] He compares the following two passages from Virgil's *Aeneid* and from the first recension of *Togail Troí*:

Aeneid	*Togail Troí*
ardet inexcita Ausonia atque immobilis ante <1>; pars pedes ire parat campis [7], pars arduus altis pulverulentus equis furit [8]; omnes arma requirunt. pars leuis clipeos et spicula lucida tergent [9] aruina pingui [10] subiguntque in cote securis [11]; signaque ferre iuuat sonitusque audire tubarum [12]. quinque [13] adeo magnae positis incudibus urbes tela nouant, Atina potens Tiburque superbum, Ardea Crustumerique et turrigerae Antemnae. (*Aeneid* VII.623–31)[11]	7 roherlaimigit dóib aidmi na conaire [7], etir longu 7 siúla 7 refeda, etir biad 7 étuch 7 indili. Roglésaiset na Tesáldai a n-eochu 7 [a] ngraighe [8] dia mbreith co hor in mara. Roglantá [9] luirecha 7 cathba[i]rr na Mirmedóndai dia meirg 7 salchur [10]. Roarmthá a ngái comtís géra fir fogail námat 7 echdrann [11]. Rosliptha a claidib 7 imorchoraigit a scéith ría ndul for conair. Roerlaimigit imthaige 7 erredai 7 étaige na nAthnénsta. R[o]bói, trá, óengáir arfut na Gréce uile [12] fóbíth roraindset íat fadéin.[12]

[6] Miles, *Heroic Saga*, 94.
[7] Miles, *Heroic Saga*, 103–4.
[8] Miles, *Heroic Saga*, 104.
[9] Miles, *Heroic Saga*, 192; compare Miles, 'The literary set piece'. For further assessments of Miles's position, see O'Connor, *Destruction*, 230–43, and his chapter in this volume.
[10] Miles, *Heroic Saga*, 117, my emphasis.
[11] All references to the *Aeneid* in this chapter are to the text in Fairclough, *Virgil* (which includes an English translation).
[12] Miles, *Heroic Saga*, 116. Numbers in square brackets are introduced by Miles for ease of comparison of specific images or phrases; I have introduced further numbers in angled brackets for ease of comparison with the Irish text (see below).

Ausonia burns, unmoved and untroubled before <1>; some prepare to go on foot to the battlefields [7], some high atop their mighty horses tear madly through the dust [8]; all seek arms. Some wipe their shields smooth and clean their spears [9] with thick fat [10], and sharpen their axes on whetstones [11]; they delight to bear standards and listen to the cry of trumpets [12]. Indeed, five [13] mighty cities make new weapons, the anvils in place, mighty Atina and proud Tibur, Ardea and Crustumerium and turreted Antemnae.[13]

and implements for the way were gotten ready [7], ships and sails and ropes, food and clothing and cattle. The Thessalians got ready their steeds and their horses [8] to bring them to the sea's edge. The breastplates and helmets of the Myrmidons were cleaned [9] of their rust and filth [10]. Their spears were armed so that they were sharp [11] for the despoiling of foes and foreigners. The Athenians' cloaks and dress and clothing were gotten ready. There was, then one cry throughout all of Greece [12], for they divided themselves [13].[14]

Comparing the two passages, Miles concludes:

> Cumulative parallels leave little doubt that the Irish author imitates Virgil. The series beginning with the preparations for the journey to the battlefields [7], the horses of the Thessalians [8], followed by the cleaning of shields and weapons [9, 10], then the sharpening of spears [11] and the 'cry' of the Greeks [12] patently reproduces Virgil's sequence of images.[15]

Interestingly, this small-scale 'epic model' is not replicated in the Irish adaptation of the *Aeneid*, even though the Irish author takes up and expands Virgil's initial reference to peace reigning in Italy (*Aeneid* VII.632, <1>) by specifying eating and feasting as expressions of this peace <1a>:

> <1> Na hEadalta tra robatar fri re ciana roime sin **a sidh 7 a soinmhighi** <1a> **ag tomailt 7 ic tomaithim** a fesi do gach maithus robai ogaib. Santaigit in tan sin <2> **tria imchosait Alechto 7 trian gresacht Iunaindi** coimerghi **catha 7 cogtha** <3> do dichur na Troiandach a hEtail ar egin, 7 rogab æn baid uili lucht na hEtaili **im cosnum** na ferand **7 im choimergi** a n-aigidh na Troiandach na rogabdais **crich no ferand** a n-Edail. <3a> Ba mor tra **in slogh 7 in tinol** tanic andsin. <3b> **Ba bagach 7 ba sochraidh** in coimerghi doronsat Edaildi i n-aighidh na Troianach in tan sin. <4> Tardsat uili miscais dia trebaire 7 ros-lecset a faill ar saint in chogaidh 7 <5> rochuirset iarnaidhi a n-arathar i n-armaib **catha 7 comluind,** 7 <6> tancatar uili iarsin .i. **gach ri 7 gach tuisech** a n-Etail **cona slogh 7 cona sochraiti** lais a soichin Tuirrn.[16]
>
> <1> Now, the Italians were for a long time before this in peace and prosperity, <1a> in eating and enjoying their feasting of every good thing they had. <2> At that time through mutual complaint caused by Alecto, and through the incitement of Juno, <3> they lusted for a joint rising in battle and war to expel the Trojans from Italy by force; and one desire took possession of all the people

[13] Miles, *Heroic Saga*, 117.
[14] Miles, *Heroic Saga*, 116.
[15] Miles, *Heroic Saga*, 117, with further discussion of 'the principle of word association rather than translation' in [7].
[16] Calder, *Imtheachta Æniasa*, lines 1755–66; all references to the Irish text are to the lines of Calder's edition, whereas references to the pages of his edition refer to his English translation. Syntactically parallel phrases and doublets of often alliterating (near-)synonyms have been set in bold here in order to show the persistence of this narrative device discussed below.

> of Italy about defending the lands, and about a joint rising against the Trojans, that they should not obtain territory or land in Italy. <3a> Great, indeed, was the host and the assemblage that came there. <3b> Warlike and imposing was the rising which the Italians made at that time against the Trojans. <4> They all hated their husbandry, and left it neglected for the lust of war; and <5> they turned the iron of their ploughs into arms for battle and strife; and <6> after that they came, all, every king and every chief in Italy, with his host and with his army along with him, to Turnus.[17]

The Irish author then refers to the instigations of both Allecto and Juno <2> which result in the Italians' desire for war against the Trojans <3>. This looks back to Allecto having stirred up turmoil in Italy in *Aeneid* VII.340–572, and retold in some detail in *Imtheachta Aeniasa*,[18] and specifically to *Aeneid* VII.620–2 and to Juno opening the twin gates of war: *tum regina deum caelo delapsa morantis / impulit ipsa manu portas, et cardine uerso / Belli ferratos rumpit Saturnia postis* ('Then the Saturnian Queen of the Gods herself descended from the sky and with her own hand drove in the obstructing doors; and she burst apart the iron-bound Gates of War'[19]). Virgil's description of specific preparations for the war, quoted above, becomes a series of more general statements about the motivation for war and about the great size <3a> and the warlike and imposing quality <3b> of the muster of the Italians. The Irish author then <4> uses *Aeneid* VII.635–6, *vomeris huc et falcis honos, huc omnis aratri / cessit armor* ('All their respect for share and sickle, all their love of the plough had given way to this [i.e., preparations for war]'[20]). Interestingly, he changes Virgil's swords of the Romans' fathers which are refashioned in furnaces in *Aeneid* VII.636 to agricultural ploughs which are turned into arms <5>. This Irish innovation is thematically meaningful in the context of an initially peaceful agrarian society, and is, as Calder has already observed, based on biblical models:[21]

> Proclaim ye this among the Gentiles; Prepare war, wake up the mighty men, let all the men of war draw near; let them come up:
>
> beat your plowshares into swords, and your pruninghooks into spears: let the weak say, I am strong. [. . .]
>
> Put ye in the sickle, for the harvest is ripe: come, get you down; for the press is full, the fats overflow; for their wickedness is great. (Joel 3.9–10, 13)

> And he shall judge among the nations, and shall rebuke many people: and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning-hooks: nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more. (Isaiah 2.4)

The substantial beginning of a long list of Italian leaders (*Aeneid* VII.641–723) is finally abbreviated to a general reference to many kings and chiefs coming to support Turnus <6>.

In this passage, the Irish author recognizably follows his Virgilian source and uses some significant narrative elements, especially the initial peace in Italy giving way to a desire for war and the Italians' loss of interest in agriculture. At this point,

[17] Calder, *Imtheachta Æniasa*, 111–13.
[18] Calder, *Imtheachta Æniasa*, lines 1636–735.
[19] Knight, *Virgil*, 194.
[20] Knight, *Virgil*, 195.
[21] Calder, *Imtheachta Æniasa*, 110.

he introduces the meaningful change from arms being refashioned to ploughs being turned into arms. He abbreviates and telescopes, and tends to reduce to more general statements specific details given by Virgil, for example in the passage quoted above which describes the preparations of the Italian muster. Furthermore, the Irish author introduces an independent system of ornamentation consisting of syntactic parallelism and doublets of often alliterating (near-)synonyms, which I have set in bold in the above quotation in order to indicate the persistence of this narrative device.[22] 'Near-synonyms' here means words which are close enough in meaning that any one of them would do as well as the other on its own.

The different retellings of a Virgilian epic model in *Togail Troí* and *Imtheachta Aeniasa* respectively raise interesting and difficult questions about the characteristics of epic style(s) in an Irish context and of arguably changing stylistic standards and fashions. They motivate the programme for my chapter, which sets out to discuss in an admittedly preliminary and tentative way the influence of Classical epic and of the classicizing style on the Irish adaptation of Virgil's *Aeneid*. As Miles has pointed out, an adaptation of the *Aeneid* could have provided an ideal springboard in order to experiment with classicizing literary intentions:

> One may ask, if Virgil was so important, why was the *Aeneid* not the first of the classical adaptations? The answer must lie in the contrast between the *Aeneid* and the *De Excidio* in terms of opportunities they provide for rhetorical exercises. The *Aeneid*, the model of classical perfection already in antiquity, is a poor template on which to practice techniques of composition and expansion. The text admits of little alteration, and therefore the ambitious *littérateur* has little scope to display ingenuity. However, the *Aeneid* is a model in its own right of the techniques of *amplificatio*, and a medieval reader of Macrobius, or even of Servius, would know that the text was also a model of *imitatio*. The adaptation of the *Aeneid* which is eventually produced in Ireland, that is, *Imtheachta Aeniasa*, represents the 'school' of classical translations at an advanced stage, after the features which would characterize a classical tale in the vernacular, for example, stereotyped descriptions of battle, had largely taken form and acquired a life of their own.[23]

In his view, *Imtheachta Aeniasa* presents a stage in the development of translational strategies in Ireland different from *Togail Troí* and *Táin Bó Cúailnge*. Miles furthermore contends that *Togail Troí* is 'in fact, more successfully Virgilian than even

[22] Compare Poppe, *New Introduction*, 20–2, even though I am no longer clear to what extent the use of often alliterating doublets and triplets represents an originally Irish narrative device. See, for example, Tristram, 'Early Insular preaching', and Miles, *Heroic Saga*, 129. (Near-)synonymous doublets are a feature of Middle Welsh prose, for example *a uryt ay uedwl* ('his mind and his thought'): see Davies, *Crefft*, 182–5, and for their use in *Ystorya Bown o Hamtwn* and in its Anglo-Norman source, see Poppe, 'Adaption und Akkulturation', 308–11. Alliterating pairs are a characteristic feature of the Old Norse *riddarasögur* (sagas of knights), for example *at sakir harms oc hugsóttar, hryggleiks ok píninga, angrs ok óróa* ('for reasons of grief and sorrow, sadness and pain, grief and unrest'). See, with further references, Kramarz-Bein, 'Der *Spesar Þáttr*', 167–70, and compare Kalinke, *King Arthur*, 134: 'a rhythmical prose characterized chiefly by amplification through syntactic parallelism, synonymous as well as antithetic, and through tautological or synonymous collocations'. For tautological pairs in Caxton's *Eneydos* – for example 'kylled and slewe' – see Leisi, *Die tautologischen Wortpaare*; Leisi also points out (*ibid*., 7–8, 135) that a large number of tautological pairs are taken over by Caxton from his French source.

[23] Miles, *Heroic Saga*, 143–4. O'Connor, *Destruction*, 237, highlights that the 'late Middle Irish translation of the *Thebaid*, *Togail na Tebe*, contains no indication that either Statius's "watchman device" or his description of Panic's illusions were felt to share anything with existing Middle Irish patterns. Statius's "watchman device" is here translated with minimal alteration, while the Panic sequence is drastically cut and shorn of any features (such as the appearance of a dusty cloud or the illusion of armies) which have given Miles cause to suggest Statius's original passage as a source for the *Táin*'.

Imtheachta Aenisasa'.[24] I think that my observations in this chapter will supply some support for this observation, even though I also hope to show that the Irish author of *Imtheachta Aeniasa* also aimed to produce a heightened style, but used narrative devices other than Virgil's, and thus displayed a fair amount of ingenuity. In an earlier analysis of the treatment by the author of *Imtheachta Aeniasa* of Virgil's similes and his subjective style specifically in Book 8, I suggested that he 'substituted detached but often stylistically refined descriptions for Virgil's extended similes, and an objective style for Virgil's subjective one'.[25] With further reference to Book 8, Miles argues that the 'first-person narrative by King Evander at Pallanteum (*Aeneid* VIII.185–275) [. . .] is closely consulted by the authors of *Togail Troí* in the construction of their own list of Hercules's feats, as is the chorus's full enumeration of Hercules's tasks which immediately follows'.[26] These passages, however, are omitted in the Irish retelling of Book 8, probably because they did not fit the Irish author's interest in the arrangements of Evander and Aeneas to join forces in war against Turnus and did not contribute to the linear progression either of the events or of the narrative.

The Irish version of Book 8 of the *Aeneid* also features one of the five instances in the text of the collocation *lúirech threbraid thredúalach* ('thrice-woven, plaited corslet'), which is here triggered by an elaborate description in *Aeneid* VIII.621–3 of a *lorica* which is, however, not specified as having been plaited.[27] Miles – correctly, I think – suggests that we view 'earlier instances [of this phrase] such as this from *Togail Troí* to be the more likely entry of the phrase into Irish [rather than via *Imtheachta Aeniasa*], though Virgil was still the model'.[28] The *lorica* and a (red-) crested helmet (*rubrae cornua cristae*) occur together in the description of Turnus's arming in *Aeneid* XII.88–9 and they do so as well in *Imtheachta Aeniasa*: *luirech trebraid tredualach alaind umaide uime cona cathbarr [fh]ororda [fh]uirri co cir d'or oirloiscthi* ('a magnificent triple-braided triple-looped hauberk of brass with its gilded helmet upon it').[29] Miles notes a similar collocation in *Togail Troí*: *Rogab éim a lúirig d'iúrn athle[g]tha imbi ⁊ a cathbarr círach cummaide fora chiund* ('He put on his breastplate of twice-melted iron and his shapen, crested battle-helmet on his head'), as well as a *círchathbarr* and a *cathbarr círach* in the *Táin*'s *Breslech Mór Maige Murthemne* (The Great Rout of the Plain of Murthemne) and *Cathcharpat Serda* (The Sickled Chariot) respectively.[30] But since there are three other instances of a *cathbarr círach* in *Imtheachta Aeniasa*, all with good parallels in the *Aeneid*, it is at least possible that these crested helmets arose independently in the process of translation.[31]

The use of *Togail Troí* as a model is adduced by Miles for *Imtheachta Aeniasa*'s version of *Aeneid* IV.239–41: *Dochuaid iarsin Mercuir risin teachtaireacht sin, ⁊ rogab a enceandaigh uime, ⁊ is cuma roimluaidhedh-se muir ⁊ tir* ('Thereupon

[24] Miles, *Heroic Saga*, 99. Ralph O'Connor reminds me that different narrative strategies do not necessarily imply different dates. Even though *Imtheachta Aeniasa* is arguably later than (the first recension of) *Togail Troí*, my focus in this chapter is not on (relative) dates and a chronology of translational strategies, but rather on their admittedly preliminary contrastive and typological analysis, as a contribution to a future history of such strategies.

[25] Poppe, '*Imtheachta Aeniasa*', 91; compare 79–87. For a definition of Virgil's subjective or empathetic–sympathetic style according to Brooks Otis, see *ibid*., 83–4.

[26] Miles, *Heroic Saga*, 163; compare 81–4.

[27] Calder, *Imtheachta Æniasa*, line 3038; Poppe, 'A Virgilian model'.

[28] Miles, *Heroic Saga*, 202; for the examples from *Togail Troí*, see Poppe, 'A Virgilian model', 174–5.

[29] Calder, *Imtheachta Æniasa*, 183, lines 2946–7.

[30] Miles, *Heroic Saga*, 201–3.

[31] Calder, *Imtheachta Æniasa*, line 1439 = *Aeneid* VI.778; Calder, *Imtheachta Æniasa*, lines 1957–8 = *Aeneid* VIII.620; Calder, *Imtheachta Æniasa*, lines 2111–12 = *Aeneid* IX.365.

Mercury went with that message, and donned his bird gear, and indifferently he would traverse sea and land'),[32] namely *Togail Troí*'s *encennach Mercúir. cumma imthéit muir ⁊ tír* ('the bird-covering of Mercury, which goes over both sea and land')[33] – which reflects Virgil's *talaria [. . .] / quae sublimen alis siue aequora supra / seu terram rapido pariter cum flamine portant* ('talaria, which, as swift as the wind carry him aloft on wings, be it over sea or land').[34] If the author of *Imtheachta Aeniasa* associated *talaria* with *encennach*, it is at least conceivable that he and the author of *Togail Troí* came up independently with similar wordings which were both modelled upon Virgil.[35]

Another epic topos of battle in *Imtheachta Aeniasa* is the formulaic phrase *co mbenad bond fri medi* 'so that sole would touch neck', which is attested three times in the text, but also in other medieval Irish texts, including *Breslech Mór Maige Murthemne*.[36] Miles has now drawn attention to the Virgilian analogue from *Aeneid* X.361, *haeret pede pes densusque uiro uir* ('foot cleaves to foot and man is pressed densely against man'),[37] which, however, is not used in *Imtheachta Aeniasa* at that point.[38] It is therefore possible that the phrase entered into Irish tradition at some earlier stage and then became formulaic, and was so used by the author of *Imtheachta Aeniasa* elsewhere when he thought that it suited his contexts and intentions.[39]

Miles argues that the description of the Argonauts at sea in a storm in *Togail Troí* is ultimately based on Virgil's description of the storm which hits the Trojan fleet on their journey to Carthage in *Aeneid* I.102–7 and that this *imitatio* 'almost certainly [has] arisen due to the use in Virgil in medieval education as a model author'.[40]

> Talia iactanti stridens Aquilone procella
> velum adversa ferit, fluctusque ad sidera tollit [1].
> Franguntur remi; tum prora avertit, et undis
> dat latus; insequitur cumulo [2] praeruptus aquae mons [3].
> Hi summo in fluctu pendent [6]; his unda dehiscens [4]
> terram inter fluctus aperit [5]; furit aestus harenis [7]. (*Aeneid* I.102–7)

> As he [Aeneas] cried thus, the storm roaring before them with the north wind batters the sails <11> and raises the billows up to the stars [1]. The oars break <13>, then the prow turns around and the ship is broadside against the waves <12>, there follows in a heap [2] a precipitous mountain of water [3]. Some hang in the summits of the waves [6]; to some others the gaping waves [4] lay bare the earth among the flood [5], the surge rages among the sands [7].[41]

[32] Calder, *Imtheachta Æniasa*, 49, lines 765–7.
[33] Miles, *Heroic Saga*, 73.
[34] Miles, *Heroic Saga*, 75.
[35] But see now O'Connor, *Destruction*, 232–3, for the view that the *encennach* in the *Togail* arose independently of Virgil or indeed any Classical source.
[36] Compare Poppe, *New Introduction*, 26.
[37] Miles, *Heroic Saga*, 239.
[38] Compare Calder, *Imtheachta Æniasa*, lines 2515–19.
[39] For these instances, see Calder, *Imtheachta Æniasa*, lines 2229–30, 2315–16, 2502–3; compare Poppe, *New Introduction*, 26, and Miles, *Heroic Saga*, 238–41.
[40] Miles, *Heroic Saga*, 115; compare 113–15.
[41] Miles, *Heroic Saga*, 114. The numbers in pointed brackets refer to passages in Virgil which the author of *Imtheachta Aeniasa* reproduces, but which are absent from *Togail Troí*.

The wording of the corresponding passage in *Imtheachta Aeniasa* is quite different from the description in *Togail Troí*, but constitutes in its own right a skilful imitation of Virgil:

Togail Troí	*Imtheachta Aeniasa*
Conerracht in muir [1] **ard uathmar** Ellispontide ina immairib **anfoille immarda** [2]. ⁊ ina colbaib **gorma gleglassa** [3]. co ménscaíld [4] in fecht aile **ina ettrigib anfóilli [5] ⁊ ina hallaib uathmara imdomni** [6]. Corba réill **éicni áille ochorbrecca. ⁊ torothair ingnathcha anachinti** for murgrían in mara [7].[42]	Tocbaidh tonda in mara a n-airdi co ruachtadar renna nimi. Dluigid in fairgi cor'bo ler in talam sis **trit in fairgi ⁊ tresin sal** etir na tondaib, ⁊ dobeir side isna seolaib, co roimpo tæba na long frisna tondaib adbulmhoraib na fairgi, uair roshailset co ticfaitis forro isna longaib na tonda batar ina cnocshlebtib osa cind. Brister na rama, ⁊ dogni gadrach dia longaib, scengith a tairrneda estibh, ⁊ scailit a claraid. Tocaibther **in grian ⁊ in gainim** a hichtar in mara, co mbai aco for lar **a long ⁊ a leburbarc** in tæb anis, ⁊ forran na tond annuas, ac dubdortad forro.[43]
The deep frightful Hellespontic sea rose [1] in great towering ridges [2] and in blue shining-green hills [3], so that at one moment [the sea] gaped wide [4] to become massive furrows [5], and [at the next] to become vast, very high cliffs [6], so that there were visible beautiful, speckle-sided salmon and wondrous, strange monsters on the sand of the sea [7].[44]	It [the wind] roused up the waves of the sea, so that they reached the firmament of heaven [1]. It rent the sea; and the sludge was visible below through the sea and through the brine [5] between the waves [4]; and it struck the sails <11>, and turned the ships' broadsides to the huge waves of the sea <12>; and they thought that the billows, towering in mountain peaks [3] above their heads, would dash in upon them into the ships. The oars were broken <13>, <21> their ships were made into withes, their pegs started out of them, and their planks separated. The silt and sand were lifted from the depth of the sea [7], <22> so that they had it in the midst of their ships and long-boats from below, combined with the violence of the waves darkly pouring down upon them from above.[45]

Miles points out that the 'phrases number [1] through [7] in the description of the storm in *Togail Troí* by no means translate Virgil's ekphrasis literally, but correspond to the visual impression created in the Latin text; visual impressions follow nearly the same order, with only the image of the wave summits [6] having been

[42] Miles, *Heroic Saga*, 113.
[43] Calder, *Imtheachta Æniasa*, lines 238–47.
[44] Miles, *Heroic Saga*, 113.
[45] Calder, *Imtheachta Æniasa*, 17.

delayed in the Irish version'.[46] The description in *Togail Troí* is closer to Virgil than the one in *Imtheachta Aeniasa*, which its Irish author has changed and expanded considerably: he has changed the order of elements and he has added the descriptions of the destruction the waves inflict on the ships <21>, now in four parallel sentences, which take their cue from Virgil's breaking oars (*franguntur remi*), and of the combined onslaught of the waves hitting the ships from below and from above <22>. Both Irish authors use often-alliterating syntactic and lexical parallel formulae for ornamentation. This passage impressively indicates the creative freedom with which the Irish redactor of Virgil's *Aeneid* approached his source.

Another example of imitation and change in *Imtheachta Aeniasa* is provided by the passage in which the Fury Allecto appears to Turnus in a dream and incites him to the war against the Trojans, based on *Aeneid* VII.445–8:[47]

Aeneid	*Imtheachta Aeniasa*
Talibus Allecto dictis exarsit in iras. at iuueni oranti subitus tremor occupat artus, deriguere oculi: tot Erinys sibilat hydris tantaque se facies aperit; tum flammea torquens lumina (*Aeneid* VII.445–9)	O rochuala Electo na briathra sain roraidh Tuirn fria, nos-geb **ferg ⁊ londus** fris, ⁊ nos-dealband ina delb fen ⁊ ba **hetig aduathmar** in delb sin. Ba **garb granda grugach** a gnuis. Batar **feochra feighi fuilide forderga foluaimnecha** na ruisc **londa lasarda** robatar ina cind. Trillsi do nathrachaib nemi is e folt bai imon cend.[48]
When [Turnus] had finished speaking, Allecto blazed forth in anger. And a sudden trembling seized the youth's limbs as he spoke, his eyes became fixed: so many are the snakes with which the Fury hisses and so great the appearance she reveals.[49] Then she bent down on him eyes which were beams of flame.[50]	When Alecto heard these words that Turnus had spoken to her, she was seized with anger and indignation against him; and she changed herself into her own form, and loathsome, dreadful was that form. Rough, horrible, wrinkled was her face; wild, sharp, bloody, deep red, unresting were the angry, flaming eyes that were in her head. Tresses of poisonous serpents, that was the hair about her head.[51]

The *Aeneid* here shifts from Allecto's anger to Turnus's fear and back to Allecto and the snakes. *Imtheachta Aeniasa*, on the other hand, focuses explicitly on the change in Allecto's appearance and details the fearsome aspects of her face. Stylistically significant and conspicuous here is the use of strings of three and five alliterating adjectives respectively in order to describe the hideousness of her face and of her

[46] Miles, *Heroic Saga*, 114.
[47] Compare Miles, *Heroic Saga*, 218–19 on the possible impact of this Virgilian passage on *Táin Bó Cúailnge* and *Togail Troí*.
[48] Calder, *Imtheachta Æniasa*, lines 1683–9.
[49] Miles, *Heroic Saga, 218.*
[50] Knight, *Virgil*, 189.
[51] Calder, *Imtheachta Æniasa*, 107.

eyes, and these strings reflect the ideal of a heightened, and arguably of an epic, style pursued by the author of *Imtheachta Aeniasa*.

A few lines later in the Latin text, at *Aeneid* VII.461–6, the 'confusion of Turnus's mind, now seething with the Fury's rage, is compared to a vat of boiling water' in an extended simile.[52] Miles suggests that 'elaborate extended similes are a defining feature of Homeric and Virgilian style, but are exceptional in native Irish saga'.[53] This general statement needs to be verified, but it should be noted that the author of *Imtheachta Aeniasa* renders this passage in a different way, which involves the use of a string of five near-synonymous nouns in order to convey the strength of Turnus's emotions: *Rogab side bruth 7 brigh 7 ferg 7 londus 7 saint catha fri Troianu 7 fri Laitintaib ar æn rian* ('He [Turnus] was inspired with spirit, force, anger, rage, and lust of battle against the Trojans and against the Latins together').[54] William F.X. Glennon observes that there is only a single 'epic' simile in *Imtheachta Aeniasa*, which he thinks is 'an example of an Irish author hewing reasonably close to an ancient text, when that ancient text employs an extended simile, yet it is, in the *Imtheachta Aeniasa* a unique example':[55]

Aeneid	*Imtheachta Aeniasa*
ac ueluti pleno lupus insidiatus ouili cum fremit ad caulas uentos perpessus et imbris nocte super media; tuti sub matribus agni balatum exercent, ille asper et improbus ira saeuit (*Aeneid* IX.59–63)	Amal bis cu allaidh in tan as gortach ag timcheall leis cærach ac iarraidh conaire isin n-aidhchi and, in tan rochluin medligh *n*a n-uan aga maithrib, is amlaidh robai Tuirrn[56]
Just as a wolf waits in ambush for a full sheepfold, when he rages driven by the wind and rain to the sheep-pens, and the lambs safe within beneath their mothers by night set up a bleating, and he [the wolf], savage and wicked, rages in his wrath[58]	Like a wolf, when he is hungry, circling round a sheep-fold seeking a way within during the night, when he has heard the lambs bleating with their mothers: even so was Turnus[57]

More research is necessary on the susceptibility of Irish redactors of foreign texts for the reproduction of epic similes and for their elaboration of cues provided by their sources for heightened style and for classicizing and epic imitation, as well as on the different forms their literary strategies may take in different texts and, perhaps, text-internal contexts as well.[59]

[52] Miles, *Heroic Saga*, 226.

[53] Miles, *Heroic Saga*, 225. Compare Stanford, 'Towards a history', 36; Poppe, '*Imtheachta Aeniasa*', 77–83. For a discussion of extended similes in *Togail Troí* and *Táin Bó Cúailnge*, see Miles, *Heroic Saga*, 131–40, 225–6.

[54] Calder, *Imtheachta Æniasa*, 107, lines 1693–4.

[55] Glennon, 'The similes', 217.

[56] Calder, *Imtheachta Æniasa*, lines 2002–5.

[57] Glennon, 'The similes', 217.

[58] Calder, *Imtheachta Æniasa*, 127, with some changes.

[59] The Virgilian image of the men with iron tongues at *Aeneid* VI.625–7 is rendered quite literally in the Irish version: see Calder, *Imtheachta Æniasa*, lines 1408–9; but Wright (*The Irish Tradition*, 168) suggests that the introduction of the numerical *gradatio* 'though I had a hundred mouths, and a hundred

Significant differences between the Latin model and the retelling in *Imtheachta Aeniasa* can be detected in the descriptions of Turnus fighting from a chariot, in *Aeneid* XII.326–30, and of Aeneas's reaction when he is pierced by Messapus's spear, in *Aeneid* XII.488–99, both singled out by Miles as potential inspirations for Cú Chulainn's heroic, and epic, chariot warfare in *Breslech Mór Maige Murthemne*.[60]

Aeneid	*Imtheachta Aeniasa*
poscit equos atque arma simul, saltuque superbus emicat in currum et manibus molitur habenas. multa uirum uolitans dat fortia corpora leto. seminecis uoluit multos: aut agmina curru proterit aut raptas fugientibus ingerit hastas. (*Aeneid* XII.326–30)	7 teit ina carpat & fobraidh in slog Troianach **co læchda laidir lamchar** 7 foceard ar mor for sluag na Troianach[61]
He [Turnus] calls for his horses and arms, and with a leap proudly springs into his chariot and takes the reins in his hands. As if in flight he sends many powerful bodies of men to their deaths. He throws down many half-dead: he tramples down ranks in his chariot and seizes spears and send them against those in flight.[62]	and he [Turnus] mounted his chariot, and assailed the Trojan host, heroically, strongly, dexterously, and he inflicted great slaughter on the host of the Trojans[63]

The Irish version is much shorter, and the only characteristic feature of heightened epic style here is the string of three alliterating near-synonymous adjectives. The same holds true for the two descriptions of Aeneas's wounding:

Aeneid	*Imtheachta Aeniasa*
huic Messapus, uti laeua duo forte gerebat lenta, leuis cursu, praefixa hastilia ferro, horum unum certo contorquens derigit ictu. substitit Aeneas et se collegit in arma poplite subsidens; apicem tamen incita summum hasta tulit summasque excussit uertice cristas. tum uero adsurgunt irae, insidiisque subactus, diuersos ubi sensit equos currumque referri, multa Iouem et laesi	Ba handsin rola Mesapus chuigi 7 tarrlaigh urchur do gai for amus Ænias. O rofhairigh Ænias in gai chuigi, roleig roime for scath a sceith, 7 benaidh in gai dar ciran cathbairr na luirighi 7 brisid in ciran. Tic **a bruth 7 a brig 7 a ghal curud** do Ænias iarsin, 7 fobraid **for slaidhi 7 for slechtadh** na slog in conair rothegidh 'mon cath for iarraidh Tuirrn[64]

tongues in each mouth', for Virgil's 'had I a hundred tongues, a hundred mouths', is a reflex of a rhetorical formula common in medieval Irish literature. See Wright, *The Irish Tradition*, 168–74 and 145–56, for examples of numerical *gradatio* with *cach* in medieval Irish literature and for a discussion of the forms of the motif of the men with iron tongues in medieval Irish religious texts.

60 See Miles, *Heroic Saga*, 232–6.

61 Calder, *Imtheachta Æniasa*, lines 2021–2.

62 Miles, *Heroic Saga*, 234.

63 Calder, *Imtheachta Æniasa*, 189.

64 Calder, *Imtheachta Æniasa*, lines 3066–71.

testatus foederis aras iam tandem inuadit medios et Marte secundo terribilis saeuam nullo discrimine caedem suscitat, irarumque omnis effundit habenas. (*Aeneid* XII.488–99)	
But now Messapus, running lightly, pointed at Aeneas one of the two tough, iron-headed spears-shafts which he chanced to be carrying in his left hand, and he sent it, spinning, surely aimed to strike. Aeneas stooped, and gathered himself behind his armour, dropping down on one knee; nevertheless, the strongly driven spear caught the crown of his helmet and dashed from his head the tops of the plumes. At this his anger rose to a fury indeed. This treacherous attack had altered his design. Realizing that the retreating horses and chariot were galloping far afield, he first called long on Jupiter and on the altars of the violated truce to bear him witness, and then, at last, charged into the midst of the foe. Dreadful, with the God of Battle giving him help, he awoke a massacre, ruthless, indiscriminate, and opened al the floodgates of his wrath.[65]	It was there that Messapus approached him, and threw a cast of a spear at Aeneas. When Aeneas perceived the spear upon him, he bent down before it, under the shelter of his shield, and the spear struck through the crest of his hauberk-helm, and broke the crest. Then his spirit, and his power, and his hero's valour came to Aeneas, and he began to hew and cut down the hosts wherever he went round the line of battle in quest of Turnus[66]

Again, the Latin source has been abbreviated, syntactically simplified, and, arguably, objectified; the only stylistic ornamentation in order to provide a heightened effect beyond pure report is the string of three nouns, two of them alliterating and the third adding the heroic stereotype of the hero's valour, triggered by Virgil's *adsurgunt irae* at *Aeneid* XII.494.

Similar similarities and differences between the Latin and the Irish version can be observed in a short ekphrasis of Aeneas in Book 1:

Aeneid	*Imtheachta Aeniasa*
Restitit Aeneas claraque in luce refulsit, os umerosque deo similis; namque ipsa decoram caesariem nato genetrix lumenque iuventae purpureum et laetos oculis adflarat honores: quale manus addunt ebori decus, aut ubi flavo argentum Pariusve lapis circumdatur auro. (*Aeneid* I.588–91)	**ba suairc, 7 ba sochraid, 7 ba sercach soicheneoil** in læch tainic and. Mong **findbuidi fororda** fair, gnuis **cæm corcurda** aigi, ruisc **cochlacha caindelta** ina chind cosmail re delb ndea, in delb rola a mathair .i. Uenir, o li serce ina ghnuis, co rocarad gach æn he in nech rosillfed fair[67]

[65] Calder, *Imtheachta Æniasa*, 191.
[66] Knight, *Virgil*, 324.
[67] Calder, *Imtheachta Æniasa*, lines 347–51.

Aeneas checked his walk, and in the bright light he shone; his face and his shoulders bore a divine beauty, for his mother had imparted a grace to his hair, she had shed on him a rich glow of youth, and set a gay sparkle in his eyes; like the shine which art can give to ivory, or like silver or marble inlaid in yellow gold.[68]	Pleasant, comely, lovely, and well-born was the hero [Aeneas], that came there – fair, yellow, golden hair upon him; a beautiful ruddy face he had; eyes deep-set, lustrous in his head like an image of a god, the expression which Venus, his mother, with love's splendour, threw into his face, so that whoever looked upon him should love him.[69]

The Virgilian simile has not been re-used in the Irish version, which instead concentrates on descriptions using syntactic parallelism and small strings of adjectives, marked in bold. It adds, however, the observation that Aeneas was loved by all because of his beauty – and the beauty of the hero is a commonplace in medieval Irish texts.[70]

A long and rhetorically complex ekphrasis of Pallas in *Imtheachta Aeniasa* is triggered by Virgil's comparison of his appearance on the scene with the Morning Star, and it provides an impressive opportunity for the Irish author to display his specific stylistic virtuosity.[71] It begins with a description of Pallas's hairs and eyes vaguely reminiscent of the description of Aeneas just quoted: *Mong fhochos orbhuidhi fair, rosc gorm glainidi ina chind* ('Golden hair upon him, slightly curling; a clear blue eye in his head').[72] On a much smaller scale, the Irish author did not forego the opportunity to introduce an ekphrasis of Lavinia as *suairc sochraidh sognimach saechlanda socheniuil* ('gentle, of beautiful form and good actions, free-born and noble').[73]

Uáitéar Mac Gearailt has suggested that 'there are many similarities of theme and general character between the Irish *Aeneid*, *Imtheachta Aeniasa*, and TTL [the version of *Togail Troí* in the Book of Leinster] on the one hand and battle-scenes in Vergil's Aeneid on the other'.[74] This view is supported by Miles who stresses that 'the elaborate battle-scene constitutes one of the techniques of expansion, and can be considered an expression of the interest in ekphrasis'.[75] In order to assess the range of stylistic options available to the translator of *Imtheachta Aeniasa*, it is instructive to consider his retelling of a short Virgilian battle-scene at *Aeneid* XII.577–8: *discurrunt alii ad portas primosque trucidant, / ferrum alii torquent et obumbrant*

[68] Knight, *Virgil,* 45.

[69] Calder, *Imtheachta Æniasa,* 23. Harris*, Adaptations of Roman Epic,* 100*,* says that Virgil's description 'is almost surpassed by the intricately alliterated Irish description'.

[70] Compare, for examples, McManus, 'Good-looking and irresistible'.

[71] Compare Calder, *Imtheachta Æniasa*, 121–2, lines 1924–37; *Aeneid* VIII.587–91. See also Poppe, '*Imtheachta Aeniasa*', 82–3, and *New Introduction*, 24–5.

[72] Calder, *Imtheachta Æniasa*, 121, lines 1924–5. These two ekphrases have already been noted by Harris, *Adaptations of Roman Epic*, 98–9, as instances where the 'descriptive imagery of the Irish tale can also be quite elaborate'.

[73] Calder, *Imtheachta Æniasa*, 95, lines 1484–5; compare *Aeneid* 7.53–3.

[74] Mac Gearailt, 'Change and innovation', 487, and see his list of battle-scene features arguably derived from Book XII of the *Aeneid*. A detailed stylistic comparison of these passages would be rewarding, but is beyond the scope of my chapter. See also Mac Gearailt, '*Togail Troí*'; Mac Gearailt, 'Change and innovation', 487, briefly refers to 'obvious differences in sequence and style between Vergil's *Aeneid* and the Irish version'.

[75] Miles, *Heroic Saga*, 125; here he also argues for the importance of Dares's *magna caedes* ('great slaughter') as a cue for expansion in the first recension of *Togail Troí*.

aethera telis ('Some run to the gates and cut down those on front, others hurl spears and darken the air with missiles'[76]):

> O roraidh Ænias na briathra-sa adnaghait uili co hænmenmnach dochum na cathrach ⁊ marbait gach æn tart[h]atar re cathraich amuigh ⁊ adnaghait for ceand, [foirind] dib ag linad na clas, ⁊ foirind ac brissidh na mur ⁊ ag tabair[t] arad ria; foirind ac cur tenedh 'sin cathraigh; foirind ag dibrugudh cloch ⁊ arm isin cathraig[77]
>
> When Aeneas had uttered these words, all pressed with one mind towards the city, and they killed every one whom they came upon outside the city; and they pressed forward, some of them filling the ditches, others breaking down the walls, and placing ladders to them, others setting the city on fire, others shooting stones and arms into the city.[78]

In contrast to most other passages discussed so far, no alliterating strings are used in order to produce a heightened stylistic effect here. The Virgilian cue *alii – alii* is taken up instead and creatively expanded by a series of five coordinated and syntactically parallel nominal phrases introduced by *foirenn* 'group, some'.[79] There are three other passages in which the Irish author similarly expands Virgilian coordination with a series of three or four coordinated phrases with *foirenn*.[80] These passages are at the same time a salutary methodological reminder of the range and variation of stylistic devices available to the Irish author of *Imtheachta Aeniasa* and of the necessity to conduct stylistic analyses on a much larger scale in order to describe his stylistic repertoire and preferences.

In the light of Miles's hypothesis quoted above, that *Imtheachta Aeniasa* 'represents the "school" of classical translations at an advanced stage, after the features which would characterize a classical tale in the vernacular, for example, stereotyped descriptions of battle, had largely taken form and acquired a life of their own',[81] it is interesting here to compare Sif Rikhardsdottir's observations on translational strategies in the *Strengleikar*, the thirteenth-century Old Norse versions of twelfth-century Old French *lais*:

> The textual modifications signal the effort of integrating the material into an existing tradition rather than supplanting that tradition. The French material is replanted in the foreign Nordic soil and the result is a distinctly different text, intimately interconnected with its source, yet unexpectedly unique. The shift in tone and aural quality

[76] Miles, *Heroic Saga*, 125.
[77] Calder, *Imtheachta Æniasa*, lines 3087–92.
[78] Calder, *Imtheachta Æniasa*, 193.
[79] In the immediately following context, another Virgilian sequence *alii – alii* is reproduced as *foirind dib [. . .] foirind ele* ('a group of them [. . .] another group'): see *Aeneid* XII.584–6, and Calder, *Imtheachta Æniasa*, lines 3095–8. See similarly *Aeneid* VI.315 (*hos [. . .] illos*), and Calder, *Imtheachta Æniasa*, line 316; *Aeneid* VI.642–4 (*pars [. . .] pars*), and Calder, *Imtheachta Æniasa*, lines 4019–20; *Aeneid* IX.725–7 (*multosque suorum [. . .] alios*), and Calder, *Imtheachta Æniasa*, lines 2297–8.
[80] *Aeneid* I.423–5, and Calder, *Imtheachta Æniasa*, lines 302–6; *Aeneid* VII.162–5, and Calder, *Imtheachta Æniasa*, lines 1551–3; *Aeneid* IX.505–9, and Calder, *Imtheachta Æniasa*, lines 2215–17. Calder, *Imtheachta Æniasa*, lines 2788–90, with three coordinated phrases, has no counterpart in Virgil's *Aeneid*. I wish to thank Barbara Hillers for a helpful discussion of this stylistic device.
[81] Miles, *Heroic Saga*, 144.

from the Anglo-Norman verse to Old Norse prose accentuates the capacity of language as a site of resistance to imperial control.[82]

In this chapter, I have explored the way in which a few passages from Virgil's *Aeneid* are retold in its Irish version *Imtheachta Aeniasa*, in the hope of gauging the extent of classicizing imitation, taking as my point of departure passages that Miles has shown to have triggered such imitation and expansion in *Togail Troí* and/or *Táin Bó Cúailnge*. Inevitably, such a comparison would need to be conducted on a much larger scale in order to yield reliable results concerning the stylistic intentions and preferences of the author of *Imtheachta Aeniasa*. I hope, however, that even on the basis of this preliminary exploration it will have emerged that *Imtheachta Aeniasa* is probably not Virgilian in a narrow sense, and that it is less so than *Togail Troí*. It is obvious, on the other hand, that its author intended to produce a heightened stylistic effect in the passages discussed here. Various forms of syntactic and lexical parallelism are seen to be his preferred stylistic device. Miles has suggested that '*Togail Troí* may have owed its popularity especially to the fact that it combined the typical Irish interest in historical writing with efforts to reflect the artistic qualities of ancient epic.'[83] I submit that something similar holds true for *Imtheachta Aeniasa*, but it must remain an open question how its author would have defined the stylistic relationship between his text and its source.

In comparison with the classicizing aesthetic identified by Miles in *Togail Troí* and *Táin Bó Cúailnge*, *Imtheachta Aeniasa* would appear to represent a somewhat different translational and aesthetic format, and the differences may not necessarily be due solely to the different dates of the texts. Analyses of passages in classicizing and heightened styles in, for example, the Irish versions of two other substantial epic poems, Lucan's *Bellum Civile* and Statius's *Thebaid* respectively, namely *In Cath Catharda* and *Togail na Tebe*, would probably yield important insights regarding the prevalence of classicizing features within medieval Irish textual culture and of the range of stylistic options available to Irish redactors of Classical sources.

[82] Sif Rikhardsdottir, *Medieval Translations*, 35.
[83] Miles, *Heroic Saga*, 99.

3

HISTORY AND *HISTORIA*: USES OF THE TROY STORY IN MEDIEVAL IRELAND AND WALES*

Helen Fulton

The translation of the story of the destruction of Troy into the vernaculars of Irish and Welsh happened several centuries apart. The Irish *Togail Troí* (The Destruction of Troy) was in circulation by the eleventh century, and had perhaps been translated as early as the tenth century.[1] The Welsh *Ystorya Dared* (The History of Dares) was first translated in the early fourteenth century and survives in over forty manuscript versions, though only around a dozen of these are genuinely 'medieval', that is, occurring in manuscripts of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries.[2]

Despite the gap in time between these vernacular versions of the Troy story, a gap accounted for largely by the differing contexts of production of the two vernaculars, the appropriated legend served a similar purpose in both cultural landscapes, as part of a complex process of contemporary identity-formation. Erich Poppe has recently compared the Welsh, Irish and Norse versions of the Troy story from the point of view of textual adaptation and the 'typology' of the different versions. On the basis of the manuscript contexts of extant texts (as far as these can be deduced), he argues that all three linguistic variants are primarily historiographical in function, despite cultural differences of style.[3] Considering the heavy debt owed by all three adaptations to Dares's *De excidio Troiae historia* (History of the Destruction of Troy), this is perhaps not surprising, and in what follows I hope to investigate further the elements of *historia* in the Welsh and Irish versions.

* I am very grateful to Ralph O'Connor, Erich Poppe and Michael Clarke for their helpful comments on earlier drafts of this article.

1 Mac Eoin ('Das Verbalsystem', 193–202) used linguistic evidence to argue that the original translation was made in the tenth century, but there are no extant Irish-language manuscripts from this century. On the dating, see the chapters by Ralph O'Connor and Máire Ní Mhaonaigh in this volume. The text survives in three recensions whose main manuscript witnesses are, for Recension 1, Dublin, Trinity College MS 1319 (formerly H.2.17, *c.* 14th/15th century); for Recension 2, the Book of Leinster, Dublin, Trinity College MS 1339 (formerly H.2.18, 12th century); for Recension 3, two manuscripts of the fifteenth century. The textual history of *Togail Troí* is complicated and no full survey is yet in print. For interim accounts, see Mac Eoin, 'Dán', 20–5; Mac Gearailt, '*Togail Troí*: an example'; Miles, *Heroic Saga*, 53–4; Poppe, 'The matter of Troy', 265–6. The text of Recension 1 has been printed with a translation in Stokes, 'The destruction of Troy'. The incomplete text (Irish only) of Recension 2 from the Book of Leinster has been printed by Best & O'Brien, *Togail Troí*. The text, with translation, of Recension 2, along with a sixteenth-century fragment from Recension 1 found boxed with the Book of Leinster, have been published by Stokes, *Togail Troí*.

2 The most comprehensive account of the manuscripts containing *Ystorya Dared* is given by Owens, 'Y fersiynau Cymraeg'. There is currently no modern edition of the text with English apparatus.

3 Poppe, 'The matter of Troy'.

Though *Togail Troí* and *Ystorya Dared* are conventionally referred to as adaptations or even 'translations', it would be more accurate to consider them as remediations in the modern sense of a transfer from one medium to another. The process of remediation is most evident today in the adaptation of a novel to a film, or a play to a musical, but many medieval written texts were also 'remediated' into a different mode of writing, often via one or more different languages. The Irish and Welsh vernacular texts are both based on the same Latin original, *De excidio Troiae historia* attributed to Dares Phrygius, a text dating (at a best guess) from the early sixth century which incorporates Latin and possibly Greek sources.[4] Along with a fourth-century Latin text, with Greek origins, attributed to Dictys, *Ephemeris belli Troiani* (A Journal of the Trojan War), these two prose texts formed the basis of a number of vernacular versions of the legend, including the very influential French adaptation, *Roman de Troie* (The Romance of Troy), made by Benoît de Saint-Maure in about 1160.[5]

More significantly, the accounts of Dares and Dictys, especially the former, became canonical, supplanting the fictionalized versions of Virgil (and Homer, though not as well-known as Virgil in the Middle Ages) as the 'true history' of the Trojan wars. Whereas Virgil, and his predecessor Homer, had clearly made things up and relied on their own invention (as it seemed to medieval readers), Dares, representing the Trojan side, and Dictys, on the Greek side, were eye-witnesses, the form of evidence which carried the most weight with medieval writers. The testimony of *auctores* came a distant second to the word of an actual eye-witness when it came to writing medieval history.[6] In Geoffrey Chaucer's *House of Fame*, a poem which calls into the question the relative truths of different authorities, the dreamer sees statues of Dares and Dictys on pillars in the hall of Fame, along with Homer, Guido delle Colonne, and Geoffrey of Monmouth, all regarded as historians of the Trojan wars, inviting us to consider the very different versions which each offers and to decide which best represents the truth.[7] In other poems, the *Book of the Duchess* and *Troilus and Criseyde*, Chaucer points us towards Dares as the most reliable source for Trojan history.[8]

Though the accounts of Dares and Dictys depend indirectly (via Virgil, Servius and Statius) on the works of Homer, they can be read as offering an anti-Homeric version of events, contradicting Homer because he lived long after the Trojan wars whereas Dares and Dictys were (they claimed) actually there and knew exactly what happened.[9] Through this strategy of claiming greater authority, the pseudo-historians

[4] The Latin text attributed to Dares has been edited by Meister (*Daretis Phrygii de Excidio Troiae Historia*), based on a selection of manuscripts from the tenth to thirteenth centuries. For an English translation and introduction, see Frazer, *Trojan War*. On the difficulty of dating the Dares text, see Kim, *Homer between History and Fiction*.

[5] For an account of the transmission of the Trojan legend from Dares and Dictys, see Benson, *History of Troy*. See also Wolf, *Troja*, who compares the French, English and Italian versions. Benoît's *Roman* is very much in the style of medieval romance, whereas the Latin adaptation made by Guido delle Colonne in 1287 reverts to the chronicle style familiar from the Dares version.

[6] Damian-Grint, *The New Historians*, 68; Ainsworth, 'Contemporary and "eyewitness" history'.

[7] Chaucer, *House of Fame*, lines 1464–70, in Benson, *Riverside Chaucer*.

[8] Chaucer, *Book of the Duchess*, line 1070; *Troilus and Criseyde*, Book 5, line 1771, both in Benson, *Riverside Chaucer*. On Chaucer's versions of the Troy story in *House of Fame* and *Troilus and Criseyde*, see Keller, 'Authorizing Trojan England'; Keller, *Selves and Nations*, 328–45.

[9] Miles (*Heroic Saga*, 98–102) cites the Classical distinction between *historia*, as written by Dares, and *fabula*, a non-truthful account as written by Homer. Guido delle Colonne, who converted Benoît's *Roman de Troie* back into Latin in 1287, says that he based his work on that of Dares and Dictys in

are able to relocate the story of Troy in a more acceptably Christian context, eliding or rationalizing the pagan and supernatural elements of Homer's account while stressing the importance of divine intervention. In another departure from the Homeric version, Dares gives larger roles to some of the heroes mentioned only in passing by both Homer and Virgil, especially Troilus, who becomes a significant protagonist, and Polyxena, with whom Achilles falls in love. Most notably, Dares and Dictys depart from the Virgilian construction of Aeneas as the great hero of Troy by depicting him as a great traitor, the one who, with Antenor, betrayed his people to the Greeks.[10] Rather than celebrating his role in the foundation of Rome, the major origin-myth of half of Europe, the accounts of Dares and Dictys undermine his heroic status and, by implication, the imperial significance of his subsequent career.

This, then, is the non-Homeric tradition of Troy which was inherited by Irish and Welsh adapters, a tradition in which Troilus rather than Aeneas is the central hero of the Trojan story. The author of the Middle Irish poem *Clann Ollaman Uaisle Emna* (The Children of Ollam are the Nobles of Emain), which draws parallels between heroes of the Trojan wars and the great warriors of Emain Macha, pairs the Ulster hero Cú Chulainn with Troilus, a match which, as Clarke points out, was suggested not by Virgil's account but more than likely by *Togail Troí*.[11] The Irish preference for Troilus accounts, perhaps, for the ambivalent treatment of Aeneas in the vernacular adaptation of Virgil's *Aeneid*, *Imtheachta Aeniasa* (The Adventures of Aeneas), where the foundation of Rome by the descendants of Aeneas, Virgil's point of closure for the whole epic, is blurred into a general account of the post-Troy wanderings of Aeneas in Italy – 'little more than an Italian *Odyssey*'.[12]

The context of Togail Troí

The Irish version of Dares was part of a wave of translations and adaptations from Classical texts beginning perhaps as early as the tenth century, a movement which coincided with the literary shaping of native story material.[13] The poem cited above, *Clann Ollaman Uaisle Emna*, calls the men of Ulster *Tro-fhian fhír na hÉirenn*, 'the true Trojan band of Ireland', and pairs Eochaid, the current king of Ulster, with Hector, Conchobor with Priam, Fergus with Aeneas, and Noísiu with Alexander (Paris), the two men whose good looks won them beautiful women and started a war.[14] Clarke has drawn attention to the stylistic similarities between *Táin Bó Cúailnge* (The Cattle-Raid of Cooley) and *Togail Troí*, including rhetorical embellishments, narrative structuring, and specific parallels such as the use of the 'watchman device'

---

order to correct the mistakes made by Virgil, Ovid and Homer (Griffin, *Guido de Columnis*, 276). Dares's status as an eye-witness is attested by an apocryphal covering letter introducing Dares's history, a letter supposedly sent from Cornelius Nepos to Sallust, both well-known Latin historians whose names helped to legitimize Dares's account (Frazer, *Trojan War*, 11–14).

10 The anti-Homeric aspects of Dares and Dictys are discussed by Spence, '*Felix casus*'.

11 Clarke, 'An Irish Achilles', 247–8. See also Clarke, 'Achilles, Byrhtnoth'.

12 Cox, 'Virgilian transformations', 78. See also Poppe, *New Introduction*, 10–11, where he points out that the Irish text removes any suggestion of 'a teleological view of Roman history' (11). The poem *Clann Ollaman* pairs Aeneas with another ambivalently located hero, Fergus, condemned to exile from his home.

13 On the timing of this coincidence, see chapter 1 of this volume, 9–11.

14 For the text and translation of the poem, see Byrne, 'Clann Ollaman Uaisle Emna', 61–80, especially 61 line 4 and 76 lines 2–3.

and the 'warp-spasm' attributed to both Troilus and Cú Chulainn, parallels which suggest a close affinity between two texts which were in process of composition at much the same time.[15] The Irish version of the *Aeneid*, *Imtheachta Aeniasa*, was adapted from a version of Virgil's text at some time in the eleventh century, while *Scéla Alaxandair meic Philip* (The Saga of Alexander son of Philip), a vernacular account of the Alexander story, may belong to the tenth or eleventh century, with a further raft of Classical legends appearing in the vernacular throughout the twelfth century and later.[16] Less direct influence from Classical literature is observable in texts such as the tenth-century *Fingal Rónáin* (The Kin-Slaying of Rónán), perhaps inspired in part by Seneca's account of the legend of Phaedra.[17]

All this points to an active programme of translation and adaptation and a close knowledge of and access to Classical texts as part of clerical education and through the glossed manuscripts that were the central conduit of the educational system, enriched by two-way traffic between Irish and continental monasteries. Brían Ó Cuív provides evidence that scholars in early medieval Ireland knew the work of authors such as Horace and Virgil, citing Irish glosses, dating from at least the ninth century and possibly earlier, on Priscian's quotations from Virgil's *Aeneid* which show that the glossators were familiar at least with sections of Virgil's Latin text.[18] In one example, where Priscian (in his *Institutio de arte grammatica*) has quoted a line from the *Aeneid* to illustrate a grammatical point, the Irish glossator uses the phrase *togail Troí*, 'destruction of Troy':

> 'Venit summa dies et ineluctabile tempus Dardaniae.'
> (*Aeneid*, II.324–5)
> (Irish gloss:) panthus dixit contra aeneam tanicc aimser derb togle troi desmrecht insin araimser deirb in feminino.[19]
>
> 'The ultimate day came and the inescapable hour of Dardania.'
> Panthus said to Aeneas, 'The certain hour of the destruction of Troy has come' – that is, an example of certain time in the feminine.'

As Ó Cuív says, not only does this gloss indicate the Irish scribe's familiarity with this particular event in the *Aeneid*, but the use of the phrase *togail Troí* anticipates the title of the adaptation in later manuscripts.

This kind of evidence also points to the vigour of the vernacular as a language of learning and literature, whether secular or religious, and as a vernacular in close contact with Latin.[20] A number of critics have stressed the importance of Classical influences on the style of native Irish texts, especially *Táin Bó Cúailnge*, identifying

[15] Clarke, 'An Irish Achilles', 241–2. On the 'watchman device', see Sims-Williams, *Irish Influence*, and Ralph O'Connor's chapter in this volume. 'Warp-spasm' is Kinsella's translation of the Irish *ríastrad* in his *Tain*.

[16] Both *Togail Troí* and *Scéla Alexandair* appear in Middle Irish tale lists (List B). See Ní Mhaonaigh, 'Classical compositions', 1–2; Peters, 'Die irische Alexandersage'; Stanford, 'Towards a history'; the Introduction to this volume.

[17] Mac Gearailt, 'The making of *Fingal Rónáin*'; and see now Michael Clarke's chapter 7 in this volume. See also de Bernardo Stempel, 'Phaedra und Hippolytos'.

[18] Ó Cuív, 'Medieval Irish scholars'. See also Hofman, 'Some new facts'.

[19] Text and translation from Ó Cuív, 'Medieval Irish scholars', 243.

[20] Mac Gearailt states that 'the increased translating activity and the general increase in literary productivity in Irish in the eleventh century suggests that Irish was now the dominant literary language in the church' ('*Togail Troí*: an example', 75).

ways in which Irish writers drew on Latin models of literary expression.[21] Michael Clarke mentions 'close stylistic affinities' such as 'vivid similes and similar expressive devices'.[22] Uáitéar Mac Gearailt notes that the 'call to arms' motif found in battle scenes in *Togail Troí* is unusual in the native tales and was probably borrowed from Virgil.[23] Clearly the two literatures worked in tandem and Irish scholars wanted to have their own versions of Classical works, perhaps to encourage students to engage with the originals.[24]

The bigger question is whether translated Irish texts such as *Togail Troí* were imitating antecedent Latin texts in their style and rhetorical devices or whether they were drawing on the stylistic resources of an existing native literature. Brent Miles argues for the former, suggesting that *Togail Troí* 'deploys a classicizing aesthetic' which aims to turn Dares's text (an admittedly bald account of events) into a Classical epic, complete with *amplificatio*, ekphrasis and figurative language.[25] The latter argument, that *Togail Troí* is an adaptation of Latin material into a native idiom, is put forward by Mac Gearailt, who, after looking at stylistic correspondences between the Irish text and its primary Latin source, says that 'the translator confidently took possession of the Latin source, following it closely but avoiding slavish word for word translation and producing a polished narrative which was in harmony with Irish tradition'.[26] For Mac Gearailt, motifs such as the 'watchman device' and the magic ball of thread by which Medea attempts to hold back Jason's ship (neither of which are in Dares) are evidence of the influence of native Irish saga on the adaptation of Dares's text.[27]

It is clearly not easy to separate Latin and Irish influences within texts such as *Togail Troí*, or even within native texts such as the *Táin*, especially as the native literature was itself dependent to some extent on those Latin models of literary discourse which were available to learned Irish scribes and copyists. Rather than one tradition having primacy, it is more realistic to recognize a hybrid tradition in which elements of pagan Classical culture are remediated into a Christianized vernacular discourse. The Latin phrases in the *Táin* noted by Hildegard Tristram suggest the bilingualism of Irish scribes working in both traditions, while John Carey finds a parallel between Hiberno-Latin teaching and the native tale *Serglige Con Culainn* (The Wasting Sickness of Cú Chulainn), suggesting a bilingual scribal culture in which compilers of native tales commented on pagan traditions from a Christian

[21] See, for example, Tristram, 'The "Cattle Raid"'; Ó hUiginn, 'The background and development', 39–41; Stanford, 'Towards a history'; Miles, *Heroic Saga*, 145–244. See further the chapters by Abigail Burnyeat and Ralph O'Connor in this volume. On the culture of Latin literacy in early Ireland, see Ó Cróinín, 'Hiberno-Latin literature to 1169'.

[22] Clarke, 'An Irish Achilles', 238.

[23] Mac Gearailt, '*Togail Troí*: an example', 81.

[24] Brent Miles ('The literary set piece', 79) points out that Irish scholars were practising *imitatio*, the learned imitation of Classical texts, and that 'the appreciation of *imitatio* necessitates that the learned character of the invention be recognized' (by going back to the original model).

[25] Miles, *Heroic Saga*, 103.

[26] Mac Gearailt, '*Togail Troí*: an example', 78. Stanford also assumes that Irish translations of Latin texts follow native Irish techniques of storytelling ('Towards a history', 37). See also Meyer, 'The Middle-Irish version of the story of Troy', who draws a number of parallels between *Togail Troí* and 'the older native epic literature' (215); and Myrick, *From the* De excidio, who argues that the Irish text is an adaptation from Latin material into a native style.

[27] The 'watchman device', which occurs in Homer but is unlikely to have been borrowed directly from him, is a striking feature of *Táin Bó Cúailnge* and occurs more rarely in medieval Welsh literature (Sims-Williams, *Irish Influence*, 95–133). The motif of the magic ball of thread is found in *Immram Brain*.

perspective.[28] Miles's account of the 'classicizing aesthetic', by which the Irish version of a Latin story was turned back into the discourse of Latin epic, therefore tends to underestimate the extent to which this discourse, particularly its rhetorical devices, had already influenced the Irish literary idiom through the scholastic tradition of commentary, translation and teaching.[29] *Togail Troí* is therefore a remediated text, rather than a translation, a text that has been transformed not just linguistically but in its medium of transmission, from a Latin scholastic history which gives a potted account of the Trojan war to a literary piece of scholarly Irish composition drawing on all the resources of a highly-developed prose tradition based on a Latinate heritage. It is quite obvious that Dares's text is not the only source used by the compilers of *Togail Troí*, so its status as a 'translation' is inevitably an inadequate way to describe it. It is rather a synthesis of a range of Latin texts coloured by the native literary discourse, reflecting the resources available to clerical *literati* in the larger centres of literary production in medieval Ireland.[30]

Just as the vernacular literary discourse can be defined as a hybrid of Classical and Christian elements, the version of history set out in *Togail Troí* can be defined as the product of a specifically Christian viewpoint articulated through a historiographical method derived from Classical models of *historia*. In terms of its historical approach, *Togail Troí* operates differently from other Irish sagas such as *Táin Bó Cúailnge*, mainly because it is based on a preceding Latin text. A three-part argument put forward by Clarke is that *Togail Troí* is the 'major text in which the Graeco-Roman heroic past was appropriated and recast as a purely Irish narrative'; *Togail Troí* is very similar stylistically to *Táin Bó Cúailnge*; therefore, both texts are 'essentially creating an Ireland-centred narrative of world history in which the wars of heroic ancestors are echoed in those of older nations in world history'.[31] In other words, if *Togail Troí* is a type of world history, then so is *Táin Bó Cúailnge*. Poppe offers a more historicist explanation for the inclusion of *Togail Troí*, in its second and more elaborate recension, in the Book of Leinster, arguing that the text 'offers a site for a narrative hybridization of Greece, Troy, Ireland and Ulster, and for an equation of the political situation of the Trojan War with that of the Irish pentarchy around the time of Christ'.[32] Like Clarke, he suggests that the legendary conflict between Ulster and the other four provinces as depicted in the *Táin* formed a direct parallel with the Trojan wars and that both texts, using similar stylistic resources, were regarded as 'histories'.[33] This may well be the case, though it does not exclude the possibility that these texts were regarded at the same time as entertaining and semi-fictionalized sagas; and we still need to account for the historiographical differences between

[28] Tristram, 'The "Cattle Raid"'; Carey, 'The uses of tradition', 78–9.

[29] Charles-Edwards ('Language and society', 726) refers to the form of literary Old Irish influenced by Latin grammar and rhetoric as 'rhetorical Old Irish'. Genee, 'Latin influence on Old Irish?', points to the high status of Latin as a reason for specific lexical borrowings into Old Irish. On literary and metrical borrowings from Latin into Old Irish, see Howlett, 'The earliest Irish writers'; Hillers, 'Ulysses'; Swartz, 'The problem of classical influence'.

[30] The other sources for *Togail Troí* almost certainly include Virgil's *Aeneid*, the commentaries on Virgil by Servius, and various works by Ovid. Mac Eoin ('Dán') suggested that the list of the deeds of Hercules in *Togail Troí*, which are not found in Dares, is derived from Ovid's *Heroides* IX. See also Miles, *Heroic Saga*, 66–94.

[31] Clarke, 'An Irish Achilles', 250–1. A similar view is expounded by Ó Néill, 'The Latin colophon', 274.

[32] Poppe, 'The matter of Troy', 269.

[33] Poppe, *Of Cycles*; Sims-Williams & Poppe, 'Medieval Irish literary theory'.

Togail Troí, with its global collapses of wealth and power, and *Táin Bó Cúailnge*, which addresses the internal concerns of one region of Ireland.

Since history is itself a form of narrative, privileging some events over others, deploying a narrative voice that points us in particular directions and setting up a chain of cause-and-effect relations, it shares a number of discursive features with literary and imaginative writing.[34] Many of the strategies of late-antique and medieval historiography were derived from other genres of secular writing, and vice versa. Bede's *Historia ecclesiastica gentis Anglorum* (Ecclesiastical History of the English People) and Gildas's *De excidio Britanniae* (On the Destruction of Britain) are both marked by a strong narrative movement, portrayals of *dramatis personae* and a clear argument leading to a definite conclusion. Irish hagiographers knew how to create suspenseful and well-organized narratives that used literary devices to appeal to readers and inspire their sympathy and devotion. Geoffrey of Monmouth's *Historia Regum Britanniae* (History of the Kings of Britain) employs numerous literary devices and was regarded even by some of Geoffrey's contemporaries as largely a work of fiction.

By the same token, texts with a high level of literary devices such as *Táin Bó Cúailnge* and *Togail Troí* can also deploy some of the strategies of historiography such as sequences of battles and the feats of famous heroes. It is possible, then, to refer to them both as 'histories' in the broad sense of stories of past heroes who can be interpreted as standing in for a people. The use of discursive resources associated with historiography does not, however, turn any account of the past into a motivated linear history of a people or nation; classifying all or most of the Irish sagas together as 'history' elides the very real textual differences between them of function and subject position. The stories of the *Táin*, or of the 'Ulster cycle' more generally, can be described as 'historical', and even 'historiographical', in that they work to historicize the deeds of heroic ancestors, placing them in a distant past that is occasionally aligned chronologically with the time of Christ, but this historicization is itself a literary conceit.[35] Discursively, the tales of the Ulster cycle differ from *Togail Troí* which is closer to Classical models of *historia* in terms of their specific structures and objectives. The literary and historiographical resources deployed in each case distinguish *Togail Troí*, as an attempt at 'world history' following its primary Latin source, from *Táin Bó Cúailnge* as the imaginative, non-linear and character-driven reconstruction of a particular, and relatively local, sequence of events. Both are 'histories', then, only in the same way that both might be called 'literature', each applying different methodologies (literary and historiographical) to historical accounts of the past.[36]

The models and practices of *historia* which developed from the fourth century onwards were derived from a Christian ideology in which any account of the past

[34] White, 'The discourse of history'; Momigliano, *Essays*; Cameron, *History as Text*. See also Wiseman, *Historiography and Imagination*, who argues that 'the beginnings of Roman historiography lie not so much in "history from documents" as in the the alternative model of history from dramatic fiction' (5).

[35] In other words, describing the *Táin* or *Togail Troí* as 'history' does not preclude applying other generic descriptions such as 'saga' or 'literature'. What is significant is how they differ as texts. See also the discussion in chapter 1 above, 6–9 and 17–22.

[36] The problem of classifying *Togail Troí* and the Ulster cycle generically highlights the difficulty of positing an overarching generic category such as 'history' as a *langue* that can be used to explain different *paroles* or individual texts (using the Barthesian distinction). Just as there are many different kinds of 'literature', there are many different kinds of 'history', each distinguished by function, discursive strategies and subjectivities. In pointing to discourse rather than genre as the distinguishing factor between texts, I am following Deleuze & Guattari: 'Rather than be content to seek out a transcendent form which acts as the template for generic works, the task of the critic should be to attest somehow to the "matters" or "signs" operating anonymously in them' (*A Thousand Plateaus*, 267).

had to confirm the pre-emptive antiquity of Christianity, predating Homer, Troy and Greek mythology. History was imagined as essentially linear, beginning with Adam or Abraham and moving inexorably forward until the end of Christian time.[37] At the same time, the emergence of barbarian peoples in the post-Roman centuries moved the focus of historiography away from Rome and its empire towards the rise (and sometimes fall) of the barbarian nations of France, Germany, England and beyond, nations that needed to trace their origins to Rome as a form of legitimation.[38] These new regional and national histories had to be aligned with the major stages and events of the 'universal' Christian history, a task which was definitively accomplished by the Greek historiographer Eusebius, writing in the late third century AD. Drawing on earlier chronographic models of history, Eusebius established an 'accurate' chronology for the whole of human history which demonstrated beyond doubt that Christianity, as part of Hebrew culture, was older than Greek civilization.[39] The destruction of Troy was regarded by Greek historians as a major milestone for arranging world events in chronological order, and was one of the points which Eusebius used to synchronize national histories, both Classical and barbarian, in relation to each other in a tabular form. Translated into Latin by Jerome (*c.* 345–419), Eusebius's *Chronica* (Chronicle) became the starting point for all subsequent histories, including the Irish annalistic compilations.[40]

As the history of barbarian peoples began to be compiled by men such as Isidore of Seville, writing of the Visigoths in Spain, Gregory of Tours, writing of the Franks in the fifth and sixth centuries, and Bede, writing of the Angles, Saxons and Jutes in England, the cyclical fortunes of these migratory peoples had to be fitted into the universal history of the Church.[41] Secular and ecclesiastical history began to merge, resulting in new historiographical genres which comprised a clear break from earlier Classical models. The importance of kings and their territories, operating under God's providence, formed the focus of these histories which aimed to describe the origins and development of post-Roman nations. In the sixth century, Boethius's *De consolatione philosophiae* (The Consolation of Philosophy) suggested an appropriate model for such histories. Based on a Christian understanding of divine providence, Boethius argued that fortune, or fate, directed individual free will towards the destiny already laid down by God.[42] Fortune's wheel could bring kings and their people to ruin, only to raise up others in their place. The course of history was 'cyclical and dynastic, characterised by a sequence of falls', a narrative model that served secular writers particularly well.[43] Between the fourth and seventh centuries, then, two alternative models of history were developed in the aftermath of Classical Roman-centred history: the linear model of Eusebius and the Church, and the cyclical model of Boethius which inspired the narrative histories, in Latin and vernaculars, of the Middle Ages.

In the case of *Togail Troí*, Dares's original text announced itself as *historia*, an account of events that actually happened, and its truth-value is endorsed by its

[37] Allen, 'University history 300–1000'.
[38] Pizarro, 'Ethnic and national history'.
[39] Mosshammer, *Chronicle of Eusebius*.
[40] Morris, 'Chronicle of Eusebius'; Hughes, *Early Christian Ireland*, 100.
[41] Goffart argues (*Narrators of Barbarian History*, 4) that 'peoples or nations were the defining feature' of barbarian histories.
[42] Marenbon, *Boethius*, 146.
[43] Hebron, *The Medieval Siege*, 92.

covering letter and Dares's status as an eye-witness.[44] It seems likely that the Irish adapters of Dares believed they too were writing history rather than epic.[45] But they chose not to imitate Dares's teacherly style, opting instead to follow the Boethian model of secular historical writing in the Christian world, a model that reached its high point with insular Latin historians of the twelfth century including William of Malmesbury and Geoffrey of Monmouth. The stylistic devices of (invented) direct speech, dramatic descriptions of battles, amplification and rhetorical embellishment, all found in the first and especially the second recensions of *Togail Troí*, are characteristic not simply of Latin epic (and Irish saga) but of Latin historiography, especially in its late-antique and medieval forms.[46]

The Boethian model of Latin historiography contrasted with the view of history set out by Augustine, whose *De Civitate Dei* (The City of God), written in the fourth century AD, followed Eusebius in envisaging a linear structure of universal history where all roads, in every nation, lead to the holy city of God.[47] More explicitly doctrinal than Boethius's work, Augustine's writing set the paradigm of eschatological history in the Middle Ages, where earthly life is interpreted as a metaphor of the teleological journey towards salvation. As Pickering says,

> The choice of the Augustinian genre obliges an author to take the following view of history: That history began with the Creation, and that from the Fall of the Angels until beyond the Day of Judgment it is fore-ordained by the triune Godhead.[48]

For Boethius, then, history moves in cycles of collapse and restoration, in which kings and heroes are fated to choose, by free will, the destiny already laid down for them. For Augustine, however, great kings and dynasties had no other function than to lead their people closer to the city of God; there is no 'fortune', only the divine providence of God's intended purpose.

The story of Troy as it was transmitted by Dares, Dictys and later Latin and vernacular writers belongs to the post-Roman tradition of historiography in which the main subject of *historia* is no longer the history of Rome and its empire but the formation of new nations and territories led by royal dynasties. As such, the late-antique and medieval versions of the story conform more closely to the Boethian rather than the Augustinian model of history, with the fall of Troy suggesting an analogy for the fall of mankind and a prefiguring of the fall of Rome. Even Dares's rather flat account draws attention (in, for example, his 'portraits' of the main protagonists in chapters 12 and 13) to the choices and decisions made by individuals in the exercise of their free will, with disastrous consequences for Troy. The author of the first recension of *Togail Troí* says of the Greek entry into Troy, orchestrated by Antenor and Aeneas, *Indarlat dofóethsad an talam fó cossaib ar threise na toilge ron-ucsat [ocus] ar mét*

[44] Poppe, among others, points out that Isidore of Seville endorsed Dares as a 'historian' (Poppe, 'The matter of Troy', 259).

[45] Mac Gearailt suggests that the compilers of *Togail Troí*, especially in its later versions, were aiming 'to provide a convenient source in Irish on Greek and Roman history' ('*Togail Troí*: an example', 79).

[46] Such stylistic devices are also found in other vernacular texts such as the *Chanson de Roland* (Damian-Grint, *New Historians*, 37–8).

[47] This is not to say that Augustine set down an explicit theory or philosophy of history 'other than his repudiation of the Platonic theory of the cycle of existences and the substitution for it of the linear progress implicit in the Christian view of the creation, fall, redemption and final destiny' (O'Meara, *St Augustine*, xxxiv).

[48] Pickering, *Literature and Art*, 174–5.

na feirgi ('You would think that the earth would fall under their feet from the force of the attack that they made, and from the greatness of their wrath'),[49] emphasizing the motivated acts of individual warriors, and his description of the bloodthirsty sack of Troy highlights the horror of the fall of a people before a new cycle begins.

Though the *Táin* also recounts battles and ends with the rout of the armies of Connacht, it does not conform to either a Boethian or Augustinian model of history and in fact is not structured like a Latinate history at all.[50] Heroes are not shown to be exercising free will and on the whole seem lacking in motivation (in the sense of a narratorial account of reasons for actions and clear cause-and-effect indicators). The battles are about royal wealth and heroic valour rather than about territory or the fate of a people. The elements of magic which create a strong atmosphere of the supernatural in the *Táin* have few parallels in Latinate histories whose purported mission was to record true events in the correct order. In the *Táin*, there is little sense of rise and fall and no clear message that the Connacht dynasty has now fallen and power will be relocated elsewhere; rather, we infer that the men of Ulster and Connacht will return home to heal their wounds before hostilities break out again somewhere else. Though the *Táin* may indeed function as a political analogy for the state of Ulster at a particular historical period, its imagination of the past to comment on the present is a literary rather than a historical construct.

Togail Troí, on the other hand, functions as *historia* in the same way that Dares's account was regarded as the history of real events and people. Its narrative mode is less suggestive of the *Táin*, in fact, than of the most famous example of Irish history, *Lebor Gabála* (The Book of Invasions), which, like *Togail Troí*, combines Latin and Irish models of narrative to create a continuous history of the Irish people.[51] Taking shape in the eleventh century, *Lebor Gabála* is an amalgam of events drawn from biblical history, Latin history (especially the *Historia Brittonum* [History of the Britons]) and native origin-legends, with accretions in each successive recension.[52] The relationship between *Lebor Gabála* and *Historia Brittonum* is unclear, but there are obvious links between the two texts which suggest influence in one or both directions. The editor of *Lebor Gabála*, R.A.S. Macalister, pointed out that the surviving text combines two histories which were originally separate. Sections 3 to 7, the *Liber Praecursorum* (The Book of Preceding Events), describing the 'invasions' of Ireland, have been interpolated into a history of the Gaels, the *Liber Occupationis* (The Book of Invasion), a work probably written originally in Latin which covers world history from the creation to the arrival of Míl and his descendants in the 'promised land' of Ireland.[53] These histories correspond approximately to the two accounts of early

[49] Stokes, 'The destruction of Troy', lines 1846–7, my translation. Stokes translates *tolg* as 'pride', which he seems to have derived from the adjective *tolgda*.

[50] For the argument that the *Táin* was regarded as *historia* by the Book of Leinster scribe who copied both the *Táin* and *Togail Troí*, see Ó Néill, 'The Latin colophon', 274. For more recent studies of the *Táin* as historiography, see Schlüter, *History or Fable?*; Toner, 'The Ulster Cycle'.

[51] On this point, see also Abigail Burnyeat's chapter in this volume.

[52] Carey, *Irish National Origin-Legend*, 11–17. Carey suggests that some kind of 'proto-*Lebar Gabála*' existed in a written form as early as the ninth century (17). The first recension survives in the Book of Leinster.

[53] Macalister, *Lebor Gabála Érenn*, I, xxv–xxviii. Macalister argues that the history of the Gaels is a 'quasi-learned parody' of the biblical account of the children of Israel (*ibid*., V, 2 and I, xxxi). The world histories of Eusebius, translated by Jerome (AD 379), and Orosius (AD 417), based on the historiographical model of the Bible, provided significant narrative models for the Irish writers of *Lebor Gabála* (Carey, *Irish National Origin-Legend*, 3–5). See Scowcroft's analyses of the text and its transmission, '*Leabhar Gabhála* – part I' and '*Leabhar Gabhála* – part II'. See also Carey (ed.), *Lebor Gabála Érenn*.

Irish history found in *Historia Brittonum*, describing firstly the series of invasions or settlements of Ireland and secondly the wanderings of the Scythians and their arrival in Ireland.[54]

The two parts of *Lebor Gabála* identified by Macalister represent a confluence of two different models of history, the Boethian and the Augustinian. The series of invasions are cyclical in their basic structure: dynasties rise and fall in a series of battles initiated by individual leaders, while time passes and new dynasties emerge from the remnant of the old. The 'Partholón' and 'Nemed' sections (4 and 5), for example, are virtual doublets of each other, both recounting the journey and arrival in Ireland of the king, a sequence of land-grabs and battles, inundations by water, plague, death of the king, and inheritance by his sons before a new king arrives from over the sea. This structure, as a series of journeys, battles, defeats, heroic pride and dynastic fall, aligns much of the 'invasions' sequence with other Boethian models of history, including *Historia Brittonum* and *Togail Troí*.

Later redactors of the second and third recensions (of which surviving manuscripts are found from the fourteenth century onwards) attempted to align this cyclical model more closely with the biblical and Augustinian linear model of time from the beginning of creation, adding in references to world history from the Flood to Abraham and the kings of Assyria.[55] These redactors include a number of synchronistic references to Troy – taken mainly from Eusebius via Jerome's Latin translation – which imply that the settlements of Ireland were contemporaneous with events in Troy:

> In ochtmad bliadan flatha Poliparis tanic tam muntire Partholoin. Is and ro togail Ercoil in Troi. Suspartus ba ri in domain in tan sin. Sesca bl[iadan] etir in da togail, .i. xxx bl[iadan] post tamh co tanic Nemed, [ocus] xx iar tiachtain Nemidh, co ro toghlad in Troi din chur dedenach.[56]

> In the eighth year of the reign of Bellepares there came the plague of Partholon's people. It is then that Hercules captured Troy. Sosarmus was king of the world at the time. Sixty years between the two Takings, that is 30 years after the plague till Nemed came, and 20 years after the coming of Nemed, till Troy was captured for the last time.

Such references – mainly from the second and third recensions – indicate a familiarity with the legend of Troy and its two sieges as a synchronic milestone, and imply a parallel between the long-drawn-out power struggle between the Greeks and the Trojans and the long period of settlement in Ireland. The frequent references (in the first recension) to Greek origins and connections of the peoples who settled Ireland, including Partholon, *tanic iarum asin Mheigindt, i. asa Greig Bhig* ('he came thereafter out of Mygdonia, that is, out of Graecia Parva'),[57] and Nemed *mac Agnomain do Grecaib Scithia* ('son of Agnomain of the Greeks of Scythia'),[58] imply other parallels between Greek and Irish history which align Ireland not only

[54] Carey, *Irish National Origin-Legend*, 5–7.

[55] For example, Macalister, *Lebor Gabála Érenn*, III, 36–7 (section 4, 'Partholon', chapter 231). Most of these 'world history' additions are found in the Book of Lecan version, which Macalister describes as having 'too many eccentric readings and interpolations' to be used as the standard reading (*ibid*., I, xxiii).

[56] *Ibid*., III, 34–5 (section 4, 'Partholon', chapter 229), text and translation.

[57] *Ibid*., III, section 4, chapter 209.

[58] *Ibid*., III, section 5, chapter 237.

with creation history but specifically with the Greeks as a heroic European people.[59] The remaining sections of *Lebor Gabála*, which describe the creation, expulsion and wanderings in exile of the Gaels as a chosen people (sections 1 and 2) and the 'Roll of Kings' in Ireland (sections 9 and 10) follow a Christian and Augustinian model of universal history, continuing the linear account of the journey to the promised land, the arrival in Ireland of Míl and his descendants, and a chronological account of the kings of Ireland extending up until the conquest of Ireland by Henry II.[60] The origins of the Gaels, unlike the other invaders, are firmly in Asia, specifically Egypt, and the overall impression from the whole text of *Lebor Gabála* is that the Irish have inherited the best of both Europe and Asia.

The Irish version of the Troy story has been remediated not only in its language and style but in its structure as a historical narrative. Using the same basic format as Dares's original account, itself modelled on a Boethian or cyclical view of dynastic history, *Togail Troí* calls on the resources of Latin history and a Latinate Irish rhetoric to create an original and distinctive version of the Troy story. In its use of these literary strategies, *Togail Troí* resembles the 'Book of Invasions' more closely than it does *Táin Bó Cúailnge*. The genealogical preface found in Recension 2 of *Togail Troí*, which amalgamates Classical myth and biblical history, along with an insertion of synchronic history aligning the Troy story with biblical history, acts as an Augustinian-style gloss on what is essentially a Boethian narrative, replicating the way in which *Lebor Gabála* also combines two types of history.[61] Some of the eleventh-century historical poems in the Book of Leinster associated with *Lebor Gabála* draw explicit parallels between the events of *Lebor Gabála* and *Togail Troí*. In one poem, Gilla Cóemáin aligns events in Irish history with those of world history, suggesting the kind of historicizing impulse which gave *Togail Troí* its significance, and claims that the fall of Troy happened at the same time as the battle of Mag Tuired (Moytura), a key transitional event between the fall of one people and the emergence of another.[62] Another poem, by Gilla in Chomded, has the fall of Troy occurring contemporaneously with the rule of the descendants of Míl, representing the final cycle in the settlement of Ireland.[63]

Togail Troí is a *historia* of ancient peoples which forms an analogy, in a parallel sequence, to the legendary history of Ireland and its people. It provides for Irish audiences an account of dynastic rise and fall which both authorizes the power of individual kings and their families and warns them of the consequences of political and military failure. The mustering of the Greek and Trojan troops under different leaders, from the islands and hinterland around the two imperial bases, recalls the political divisions of Ireland into provinces and territories ruled by kings, and the Irish compiler of *Togail Troí* uses the familiar terms *rí*, 'king', and *ardrí*, 'high-king', to distinguish between the individual leaders and the generals in command of the whole armies. When Palamedes challenges Agamemnon's leadership of the Greek forces, a pivotal event that alienates Achilles, the Irish text says: '*Ro-ordiset na Greic iarsin do airdrigh forru uile*' ('The Greeks appointed him then as high-king

[59] On the relationship between the Greeks and the Irish, see Poppe & Schlüter, 'Greece, Ireland'; Jaski, '"We are of the Greeks in our origin"'.

[60] Regarding the final sections of *Lebor Gabála*, sections 9 and 10, 'The Roll of the Kings', Macalister says that these were originally a separate and independent compilation (*Lebor Gabála Érenn*, V, 137).

[61] Best & O'Brien, *Togail Troí*, lines 30820–37.

[62] Smith, *Three Historical Poems*. For further commentary, see Poppe, 'The matter of Troy', 270; Carey, '*Lebor Gabála* and the legendary history of Ireland', 41–5.

[63] Clarke, 'An Irish Achilles', 246.

over them all').[64] By mapping Greek and Trojan political organization on to that of contemporary Ireland, the compilers of *Togail Troí* make the story relevant to their audiences, linking the great conflict between Greece and Troy to the movements of peoples who became the ancestors of the provinces of Ireland. The origins of the Irish people in both Europe and Asia, according to *Lebor Gabála*, aligns them further with the legend of Troy whose heroes recognized themselves to be Europeans (Greeks) fighting against Asians (Trojans). When Hector counsels against all-out war with the Greeks, in recension 1 of *Togail Troí*, he says that war-loving Greece can summon armies from all over Europe, whereas the Trojans cannot rely on similar support from the men of 'Little Asia': '*Ní romúinsetar sidé dóib bith i cathaib no i coicthibh, acht i síth [ocus] cáinchomrac [ocus] indess dogrés*' ('They have not thought of themselves as being in battles or fights, but rather in peace and fair dealing and quiet always').[65] This, then, is the Irish heritage, combining the warrior excellence of the Greeks and the peace-making of the Asians.

Ystorya Dared *as history*

Despite its later date of composition, *Ystorya Dared* seems to have been designed, like its Irish counterpart, to fit into existing paradigms of historiography. Surviving in a number of manuscripts from the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries (as well as many later manuscripts), the text invariably precedes one or more of the Welsh chronicles: *Brut y Brenhinedd* (History of the Kings), a thirteenth-century translation of Geoffrey of Monmouth's *Historia Regum Britanniae*; *Brut y Tywysogyon*, 'History of the Princes', a continuation of Geoffrey's *Historia* up to 1282; and *Brenhinedd y Saesson* (Kings of the Saxons), another continuation of Geoffrey which attempts to align Welsh and English history.[66] The latter two of these texts, probably compiled in the fourteenth century, are based on earlier Latin texts which no longer survive, so all three of the histories, together with *Ystorya Dared* itself, are derived from Latin models.

From its position in the manuscript record, and its juxtaposition to the primary sources of vernacular Welsh history, it seems safe to conclude that *Ystorya Dared* was indeed regarded as *historia*, and that it was deliberately positioned before the translation of Geoffrey's *Historia* in order to provide a chronologically antecedent account of the Trojan origins of Brutus, founder of Britain and ancestor of the British, that is, Welsh, people. By starting the chronological history of Britain with the fall of Troy, the Welsh compilers established an origin for Wales that began before the founding of Rome and linked the Welsh to the great civilizations of both Troy and Rome. The correspondences between different versions of *Ystorya Dared* and different versions of the Welsh chronicles found in specific groups of manuscripts make it all the more likely that the texts were copied together as part of an imagined sequence.[67]

[64] Stokes, *Togail Troí*, lines 2108–9.
[65] Stokes, 'The destruction of Troy', lines 333–4 (my translation).
[66] For a table showing the sequence of texts in the earliest manuscripts, see Fulton, 'Troy story', 146. On the Welsh chronicles, see Roberts, 'Geoffrey of Monmouth'; Smith, 'Historical writing'. On the transmission of medieval Welsh prose texts and a list of manuscripts, see 'Welsh Prose 1350–1425', http://www.rhyddiaithganoloesol.caerdydd.ac.uk (last accessed 2 August 2013).
[67] Jones, 'Historical writing', 16; Fulton, 'Troy story', 146.

Ystorya Dared therefore shares with Geoffrey's *Historia*, and other earlier Latin histories such as the *Historia Brittonum*, a cyclical model of history which, like *Togail Troí*, emphasizes the workings of fate, the agency of individuals, and the fall of one regime which will be replaced by another. Its structure provides a generically seamless introduction to the Welsh translation of Geoffrey's *Historia Regum Britanniae*, the history which, more than any other of its type, relies on the pattern of successive cycles of power, each brought down by the next regime which rises up as another falls. But the other two chronicles, *Brut y Tywysogyon* and *Brenhinedd y Saesson*, based on native Latin annals, are much closer to the model of the traditional monastic chronicle which provides a year-by-year account of major events, including the deaths of kings and bishops, and which arranges local and national history on a linear trajectory. As Poppe has pointed out, wherever *Ystorya Dared* is followed by one of the Welsh chronicles in a medieval manuscript, it is always *Brut y Brenhinedd*, the translation of Geoffrey, which follows it.[68] It seems likely, then, that *Ystorya Dared* was envisaged not so much as a prequel to the whole sequence of chronicles, but specifically as a prequel to Geoffrey, whose style and structure it resembles.[69]

In contrast to *Togail Troí*, the Welsh *Ystorya Dared* follows its source, Dares, fairly closely, as a means of retaining the historical credibility of the source text as well as aligning it with Geoffrey's history. While Wales did not, as far as we know, produce any vernacular foundation histories of its people comparable to the Irish *Lebor Gabála*, Welsh scribes drew on their knowledge of post-Roman Latin historiography focused on regional histories and the stories of great leaders articulated through secular narrative strategies. The twelfth-century *Historia Gruffudd ap Cynan*, a rare example of *historia* produced in Wales before about 1200, was based on a Latin original and shares features with both Welsh bardic eulogy and Latin genres of narrative history, including descriptions of battles, public speeches by war leaders and a lack of chronological precision.[70] Similarly, we can find in *Ystorya Dared* some influence from the vernacular tradition of narrative, particularly the stories known as the 'Four Branches of the *Mabinogi*', which suggests that, as in *Togail Troí*, translated material was remediated into narrative modes that were already familiar. The opening phrases of *Ystorya Dared*, *Pelleas a oed urenhin yg nghastell a elwit Pelopeus, a brawt a oed idaw a elwit Eson* ('Pelleas was king in a castle which was called Pelopeus, and he had a brother who was called Aeson'),[71] follow the pattern of the native tales such as *Branwen Uerch Lyr* (Branwen, Daughter of Llŷr), which begins *Bendigeiduran uab Llyr a oed urenhin coronawc ar yr ynys hon, ac ardyrchawc o goron Lundein* ('Bendigeidfran son of Llŷr was a crowned king of this island and invested with the crown of London').[72] This syntactic pattern of the

[68] Poppe, 'The matter of Troy', 262.

[69] The existence of a 'special relationship' between Geoffrey's history and Dares's text is supported by a number of manuscripts in which the two Latin texts are found together: see Poppe, 'The matter of Troy', 274. Jones ('Historical writing', 17) adds a further prequel to the sequence, namely *Y Bibyl Ynghymraec*, a translation of the *Promptuarium Bibliae*, the 'poor man's version' of *Historia Scholastica*, the long bible-history compiled in the second half of the twelfth century by Peter Comestor. This abridged history, Augustinian in style, covers the period from the creation to the immediate ancestors of Priam, and includes a closing reference to *Ystorya Dared* as the next item in the historical sequence.

[70] On the *Historia*, see Russell, *Vita Griffini*.

[71] The Welsh text is taken from Rhys & Evans, *Text of the Bruts*, 1, with standardized orthography and my own translation.

[72] Thomson, *Branwen Uerch Lyr*, 1.

name, the status, a location, and an adverbial or paratactic addition is distinctively Welsh and is not found in quite the same form in either the Latin or Irish Troy texts.

The relatively late appearance of the Welsh adaptation of Dares – in the first third of the fourteenth century – needs to be considered in the broader context of vernacular writing in Wales, which survives only in small amounts before the middle of the thirteenth century.[73] The translation of Geoffrey's *Historia* into Welsh was among the earliest vernacular texts to be written, along with the other Welsh chronicles, suggesting the importance of early British history to Welsh scribes and their patrons in the thirteenth century. *Ystorya Dared* seems to have been translated early in the next century perhaps for the sole reason of attaching it to *Brut y Brenhinedd* as an extension of British (and Welsh) history into the further reaches of antiquity. It is striking that the first appearance of the Troy story in English appeared at around the same time as the Welsh version, and in a similar locale, namely the March of Wales. *The Seege or Batayle of Troye*, adapted mainly from Dares (with some additions from the French *Roman de Troie* of Benoît de Saint-Maure), is associated with Shrewsbury, while *Ystorya Dared* is most likely to have been compiled at the Cistercian abbey of Valle Crucis, situated near Llangollen between Wrexham and Oswestry and barely thirty miles from Shrewsbury.[74] This proximity suggests a shared Marcher interest in the Troy story, but for different purposes. The English version is a free adaptation of Dares into verse, adding in comic anti-Trojan inventions such as the ignominious death of Hector at the hands of Achilles while bending over from his horse to pick up a jewelled helmet.[75] The Welsh version, by contrast, retains the historiographical structure and function of Dares, with its emphasis on the series of battles over an extended period of time and the inexorable fall of Troy to a superior military power. The fact that the Welsh translation of Geoffrey, *Brut y Brenhinedd*, is also likely to have been a Valle Crucis text indicates the monastic and historiographical purpose that brought *Ystorya Dared* and *Brut y Brenhinedd* into the same manuscript context.[76]

Of the other two Welsh chronicles, *Brut y Tywysogyon* was probably compiled at the Cistercian abbey of Strata Florida, not far from Aberystwyth in west Wales.[77] *Brenhinedd y Saesson*, on the other hand, is likely to be another Valle Crucis text,[78] suggesting that this abbey had a considerable investment in the writing of Welsh history. It is clear that at some stage in the later part of the thirteenth century and the early part of the fourteenth century the scribes at the Cistercian abbeys of Wales began remediating their Latin annals, and other Latin material such as Dares, into vernacular histories of Wales. They were in fact instituting a new kind of historiography, and it was one which emerged as a direct response to the upheaval of the social and political order following the trauma of 1282. In that year, Llywelyn ap Gruffudd, the last independent prince of north Wales, was killed in battle against the army of the English king, Edward I, and with his death Wales lost its political independence. This event was a major turning-point in the history of Wales, leading swiftly to its appropriation, in 1284, into an English institutional infrastructure of government and

[73] Huws, 'The Welsh Book'; Huws, *Medieval Welsh Manuscripts*, 13. See also Fulton, 'Literature of the Welsh gentry', 196–8. Some examples of Old Welsh are found in manuscripts of the ninth and tenth centuries (Huws, *Medieval Welsh Manuscripts*, 9), but no vernacular manuscripts survive before about 1250.

[74] Barnicle, *The Seege*, xxvi–xxvii; Smith, 'Historical writing in medieval Wales', 81–2.

[75] Barnicle, *The Seege*, version L, lines 1493–1502.

[76] Huws, *Medieval Welsh Manuscripts*, 53.

[77] *Ibid*.

[78] Smith, 'Historical writing in medieval Wales', 84.

administration. But it was also an apocalyptic event for Welsh men of learning and one which largely determined literary and cultural production for the next century and a half. Poets expressed a sense of national devastation, exemplified most vividly by Gruffudd ab yr Ynad Coch's elegy for Llywelyn ap Gruffudd, a highly-charged piece of rhetoric which begins:

> *Oer calon dan fron o fraw – allwynin*
> *Am frenin, dderwin ddôr, Aberffraw*.
>
> Heart cold in the breast with terror, grieving
> For a king, oak door, of Aberffraw.[79]

The writer of *Brenhinedd y Saesson* says of the death of Llywelyn: '*Ac yna y bwriwyd holl Gymry y'r llawr*' ('And then all Wales was cast to the ground').[80]

This same sense of apocalypse, of the fall of princes and the loss of empire, is precisely what the Welsh monks found in Dares and which perhaps prompted their adaptation of the text. The series of battles recounted by Dares, with months or years of truces in between, mirrors the long war of attrition between Wales and England during the thirteenth century. Yet the Welsh redactor, like the English poet of the *Seege*, avoids making an easy correlation between the warlike Greeks and the English on one side, and the plucky Trojans and the Welsh on the other. Despite Dares's supposed allegiance to Troy, his text, and the Welsh and English versions, display a certain partiality for the noble Greeks and their great hero, Achilles, with Aeneas labelled as a traitor for betraying Troy to the Greeks. The Welsh account of the death of Achilles, due to the plotting of Hecuba and her son Alexander and to the frailty of Achilles, tempted by Polyxena, follows Dares quite closely but manages to underline the significance of Achilles's death as a setback for the Greeks which casts no glory at all on the treachery of the Trojans:

> Ac yn hynny Achelarwy ac Antilogus mab y Nestor a deuthant yr lle gossodedic, ac aethant y gyt yr demyl. Ac o bob parth udunt y byrywyt ergyteu, ac yd anoges pawb or bratwyr y gilyd o un vryt. Ac yna Achelarwy ac Antilogus a droyssant eu mentyll am y breicheu asseu udunt, ac a dynnassant glefydeu. Ac yna y lladawd Achelarwy lawer o wyr, ac Alexander a ladawd Antilogus ac a vrathawd llawer o vratheu yn Achelarwy. Ac Achel yna or bratheu hynny kyt bei dewr yr ymladei a golles y eneit. Ac Alexander a erchis bwrw y gorff ef y adar a bwystuileit, ac adolwyn a wnaeth Elenus nawnelit hynny, namyn rodi y gorff y wyr Achelarwy. A gwyr groec a gymerassant y gorff ef a chorff Antilogus ac ae dugassant gantunt y eu lluesteu.[81]
>
> And then Achilles and Antilochus, son of Nestor, came to the appointed place and went together into the temple. And from every side blows were struck at them, and each of the traitors urged on the others with one mind. And then Achilles and Antilochus wrapped their cloaks around their forearms and drew their swords. And then Achilles killed many men, but Alexander killed

[79] The Welsh text of the poem is in Parry, *Oxford Book of Welsh Verse*, no. 36; the English translation is in Jones, *Oxford Book of Welsh Verse in English*, no. 22.

[80] Jones, *Brenhinedd y Saesson*, 258, lines 19–20 (Welsh text) and 259, line 23 (English translation).

[81] Rhys & Evans, *Text of the Bruts*, 31–2 (my translation). Compare Meister, *Daretis Phrygii De excidio Troiae historia*, chapter 34.

> Antilochus and stabbed many wounds into Achilles. And then Achilles, from these wounds, however strongly he fought, lost his soul. And Alexander called for his body to be thrown to the birds and the wild beasts, but Helenus did not want this to be done but to give the body to Achilles's men. And the men of Greece took his body and the body of Antilochus and carried them away with them to their tents.

Like Dares and *Togail Troí*, the author of *Ystorya Dared* contrasts the men of Europe with the men of Asia, though not as judgementally as Dares, who reports Hector as saying that the men of Asia had spent their time in idleness instead of building ships ready for war.[82] In the Welsh version, Hector says in reference to the men of Asia (that is, the troops who would ally themselves to Troy should they go to war with Greece): *a bot gwyr yr Asia ynteu yn llesc yn ymladeu, ac wrth hynny nat oed hawd kael llyges* ('and that the men of Asia were weak at fighting, and because of that it would not be easy to obtain a fleet').[83] Unlike the Irish, who saw themselves as the products of both Europe and Asia, the Welsh trace their descent definitively from Europe. In the Welsh version of British history, it is the founding hero, Brutus, with his noble Roman descent, who will cancel out the stigma of treachery that marks Aeneas. At the end of *Ystorya Dared*, the Welsh adapter adds the comment, not in Dares or the Irish version, that Aeneas set sail away from Troy *parth ar eidal*, 'towards Italy', prefiguring the rise of Rome in the wake of the destruction of Troy.

Conclusion

In both Wales and Ireland, the Latin text of Dares Phrygius, itself a product of late-antique historiography, was remediated into genres of historiography which were already familiar and current among writers and their readers. For Ireland, that meant the Latin histories written by Jerome and Orosius, the *Historia Brittonum*, and the vernacular *Lebor Gabála*, a work which placed the Irish centrally within biblical world history and located them at the intersection of Europe and Asia, the same location as the war that toppled Troy. For Wales, the remediation meant an alignment with Geoffrey's *Historia*, also translated into the vernacular around half a century before *Ystorya Dared* was composed. The purpose of *Ystorya Dared* was to provide an authenticating prequel to *Brut y Brenhinedd* which established beyond doubt the Trojan, Roman and European origins of the British people and their indisputable occupation of the island of Britain before the coming of the Saxons. Appearing soon after the loss of Welsh independence in 1282, the sequence of *Ystorya Dared* and *Brut y Brenhinedd*, with their stylistic similarities and seamless chronology, provided historical proof of an ancient right to political and territorial autonomy, now overridden by the English crown.

Both the Irish and Welsh versions of the Troy story exemplify the new styles of Christian historiography which developed from late antiquity to replace older Classical narratives about Rome and its empire. They follow their main source, Dares, in structuring the narrative as a story of great nations and their leaders whose rise and fall, mediated by the providence of God, leads to further dynastic and territorial developments. Particularly in the case of the Irish compilers, they go further

[82] *Ibid.*, chapter 6.
[83] Rhys & Evans, *Text of the Bruts*, 7.

than Dares in giving greater emphasis to individual heroes and battles, and to the tragic inevitability of the fall of a people. With the revival of Classical models of history from the tenth century, Irish and Welsh historians, like their contemporaries elsewhere in Europe, combined Latin and vernacular styles to write histories which were more detailed and literary than chronicles, and whose function was to account for the origins of the post-Roman nations.

4

THE USES OF EXAGGERATION IN *MERUGUD UILIXIS MEIC LEIRTIS* AND IN *FINGAL CHLAINNE TANNTAIL**

Robert Crampton

Introduction

Merugud Uilixis Meic Leirtis (The Going Astray of Ulysses son of Laertes) and *Fingal Chlainne Tanntail* (The Kinslaying of the Family of Tantalus) are medieval Irish adaptations based on Classical narratives.[1] Although *Merugud Uilixis* has been the focus of several studies, its author's original take on the story of the return of Homer's hero remains a source of wonder;[2] on the other hand, the account of the tragedy of the Mycenaean royal house presented in *Fingal Chlainne Tanntail* both deviates less markedly from its underlying narrative(s) and has received very little modern critical attention.[3]

The significant number of unique aspects of *Fingal Chlainne Tanntail* and *Merugud Uilixis* (including both unorthodox details which are present in, as well as orthodox details which are absent from, these medieval Irish adaptations) may suggest a combination of deficient sources and limited authorial skill. Authorial deficiency may be most keenly felt in the case of *Merugud Uilixis*, which contains several elements which are wildly unorthodox, even diametrically anti-Classical. Modern scholarship on this tale to date has tended (with the exception of W.B. Stanford and, to a lesser

* This chapter expands upon my PhD dissertation which includes an analysis of the unorthodox aspects of each of the medieval Irish adaptations discussed here: Crampton, '*Fingal Chlainne Tanntail*'.

[1] The editions cited here are, respectively, [Robert T.] Meyer, *Merugud Uilix*, and Byrne, 'The parricides'. Byrne prefers the title containing the plural form *Fingala*, which is found in Dublin, Royal Irish Academy, MS D iv 2. However, the singular *Fingal* is found both in the only other extant version of *Fingal Chlainne Tanntail*, in Dublin, King's Inns, MS 12, and in what is highly likely to be a direct reference to this work contained within the twelfth- or thirteenth-century *Togail na Tebe* (The Destruction of Thebes), a medieval Irish version of Statius's *Thebaid*. The word *merugud* is sometimes translated as 'wandering' when referring to *Merugud Uilixis*. However, the word can also be used to mean 'error'; there are good reasons to infer that the psychological meaning of *merugud* was at least present in the author's mind, therefore I prefer 'going astray' to 'wandering'.

[2] Hillers ('Ulysses', 195) notes that 'scholars have always been puzzled by the Irish saga's dramatic deviation from the story line of Homer's *Odyssey*'. In a similar vein, Miles (*Heroic Saga*, 60) states of *Merugud Uilixis* that 'though one would expect it to be the most Greek of the classical tales, it is, paradoxically, the most characteristically Irish'.

[3] Apart from Byrne's edition of *Fingal Chlainne Tanntail*, there are but few references to this text in modern scholarship. For example, whereas Stanford ('Towards a history', 35) is notably complimentary about *Merugud Uilixis*, he notes of *Fingal Chlainne Tanntail* that 'The account of Tantalus and his descendants is less effective as a literary work than the *Merugud* . . . it has little vividness or style, to judge from a translation'.

extent, Kuno Meyer) to give a very low assessment of the author's Classical knowledge. Barbara Hillers has stated that:

> As a version of the *Odyssey, Merugud Uilixis* is a disappointment . . . the Homeric content of *Merugud Uilixis* is so slim that we have to conclude that it could not have been based on any complete version of the *Odyssey* . . .[4]

Moreover, most damningly for the author's status as a classicist, in the view of Hillers,

> The omissions and misunderstandings [in relation to the Cyclops incident] indicate that the author did not have the text [either of Virgil's *Aeneid* or of the Irish *Imtheachta Aeniasa*] in front of him to verify his account: he either *read* the text some time previous to the composition of *M[erugud] U[ilixis]*, or *heard it read*.[5]

However, any explanation of the content of either tale which is predicated on deficiency is unlikely to explain all of the material which is present in each text. In particular, if the respective authors did not know the underlying narratives well, how could they have produced between them portrayals of major characters which are both well-developed and close to orthodox, such as that of Atreus in *Fingal Chlainne Tanntail*, as well as fine details of plot which are also close to orthodox, such as Penelope's parting gift of a brooch which is present in *Merugud Uilixis* as it is in Homer's *Odyssey*?[6] The presence of such orthodox elements in each tale is difficult to explain, if deficiency is taken to be the root cause of each text's unorthodox aspects. For example, despite the quirks of *Merugud Uilixis* in relation to the orthodox narrative, modern commentators appear to agree that the author shows great confidence in his ability to capture the spirit of Odysseus in his portrayal of Uilixes.[7]

If weakness of either author or source cannot explain the whole content of either text, we are left with the puzzle or paradox presented by the idiosyncratic elements of each of these medieval Irish adaptations. However, when their unorthodox aspects are considered collectively, and especially when the sum of both texts' unique elements are taken together, it is possible to understand the rationale which produced even the most perplexing aberrations from what we expect in a version of the Classical narrative in question.[8] It will be suggested below that even the most radical of deviations from the orthodox Classical path in these two texts, such as where the author of *Merugud Uilixis* would have us believe that the final leg of his hero Uilixes's journey home takes place *gan muir* ('overland'), may not be as they first appear.[9] On its own, such a detail might be considered a barbarism, yet when all

[4] Hillers, 'The odyssey', 65–6. Compare Hillers's discussion in chapter 5 of this volume.

[5] *Ibid*., 68 (Hillers's italics).

[6] On the portrayal of Atreus in *Fingal Chlainne Tannail*, see below, 61–3. Descriptions of the respective brooches may be found in [Robert T.] Meyer, *Merugud Uilix*, line 258, and *Odyssey* IX.226–8. All references to the *Odyssey* in this chapter are to the text (with translation) in Murray, *Homer The Odyssey*.

[7] Hillers states that 'He clearly felt he knew Ulysses' ('*In fer fiamach firglic*', 28). Stanford goes further, hinting that the author of *Merugud Uilixis* not only knew the Classical hero, but deliberately improved on him: 'in depth the essentials [of the Odyssean narrative] remain the same. Ulysses displays high intelligence, resourcefulness, prudence, courage and endurance . . . He is even shown in a more admirable light than in the Cyclops episode in *Odyssey* 9' (Stanford, *Ireland*, 77).

[8] The following comment by Stanford (*ibid*.) appears to be a useful starting point for the analysis presented below: 'To regard it [*Merugud Uilixis*] as a "debased" or "distorted" version of the *Odyssey*, as some scholars have done, is wrong . . . the *Merugud* can be accepted on its own merits as a skilful re-creation of Ulysses' adventures'.

[9] Hillers has taken the fact that Uilixes arrives home overland to indicate that the author 'doesn't know basic facts about Ulysses [e.g. Ithaca; island]', and has suggested that 'the author has re-interpreted and

such anti-Classical aspects of these tales are taken together, a clear pattern emerges. It may be shown that, for both texts, such unorthodox details are not errors but represent their respective authors' efforts to steer us towards a particular interpretation of the *moral* content of the underlying stories in question. Therefore, rather than indicating weakness, it seems far more likely that the unorthodox aspects of each tale are the result of a deliberate programme of reworking by authors both highly learned and imaginative, each with a clear and remarkably similar focus on the moral potential of their specialist subject matter. The evidence presented below suggests that the respective authors not only possessed a firm grasp of the arcane (especially in the context of the medieval West) underlying narratives in question, but that each of these medieval Irish authors also appreciated this material in a manner not far removed from that expressed by at least some of their Classical forebears.

The unorthodox aspects of Fingal Chlainne Tanntail *and* Merugud Uilixis

The application of a comparative method in order to separate orthodox material from what appears to be the input of the medieval Irish adapter is relatively straightforward in the case of *Fingal Chlainne Tanntail*, although such a process is not without methodological pitfalls, such as the identification and selection of orthodox analogues to a particular incident as it appears in its medieval Irish guise. A comparative study is both practicable and effective in identifying the unique details of plot and character-portrayal present in this text, because much of the content of many of its sub-narratives is similar enough to that found within identifiable orthodox analogues: this leaves the boundary between orthodox and unique material reasonably clear. However, since this is not so obviously the case for much of the content of the more unorthodox *Merugud Uilixis*, the employment of any method which relies on the existence of orthodox analogues is more open to question. Even so, methodological problems need not prove insurmountable even in this case.

An example of the greater degree of unorthodoxy present in the incidents described in *Merugud Uilixis* may be found in their descriptions of the following culinary incidents: the grisly meal prepared by Atreus for Thyestes as described in *Fingal Chlainne Tanntail*, and Uilixes's response to his men's desire to feed on the flesh of giant sheep forever in *Merugud Uilixis*. A brief comparative analysis of the presentation of these incidents and a sample of their respective orthodox analogues will illustrate the usefulness of applying this method in order to identify the unique elements of each medieval Irish adaptation. This is especially important for the interpretation of *Merugud Uilixis*, since what appears to be true for *Fingal Chlainne Tanntail*, which is relatively close to orthodox, may also apply in the case of the apparently far more idiosyncratic *Merugud Uilixis*.

---

re-combined the homeric motifs in a way that strongly argues against the author having had access to any complete summary of the *Odyssey*' (see also below, 84–93). I propose that the reverse is the case: that both the author's morally ameliorative reworking of the underlying narrative and his skilful use of wordplay based on such orthodox material as the names of Argos and Aeolus suggest that he knew and understood the entire underlying narrative very well.

1. Atreus orders a terrible menu for Thyestes

(a) *Fingal Chlainne Tanntail*, section 3[10]

> rosmuisainedh comairli ainghidh [uathmar ag Aídir] ina menmain, .i. in coíca mac rostorgaib [dia brathair, a marbadh uile] ocus a tabairt arson feola cet[radh dia n-athair] dia caithem leisin fleidh . . . 'Is olcc in gním doronais', bar Teist, 'do daltadha fein do marbad'. 'Nirbo ferr duitsi, mo conugudh-sa fam tsheitidh', for Aídir.
>
> Atreus conceived a terrifying, wicked plan in his mind, to kill all the fifty sons which he had taken from his brother, and to serve them to their father in place of beef that he might eat them at the feast . . . 'Evil is the deed you have done', said Thyestes, 'to kill your own foster-sons'. 'It was not better for you to inflict a severe wound on me through my wife', said Atreus.

(b) Hyginus, *Fabulae* 88.1–2[11]

> filiosque eius infantes Tantalum et Plisthenum occidit et epulis Thyesti apposuit. Qui cum uesceretur, Atreus imperauit bracchia et ora puerorum afferri.
>
> [Atreus] killed Thyestes's infant sons, Tantalus and Plisthenes, and served them to his brother as a meal. While he was eating them, Atreus ordered the hands and heads of the boys to be brought forth.

(c) *First Vatican Mythographer* I.22.4[12]

> [Atreus] eique ad se uocatos filios suos interempos apposuit epulandos; eique post epulas filiorum capita signum conuiuii ostendit feralis.
>
> [Atreus] seized his [two] sons, killed them and gave them to him [Thyestes] to eat; after the meal he showed him the heads of his sons as proof of this fatal meal.

(d) *Togail na Tebe* (The Destruction of Thebes), lines 1571–7[13]

> Et o 'tcualaich Aitir sin, romarbad a dalta fein mac Tiestis, ⁊ tuc do Tiestis arna bearbad, co rocaith a richt feola; . . . conid imi sin na deachaid sochraidi sloig a Maen ⁊ a Meicnib dochum na Tebi, amal indister ar fingail claindi Tantail.
>
> And when Atreus heard that [i.e. that Thyestes had slept with Atreus's wife] he killed his own fosterling the son of Thyestes, and gave him to Thyestes after being boiled, so that he consumed him in the form of flesh; . . . so that on that account that no allied host came from Maeonia and from Mycenae to Thebes, as is related of the fratricide of Tantalus's children.[14]

[10] Byrne, 'The parricides', 18 (my translation).
[11] Marshall, *Hygini Fabulae*, 81 (my translation).
[12] Kulcsár, *Mythographi*, 11 (my translation).
[13] Calder, *Togail na Tebe*, 100 (Calder's translation).
[14] See below, 62 and n. 15, on the translation of *ar fingal claindi Tantail*.

It is evident that the account of this incident in *Fingal Chlainne Tanntail* is broadly orthodox in that Atreus, as in all other versions, kills his brother's sons and serves them up for their unwitting father Thyestes to eat. Even so, the few details unique to the Irish tale may cast some light on its author's methods and preoccupations.

Firstly, whereas in accounts which may be considered broadly orthodox Atreus kills any number of nephews between three (in early Classical sources) and one (in medieval sources), in *Fingal Chlainne Tanntail* alone the Mycenaean king kills as many as fifty. This may appear to be insignificant, yet when taken with the extra information found in *Fingal Chlainne Tanntail* alone, that the victims are also his foster-sons, the grim killings ordered by Atreus in the Irish tale may be considered even worse than their already awful orthodox counterparts. Just as the unique mention of beef in the medieval Irish account of this feast may be an instance of acculturation, so the detail that Atreus killed his foster-sons might have made the deed even more heinous to a medieval Irish audience than the orthodox murder of nephews. The other medieval Irish account of this incident, in *Togail na Tebe*, also mentions this foster-relationship, yet only envisages a single victim whereas *Fingal Chlainne Tanntail* claims fifty. Even so, *Togail na Tebe* states that this incident is related *ar fingail claindi Tantail*,[15] which may be translated either 'of the parricide of the descendants of Tantalus' or, more likely, 'in [the text known as] *Fingal Chlaindi Tantail*'.[16] This evidence appears to offer some support to the idea that the author of *Fingal Chlainne Tanntail* both knew the orthodox narrative and deliberately exaggerated the number of Atreus's victims in order to make him appear even more bloodthirsty than his Classical counterpart.

In addition to rendering Atreus's deeds cruel on a grander scale than they do elsewhere, the act of making Thyestes's murdered sons as numerous as fifty may also reflect badly on Thyestes, from the perspective of an author keen to promote self-control. This is because the number of Thyestes's offspring in *Fingal Chlainne Tanntail* strongly suggests that he was sexually promiscuous, begetting children on multiple women, it must be assumed. Again, this licentious element in the portrayal of Thyestes builds on a detail which is orthodox, since in every other account as well as in the Irish tale he is said to have had incestuous relationships with both his brother's wife, Aerope, and with his own daughter, Pelopia ('Telepía' in our text).[17] Thus, the apparent addition of a few apparently insignificant and/or highly unorthodox details to an orthodox narrative seems to be enough to present both Atreus and Thyestes as lacking in self-control over violence and sex respectively – as already presented in orthodox accounts, yet even more so in *Fingal Chlainne Tanntail*.

It can be seen from the above excerpts that the Irish text's account of this incident places unique emphasis on the brooding, scheming element of Atreus's grisly plan. This is not found in any extant mythographic or other brief orthodox reference to this incident, such as those presented above. The only other analogous account to delve this deeply into Atreus's machinations as he develops his twisted scheme is Seneca's *Thyestes* (lines 190–290).

[15] Calder, *Togail na Tebe*, 100, lines 1571–2; Calder's translation of *fingal* as 'fratricide' for 'parricide' is an oversight, perhaps influenced by the mutual slaying of brothers present in the surrounding *Togail na Tebe*.

[16] This is also the view of Miles, *Heroic Saga*, 63.

[17] According to the Classical mythographical work ascribed to Apollodorus, *Library*, Epitome 2.13, Thyestes also consorted with a Naiad nymph, by whom he had three sons: Frazer, *Apollodorus*, II, 166–7.

(e) Seneca, *Thyestes* 254–6[18]

Assistant:	Quid novi radibus struis?
Atreus:	Nil quod doloris capiat assueti modum; nullum relinquam facinus et nullum est satis.

Assistant:	What new scheme is your rage devising?
Atreus:	Nothing conforming to the limits of ordinary bitterness; I shall leave no deed undone – and none is enough.

Furthermore, in *Fingal Chlainne Tanntail* and in *Thyestes* only, Atreus offers a very similar, weak, justification to his brother when the latter reacts badly to the knowledge that his sons have been murdered and fed to him. In each case, Atreus attempts to equate the adultery of his brother and wife with his own grisly crimes of parricide and induced cannibalism. This equation in Atreus's mind between his grim acts and Thyestes's adultery with Aerope is restricted to *Fingal Chlainne Tanntail* and *Thyestes*. Taken together, the comparable interest in Atreus's scheming in these two texts in particular indicates authors who, though set apart by *c.* 1200 years and *c.* 1200 miles, nevertheless approached this material in a similar way to each other. In fact, the Irish author appears to add another deft twist to his account, by making Atreus specify that the grisly feast must resemble a *fledh bainsecdha* ('wedding feast'), a further subtle reference to Thyestes's adultery with Aerope. This mention of marriage by Atreus echoes and perhaps expands on Seneca's portrayal of the same character with reference to the Mycenaean king's vengeful acts against the brother who had cuckolded him:

(f) Seneca, *Thyestes* 1103–4[19]

Thyestes:	Piorum praesides testor deos.
Atreus:	Quid coniugales?

Thyestes:	I call to witness the gods that protect the righteous.
Atreus:	What about the marriage gods?

With such examples in mind, the application of a comparative method to the constituent sub-narratives of *Fingal Chlainne Tanntail* has two clear benefits in relation to understanding its author's methods and his preoccupations. Firstly, it can be seen that unique details appear to be present for a particular reason, namely in order to make 'bad' into 'even worse' – three killings at most in accounts found in the broad orthodox tradition become fifty in the medieval Irish work, and slain nephews are also foster-sons (though that may be explained as acculturation). Secondly, it appears that, whether or not he had direct knowledge of the work of either Seneca or of any other Classical tragedian, the saga-author shared with Seneca an interest in the protagonists' motivations and passions. In the case of Atreus, in a pattern which recurs throughout the text, a male member of the Tantalus clan is shown to react to negative events (usually connected with a female family member and incestuous or adulterous sex) with immediate violent anger. Atreus's fury is, uniquely in *Fingal Chlainne Tanntail*, expressed via a deadly scheme over which he ruminates at some length. In

[18] Fitch, *Seneca*, II, 250–1 (Fitch's translation).
[19] Fitch, *Seneca*, II, 322–3 (Fitch's translation).

this regard, the medieval Irish account resembles the action of Seneca's *Thyestes* far more closely than other analogues do.

The briefer accounts of this incident in the analogues (as in the First Vatican Mythographer quoted above) are purely matter-of-fact statements, a far cry from what we encounter in *Fingal Chlainne Tanntail*. In his unique version of this incident, the Irish author can be seen moulding and crafting his subject matter, placing – if anything – more emphasis on the importance of self-control over the impulses than even a Stoic writer such as Seneca. We might expect a higher degree of characterization in a narrative adaptation such as this than in a purely mythographic source; yet the similar focus on Atreus's lack of self-control in this scene in both the medieval Irish account and in Seneca is striking, as are the respective references to marriage at this point. Since the focus on a character's lack of self-control as the direct cause of *fingal* is repeated with emphasis throughout the tale, it would appear that one of its author's chief methods is exaggeration of a thematic preoccupation already present in Classical tragedy. It is remarkable that the main characters of *Fingal Chlainne Tanntail* are portrayed as even more lacking in self-possession (Greek *σωφρσύνη* [*sophrosyne*], the lack of which is typically portrayed as the cause of a character's downfall in Classical tragedy) than their orthodox counterparts are. Taken together with the fact that in the Irish text a similar lack of self-control within members of the Tantalus clan over five generations is related in a single work, its account of the self-destruction of the Tantalids is both far terser and more focused on the consequences of immorality than are its orthodox counterparts.

2. Medieval mutton versus Classical lotus in Merugud Uilixis

(a) *Merugud Uilixis*, lines 17–19[20]

> 'Is mithig dún imtecht,' ar sé.
> 'Ní cóir a n-aprai,' . . . 'úair atá ar n-daíthin co bráth ina fil do caírib sund.'
> 'Nocho dingnem foraib,' ar sé, 'gan dula d'íarrair ar n-athar-tíri bunaid féin.'

> 'It's time for us to set off,' said he [Uilixes].
> 'What you say is not right,' [said the crew,] 'since we have enough sheep here to feed us forever.'
> 'There is no way that we shall do as you say,' said he, '[i.e.] not go to seek our own ancestral fatherland.'

(b) Homer, *Odyssey* IX.98–102

> τοὺς μὲν ἐγὼν ἐπὶ νῆας ἄγον κλαίοντας ἀνάγκῃ,
> νηυσὶ δ' ἐνὶ γλαφνρῇσιν ὑπὸ ζυγὰ δῆσα ἐρύσσας.
> αὐτὰρ τοὺς ἄλλους κελόμην ἐρίηρας ἑταίρους
> σπερχομένους νηῶν ἐπιβαινέμεν ὠκειάων,
> μή πώς τις λωτοῖο φαγὼν νόστοιο λάθηται.

> [Odysseus:] 'I myself brought back these men, weeping, to the ships under compulsion, and dragged them beneath the benches and bound them fast in the hollow ships; and I bade the rest of my trusty comrades to embark with speed

[20] [Robert T.] Meyer, *Merugud Uilix*, lines 17–19 (my translation).

> on the swift ships, for fear that perchance anyone should eat the lotus and forget his homecoming.'

(c) Hyginus, *Fabulae* 125.2[21]

> idque cibi genus tantam suauitatem praestabat ut qui gustabant obliuionem caperent domum reditionis. Ad eos socii duo missi ab Vlysse cum gustarent herbas ab eis datas, ad naues obliti sunt reuerti, quos uinctos ipse reduxit.
>
> and that food [the lotus flower] offered such sweetness that whoever ate it forgot about returning home. Two men Ulysses sent to them [the Lotophagi] ate the flowers offered to them and forgot to return to the ships, so Ulysses had to lead them back in chains.

From both the absence of lotus from, and the presence of outsized sheep in, the medieval Irish version of this incident alone, it may appear that the author of *Merugud Uilixis* had, at best, limited knowledge of the orthodox Homeric incident featuring the island of magical food. Hillers has suggested that the presence of mutton and not lotus in this incident in *Merugud Uilixis* indicates that its author was not thinking of the orthodox Homeric narrative at all:

> The reluctance of the comrades to leave the island seems perfectly understandable and can hardly be equated with the magic change of consciousness that affects the comrades who join the lotus eaters in Homer.[22]

However, the words used by Uilixes and Odysseus to describe the reasons why the crew must not gorge on, respectively, mutton or lotus forever are remarkably close in meaning. This demonstrates that the medieval Irish author not only understood the *significance* of this incident in the context of the narrative as a whole (the requirement for the hero to exercise self-control over the appetites), but also that he made Uilixes more aware than Odysseus of the specifically *patrimonial* reason why he must not allow his men to feast on an eternally-available special food. Uilixes, like Odysseus, forces his men back to the ships, but only in *Merugud Uilixis* does he state that they are not allowed to act *gan dula d'iarrair ar athar-tíri bunaid féin* ('without going to seek our [i.e. my] own native fatherland'). Homer's Odysseus talks instead of his men forgetting their *νόστος* (*nostos*, 'homecoming') at the equivalent point of the encounter with the Lotophagi. The Classical mythographer (pseudo-) Hyginus's account also refers to 'home' (*domus*, in the accusative), but no analogue mentions either the hero's patrimony or fatherland as a reason for rejecting the magical food, whereas *Merugud Uilixis* does. In the *Odyssey*, the hero comes to recognize the specific importance of his *πατρίς* (*patris*, 'fatherland') only later in the narrative, after many more travails and encounters with strange beings, including in the spirit world. This appears to suggest that the Irish author not only knew the orthodox sub-narrative relating to eternally available food, but understood its significance within the entire narrative so well that he felt free to change the emphasis subtly from 'home' to 'patrimony', underscoring a thematic preoccupation which is ultimately Homeric.

[21] Marshall, *Hygini Fabulae*, 108 (my translation)
[22] Hillers, 'The odyssey', 77 (see also Hillers's chapter in this volume).

If the medieval Irish adapter did understand, and even exaggerate, the importance of the hero's rejection of the plentiful and palatable food in relation to the latter's overriding mission to get home and to secure his fatherland and therefore his patrimony, this may imply that the author knew the orthodox story – including some of its most important Homeric thematic content – very well, even to the extent that he carefully added extra emphasis to such things as the importance of the hero's speedy return in order to secure his and his son's patrimony. However, if the author of *Merugud Uilixis* had a firm grasp of the Classical narrative, so firm that he even understood it in a manner in keeping with Homer himself, why did he replace lotus blossom with giant mutton? It is possible that the Irish adapter did so for reasons of acculturation, perhaps considering that lotus blossoms would not have been felt to be appetizing enough by his audience for the crew to want to eat them *co bráth* ('forever') even if they knew what the Homeric plants were. Acculturation has been suggested as the explanation of the especially lively depiction of Uilixes's dog in *Merugud Uilixis*, especially when compared with the Homeric equivalent, Argos, portrayed in Book 17 of the *Odyssey* as both flea-bitten and living in dung heaps.[23] Of special interest in the Irish depiction of the dog is that *she* (in one of many direct inversions which I interpret as both deliberate and humorous) is unnamed, but the meaning of the name 'Argos' ('bright white'), is referred to in the Irish description. Not only is Uilixes's hound described as having *da taeb gle-gela* ('two bright white sides'), an obvious though unmarked reference to Argos; she is also said to be of many other colours – superior, in a lighthearted way, to a Classical dog who is only 'bright white'.[24]

With this in mind, it is very probable that both mutton (for lotus) and lively, multi-coloured dog (for the pitiful Argos) are not only instances of acculturation in *Merugud Uilixis*, but that each represents a deliberate *improvement* on its Classical counterpart. Although the underlying narrative is ultimately reconciled from the point of view of Odysseus and his family, there are aspects of the Odyssean narrative which may have been considered less than ideal, and the medieval Irish adapter seems to have relished the task of rendering several of these in a more positive light. It may be the case that giant mutton was preferred as the eternally-available, *nostos*-endangering foodstuff because it would have been considered even more appealing to Uilixes's men than lotus leaves – if the unlimited fare had been merely Gaelicized and transformed into any meat, surely beef would have been chosen, as in the case of the type of flesh replaced with that of Thyestes's sons at Atreus's aforementioned feast, uniquely according to *Fingal Chlainne Tanntail*.[25] Furthermore, it may also be the case that the Irish author here makes a deliberate if silent play on the two words spelt *μήλον* (*melon*), in Greek, one meaning 'fruit' and the other 'sheep'.[26] In the light of other unmarked wordplays in *Merugud Uilixis*, especially the play on the Greek meaning of 'Argos', this is

[23] See Ahl, 'Uilixis mac Leirtis', 179–88.

[24] [Robert T.] Meyer, *Merugud Uilix*, lines 265–6.

[25] In the light of the discussion below relating to the absence of supernatural elements in *Merugud Uilixis*, it is worth noting that its giant sheep provide a potentially inexhaustible supply of food, yet though they are unusually large, these ovines belong to the everyday mortal world, as do the Cyclops and all the other characters present in the medieval Irish work.

[26] I would like to thank Michael Clarke for bringing the dual meaning of *μήλον* to my attention. The same linguistic quirk is mentioned by Diodorus Siculus (*Library* 4.26–7) in relation to different mythographic accounts of either apples or sheep of the Hesperides. I would like to thank Matthias Egeler for this reference.

very likely in my view. This apparent penchant for silent wordplay, quite different from the typical medieval Irish etymologizing deconstruction of personal and place names, is found both here and in *Fingal Chlainne Tanntail*.[27] Such authorial interventions may be understood, somewhat paradoxically, as both light-hearted and adding to the moral weight of the narrative. Reversals and wordplays, as well as exaggerations, serve to polish the already reconciliation-driven Odyssean narrative in *Merugud Uilixis*, whereas in *Fingal Chlainne Tanntail* such apparent interventions may be shown to allow the medieval Irish adapter to render an already bad Classical situation worse.

As for the improved portrayal of the hero's dog found in the Irish adaptation relative to Odysseus's Argos, the overall narrative is clearly a shade happier for the hero to return home to a hound who is full of life than for the returning Odysseus to find that his faithful canine is both flea-bitten and at death's door. Such elements of the narrative of the *Odyssey* appear to have benefited from a medieval Irish makeover, and this process is especially noticeable when these and other unique details in *Merugud Uilixis* are considered together. It may be inferred from such a process that a deliberate programme of idealization is integral to the Irish author's method and purpose.

This is true in relation to both details of plot and the portrayals of the major characters relative to their Classical counterparts. If the giant mutton of the Irish tale, though non-magical, is offered as a superior foodstuff to lotus fruit, and a lively multicoloured medieval Irish version of the hero's hound is better than the pitiful monochrome Odyssean Argos, so much more idealized are the respective portrayals of Uilixes and Peneloipi than their Classical counterparts in relation to the incidents which surround both the sheep and hound in *Merugud Uilixis*. For an Irish audience, Uilixes would surely have been considered even more self-restrained than Odysseus since he can resist unlimited roast lamb and not merely the fruit of the lotus plant. Likewise, Peneloipi must be considered an even better literary wife than her (already far from deficient) Classical namesake in that her medieval Irish incarnation tends her husband's hound in a far better manner than takes place in the *Odyssey*, in which we are told that Argos lay neglected and that the women of Ithaca failed to care for him.[28] The reference to the special, but not magical, nourishment given to Uilixes's dog by Peneloipi is likely in my view to be a deliberate reversal of the Ithacan women's collective neglect of Argos in the *Odyssey*.

The process of adaptation which appears to be at work in *Merugud Uilixis*, then, involves both reversals and transformations, as in the above portrayals of dog and special food. It appears from these two examples that, in spite of their respective unorthodox forms, these incidents contribute to portrayals of the main characters which are consistently more positive than their Classical counterparts. In addition, these unorthodox portrayals of sheep and hound convey an element of knowing levity on the part of the Irish author, since not only are Uilixes and Peneloipi shown to be better than their Classical incarnations, but both the narrative's inexhaustible foodstuff and canine have been polished in their medieval Irish guises. Clearly, at least a learned section among the audience of *Merugud Uilixis* was expected to understand and appreciate the wit behind these silent references. We are therefore presented with

[27] For examples of wordplay in *Fingal Chlainne Tanntail*, see below, 69–70.
[28] *Odyssey* XVII.296, 319.

the remarkable conclusion that at least a scholarly élite of Irishmen around AD 1200 was expected to be familiar with some Greek words.[29]

Fingal Chlainne Tanntail: *a distilled Irish account of the tragic Tantalid world*

The above comparative analysis of Atreus's grisly feast in *Fingal Chlainne Tanntail* demonstrates that the version of a given sub-narrative found in this adaptation typically differs from most of its orthodox analogues. This text not only tells us that successive members of the Tantalus dynasty killed one another, but offers us a powerful and pressing reason *why* this happened at a level which might be called psychological or spiritual. This may involve either the apparent introduction of a new motive for a kinslaying where no Classical explanation seems to have existed or survived into the Middle Ages, or the apparent replacement of a pre-existing motive with one which is likely to have been seen as more powerful. Such a motive is usually connected with female sexuality in *Fingal Chlainne Tanntail*, as in the case of the otherwise-unknown figure Moesia who, as a lustful stepmother, acts as the prime mover in the murder and sacrifice of her stepson Pelops, the motivation for which is seldom clear in orthodox accounts, and may well be considered scant justification for filicide where it is mentioned.[30]

No doubt confirming his own views on the matter, the uniquely recurring motivation given by the Irish author for such instances of *fingal* is that they were committed by weak and impulsively violent male characters in reaction to instances of uncontrolled sexual passion, usually incestuous, on the part of female characters. The unbridled lust of the text's women is twice expressed using the phrase *tuc grádh dermháir do* X ('She fell passionately in love with X'), where X is a kinsman, meaning that the passion of the woman in question is not only adulterous but incestuous.[31] On another occasion, the Irish author either light-heartedly or perhaps sardonically extends the notion of friendship between a woman ('Eoraip' = Aerope) and her brother-in-law ('Teist' = Thyestes) to denote a sexual relationship.[32]

[29] There is some evidence that an élite among early medieval (*c*. AD 600–800) Irish scholars could read New Testament Greek to a reasonable standard; yet even David Howlett, the modern commentator whose opinion of early medieval Irish scholars' knowledge of Greek is among the highest, discounts the possibility that 'Homeric poems and works of the Classical dramatists' were known to learned Irishmen, as with other westerners: Howlett, 'Hellenic learning', 56. For a review of the scholarship on this issue, see Miles, *Heroic Saga*, 34–8. However, at present little is known in relation to learned Irishmen's knowledge of Greek in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries: see below, 80–2, and last note in chapter.

[30] Servius (commenting on *Georgics* III.7) appears to be the first author to specify a motivation for the murder of Pelops: see Thilo & Hagen, *Servii commentarii*, III, 273. However, the creator of *Fingal Chlainne Tanntail* was not alone among medieval westerners in feeling the need to add to the 'Divinity Test for the gods' given by Servius. Over six hundred years after Servius, the Second Vatican Mythographer proposed that Pelops was killed and served to the gods because other types of food were scarce: see Kulcsár, *Mythographi*, 190, at *fabula* 124 line 2. The machinations of a lustful stepmother in *Fingal Chlainne Tanntail* offer a much more immediate and passion-related rationale for a father to order an act of filicide than the Hansel-and-Gretel-esque additional motivation suggested by the Second Vatican Mythographer.

[31] Byrne, 'The parricides', 16 (Moesia / Pelops) and 22 (Clytemnestra / Aegisthus).

[32] *ba haentadach ocus ba dluith in comunn boi idir Eoraip .i. ben Aidir ocus Teist. Dochuaidh tra Teist co mnai a bratar* ('close and harmonious was the companionship between Aerope the wife of Atreus and Thyestes. Thyestes indeed had intercourse with his brother's wife'), Byrne, 'The parricides', 18 (Byrne's translation).

This particular literary instance of illicit sex between kinsfolk is orthodox, as are the two incestuous relationships between Clytemnestra and Aegisthus and between Thyestes and Pelopia related in *Fingal Chlainne Tanntail*. However, in apparently adding a lustful stepmother to the narrative of Tantalus and Pelops, and in later making Hermione prefer Pyrrhus to her lawful fiancé Orestes – which is also unorthodox – the Irish author appears to take the Classical motif of the dangers of uncontrolled sexual passion, and extend it especially to female characters, rendering this account unique in several places in a most anti-feminist way.[33]

In similar fashion, in male characters a concurrent lack of self-control in relation to violent anger is portrayed throughout the tale, and male rage is repeatedly shown to lead directly to the *fingala* which occur throughout the text. The expression *Ro fergaighedh* X (X became enraged) typically occurs in this text shortly before a crime against the family is committed by a male character. This emphasis on the importance of self-control is similar both to the aforementioned quality of *sophrosyne* prized by Classical Greek tragedians and to its Latin counterparts beloved by Stoics and especially evident in the works of Seneca. Just as in the works of these ancient authorities, here too members of the Tantalus clan self-destruct because they lack self-possession, yet this deficiency is presented more starkly than is found even in Classical tragedies, let alone in more matter-of-fact accounts in glosses and mythographic works. Exaggeration in relation to the moral shortcomings of his characters is a major technique employed by the author of *Fingal Chlainne Tanntail*, it seems. Furthermore, this deliberate policy of exaggeration would appear to be the main reason why he seems to have believed that he could express what he saw as the *meaning* of a significant quantity of Classical tragic material in a single relatively brief account.

In addition to consistently portraying female characters as licentious and male characters as unable to control their anger, the author of *Fingal Chlainne Tanntail* went to considerable lengths both to show the women as scheming against the interests of their husbands and their husbands' kin, and to present the men as gullible or weak. As in the examples of exaggeration in the same text, this is an extension of the views of some Classical authorities concerning Clytemnestra and Agamemnon – two prominent members of the Tantalus clan – in particular. Upon the Mycenaean king's triumphant return from Troy, his wife, already established in a liaison with Aegisthus (Agamemnon's cousin), is portrayed in orthodox sources as scheming to bring about her husband's doom either by tricking him into walking upon the purple cloths reserved for the gods, or by literally catching him in a net in the form of a shirt specially tailored without a hole for the head. Since an interpretation of Clytemnestra's Greek name, exploited by at least one Classical author, is 'famous schemer', it is at least interesting that the Irish author chose to call his version of Clytemnestra's 'scheme' to usurp her husband her *airic menmun* ('device') – a somewhat ironic and unmarked play on 'Aigmemnon', the Gaelicized version of her husband's name in this tale.[34] In addition to this deft touch, *Fingal Chlainne Tanntail* extends this

[33] The late-seventh-century Anglo-Saxon scholar Aldhelm appears to be alone among commentators (apart from the author of *Fingal Chlainne Tanntail*) in his attitude to this incident in appearing to blame Hermione for having changed her mind and married Neoptolemus, after being engaged by right of dowry to Orestes: Ehwald, *Aldhelmi Opera*, 479, lines 15–16.

[34] Aeschylus makes two references in quick succession to the scheming of Clytemnestra, undoubtedly playing on the similarity between Clytemnestra's name and *Κλυται-μήστρα* (*Clyte-mestra*,'famous schemer') as he describes her plan to trap and kill Agamemnon: Sommerstein, *Aeschylus*, II, 131, lines 1100 and 1102, n. 237. At the equivalent point in the narrative, *Fingal Chlainne Tanntail* states of Clytemnestra that *Isi airic menmun forfuair si* ('She bethought her of the following device'): Byrne,

scheming element in its portrayal of women in general, from Clytemnestra to other members of the Tantalus clan – beginning with Moesia, the otherwise-unattested wife of Tantalus, whose failed plot to seduce his son initiates the doom of her husband's dynasty. It may be worth noting that both Tantalus and Moesia are punished by the gods not with tantalization but with instant violent death via a bolt of lightning, a fate mentioned only in the Irish tale. This may be a silent reference to the Greek meaning of the name Sterope ('lightning'), a figure who plays a significant role in the orthodox story of Pelops, either as his maternal aunt (sister of Dione) or as the mother of his wife Hippodamia, depending on the source. If this is a deliberate allusion to the meaning of Sterope's name in *Fingal Chlainne Tanntail*, it would be akin to the reworking of Argos into the multi-coloured hound in *Merugud Uilixis*, discussed above.

In a hint that he knowingly and openly took liberties with orthodox material in order to hammer home his thematic penchant for portraying women as scheming against the interests of their husbands and their husbands' kin, the author of *Fingal Chlainne Tanntail* also chose to introduce the anti-Classical detail that the Trojan-born Hesione, mother of the famous Greek archer Teucer, prevented her son from fighting alongside Agamemnon's Argive forces at Troy.[35] Hesione's intervention is a less serious, even humorous, instance of female interference in the political affairs of her husband and his kinsmen than the respective machinations of Moesia, Clytemnestra and Aerope against their menfolk, yet it reinforces the impression that the Irish author was not afraid to add anti-Classical colour when it suited his purposes – which appears to include a focus on the text's women as 'famous schemers'. Again this may be coincidental, yet it is worth noting that it is Homer's Agamemnon who claims that Clytemnestra's faithless and treacherous scheming has brought shame upon all women, even those who do not commit such misdeeds – making the *Odyssey*'s Clytemnestra a template for the future portrayal of women as licentious schemers (even if this misogynistic view is not authorial, but comes out of the mouth of the shade of the embittered Agamemnon).[36] Even if he did not know of this statement in the *Odyssey*, the author of *Fingal Chlainne Tanntail* seems to have agreed with its sentiments as he, uniquely in accounts of this narrative, even appears to blame even non-adulterous women such as the mother of Atreus and Thyestes for giving birth to them as twins (also unique to the Irish text), the next generation of Tantalid intra-familial criminals.[37]

The unique inclusion of Helen in the role as military counsellor to the Atridae – though *niruo cóir* ('it was not proper') for her to play this role, the author informs us – also serves to reinforce the connection between what the text's author would have us believe are female characteristics, Helen's famed sexual faithlessness and her less well-known role as counsellor to men.[38] In another curious twist, the tone of this incident is fairly reminiscent of the Classical Helen, not as she appears in tragedy nor in post-Classical works such as Dares Phrygius's *De excidio Troiae historia*

'The parricides', 20–1 (Byrne's translation). It is a serendipitous quirk that both Classical Greek and medieval Irish play on words meaning 'scheme', respectively in relation to the wife and husband pairing Clytemnestra and 'Aigmemnon'. My suggestion in this chapter that the Irish author understood the meaning of the name Sterope hints that he also knew the possibilities for wordplay afforded by 'Clytemnestra' in Greek, as he clearly did with 'Aigmemnon' in his own tongue.

35 Teucer's orthodox role in the Argive campaign at Troy is related in the second recension of *Togail Troí*, a medieval Irish expanded adaptation of Dares Phrygius's *De excidio Troiae historia*: Stokes, *Togail Troí*, 29, line 1172.

36 *Odyssey*, XI.426–7.

37 This figure is called 'Taithis' in *Fingal Chlainne Tanntail* (Hippodamia in orthodox accounts).

38 Byrne, 'The parricides', 24, section 6.

(History of the Destruction of Troy) but as she is presented in Book 15 of Homer's *Odyssey*: here she is closely connected with quasi-prophetic wisdom as she predicts a happy outcome for both Telemachus and Odysseus.[39] This parallel may be coincidental, but her role as counsellor in *Fingal Chlainne Tanntail* is interesting since she seldom appears elsewhere as such, except in Homer. It seems that the author of *Fingal Chlainne Tanntail* felt that her more widely reported role as the model adulteress was not worth repeating and he preferred to focus on her verbal powers – less well attested elsewhere – as an instance of the female schemer. Again, this scheming aspect of Helen's portrayal is best represented in Homer's *Odyssey* among extant sources, especially where it is related that she – in a brilliant coup to be understood as a scheme to protect her own interests – administers a drug of forgetfulness to Menelaus and other men at the very point in the narrative of the *Odyssey* at which the tale of her adulterous elopement with Paris is to be related.[40] Even if this, too, is coincidental, in his portrayal of Helen using her verbal powers (improperly, in the author's view) in order to influence men (Agamemnon and Menelaus), the Irish author makes his Helen as devious as Homer's, in a manner matched by few other authorities.[41]

With this in mind, then, the placing of a somewhat (but not entirely) extra-Classical and markedly pejorative emphasis on female characters as both lustful and scheming appears to be a central concern for the Irish author. To portray male characters beginning with Tantalus as weak in falling victim to the schemes of women is the corollary of this. Moreover, the conclusion of the tale indicates that, after five generations of self-destruction rooted in a combination of unfettered female desire and plotting followed by uncontrolled male violent rage, the dynasty of Tantalus is extinguished, after an account of the death of Orestes, an event which is not described in orthodox sources.[42] *Fingal Chlainne Tanntail* may be understood as relating accounts of Classical tragic narratives in précis form, in which characters behave in a manner which is even worse than their already delinquent orthodox counterparts, and an even worse set of individual and collective fates for these characters is spelt out with little room for interpretation. For example, Orestes not only kills his mother but also his sister (understood as Iphigenia, though she is unnamed), and he bathes in the latter's blood. This is not the only instance of an 'extra', seemingly motiveless, kinslaying in this text, for it also tells us that Aegisthus killed not only his uncle Atreus (as in orthodox accounts) but also his own grandfather Pelops.[43]

The identification of unique material in *Fingal Chlainne Tanntail*, and with it the revelation of its author's probable thematic preoccupations and techniques, is not the only result of comparing its content with orthodox analogues. In addition, this analysis reveals that at every step the author seems to have intervened in the underlying narrative in order to render it more complete than any combination of extant analogues. Thus, characters' statuses (child or adult) are specified (for Pelops at the time of his sacrifice, and for Orestes at the time of his exile) where in orthodox accounts they are typically not made clear, and the manner of death is also specified for important characters in this text where this detail is absent or unclear elsewhere

[39] *Odyssey* XV.171–81.

[40] *Odyssey* IV.220–1.

[41] The irony in Helen's advice to the Atridae is surely intended by the Irish author, as she bemoans the fate which will befall her if the brothers do battle with Clytemnestra and Aegisthus.

[42] According to the Irish account alone, Teucer son of Telamon takes the kingship from Orestes after killing him, making it clear that the rule of the Tantalids over Greece ended at that point: Byrne, 'The parricides', 32–3, section 11.

[43] Byrne, 'The parricides', 20–1, section 3.

(as with Helen and Orestes). With the addition of these biographical details, alongside interventions to ensure thematic consistency, the Irish author seems to have produced a narrative with a structure which is highly episodic, joining together narratives which are typically found separately in orthodox analogues.[44] The structure apparently imposed by the saga-author adds emphasis to his thematic preoccupations, as each member of the Tantalus clan self-destructs for what are portrayed as similar reasons, and the focus turns to the next generation.

It appears to be the case, then, that one of this saga-author's main tools was outright invention (as in the otherwise-unknown character Moesia); yet even such apparent liberties with the orthodox narrative were not taken except to add extra emphasis on the thematic, moral, content already present in varying degrees in analogous accounts. These liberties were not necessarily taken merely in order to acculturate or Gaelicize the narrative – although it may be noted that Moesia plays a very similar role here to that performed by the lustful stepmother Ingen Echdach in the medieval Irish *Fingal Rónáin*, a stepmother who in turn resembles the Classical figure Phaedra. Nor is this the only incident in *Fingal Chlainne Tanntail* whose precise form may have been inspired or influenced by a medieval Irish literary counterpart.[45]

It seems that both outright inventions and other degrees of transformation work towards particular authorial preoccupations. These purposes may reflect themes which are at least close to orthodox, yet they are represented here in exaggerated form. It may also be the case that notable orthodox details which are absent from *Fingal Chlainne Tanntail*, though they might be expected to be present (such as Agamemnon's act of *fingal* against Iphigenia), were ignored by the adapter because they did not suit his preoccupations. In the latter case, to have included the sacrifice of Iphigenia might have worked against the presentation of acts of kinslaying as female-driven which is the pattern consistently found throughout the Irish text: here, the unnamed Iphigenia is brutally murdered by her brother Orestes, yet Clytemnestra's scheme to dethrone and kill her husband is presented as the root cause of this crime.

In any event, the sum of the inventions and transformations in, and absences of orthodox elements from, *Fingal Chlainne Tanntail* suggests that its author sought to exaggerate downwards the moral tone of his subject matter which was already presented in a negative light elsewhere. His motivation for doing so appears to have been a desire to portray the female members of the Tantalus clan as even more licentious and its male members as even weaker and prone to impulsive violence than their orthodox counterparts. Where this might not be achieved, as in the case of the sacrifice of Iphigenia, the incident is not present. It is of course impossible to prove that such absent details were known to the author, yet when it is clear that such an orthodox incident would have worked against the overriding thematic content of his

[44] However, both Euripides (*Orestes*) and Seneca (*Thyestes*) refer to the travails of the Tantalus clan over several generations. See Kovacs, *Euripides*, V, 412–15, lines 1–30; Fitch, *Seneca*, II, 232–5, lines 23–67.

[45] On the possibility that the author of *Fingal Rónáin* drew on the Classical story of Phaedra and Hippolytus, see Michael Clarke's discussion in chapter 7 of this volume. The resemblance between the Clytemnestra of *Fingal Chlainne Tanntail* and the Medb of medieval Irish saga, especially as she is presented in Recension 2 of the medieval Irish saga *Táin Bó Cúailnge*, is noted by Stanford, 'Towards a history', 35. *Fingal Chlainne Tanntail* also includes possible echoes of incidents involving the medieval Irish literary figures Derdriu and Núadu Argetlám (respectively, the unorthodox suicide of Hermione in preference to marrying her lover's killer and the orthodox account of the shiny prosthetic upper limb made for Pelops by Ceres).

tale, it is certainly worth noting that its absence appears to be convenient from the author's perspective, judging by what is present.

Merugud Uilixis: *an idealized and demythologized Irish account of Odysseus's return*

What then may be understood in relation to the unique material in *Merugud Uilixis* and its author's approach to his Classical subject matter, in the light of the above findings? Despite the methodological issues caused by the tantalizing nature of this text, certain elements are recognizably orthodox, whereas others are unique and may be considered to be the author's own work. As in the case of *Fingal Chlainne Tanntail*, the identification of a pattern in its recognizably unique elements may offer the best, if not only, way to identify its author's likely preoccupations, and thereby to approach – if not solve – the puzzle it presents.

It is difficult to be certain whether a given unorthodox incident in *Merugud Uilixis* is completely unique or a 'faint echo' (in Kuno Meyer's words) of something orthodox, such as the aforementioned visit of Uilixes and his men to the island of giant sheep; yet the hero's next encounter with a special being (albeit both mortal and human), *in Cicropecda* ('the Cyclops'), contains both material which is firmly orthodox (possibly borrowed either from Virgil's *Aeneid* or from its medieval Irish adaptation *Imtheachta Aeniasa*, as Hillers has proposed) and certain details which are not.[46] This allows for conclusions to be drawn from the unique material contained in this incident, of which among the most anti-Classical is the presence of a mountain of gold at the centre of the Cyclops's island.[47] What is particularly striking about the mention of gold at this point and the opposite attitudes towards it taken by Uilixes and his men (respectively negative and enthusiastic) is that this detail presents the diametric opposite of the situation at the equivalent point in the *Odyssey* itself, in which the hero puts himself and his men at risk by waiting for the Cyclops Polyphemus to come home because he is eager to receive a guest gift from him, whereas the crew express the desire to cut and run with some stolen cheese and lambs.[48]

The special reason given by Uilixes for being suspicious of the mountain of gold is expressed in the question which he poses to his men, '*Cá fis daíb-si ón*?' ('How do you know that [this is a good find]?'). This quasi-philosophical enquiry hints that there may be dangers associated with the gold imperceptible to their senses, and his mistrust of the mountain's golden exterior is proved to be correct as the Cyclops lurks nearby, as yet unseen by human eyes. Again, this is the mirror image of what occurs in the *Odyssey*, as here it is Odysseus who is proved wrong to have waited for Polyphemus's return against the wishes of his men, and several crew-members pay for Odysseus's gift-greedy misjudgement with their lives. The focus on hidden truth and the form of the question *Cá fis daíb-si ón?* put into the mouth of Uilixes in this incident are discussed below as part of what may be understood as a deliberate attempt to portray him as the possessor of a philosopher's wisdom, morally superior to the cunning associated with Odysseus.[49]

[46] Hillers, 'The odyssey', 68–9. For 'faint echoes', see [Kuno] Meyer, *Merugud Uilix*, ix.
[47] [Robert T.] Meyer, *Merugud Uilix*, lines 26–7.
[48] *Odyssey* IX.224–9.
[49] The special emphasis in *Merugud Uilixis* on the strength of wisdom versus the weakness of sense-perception in discerning the truth (including in relation to the true domestic situation of Peneloipi) and

Uilixes's lack of interest in wealth in the Cyclops episode is not the only instance of a unique detail in the text which portrays the Irish version of the hero in a more positive light than his Classical counterpart, especially from the standpoint of an author keen to promote self-control. In addition, the absence in the Irish text of many elements familiar from the narrative of the *Odyssey* also serve, in Uilixes, to produce a central character who is an idealized version of Odysseus. Many of the Classical hero's most obvious shortcomings (for example, that he is an absent father: in *Merugud Uilixis* alone he is portrayed as not knowing that he has a son during his time away from home) are either played down in, or notable by their absence from, the Irish tale. Examples of both types of technique (unique details present, and familiar orthodox details absent) which suggest deliberate idealization of the hero in Uilixes are as follows.

Firstly, in addition to the incident in which a mountain of gold is rejected by Uilixes in the Cyclops episode, he is consistently portrayed as less materialistic both than his men and than his Classical counterpart. This is evidenced by his willingness to pay a total of ninety ounces of *derg-ór* ('red gold'), for the teachings of a figure called *Breithem na Fírinne* ('the Judge of Truth', on whom more below). This contrasts sharply with Odysseus, who almost always *takes* wealth from even friendly hosts in strange lands in the forms of extended hospitality and guest gifts: he spends a month being entertained by Aeolus, whereas Uilixes stays just three nights with The Judge of Truth. Odysseus also gains booty from raiding, whereas for Uilixes, the spoils of Troy are enough.[50]

Secondly, Uilixes is far less violent than Odysseus. Apart from his act of blinding the Cyclops – which may be understood as an act of self-defence in *Merugud Uilixis* and more justifiable than in Homer's account – he commits no violence on his journey home. His Classical acts of plundering go unmentioned except in reference to Troy, and even in the case of Troy no mention of the hero having shed blood is made, in contrast with orthodox accounts. There is no mention of his attack on the Cicones, which is Odysseus's first adventure on the way home, a raid in which the hero and his men commit both manslaughter and plunder.[51] In addition, the relatively speedy return of Uilixes means that there are no suitors to be despatched in the Irish tale, and no maidservant collaborators to be brutally hanged outside the Ithacan palace as happens in the bloody climax of the *Odyssey*.[52] The uniquely peaceful ending, in which the suitors' role is played by Uilixes's own son whom the hero initially fails to recognize, illustrates the author's special interest in portraying the hero's control over his violent impulses as he arrives home. This supreme act of self-moderation, when his initial fear (that he has been supplanted by *fer eli*, 'another man') appears to him to have been realized, is closely connected to the central role played by the Judge of Truth in the narrative, as discussed below.

Thirdly, the sexual adventures of Odysseus are not mentioned, and the hero therefore appears to be far more sexually continent in his medieval Irish guise than other

---

the use of such philosophical questioning are among the aspects of the medieval Irish adaptation which may suggest Platonic influence (see page 82 and final note in this chapter).

50 [Robert T.] Meyer, *Merugud Uilix*, lines 29–30.

51 *Odyssey* IX.40–2.

52 Uilixes arrives home just three years after the siege of Troy has ended, whereas Odysseus takes ten years. According to the *Odyssey*, the suitors begin to besiege Penelope some six years after Odysseus has set sail from Troy, so the Irish author could have claimed that his unique account without suitors was consistent with the orthodox narrative: had the hero arrived home more quickly, as related in *Merugud Uilixis*, there would have been as yet no suitors and therefore far less bloodshed than Homer relates.

portrayals of the hero. There is no mention of either of Odysseus's supernatural paramours Circe and Calypso, nor does Uilixes flirt with the Phaeacian princess Nausicaa as Odysseus appears to. His concerns from the outset are the state of his marital union after a long absence, and the political damage he associates with any disruption to it caused by the queen's likely (in his misguided initial view) replacement of him with another man.

Fourthly, Uilixes is at least as intelligent as Odysseus, and may be considered wise whereas Homer's hero is merely cunning. He is said to be *coitchchindberla* ('common-speaking', a polyglot), who communicates with others in their own language, in both senses, it may be understood. This quality may be considered to be similar yet morally superior to the epithet *πολύτροπον* (*polytropon* – 'of many turns', including of speech) applied to Odysseus by Homer.[53] He is also presented as far more enlightened concerning domestic matters than his Classical counterpart. This extra degree of wisdom on the part of the hero is demonstrated by his very early realization of the pressing matrimonial and especially patrimonial reasons for him to get home as soon as possible. The near-synonymous words for 'patrimonial', *athardha* and *dúthaig* (each used substantively), as well as the less specific words for 'land', *ferann* and *tír* (often used in combination with the royal possessive *ar* 'our', here in the royal sense meaning 'my'), echo throughout *Merugud Uilixis*, as does *πατρίς* (*patris*) in the *Odyssey*. However, Uilixes is notably quicker than Odysseus is to recognize that his own absence puts his patrimony at risk. As such, he is more self-aware, even taking into account the relative brevity of *Merugud Uilixis* in relation to a work such as the *Odyssey*. Homer's hero may be fairly accused of being somewhat laggardly on his journey home (especially while being entertained by Circe since, after one year in her company, Odysseus's men have to force him back to the ships), and he was mildly criticized for this in Classical times by, for example, Ovid's Penelope.[54]

The supreme importance of a speedy return home to secure the hero's patrimony is given further special emphasis through the promise (though it is not kept) that whoever is taught by the Judge of Truth may reach his own *dúthaig* ('patrimony') *fo chétoir* ('immediately') – not merely directly and without further diversion as Aeolus the wind-king promises in the *Odyssey*.[55] The orthodox narrative relates that the hero attains a state of wisdom on his travels and is finally allowed by the gods to go home, a situation akin to that presented in *Merugud Uilixis*; yet the attainment of this level of enlightenment takes Odysseus far longer than it does Uilixes, even allowing again for the relative brevity of the Irish text as a whole. Moreover, Odysseus does not fully grasp the importance of his patrimonial mission until he has visited the House of Hades and heard the words of both his mother and the shade of Agamemnon concerning the importance of wife, home and son.[56] In other words, Odysseus takes a good while to appreciate his own tale fully, to understand what it is to be an *ἀνήρ* (*aner*, '[hu]man', 'husband'), the base form of the first word of the *Odyssey*. As we have seen, Uilixes's level of wisdom is already far higher than his

[53] *Odyssey* I.1, X.330.

[54] In *Heroides* 1, Penelope, addressing her absent husband, both refers to his slow return and suggests that *peregrine captus amore potes* ('you might be captive to a stranger love': Ovid, *Heroides* 1.1, in Showerman, *Ovid*: *Heroides*, 10–11 (Showerman's translation). No such strangers and no such adulterous love hold Uilixes back from his happy matrimonial reunion.

[55] With the other winds safely held in Aeolus's bag, the Zephyr might blow the Ithacans straight home in ten days: *Odyssey* X.25–6, 28–30.

[56] The phrase *teach n-aided* ('guest house') may be seen as a possible play on the House(s) of Hades in *Merugud Uilixis*.

Classical counterpart as he sets off for home, for he recognizes that his absence puts his patrimony at risk. Crucially, he also understands very quickly the limits of being a (hu)man, denoted by either *fer* or *duine*, words which echo throughout *Merugud Uilixis*, and this lies behind his willingness to pay dearly in red-gold for the knowledge offered by the Judge of Truth – whose speciality we are told is helping the willing learner to reach his patrimony straight away, a quality which serves to render the Judge of Truth a highly idealized ruler-helper.

Fifth and lastly, Uilixes is presented as a better leader of men than Odysseus. Not only does he not cause any of his men to be killed by the Cyclops in a quest for guest gifts as mentioned above, he turns his powers of wisdom towards safeguarding his men on the journey home. The six who follow Uilixes steadfastly arrive safely home with the hero, and only those who fail to follow his counsel (the teaching gained from the Judge of Truth) fail to survive the journey. This situation reflects much better on the hero than that found in Homer in which Odysseus arrives on Ithaca alone with all hands lost, as the direct result, it seems, of being unable to resist the temptation to gloat over the blinded Polyphemus, thereby incurring the wrath of Poseidon. Had Odysseus remained as *Outis* ('Nobody'), the Cyclops's father might not have ensured the deaths of Odysseus's comrades.[57] The hero of the *Odyssey* returns home having left many others to fall in his track, whereas in the Irish tale only those who are either guilty of crimes such as the Cyclops, or fail to act prudently or in accordance with the teachings of the Judge of Truth, perish.

With these five factors in mind, the overall picture of the protagonist is that he is similar to Odysseus (such that Hillers could fairly state that the author of *Merugud Uilixis* 'felt he knew Ulysses'), but is morally superior to Homer's hero from the standpoint of an author who wished to extol the virtues of self-control, and this improvement is achieved through the skilful reworking of orthodox elements in the hero's portrayal.[58] The techniques used in this process include reversal (as in Uilixes's opposite attitude to material wealth to that of Odysseus) and editing out as well as exaggeration, but the overall picture is of a self-possessed, wise, Classical hero whose qualities have been enhanced by the Irish author. Odysseus, it seems, has received plastic surgery for the soul in his transformation into Uilixes.

In addition to the fact that the hero is portrayed as more enlightened, less savage, less materialistic and a better leader than Odysseus, it has been noted above that the respective portrayals of Peneloipi and the hero's unnamed dog also represent improvements on their Classical counterparts. In addition to tending her husband's dog, Peneloipi is portrayed as, if anything, even better than her Classical namesake in protecting her marital chastity. Her method of guaranteeing faithfulness is to sleep chastely beside their 'own flesh and blood' (further highlighting the related Odyssean themes of paternity and inheritance).[59] This behaviour is even more extreme and direct – in keeping with the spirit of *Merugud Uilixis* versus the *Odyssey* – than the techniques used by Homer's Penelope to avoid the suitors' advances. It may be noted that Peneloipi exhibits a degree of like-mindedness with her husband in their mutual recognition towards the end of the story, which is similar to that of their Homeric

[57] Having given his name as *Outis*, in order to prevent the other Cyclopes from helping Polyphemus, Odysseus cannot resist gloating over his stricken foe, in the process revealing his true name (*Odyssey* IX.502–5).

[58] Hillers, '*In fer fiamach firglic*', 28.

[59] [Robert T.] Meyer, *Merugud Uilix*, lines 240–2.

counterparts: in each case the royal couple use secrets and signs of recognition and refer to similar brooches as parting gifts given before each hero left for Troy.[60]

It appears to be fairly uncontroversial, then, to state that the respective portrayals of Uilixes, Peneloipi and their unnamed dog are versions of their Classical counterparts which have been deliberately reworked such that each character is presented most positively in *Merugud Uilixis* among all extant versions of the Odyssean narrative. However, when it comes to the Judge of Truth, the figure who stands beside the hero in terms of importance to the narrative – for without his *foglaim* ('teaching'), even if Uilixes had returned home he might well have killed his own son – the identity of any Classical figures (if any) he is based on may appear at first to be less clear-cut. Judging by his position in the Irish tale's internal chronology, the Judge of Truth ought to be a version of Aeolus, the wind-king whom Odysseus meets immediately after having defeated Polyphemus. However, if this is so then Aeolus has received a makeover far more dramatic even than a Classical lotus leaf turned into a giant medieval Irish mutton chop.

The Judge of Truth, as in the case of the Classical wind-king, is a mysterious ruler who asks *scéla* ('tales, news') of the hero (a sure sign that he is friendly, unlike the Cyclops in both *Merugud Uilixis* and orthodox accounts), entertains him and his crew, and offers to send them home in each case with a bag with a connection to gold which must not be opened until they arrive.[61] However, in addition to these similarities between the Judge of Truth and Aeolus, there are several marked differences between them, such that this episode exemplifies the puzzling nature of much of the content of *Merugud Uilixis*. The ruler-helper has no overt connection with the winds, sends the hero home by land, and offers advice relating to both the sun's position in the sky and to which roads to take.

These may appear to be, at best, 'faint echoes' of the Odyssean Aeolus;[62] yet when considered in the light of the idealization process which appears to have been applied to the other main characters in *Merugud Uilixis*, it can be seen that each variation is rooted in the desire to improve on Aeolus as a figure with special powers to assist in the hero's return. As a result, the medieval Irish version of the ruler-helper is similar but clearly superior to his Classical counterpart. The forms of advice given by the Judge of Truth also serve to ground the Irish version of the Odyssean narrative on earth, in the everyday world of mortals, enabling demythologized versions of several Odyssean details to replace their orthodox supernatural counterparts. In each case where a supernatural element has been demythologized, the author makes a subtle, typically wordplay-related, reference to the orthodox detail in question, thereby informing us that he knew it. The twin processes of idealizing and demythologizing at work in the text are illustrated by the following three examples.

Firstly, the help offered to the hero by the Judge of Truth is similar to, but better than, that offered to Odysseus by Aeolus in that it is successful. Having accepted this help, he, unlike Odysseus, does get home both quickly and without the need for adventures with supernatural beings (which, happily from the point of an author eager to extol the virtues of self-control, eliminates the need for the hero to engage in either sex or violence). In contrast to the successful outcome presented in *Merugud*

[60] [Robert T.] Meyer, *Merugud Uilix*, lines 254–9; the version of the brooch given here may be considered superior to the golden one offered in the *Odyssey*, since it is made of both gold and silver in *Merugud Uilixis* alone.

[61] *Odyssey* X.23–4, 44–5.

[62] [Kuno] Meyer, *Merugud Uilix*, ix.

Uilixis, Aeolus's attempt to help Odysseus is foiled by the hero falling asleep at the very moment when his land comes into view.[63] It may be noted that Uilixes sees his own land at the very beginning of the narrative before his adventures begin and before he has met with a ruler-helper such as Aeolus.[64] The apparent bringing forward of this detail in the Irish tale has the effect of making the connection between Uilixes's initial misperception of the situation which awaits him at home – thinking that both his land and wife are in the hands of another man – with the next event described, his being cast back out to sea.

The strong suggestion from this dislocation is that Uilixes's physical *merugud* ('going astray') occurs as a direct result of a psychological *merugud*, his misperception of what awaits him at home, for in truth Peneloipi has been faithful, and no other man threatens his kingdom. Because the information that he and his men shared this incorrect opinion in relation to Peneloipi's chastity is given by the narrator immediately before they are cast back out to sea by a storm, the bringing-forward of the Classical detail that the hero sees his own country before his adventures begin suggests a direct connection between the hero's error in respect of Peneloipi's faithfulness and his physical wandering off course. Therefore, the need for him to have adventures, especially with the Judge of Truth, may be interpreted as an intervention by a power who controls the weather (though he is not named, it is my contention that this is intended to be the Christian God) in response to the hero's imperfect human reasoning. If the hero had been allowed to go ashore without these adventures, then not only would there be no medieval Irish *Odyssey*, but he would have no son, because he would not have learnt forbearance from the Judge of Truth, and so would perhaps have killed both his own son and Peneloipi, mistaking them for lovers. Not only does the Judge of Truth play the role of ruler-helper played by Aeolus (and later by Alcinous) in the *Odyssey*, but he also plays the 'spiritual/divine helper' role played by Athene in Homer's work. The expanded function of the Judge of Truth allows for the goddess to remain unmentioned in *Merugud Uilixis*, removing a central mythological figure from the narrative.

The fact that the Judge's skill relates to truth and wisdom, whereas Athene is mistress of craft(iness), is a further example of moral idealization present in the Irish tale. The wise figure who counsels the hero in the folklore analogues identified by Hillers may be ultimately based on Athene (or conceivably vice versa, at some distant point in the past).[65] In any case, if an analogous folktale involving a wise figure who counsels a figure returning home were known to the saga-author, his skill in producing the Judge of Truth by combining elements of a folklore figure with portrayals of several Odyssean helpers including Aeolus and Athene would be a considerable feat. My view is that it is not necessary to include the suggested folklore parallels as

[63] *Odyssey* X.31–3.

[64] [Robert T.] Meyer, *Merugud Uilix*, lines 3–4.

[65] Hillers refers to Athene when discussing the importance of the Judge of Truth to the meaning of the entire tale, yet her view is that the Judge is a skilful, heavily Christian, reworking of the Master who appears in folktales across the world as the source of three wise counsels (Hillers, 'Ulysses', 213–18, and her chapter in this volume). My view is that Odyssean figures such as Athene and Aeolus made a significant contribution towards the creation of the Judge of Truth, and if the latter is both at home with Christian teaching about Truth and a purveyor of philosophical wisdom, this need not be considered incompatible with the author's having been influenced by either the folkloric Master or by Odyssean figures such as Athene or Aeolus. The fact that he knew the Classical narrative well enough to rework it in such an imaginative fashion, while drawing on a rich variety of sources, is perhaps his most remarkable achievement.

source-material for *Merugud Uilixis*. A combination of Classical knowledge and a focus on the idealizing moral potential of the underlying narrative – especially from a Platonic point of view – could have produced both a figure such as the Judge of Truth and other aspects of the text which resemble folklore material to some extent, as do parts of the *Odyssey* itself.[66]

Secondly, the first two of the three lessons given by the Judge of Truth are very different to the physical bag of winds given to Odysseus by Aeolus. In fact, the nature of these two pieces of advice suggests that the portrayal of the Judge of Truth incorporates elements found not in Aeolus but in other Odyssean characters who act as helpers to the hero. 'Taking the main road only' (*leanaid in sligid móir*) could be understood as a medieval Irish anti-mythological shorthand for the orthodox advice of Circe to steer a course between Scylla and Charybdis, while the Odyssean taboo against eating the cattle of Helios may well be reflected in the advice not to set out before the sun has risen to a certain position in the sky overhead.[67] The latter reworking is particularly noteworthy as it appears to rely on a lighthearted and unmarked play on the epithet applied to Helios in Classical sources, *Ὑπερίων* (*Hyperion*, 'The High One'). Thus, advice given to the hero by helpers other than Aeolus in the *Odyssey* is offered to Uilixes by the Judge of Truth, albeit couched in different, demythologized forms. The fact that the Judge of Truth offers substitutes for the advice of other figures in the *Odyssey* both eliminates the need to mention these figures and supports the notion that the Judge of Truth is similar but superior to Aeolus, and is at once a distilled and composite version of several Odyssean helper-figures.

Third and lastly, the final lesson given by the Judge of Truth (to hold the breath three times before committing an *écht*, 'murder')[68] is most important to the narrative as a whole since, as mentioned above, when Uilixes later acts upon it the heightened level of self-control he learned from the Judge of Truth prevents him from killing both his wife and son in error. This is a truly remarkable passage, for it demonstrates very clearly both of the elements which are crucial to solving the puzzle at the heart of *Merugud Uilixis*: first, the author's knowledge of the orthodox narrative, to which he subtly alludes using the word *eólus* ('knowledge', 'direction'), playing on the name of the expected, but absent, Aeolus;[69] second, the clever use of transformation of orthodox details – just as the three unhelpful winds are held in Aeolus's bag, in the Irish version three breaths must be contained within the respiratory system.[70] The repeated play on *eólus* in this episode is the key to solving the 'puzzle' caused by the text's continual juxtaposition of orthodox and unique material, for its use subtly informs us that the Irish author was well aware of the orthodox story, yet deliberately chose to portray his version of 'Aeolus' as the Judge of Truth, an altogether superior ruler-helper who dispenses the *eólus* needed by the hero in order for him to get home

[66] It is worth considering the question of Platonic influence on the transformation of orthodox ruler-helpers into The Judge of Truth, who is a philosopher as well as a ruler as recommended in the *Republic* (see below, 82n.74).

[67] [Robert T.] Meyer, *Merugud Uilix*, lines 134, 146–7. It may be the case that listening to and acting on advice which contradicts that given by the Judge of Truth such as that given by *fer dun cuidechta* ('a man of the company') as Uilixes and his men set out on the final leg of their journey before arriving home (*ibid.*, lines 160–82) should be read as the equivalent of being drawn to one's doom by the Sirens' voices. Those crew-members who heed the words of this *fer dun cuidechta* are portrayed as suffering a similarly speedy demise to the violent end which those who fail to ignore the Sirens' song meet in orthodox accounts.

[68] [Robert T.] Meyer, *Merugud Uilix*, lines 117–24.

[69] *Ibid*., lines 121, 158.

[70] *Ibid*., lines 121–3. For Aeolus's bag of winds, see *Odyssey* X.25–30.

both more quickly than his orthodox counterpart and with his wisdom enhanced such that he does not kill his own wife and son.

The wordplay on 'Aeolus' also recalls the phrase *airic menmun* playing on 'Aigmemnon' in *Fingal Chlainne Tanntail*, discussed above, which also has an instance of *lár medhón* ('epicentre') as a play on the personal name Laimedon. Just as in the previously mentioned case of Classical tragedy (Clytemnestra/'famous schemer'), a writer working on the Odyssean narrative might well have been encouraged to utilize the related tools of humour and wordplay by their frequent appearances in the 'mother' narrative: for example, the name *Outis* (Nobody) is a famous instance in Homer's Cyclops episode, but there are many further examples in the *Odyssey* which play on the interpretation of Odysseus's Greek name as 'Man of Pain'. Such a procedure would of course require at least a glossary of Greek words, especially personal names, found in the *Odyssey*, to have been available to the author of *Merugud Uilixis* alongside whichever version of the Classical narrative he used (and there is no way of knowing what form this took at present). Both instances of wordplay, as well as the broader exaggerative process apparent in both Irish adaptations, suggest writers and audiences who were well versed in this material – namely the stuff of Classical tragedy and the content of the orthodox narrative of the *Odyssey*, though probably not the respective Classical texts themselves.

The cumulative effect of the idealized portrayals of the main characters of *Merugud Uilixis* in relation to their orthodox counterparts is a narrative which is, from its author's perspective, morally superior to that of any extant orthodox form of the *Odyssey*. It might also be added that not only are many of the unorthodox details found in the Irish text explicable as deliberate idealizations (as with the Judge of Truth), but many identifiable themes in the *Odyssey* itself are also present in distilled form. Thus, such ultimately Homeric preoccupations as the importance of recognition (both physical and political) and the focus on blood-ties and patrimony echo throughout the text and are mentioned even more frequently here than in the *Odyssey* itself. The presence of such thematic material implies a profound level of appreciation of the Classical narrative on the part of the medieval Irish author, whatever his immediate sources were. This may be considered even more remarkable than his apparently detailed knowledge of the narrative. It is the view of modern scholarship that the Homeric text was not directly accessible by medieval Westerners in general, and that any awareness of the content of any Homeric works Irish scholars may have had is likely to have been piecemeal at best, mediated by commentators such as Servius and Macrobius. However, while this may be accepted for the early Middle Ages, our knowledge of which Greek texts might have been accessible to an Irish scholar around the turn of the thirteenth century is at present uncertain.[71] It is an entirely circular argument to state that the content of *Merugud Uilixis* itself is the best (indeed, the only) available evidence that the underlying Homeric narrative in some form, plus several Greek words, were known to at least one Irishman at this time. Even so, I believe that the above analysis strongly supports this assertion.

[71] Clarke's statement that 'there is no possibility that any Irishmen were acquainted with Homer at the time this work was composed' refers to Recension 1 of *Táin Bó Cúailnge*, written two or three centuries before *Merugud Uilixis* ('Achilles, Byrhtnoth', 264).

Conclusion

In addition to the shared circumstances of our two adaptations as regards probable date of composition, manuscript provenance and Classical subject-matter, which appear to suggest the possibility of a connection between these texts, an examination of the unique material contained in each text suggests that each author approached his respective underlying narrative(s) from a similar moral perspective. Each author appears to have noticed similar thematic possibilities present in whatever sources (presumably broadly orthodox, though we cannot be certain) he knew. In particular, the respective actions of these narratives make it clearer than in any extant orthodox source that self-control over sexual and violent impulses must be exercised in order to protect both the individual and the wider family. In *Fingal Chlainne Tanntail* we read of the consequences of persistent failure to do this: self-destruction, loss of political power and ultimately dynastic extinction. The opposite situation is presented in *Merugud Uilixis*, in which supreme self-control, learned from a wise teacher who is also a ruler, is shown to prevent a catastrophic *fingal*. Whether coincidentally or not, the Homeric opposition between Mycenaeans and Ithacans is preserved and even magnified.

This is already a remarkable state of affairs, since the respective Classical narratives underlying each of these medieval Irish texts are not generally held to have been either known or studied in the medieval West. Nevertheless, the above analysis suggests Irish authors who were both skilled wordsmiths and learned men in possession of sources which enabled them not only to know their Classical subject matter but also to understand its thematic content. Future research may shed more light on the nature of these sources, but they could have included mythographic works, such as paraphrases or glosses, translated extracts in *florilegia*, or all three. Sources like these are suggested by Michael Clarke in relation to medieval Irish works such as *Fingal Rónáin* which appear to draw on Classical parallels, yet for which the sources are as yet unidentified.[72]

Although there must be a degree of uncertainty about their respective sources, it is apparent from the above analysis that the authors of *Fingal Chlainne Tanntail* and *Merugud Uilixis* each applied similar adaptive approaches and techniques to his Classical subject-matter, as well as a similarly knowing yet often lighthearted authorial tone, evidenced by such examples of unmarked wordplay as in the respective cases of *airic menmun*/'Aigmemnon' and *eólus*/Aeolus. With this in mind, it seems that each adaptation was composed by a scholar who felt comfortable in the exalted worlds of Classical tragedy and Homeric material respectively. This adaptive method seems to have been directed specifically towards placing greater emphasis on salient themes already present in orthodox accounts. In addition, certain orthodox plot-details are transformed in their medieval Irish guises, and others have apparently been edited out (such as Agamemnon's sacrifice of his own daughter Iphigenia in one text, and the absence of the hero's paramours Circe and Calypso from the other) which seem not to have suited the Irish authors' respective purposes. The result, in both cases, is a distilled account in which, in one text, the impulsive crime-ridden Tantalus clan is further abased, whereas in the other text, the self-controlled Uilixes and Peneloipi, as well as the ruler-helper figure the Judge of Truth, dog and magical food, contribute to a narrative even more idealized than the *Odyssey* itself.

[72] Clarke, chapter 7 of this volume.

Of the two texts discussed above, it is *Merugud Uilixis* which on the face of things displays the most dramatic reworking of the underlying narrative; yet in both texts the author's apparent interventions magnify and illuminate thematic content already present in the underlying narratives. A possible reason for the greater degree of reworking in *Merugud Uilixis* is that the orthodox events described in the tragic narratives underlying *Fingal Chlainne Tanntail* were already so terrible that there was less room, or perceived need, for exaggeration there than in the case of the narrative of the *Odyssey*. The 'imperfections' of, and therefore room for further polishing in, the Odyssean narrative – especially the figure of the hero himself – appear to have been recognized by the Irish author.[73] The moral shortcomings of Odysseus would have been especially salient to an author who worked from a perspective which might be called Platonic. I suggest that this is an approach to the text's unorthodox content which deserves close attention – especially in the light of the resonances between its unique elements and Plato's works on sense-perception, knowledge and truth, including 'true judgement', as well as self-control and anti-materialism.[74]

The magnified, yet quasi-Classical, emphasis on the dangers of a lack of self-control over the sexual and violent impulses presented in *Fingal Chlainne Tanntail* render it a remarkable work within the corpus of medieval Irish Classical adaptations. In the case of *Merugud Uilixis*, whatever the precise nature of his sources and influences may have been, we are presented with the work of a highly skilled and learned author, willing and able to take on the most exalted of ancient narratives, capable of magnifying and even (in his view) improving on what he understood to be its *moral* content while simultaneously eliminating its supernatural aspects, such as the hero's orthodox adventures into non-human worlds.

[73] In his foreword to the 1992 edition of Stanford's *The Ulysses Theme* (iii–xix), Charles Boer goes so far as to suggest that Odysseus is little better than a sex-crazed sociopath.

[74] The idiosyncratic ending of *Merugud Uilixis*, in which Uilixes learns the truth, further suggests Platonic influence. In order to discover the truth – that the relationship between Peneloipi and the young man beside her in bed is platonic and that the latter is Uilixes's son – Uilixes is made to enter his bedroom upwards out of an *uaim* ('cave') in a manner which recalls Plato's parable of the Cave in *Republic* 7. Additionally, the Irish word *sochraide* ('alliance') is used three times in this short incident ([Robert T.] Meyer, *Merugud Uilix*, lines 221, 239), which I suggest is a play on the name of Plato's narrator, Socrates. Against possible objections that such works as the *Republic* and the *Theaetetus* (whose focus is on epistemology, which also seems to have interested the author of *Merugud Uilixis* judging by his use of the quasi-Socratic 'how do you know that?', discussed above, 73) could not have been known by the Irish author, it might be argued that if he knew the content of the *Odyssey*, even if not the entire work in Homeric Greek, he might also have known parts of these Platonic works, a degree of specialist Classical learning held by modern scholarship to be equally unlikely for his time and place. On knowledge of Plato's works in the medieval West, generally held to be restricted to the *Timaeus* via the partial Latin translation and commentary by Calcidius, see Gregory, 'The Platonic inheritance', 54–80. It is clear that, as the twelfth century progressed, interest in and knowledge of Platonism flourished among parts of the western European intelligentsia, especially in centres such as Chartres under Thierry (Dronke, 'Thierry of Chartres', 358–85). The content of both *Merugud Uilixis* and *Fingal Chlainne Tanntail* constitutes evidence, in my view, that specialist Classical learning might also be found among Irish scholars around 1200. There is also evidence that centres such as Chartres included scholars from Ireland among their number during the twelfth century, some of them working on Platonic material (Ó Néill, 'An Irishman at Chartres'). See also 152–4 below

5

THE MEDIEVAL IRISH *WANDERING OF ULYSSES* BETWEEN LITERACY AND ORALITY

Barbara Hillers

Merugud Uilixis meic Leirtis, 'The Wandering of Ulysses son of Laertes', is a short prose saga composed in late Middle Irish around the year 1200.[1] The text survives in three late-medieval manuscripts, the earliest and best-known of which is the late fourteenth-century Book of Ballymote.[2] *Merugud Uilixis* purports to tell the adventures of Ulysses son of Laertes, Uilixes mac Leirtis, on his voyage home from Troy and his eventual homecoming.

Merugud Uilixis has attracted a fair amount of critical notice for being the first vernacular retelling of the *Odyssey* in the medieval West. The composition of a vernacular Irish saga devoted to the adventures of Ulysses, at a time before any twelfth-century renaissance can plausibly be claimed to have permeated Irish monastic institutions, is noteworthy and the text sheds new light on the reception of Homer, specifically Homer's *Odyssey*, in medieval Ireland.

Kuno Meyer, who published the text and translation in 1886, already concluded that the text represented an original composition rather than a translation of a Classical source-text.[3] William Stanford called the saga 'a lively and sophisticated fusion of classical and Irish elements'.[4] Stanford's description of *Merugud Uilixis* as 'not entirely unhomeric'[5] aptly expresses the problem the saga has posed for its critics: the saga appears to capture the spirit of the *Odyssey*, while deviating dramatically from the Homeric plotline. The Irish author appears to have a grasp of the overall story arc and its Iliadic context, and he presents us with a vivid and plausible portrayal of its central characters. A significant number of the story's motifs are ultimately derived from Homer's *Odyssey*, but in each case they appear transformed and bear little detailed resemblance to the text of the *Odyssey*. Furthermore, a significant portion of the saga is devoted to adventures that cannot be traced back to Homer but

[1] *Merugud Uilixis* has been edited three times ([Kuno] Meyer, *Merugud Uilix*; [Robert T.] Meyer, *Merugud Uilix*; Hillers, *Medieval Irish Odyssey*). For a discussion of the form *Uilix* used by previous editors, as in the saga title *Merugud Uilix*, see below, 000.

[2] Dublin, Royal Irish Academy, MS 23 P 12 ('Book of Ballymote'). The other manuscripts are Dublin, Royal Irish Academy, MS D iv 2 (the 'Stowe manuscript') and Dublin, King's Inns Library, MS 12; both date to the late fifteenth century. The three manuscripts are independent of each other (*pace* [Robert T.] Meyer, *Merugud Uilix*, xii; see Hillers, *Medieval Irish Odyssey*, 327), but differences between them are relatively minor. The Book of Ballymote text provides overall the best readings; the King's Inns manuscript shows most evidence of linguistic innovation on the part of late medieval scribes.

[3] 'The Irishman was himself the author of this work, which he compiled from different sources': [Kuno] Meyer, *Merugud Uilix*, ix.

[4] Stanford, 'Towards a history', 35.

[5] Stanford, *The Ulysses Theme*, 1st ed., 286 n. 3.

are inspired by a popular oral folktale; the author, as we shall see, has successfully grafted the folktale's plot onto the Homeric plotline.

Critical readings of *Merugud Uilixis* have tended to approach the Irish text by matching elements in the saga to episodes in the *Odyssey,* and to judge the saga by the extent to which it adheres to Homer. Robert Crampton rightly takes issue with a tendency to view *Merugud Uilixis* as a failed version of the *Odyssey* or to dismiss the text as a 'combination of deficient sources and limited authorial skill.'[6] He invokes Stanford, who insisted that 'to regard it as a "debased" or "distorted" version of the *Odyssey,* as some scholars have done, is wrong . . . the *Merugud* can be accepted on its own merits as a skilful re-creation of Ulysses' adventures.'[7] Crampton argues cogently that 'Any explanation of the content . . . which is predicated on deficiency is unlikely to explain all of the material which is present' in the text.[8] Crampton's insights about the saga hero's transformation at the hands of the medieval Irish author help us gauge his moral and intellectual compass.[9] Where Crampton and I disagree is the extent to which the Irish author was acquainted with Homer and with Classical learning generally. In the light of what we know about the transmission of Homer in the Middle Ages, we are not entitled to assume that the text of Homer's *Odyssey* or anything closely resembling the Homeric narrative was available to the Irish author. The medieval Latin West did not have access to the Homeric texts, the study of Greek language and particularly literature generally being outside the western monastic curriculum. Furthermore, while the content of the *Iliad* was well known through numerous Latin translations and adaptations, no comparable Latin texts existed to mediate the *Odyssey*. Crampton acknowledges this difficulty and does not attempt to supply circumstantial evidence. His case for the Irish author's familiarity with the Homeric narrative is based on internal evidence. 'If the respective authors did not know the underlying narratives well,' he asks with regard to *Merugud Uilixis* and *Fingal Chlainne Tanntail*, 'how could they have produced between them portrayals of major characters which are both well-developed and close to orthodox, . . . as well as fine details of plot which are also close to orthodox . . .?'[10] The saga itself, Crampton believes, offers sufficient proof for an Irish acquaintance with the 'Homeric narrative in some form.'[11] My own reading of the saga emphasizes instead the disjunction between the medieval Irish author and the Homeric text. This chapter can only probe the elusive sources and underground channels by which the story of Ulysses was transmitted to Ireland. However far removed from Homer's *Odyssey* these may seem, they bring us closer to the intellectual horizon of the author of *Merugud Uilixis*.

Ulysses in medieval Ireland

The medieval Irish translations and adaptations of Classical matter form an extensive and richly rewarding corpus of texts which has only recently begun to receive

[6] Crampton, this volume, 58.
[7] Stanford, *Ireland*, 77.
[8] Crampton, this volume, 59.
[9] His insights seem (to me at least) to tally closely with my own readings of the saga's underlying message for its contemporary audience (Hillers, 'Ulysses').
[10] Crampton, this volume, 59.
[11] 'It is an entirely circular argument to state that the content of *Merugud Uilixis* itself is the best (indeed, the only) available evidence that the underlying Homeric narrative in some form, plus several Greek words, were known to at least one Irishman at this time.' (Crampton, this volume, 80).

the critical attention it deserves. In recent decades a compelling case has been made that the Classical tales were intended by their monastic authors to provide a narrative of Classical antiquity within the framework of Christian historiography.[12] This historiographic interest is reflected in the manuscripts that contain Classical material: the Book of Ballymote and Royal Irish Academy MS D iv 2 – two manuscripts that contain copies of *Merugud Uilixis* – are massive and well-organized compilations with an explicit historiographic scope, ranging over biblical, Classical and Irish history.

The Irish monastic *literati* appear to have been particularly interested in Greek legendary history,[13] and there is a cluster of stories connected to the Fall of Troy that Erich Poppe has rightly termed a 'Troy cycle'.[14] *Merugud Uilixis* should be seen very much as part of this cycle of Troy tales, as even the physical context of the manuscripts suggests: in all three manuscripts that contain a copy of *Merugud Uilixis*, the text is preceded by *Togail Troí* and other tales from the Troy cycle.[15] The saga's opening sentence explicitly situates *Merugud Uilixis* in the context of the Trojan War:

> Iar n-indrad ⁊ díscaíled Troíana, turthechta na nGréc, tánic cach díb dochum a chríchi ⁊ a fheraind dílis féin. Tánic trá Uilixes mac Leirtis dá chrích 7 dá fherann. . .
>
> After the spoiling and dispersal of the Trojans, as for the Greeks, each of them went to his country and his own dear land. Ulysses son of Laertes for his part went to his country and his land . . . (section 1)[16]

In some sense, *Merugud Uilixis* clearly serves to flesh out the story of one of the great heroes of the Trojan War.

Merugud Uilixis is not the only medieval Irish text that mentions Ulysses. He is well known in medieval sources as one of the inner circle of heroes of the Trojan

[12] Myrick, *From the* De Excidio; Poppe, *New Introduction*; Miles, *Heroic Saga*; and see Helen Fulton's contribution to the present volume.

[13] By far the greater number of the Classical translations are dedicated to Greek subject matter, including full-length translations of epics and chronicles such as *Togail Troí* (The Destruction of Troy), *Togail na Tebe* (The Destruction of Thebes), *Imtheachta Aeniasa* (The Adventures of Aeneas) and *Scéla Alaxandair* (The Alexander Saga), as well as shorter free adaptations such as *Sgél in Mínaduir* (The Story of the Minotaur), *Fingal Chlainne Tanntail* (The Kinslaying of the Family of Tantalus), and of course *Merugud Uilixis*. Only one of the Irish Classical adaptations is devoted exclusively to Roman history (*In Cath Catharda*, 'The Civil War', the adaptation of Lucan's *Bellum civile*).

[14] Poppe, *New Introduction*, especially 3–10; Hillers, *Medieval Irish Odyssey*, 52–60 on the centrality of the Trojan War as a key event in the Irish reception of Classical 'history'. Stories only marginally connected to the Fall of Troy were reframed by their Irish adapters to draw them into the Trojan sphere.

[15] In the Book of Ballymote (Dublin, Royal Irish Academy, MS 23 P 12), *Merugud Uilixis* is preceded by *Togail Troí* and followed by *Imtheachta Aeniasa*; in Dublin, Royal Irish Academy, MS D iv 2, *Merugud Uilixis* is preceded by *Togail Troí*, *Don Tres Troí*, and *Fingal Chlainne Tanntail*; and in Dublin, King's Inns Library, MS 12/13, *Merugud Uilixis* is preceded by *Togail Troí* and *Don Tres Troí* and followed by *Fingal Chlainne Tanntail* and *Imtheachta Aeniasa*; see Hillers, *Medieval Irish Odyssey*, 295–307.

[16] All translations are my own. The Irish text is quoted from my electronic edition of *Merugud Uilixis* based on the Book of Ballymote text (available upon request from the author). For easy reference, both text and translation are cited with paragraph references based on Robert T. Meyer's widely available edition, *Merugud Uilix*. Kuno Meyer's 1886 translation in his *Merugud Uilix* contains significant pitfalls.

War. References to Ulysses are found in a number of the Classical adaptations, most notably *Togail Troí* (The Destruction of Troy) and the Irish *Aeneid*. The form of the hero's name throughout a wide range of vernacular Irish texts (including *Togail Troí*, *Imtheachta Aeniasa* 'The Adventures of Aeneas' and *Geinemain Aichil* 'The Birth of Achilles')[17] is *Ulixes* or *Uilixes*. The name also occurs in two poems where a trisyllabic *Ulixes* is required by metre.[18] Scribes often abbreviated long personal names, and two of the three manuscripts of *Merugud Uilixis* consistently abbreviate the hero's name to a bisyllabic *Ulix.* / *Uilix*., leading Kuno Meyer (followed by Robert T. Meyer) to believe that *Uilix* is the Irish form of Ulysses.[19]

Merugud Uilixis shares a number of characteristics with other texts in the Classical corpus. Like many of the texts in the corpus, including the Irish translations of the epics of Virgil, Lucan and Statius, it dates to the late Middle Irish period. Like them, it has successfully been assimilated to an Irish cultural milieu and is entirely couched in the characteristic idiom of native saga. However, *Merugud Uilixis* differs from other Classical adaptations in a number of ways: it is, for one thing, much shorter, and it is not in any sense a translation. While the Irish versions of Virgil, Lucan and Statius are never simply 'translations' in the modern sense, each can be said to, in the widest sense, 'translate' a particular Latin text or texts: *Imtheachta Aeniasa* is based on Virgil's *Aeneid*, *In Cath Catharda* on Lucan's *Bellum civile*, and *Togail na Tebe* on Statius's *Thebaid*; *Togail Troí* and *Scéla Alaxandair* draw on post-classical Latin prose texts popular in the Middle Ages. *Merugud Uilixis*, on the other hand, does not translate any text at all, be it Classical or post-Classical, and scholars agree that the saga represents instead an original Irish composition based on Classically derived subject matter. It is one of the shortest texts in the Classical corpus; Robert T. Meyer's edition of the saga comprises just under ten pages, whereas texts such as *Togail Troí* and *In Cath Catharda* are among the longest extant prose compositions in medieval Irish.

While the Irish translators of Virgil, Lucan and Statius were able Latinists and learned scholars, the author of *Merugud Uilixis*, as we shall see, had a different educational profile. The story he tells is not exclusively concerned with Classical antiquity; into the Odyssean frame the author inserts the plot of a folktale that appears to have been in oral currency throughout medieval Europe. This text presents us with a conceptually intriguing puzzle. Its author, who operated within a monastic milieu and whose thoroughly Christian mindset we shall have occasion to explore below, has fused popular oral and quintessentially literary elements. Its use of oral sources makes *Merugud Uilixis* stand out from other tales in the Irish Classical corpus. While it cannot in this regard be considered representative of the corpus as a whole, it is arguably all the more interesting for that reason.

[17] Ó hAodha, 'The Irish version', sections 38–43. *Geinemain Aichil* is only extant in the third recension of *Togail Troí.*

[18] Ulysses is mentioned in a metrical retelling of Dares (Mac Eoin, 'Dán', 35) and in a poem by Gilla in Chomded úa Cormaic in the Book of Leinster (Dublin, Trinity College MS 1339, fo. 143 b 44–71).

[19] Kuno Meyer's edition was based on the Book of Ballymote text and MS D iv 2; he was not aware of the third manuscript, King's Inns' MS 12, which has several instances of the unabbreviated trisyllabic form. There can be little doubt that the scribes of all three manuscripts of *Merugud Uilixis* understood the hero's name to be a trisyllabic *Uilixes*. The scribe of the Book of Ballymote texts of *Togail Troí* and *Imtheachta Aeniasa* used the trisyllabic form *Ulixes*; it is only in the context of the saga devoted to Ulysses that the hero's name is abbreviated. Short forms are invariably marked as abbreviations either by a suspension stroke or a period (Hillers, '*In fer fiamach firglic*', 18–21).

The story opens, as we have mentioned above, at Troy. The Trojans have finally been defeated, Troy has fallen, and the Greeks – Ulysses among them – have triumphed. Ulysses and his men prepare to return home, their boat laden with Trojan treasure (section 3). The author is aware of the long duration of the Trojan War, and that Ulysses went to Troy to support *ríg Gréc* ('the King of the Greeks', section 16), presumably Agamemnon.[20] The author's characterization of his main protagonists is confident and mostly apt. The personality of Ulysses – *Uilixes mac Leirtis* – is drawn to perfection. Homesick and weary, he remains consistently resourceful and wise to the last: *Ba fear fiamach firglic trá in fear sa 7 ba coitchindbérla* ('Now that man was astute and very clever and he was a polyglot', section 6). The only other saga character mentioned by name is Penelope – *Peneloipi* – who is as loyal to her absent husband as her Homeric counterpart, and quite as cautious. The rest of the small cast of the saga remain nameless: the couple's son Telemachus, the dog Argos, Agamemnon and Polyphemus the Cyclops.

Homer's *Odyssey* is chiefly remembered for the hero's adventurous encounters with magical adversaries, which folklorists have shown to be firmly rooted in the world of supernatural legend and folklore.[21] Homer's Odysseus encounters (in order) the Ciconians; the Lotus-Eaters; Polyphemus the Cyclops; Aeolus, god of the winds; the giant Laistrygonians; the sorceress Circe; the souls of the dead in Hades; the Sirens; Scylla and Charybdis; the Cattle of Helios; and the nymph Calypso. The hero of *Merugud Uilixis*, on the other hand, only visits three places on his journey home, and there is no trace of most of the popular Odyssean episodes, such as Odysseus' sojourn with Circe and with Calypso, or his escape from the Sirens and from Scylla and Charybdis.

The Irish hero's *merugud* ('wandering, going astray') begins when, shortly after his departure from Troy, Ulysses's ship is thrown back into the open sea within sight of his native land. Just as Odysseus has come close enough to Ithaca to be able to make out people tending fires (*Odyssey* 10), the hero of *Merugud Uilixis* is close enough to distinguish the mountains of his home land. In Homer's *Odyssey*, the storm that throws the comrades back is caused by the inadvertent release of the winds from the bag given to Odysseus by Aeolus, the god of the winds. In *Merugud Uilixis*, the storm is not obviously caused by the breaking of a taboo.[22]

1. The Island of the Sheep

The Irish hero's *merugud*, though much abridged, captures something of the spirit of the original, and the first island in particular where Ulysses and his men find refuge after being driven off course has a certain Odyssean ambience. It is not surprising that critics have attempted to draw parallels between this island and various Homeric islands, in particular the island of the Oxen of Helios and the Lotus-Eaters

[20] When later on in the story Ulysses runs into trouble, his men advise him *dul ar amus ríg Gréc 7 t'imned d'acaíne fris, 7 amail dochuaidaisium ina shochraidisium ticedsam at shochraidisiu* ('to go to the King of the Greeks and to tell him of your troubles, and as you went to his aid, let him come to your aid', section 16).

[21] Classic treatments include Carpenter, *Folk Tale*, and Page, *Folktales*. The list of folklore motifs in the *Odyssey* continues to grow; see e.g. Hansen, 'Odysseus' and *Ariadne's Thread*.

[22] Crampton suggests (this volume, 78) that Ulysses is being punished for the misplaced jealous fears he expresses in the opening passage of *Merugud Uilixis*.

(*Odyssey* 12 and 9 respectively). Kuno Meyer saw 'faint echoes' of both episodes in *Merugud Uilixis*;[23] Robert T. Meyer speaks of non-specific 'dim reminiscences of . . . Homeric episodes',[24] and Stanford refers to 'adventures which clearly echo' the episodes of the Oxen of the Sun and the Lotus-Eaters.[25] All three are notably cautious in their claims, since the resemblance between the Irish episode and either of the two Homeric passages is neither close nor detailed. In his contribution to the present volume, Crampton suggests that the episode represents a conscious and deliberate reworking of the Lotus-Eaters episode,[26] and I would like to revisit the case for textual borrowing. There is no methodological gold standard for proving textual influence, but in order to build a compelling case for one text's dependence upon another text one should expect to demonstrate a significant overlap between the texts in question, on the level of narrative structure, plot detail, and wording. Connecting isolated elements from two texts – even if they look superficially similar – is not enough to establish borrowing. This is particularly true in the present case, where the two texts deal with the same subject; the Irish saga author's sources, however derived, were bound to incorporate genuine Homeric detail. To take an example, in the Island of the Sheep episode, Ulysses urges his comrades to persevere in their quest to reach their fatherland (*athar-tír*), which in Crampton's view confirms the Irish text's debt to the Lotus-Eaters episode, where Odysseus pleads with his comrades not to forget their 'homecoming' (*nostos*; *Odyssey* 9). The use of the relatively uncommon word *athar-tír* in the Irish saga is not likely to be a coincidence, but neither does it prove the saga's dependence on the Lotus-Eaters episode. Ulysses's loyalty to his native country was a well-known trope which could have reached the Irish author through a variety of channels.

Let us take a closer look at the episode in *Merugud Uilixis* as compared to the two Homeric episodes. In the Cattle of Helios episode in *Odyssey* 12, Odysseus and his men are stranded on an island where the sacred cattle of the sun-god Helios graze. Odysseus warns his comrades not to touch the cattle, but when storms keep them moored on the island and they face starvation, the men kill and eat some of the cattle. As a punishment, their boat is shipwrecked and all but Odysseus die. In *Merugud Uilixis*, the food consumed by the travellers is not cattle, but sheep; the animals are not stated to be under the protection of a deity, and there is no indication that the men are breaking a taboo by killing the sheep. Their action is not followed by any negative consequence or mishap, and they sail on safely to the next island.

The case for the saga episode being in imitation of Homer's Lotus-Eaters is similarly hard to substantiate in concrete textual terms. Not only is the nature of the food consumed strikingly different, as Crampton himself points out, but the episodes are structured differently. In Homer, it is only the two scouts that consume the lotus, while Odysseus and the rest of the comrades remain behind; Odysseus sets out to rescue the two who have clearly experienced a drug-induced change of consciousness, as the result of which they have joined the natives. Odysseus forcibly removes them from the group and restrains them aboard ship. The rest of his companions are as eager to leave as he is himself. In *Merugud Uilixis*, on the other hand, the food is not being offered by the local population; everybody – including Ulysses – eats of the flesh, and the companions' reluctance to leave the island seems

[23] [Kuno] Meyer, *Merugud Uilix*, ix.
[24] Meyer, 'The Middle Irish *Odyssey*', 556.
[25] Stanford, 'Towards a history', 34.
[26] Crampton, this volume, 64–8.

quite reasonable. In the end, in spite of their grumbling, all the companions leave the island voluntarily. All in all, the Island of the Sheep in *Merugud Uilixis* does not show the kind of close and consistent similarities to either of the two Homeric episodes in respect of structure, plot detail or wording which would warrant textual borrowing.

2. The Island of the Cyclops

The Island of the Cyclops is the only episode in *Merugud Uilixis* that bears any detailed relationship to a Classical text. The account of how the Cyclops carries off Ulysses and his men, and how Ulysses brings about their release by blinding the giant, is however based not on Homer but on Virgil's retelling of the episode in the *Aeneid*, where Aeneas encounters one of Ulysses's men who was inadvertently left behind. A careful comparison of the Irish text with the Cyclops episode in Homer and Virgil respectively shows that the Irish version contains most of the details provided in the *Aeneid*, and no Homeric details beyond those found in Virgil. As I have argued in detail elsewhere, it is likely that the author of *Merugud Uilixis* based his account of the Cyclops episode on the Irish adaptation of the *Aeneid*, *Imtheachta Aeniasa*, rather than the Latin text, since the wording in *Merugud Uilixis* is extremely close to the wording used in *Imtheachta Aeniasa*.[27]

Virgil's *Aeneid*, along with its attendant apparatus of late- and post-Classical commentaries and glossaries, was a foundational text for the Irish reception of Classical antiquity.[28] The fact of its translation into the vernacular sometime during the Middle Irish period is itself of course an indication of its popularity; more importantly in the context of the present study, it is also a sign that the reception of Classical literature had broadened to include members of the monastic community who were not able to read the text in the original Latin. In the light of Virgil's enduring popularity in medieval Ireland, the fact that the author of *Merugud Uilixis* ignores the *Aeneid* except for the Cyclops episode is puzzling. The *Aeneid* could have furnished the author with a wealth of information about Ulysses since Virgil's epic is to a considerable extent modelled on the *Odyssey*; like Ulysses, Virgil's Aeneas has to spend a long time at sea before he is allowed to reach his destination. On his voyage, Aeneas passes Ulysses's island realm Ithaca, Circe's island, Scylla and Charybdis, and the island of the Cyclopes, and in each case Ulysses's adventures are explicitly referenced. In a monastic Irish context, Virgil's *Aeneid* should have been the single most easily available Classical text. The Irish author's avoidance of readily available Latin source-material may be an indication that he may not have possessed the necessary degree of fluency to access the Latin text. Even more puzzling is his avoidance of the Irish translation, *Imtheachta Aeniasa*; his acquaintance with the Irish *Aeneid* may have been, as I have argued elsewhere, through aural rather than visual channels, offering yet another tentative clue to help us understand the Irish author's complex relationship with literacy and orality/aurality.[29]

[27] Hillers, 'Ulysses', 200–3.

[28] See Hillers, 'Ulysses', 200–3, for references too numerous to cite here, and see also now Miles, *Heroic Saga*.

[29] Hillers, 'Ulysses', 203.

3. Aeolus and the Judge of Truth

Kuno Meyer tentatively identified the mysterious figure of the Judge of Truth (*Breithem na Fírinne*) in *Merugud Uilixis* with Aeolus, god of the winds.[30] In *Odyssey* 10, Aeolus befriends the hero and gives him the bag of winds to enable him to get home quickly. Thanks to the bag, Odysseus makes good progress, but just as they are about to reach Ithaca, his men foolishly open the bag, releasing a storm that throws them back out to sea. This episode has a number of suggestive parallels with *Merugud Uilixis*: in the Irish saga, the Judge of Truth gives Ulysses a *cilfing bec* ('little bag', section 11) as a farewell gift, with the injunction not to open it. As we have seen, the motif of a storm at sea within sight of home also occurs in *Merugud Uilixis*, although in the saga's opening paragraph rather than in the context of the Judge of Truth episode. The cluster of details with echoes of *Odyssey* 10 – the storm at sea that sends the hero astray, and the gift of a bag which he is not to open – strongly suggests the author's familiarity with motifs from the Aeolus episode. On the other hand, the parallel to *Odyssey* 10 is neither close nor consistent enough to suggest the saga author drew on a complete narrative of the episode. While Aeolus's bag of winds appears to be an impressively sized object, made from the skin of a fully grown ox, the bag which Ulysses is given by the Judge of Truth is referred to as *cilfing bec* ('a little bag'), and it serves in effect as a purse. Homer's Odysseus does not receive the injunction, as Ulysses does in the Irish saga, to give the bag of winds to his wife, or to open it on his return. There is no mention in *Merugud Uilixis* of Ulysses' men opening the *cilfing* behind his back, and the storm unleashed at the beginning of the saga is, of course, quite unconnected to the bag. In fact, there is no hint in the Irish story that the bag is in any way connected with the winds; indeed, since Ulysses returns home from the Judge's kingdom over land, there would be no point in a present of a bag of winds.

Crampton has suggested a new and attractive link between Homer's Aeolus and the Judge of Truth: he points to the occurrence of the word *eólas*, 'knowledge', in the episode of the Judge of Truth, and suggests that the Irish author plays on the similarity between *eólas* and *Aeolus*: 'The Irish author', Crampton argues, 'deliberately chose to portray his version of "Aeolus" as the Judge of Truth . . . who dispenses the *eólus* needed by the hero'.[31] While it is by no means impossible that the medieval author was aware of the name of the Homeric god of the winds, I remain sceptical about the wordplay Crampton sees between *Aeolus* and *eólas*. As we shall see in greater depth below, the Judge of Truth in *Merugud Uilixis* is strongly associated with concepts of wisdom and knowledge, and words in this semiotic field abound in the episode (*aicept*, 'precept'; *foglaim*, 'instruction'; *comairle*, 'advice'; and in particular *fírinne*, 'truth'). The occurrence of the word *eólas* as yet another term for knowledge is thus not in itself surprising. Furthermore, it is the word *fírinne*, rather than *eólas*, that is used repeatedly (the noun *fírinne* 'truth' is used five times, and the adjective *fír* 'true' occurs seven times) and that is directly linked to the figure of the Judge in the collocation *Breithem na Fírinne* (the word *eólas,* by comparison, occurs just twice).

[30] The Judge of Truth was 'clearly a reminiscence of Aeolus' ([Kuno] Meyer, *Merugud Uilix*, ix; followed by Dottin, 'Les légendes', 402, n. 3; [Robert T.] Meyer, *Merugud Uilix*, xv; Mac Cana, 'La traduction', 84; Stanford, *Ireland*, 77; Stanford, 'Towards a history', 34.

[31] Crampton, this volume, 79.

4. The homecoming of Ulysses

More than any other part of the saga, the hero's homecoming is replete with Homeric echoes. Some of these, such as the hero's recognition by his dog, have been commented on by scholars, others have not. In all cases, however, the Homeric motifs have been thoroughly transformed.

As in Homer, the Irish Ulysses initially disguises his true identity from his wife. Presuming the young man whom he sees by Penelope's side to be her lover, Ulysses gains access to his wife's bed-chamber with the intention of killing her as well as the young man – who of course is his own son. Just then Penelope wakes from a dream in which her husband appeared bent on killing her. This recalls Penelope's dream of Odysseus as a death-bringing avenger in *Odyssey* 19. Later in the saga, when Ulysses finally reveals his true identity, Penelope is initially as reluctant to recognize him as her Homeric counterpart (*Odyssey* 22), and like her, she proceeds to test the stranger. First, she asks him to identify her husband's parting gift, and Ulysses correctly describes a golden brooch with a silver pin, recalling Odysseus's description of the golden brooch he wore as he parted from Penelope (Odyssey 19). Still unconvinced, Penelope asks Ulysses to describe his dog, which again he does correctly, and then orders the servants to bring in the dog as a third and final test. Odysseus's recognition by his old dog Argos (*Odyssey* 17) is a well-loved motif, and its transformation at the hands of the Irish saga writer has attracted much comment, most recently by Crampton in this volume.[32] In Homer, the recognition scene is one of quiet pathos, as the old, neglected dog no longer has the strength to move towards Odysseus; overcome by the excitement of seeing his master, the dog only wags his tail and dies. In *Merugud Uilixis*, the dog (who in the Irish saga is a female and remains nameless) is a fierce hound; when she hears her master's voice, four men are not strong enough to hold her back as she leaps up to lick Ulysses's face. Crampton regards the transformation of Odysseus's moribund dog as an instance of conscious rewriting on the part of the Irish saga author. The description of Ulysses's dog as *glégel* ('pure white', 'bright white') suggests 'an obvious though unmarked reference to Argos'; 'the dog . . . is unnamed, but the meaning of the name "Argos" ("bright white") is referred to in the Irish description.'[33] Leaving aside the question of how the Irish author would have known the meaning of Greek *argos,* even if he knew the dog's name was 'Argos', the Irish text does not suggest a pun on 'bright white' to me; three other colours are used in the passage, and the overall effect is 'colourful' rather than 'white': *Dá thaeb glégela aice . . . ⁊ druim glécorcra ⁊ tairr círrdub ⁊ earball uainegda* ('She has two bright white sides . . . and a bright crimson back, and a jet-black belly, and a greenish tail', section 19). The point of the dog's unusual and striking appearance would seem to be that it serves Penelope as a means to test her husband's identity; Ulysses's ability to describe the dog correctly proves that he really is who he claims to be.

Our examination of the Homeric elements in *Merugud Uilixis* has enabled us to identify a number of motifs that are ultimately derived from Homer. Among them is a cluster of details pointing to an acquaintance with the Aeolus episode, and another cluster in the homecoming sequence. Aside from the Cyclops episode, however, which is drawn from Virgil's *Aeneid* (probably via its Irish translation, *Imtheachta Aeniasa*), none of these elements appears to draw on any extant text, whether classical

[32] Crampton, this volume, 66.
[33] *Ibid*. 66.

or post-classical. The author's use of these Homeric elements thus cannot be regarded as proof of dependence on the *Odyssey* or on any extant summary of the Classical text. On the contrary, the way the motifs have been re-interpreted and re-ordered by the author strongly argues against his having had access to any complete retelling of the *Odyssey*. It suggests instead that he drew on discrete Odyssean motifs which had come to him piecemeal, synthesizing them into an engaging tale and bringing Homer's hero to life in a new dress and for a new, contemporary audience.

The Ulysses we encounter in *Merugud Uilixis* is a thoroughly likeable, albeit not morally perfect, hero. Our author appears untouched by the anti-Odyssean propaganda of Latin Classical and late-antique writers: the Ulysses of the Irish author's imagination is not the vilified character of Virgil's *Aeneid*. He is not a flawless figure, but he is very much the hero of his tale and the focus of our sympathies. To some extent at least, the author's pro-Odyssean perspective can be traced to the ecclesiastical channels by which Odyssean material remained available. From Augustine and Jerome to Ambrose and Paulinus, Odyssean allusions and themes abound in the writings of the Church Fathers.[34] For them, Ulysses is a sympathetic hero who triumphs by his wit and perseverance, his journey emblematic of man's struggle against adversity. The allegorical reading of Homer adopted by patristic writers succeeded in transforming the trickster Odysseus into a Christian Everyman, and the *Odyssey* became 'almost the *Pilgrim's Progress* of educated christians'.[35] This positive and didactic view of Ulysses is echoed in the Homeric allusions of Hiberno-Latin writers who are our best witness to what information was available about Ulysses in medieval Ireland. The Irish compiler of Laon, Bibliothèque Municipale MS 468, a miscellany with a particular interest in writings about classical pagan mythography associated with Martinus Hiberniensis, invokes Fulgentius: *Ulixes in modum sapientiae pontitur, et interpretatur omnium peregrinus, quia sapientia ab omnibus mundi rebus peregrina est* ('Ulysses is set down as a measure of wisdom; and he is interpreted as the wanderer of all things, because wisdom is a wanderer from all things of the world').[36]

The portrayal of Ulysses in *Merugud Uilixis* is entirely consistent with such ecclesiastical views of Ulysses as an Everyman figure and quasi-pilgrim. Crampton has argued persuasively that in a number of ways the hero of *Merugud Uilixis* is morally superior to Homer's trickster-hero, and that his 'improved' Ulysses reflects the author's contemporary Christian outlook.[37] I only disagree with Crampton's view that this moral improvement of the 'man of many turns' is due to the author's deliberate rewriting of Homer. In the absence of any evidence for access to the Homeric text, either in the original or in any translation or adaptation, we have to content ourselves with looking for more humble and oblique channels of transmission, such as the Odyssean references and motifs in the writings of the Church Fathers referred to above. In this context it is significant that the Irish saga author's knowledge of Ulysses appears in fact to have been more limited than it need have been in twelfth-century Ireland, had he availed himself of Classical Latin sources such as Virgil. The Irish author's exposure to Ulysses appears to have been limited – whether by choice or by educational opportunity – to such ecclesiastical channels of transmission. The hero of *Merugud Uilixis* is a morally improved proto-pilgrim because that was the received

[34] Hillers, 'Ulysses', 198.
[35] Stanford, 'Studies', 54.
[36] I am indebted to Michael Clarke's stimulating chapter 6 in this volume for this reference (000), and I cite his translation here. This Fulgentius quotation appears on fo. 7r 8–9 (see chapter 6, n. 000).
[37] Crampton, this volume.

characterization of Ulysses in Christian Ireland. The author's *interpretatio* of Ulysses is informed by an overarching ideological agenda steeped in Christian allegory and exegesis, and it is this Christian agenda that motivates the author's use of such apparently incongruous materials as pagan myth and, as we shall see, an oral folktale.

Merugud Uilixis *and the folktale of The Master's Good Counsels*

However far removed from Homer's text the Odyssean motifs in *Merugud Uilixis* are, they are still all ultimately text-based, literary in inspiration and literate in transmission. Let us now move on to the author's second major narrative source, which is neither literary nor mediated through text. About a third of the way into the narrative, once Ulysses reaches the kingdom of the 'Judge of Truth', the story's Odyssean framework – tentative as it is – recedes into the background, making room for a narrative with a very different pedigree, the folktale of the three good counsels, which the author has skillfully inserted into Odyssean frame-story. The tale is known to folklorists as The Master's Good Counsels and has been assigned the type number 910B in the international Aarne-Thompson-Uther folktale index.[38] It is particularly popular in the Gaelic-speaking world. 290 Irish versions have been collected, mostly under the auspices of the Irish Folklore Commission in the first half of the twentieth century.[39] The tale was known in most parts of the country and continued in oral circulation right through the twentieth century; the most recent example collected in Ireland was told by South Kerry storyteller Bab Feiritéar, who died in 2005.[40] The tale was also known in Scotland, and although the number of Scottish versions is relatively small, their distribution strongly suggests that the tale was known throughout the country.[41]

In Irish and Scottish versions of the folktale, the hero of the folktale is a poor man who has to leave his wife and family to look for work far from home. He engages to work for a farmer for a number of years (ranging from three to twenty-one years in oral variants). At the end of this period, his master presents him with an apparently outrageous choice: the hero can either have his wages or three good pieces of advice. Invariably, the hero chooses the advice, and his master sends him home without any wages. Before his departure the master gives him a loaf of bread, often with the explicit injunction not to break it on the way but to give it to his wife.

The rest of the story will sound familiar to any reader of *Merugud Uilixis*. Because of the three good counsels he receives from his master, the hero successfully overcomes three misadventures on his return journey. Thanks to the first advice the hero does not take a shortcut and escapes an attack by robbers. The second advice – not represented in *Merugud Uilixis* – is not to stay a single night in a house where the husband is old and the wife is young. The third advice, finally, saves the hero from

[38] See Aarne & Thompson, *Types of the Folktale*, and Uther, *Types of International Folktales*.

[39] See type 910B in Christiansen & Ó Súilleabháin, *Types of the Irish Folktale*. For a revised and more detailed list of all Scottish versions, see Hillers, *Medieval Irish Odyssey*, 403–6.

[40] Cáit 'Bab' Feiritéar, in Almqvist & Ó Cathasaigh, *Coiglímis*, 131–7. Bab's spirited and precise telling can be heard on the CD accompanying the book (disc 2, track 2). I am indebted to Bo Almqvist for bringing Bab's telling of the story to my attention.

[41] Eighteen versions have been collected in Scotland. They include a handful of printed versions, two of which were published as early as the nineteenth century. Most are unpublished versions from the archives of the School of Scottish Studies in Edinburgh, collected in the second half of the twentieth century. For a full list of Scottish versions, see Hillers, *Medieval Irish Odyssey*, 406–8.

killing his own son, grown up in his father's absence, whom he finds sharing his wife's bed when he returns in the middle of the night. As in *Merugud Uilixis*, all is revealed, and when the hero's wife cuts open the loaf of bread, she finds inside the entire sum of money that the master owed the hero.

The folktale of The Master's Good Counsels is not confined to the Gaelic-speaking world; it is in fact a popular international folktale found in storytelling communities as far west as French Canada and as far east as Japan. Jean-Pierre Pichette's 1991 type-study *L'Observance des conseils du maître* traces hundreds of international variants of the story and shows that the story's epicentre is in Europe where it goes back at least as far as the eleventh century. The tale's first attestation in written literature is in a Latin courtly epic, the *Ruotlieb*, composed in Germany. *Merugud Uilixis*, composed in Ireland around 1200, comes second. Sometime later the tale appears in the *Gesta Romanorum* (The Deeds of the Romans), compiled either in England or Germany, in the French Arthurian romance *Le Saint Graal ou le Joseph d'Arimathie* (The Holy Grail or Joseph of Arimathea), and in a short Icelandic tale, *Hákonar þáttr Hárekssonar* (The Tale of Hákon Hárekssson).[42] As I have shown in detail elsewhere, these five literary texts are strikingly different from each other, both with regard to which of the tale's motifs they preserve and in terms of the macro-context in which the story appears.[43] They are clearly independent of each other, and each appears to have been borrowed from oral tradition in its respective country of origin.

We cannot hope to deal in depth with the complexities of the oral/literary relationship here. For an exploration of the tangled interaction of oral and literary strands, Ireland remains an excellent field of study, as it possesses an extensive literary record going back to the early medieval period and a first-class oral archive.[44] Motifs and entire plot-lines have over the centuries crossed from oral to literary tradition and back again, and one should be wary of generalizations replacing individual case studies. Alan Bruford's influential *Gaelic Folk-tales and Mediaeval Romances* made a strong – albeit by no means watertight – case for the literary provenance of some of the elaborate hero-tales that constitute one of the chief glories of Gaelic storytelling.[45] The case for literary origin or even literary influence is much weaker if we look at the main body of international folktales, those stories that have been documented plentifully in the oral indigenous traditions of Europe, Asia and beyond. When a story is richly evidenced in the oral record of a large number of contiguous ethnic groups, the occurrence of a literary attestation is not in itself an indication of literary origin. Stith Thompson has warned against the fallacy of thinking that a story's earliest attestation must necessarily be the story's source or origin:

> The fact that one may cite a literary form of a story, even a very old version, is by no means proof that we have arrived at the source of the tradition . . . the literary telling of a tale may represent merely one of hundreds of examples of the story in question and have for the history of the tradition no more significance than any other one of the hundreds of variants at hand.[46]

[42] Oesterley, *Gesta Romanorum*, 431–4; Hucher, *Le Saint-Graal*, III, 635–51; Overgaard, *Hákonar þáttr Hárekssonar*.

[43] Hillers, 'Ulysses', 208–11.

[44] The National Folklore Collection (Cnuasach Bhéaloideas Éireann), incorporating the archives of the legendary Irish Folklore Commission, is housed in the Belfield campus of University College Dublin.

[45] Bruford, *Gaelic Folk-tales.*

[46] Thompson, *The Folktale*, 178.

In this context, The Master's Good Counsels offers an excellent test case, since it is richly attested in both the oral and the literary record, and can in many ways be argued to be more representative of the body of international folktales than are the romantic hero-tales of Gaelic tradition. A content analysis of oral and literary versions of The Master's Good Counsels shows that none of the five literary attestations could have given rise to the oral-traditional tale, as none contains all the story's essential motifs universally attested in the oral versions.[47] In fact, the literary versions do not seem to have had any tangible impact on the way the story continued to be told in their respective traditions, a fact that is less surprising if we bear in mind the socio-economic and educational profile of oral storytellers. None of the almost three hundred oral Irish versions of The Master's Good Counsels, for example, show the least evidence of having been influenced by the Irish literary version, *Merugud Uilixis*.

Pichette's study leaves no doubt that The Master's Good Counsels is essentially an oral folktale, passed on through the centuries by oral channels and developing characteristic regional traits in the various far-flung communities where it was told. The hero of the story, like many of the storytellers, is a poor man, driven by economic necessity to leave his home. The widespread practice of migrant labour in traditionally impoverished rural areas gave the tale a continued social significance, and the hero's status as a migrant worker made The Master's Good Counsels a perennial favourite in communities where migrant labour was prevalent, as detailed studies of the economic background of Irish and francophone Canadian storytellers make abundantly clear.[48] The rural proletariat who make up an overwhelming proportion of storytellers in modern storytelling communities[49] could readily identify with every step of the hero's adventures, from the heart-wrenching decision to leave his family, and his years of labour in another man's service, to the moment when he opens the latch of the one-room cabin and by the dim light of the fire sees a man asleep in bed beside his wife.

The story's wide distribution and impressive homogeneity in oral tradition owes a good deal to its narrative structure, which appears ideally suited to oral reception and reproduction. The tripartite structure of advice and associated adventure, in which each of the three counsels becomes the core of a narrative episode, helps the storyteller remember the story's details and gives him a natural order to follow. The tale has been classified as a novella tale, stories of a realistic flavour in which fate replaces magic as the supernatural agent, but despite the story's sturdy veneer of social realism, it incorporates a quest and a tripartite testing of the hero, revealing its kinship to the wonder-tale, which is ruled by magic and poetic justice.

Given the tale's long and successful survival in oral transmission, its structure and style that facilitate oral performance, and its kinship with the corpus of oral wonder-tales, it is likely that The Master's Good Counsels originated in oral tradition, within the social milieu that most closely reflects its protagonist's life experience, social context and outlook.

[47] Hillers, 'Ulysses', 209.
[48] Pichette, *L'Observance*; Hillers, *Medieval Irish Odyssey*, 155–92.
[49] As documented compellingly by Holbek, *Interpretation of Fairy Tales*.

The use of oral materials in the quintessentially literate context of a Classically derived tale is one of the saga's most fascinating features. *Merugud Uilixis* draws on and fuses traditions that in scholarly discourse are usually constructed as polar opposites: oral vernacular tradition on the one hand, and learned Latin literature on the other hand.[50] *Merugud Uilixis* is a living proof that the two could and did in fact coexist, even within the same text. Irish medieval authors were not insulated from the oral popular culture that surrounded them and did not hesitate to draw on it when it suited them.

Brent Miles's ground-breaking study of Classical literature in medieval Ireland makes a cogent case that the authors and scribes who gave us early Irish literature were steeped in the Latin learned literature mediated by the medieval church. The evidence from *Merugud Uilixis* suggests that not all of them necessarily belonged to a mandarin class of learned intellectuals, and that even authors writing about Classical subject-matter were not necessarily learned scholars of Latin. Indeed, *Merugud Uilixis* shows that the interest in Classical subject-matter was not confined to the inner circles of highly educated Irish scholars but was shared by the entire 'Christian literate community'.[51]

Beyond the simple acknowledgement of the text's Classical and oral-traditional roots, this analysis helps us to appreciate the text's nature and gives us a unique insight into the author's creative input. In the final part of our discussion, we will investigate the author's motivation in bringing together such diverse sources, and the meaning he invested in the narrative he created. Why should an Irish writer working within the monastic milieu set out to tell the story of Homer's trickster-hero Ulysses? And why would he consider an oral folktale, which he may well have heard among his social inferiors, a suitable complement for a Classical tale?

To the author of *Merugud Uilixis*, the story of The Master's Good Counsels was not simply about a labourer's happy reunion with his family. For the medieval author, this tale about master and servant, so reminiscent of New Testament parables dealing with the relationship between man and God, carries additional metaphysical and allegorical meaning. The master's supernatural faculties are implicit in his ability to foresee and forestall the hero's misadventures. Two of the master's counsels, to take the straight road and to reflect before acting, have strong Christian resonances. The author's use of the term *eólas*, to which Crampton draws our attention,[52] may be significant in this context. *Eólas* can specifically denote knowledge of place and of direction; thus the tale repeatedly emphasizes the idea of choosing the right path. We are told that the Judge's instruction enables the traveller to reach his destination directly as long as he follows the Judge's injunction not to stray from the path. Ulysses's journey in *Merugud Uilixis* is an overarching quest for truth and the right path to choose as is indicated by the frequent repetition of the term *fírinne*, 'truth/justice', which occurs in the tale's first and last paragraphs, and which is further supported by a wealth of other terms denoting knowledge, as we have seen (*aicept*, 'advice'; *foglaim*, 'instruction'; *comairle*, 'counsel'; *fis* and *eólas*, 'knowledge').[53]

[50] See also Elva Johnston's nuanced discussion in *Literacy and Identity*, and Ralph O'Connor's chapter 9 in this volume which examines the oral-literary dichotomy from a different perspective, 188–95.
[51] Ó Cathasaigh, 'Pagan survivals', 294.
[52] See above, 90.
[53] See Hillers, 'Ulysses', 213.

It is within this allegorical framework that we can fully appreciate the figure of *Breithem na Fírinne*, the 'Judge of Truth'. The Judge is clearly no longer simply the nameless master of the folktale: young yet apparently omniscient, he is the ruler of a kingdom, and travellers come to his kingdom from afar to receive his spiritual guidance and instruction. As I have shown elsewhere in some detail, the figure of the Judge of Truth ties into a web of eschatological thought and imagery, encapsulated by his title 'Judge of Truth' which links him to the figure of Christ in his role of Judge at the Last Judgement.[54] He is a stand-in for Christ, and would, without a doubt, have been identified as such by the saga's monastic audience.

The author of *Merugud Uilixis* belonged undoubtedly to the Irish monastic world and was part of the same intellectual universe as the learned translators who produced the Classical adaptations. His knowledge of the Classical hero was mediated through the same ecclesiastical channels, and his frame of theological reference was not different from theirs. He cast his hero as a Christian Everyman, a pilgrim whose spiritual as well as physical journey is blessed with success because of the hero's faithful observance of the guidance he receives from the Judge of Truth, in particular, as Crampton has shown, with regard to ruling his desires and emotions, restraining anger, and practising patience.[55]

The remarkable array of sources and allusions that have been fused in *Merugud Uilixis* are a tell-tale sign of literary composition. Yet there are a number of indicators that the saga author may not have been *literatus* in the medieval sense of being literate in Latin, at least not on a level of proficiency which would enable him to make use of the Latin texts that would have added to his knowledge of the adventures of Ulysses. As we have seen, the author made no use of the Odyssean adventures retold in Virgil's *Aeneid*, except for the Cyclops episode which we have good reason to believe he borrowed from the Irish translation of the *Aeneid* rather than the Latin original. On the other hand, the author had access to an oral storytelling culture and drew on it extensively in the composition of his tale.

In view of the compelling case that has been made by Miles and others for the profound influence of Classical learning on native textual production, this tale serves as an indicator that Classical influence was not confined to the small elite of monastic scholars whose proficiency in Latin enabled them to access the entire range of texts available in a medieval Irish scriptorium. Transmitted, we must assume, through the monastic classroom alongside sermons and edifying literature, the interest in the world of Classical antiquity had percolated to those on the outer fringes of the Latin learned culture of the scriptorium. *Merugud Uilixis* is a reminder that the monastic world accommodated a range of heterogeneous authorial processes; the contribution of creative writers literate in the vernacular but not necessarily in Latin may have been considerable. The flourishing vernacular culture emanating from the monastery may have been more deeply influenced by the popular and overwhelmingly oral culture that surrounded it than is currently thought.

[54] Hillers, 'Ulysses', 213–18.
[55] Crampton, this volume, 74–80.

Part II

The dynamics of Classical allusion

6

DEMONOLOGY, ALLEGORY AND TRANSLATION: THE FURIES AND THE MORRÍGAN

Michael Clarke

The literary classifications of a century ago still loom over us. When *Táin Bó Cúailnge* (The Cattle-Raid of Cooley) was recruited as the 'primary epic' of a national literature,[1] and when the texts associated with it were called a Heroic Cycle,[2] they were uprooted from the cultural context that gave them meaning. We are only beginning to undo the damage, and to re-learn how to listen to the medieval Irish construction of the ancient past. In this paper, I offer a case study taking this corpus as the record of a remarkable adventure in cross-cultural translation.[3] Where the medieval scholar-authors' engagement with Graeco-Latin models and analogues has been studied, it has usually been understood as a process of emulation and imitation between literatures;[4] it has been approached less often in terms of mapping between languages, and this paper attempts to move the discussion in that direction.

I begin from the hunch or working hypothesis that the extended texts based on Classical sources – *Togail Troí, Imtheachta Aeniasa*, *Togail na Tebe, In Cath Catharda* – resemble the more famous narratives set in Ireland, notably the so-called Ulster Cycle texts and the *catha* and *cathréimeanna*, 'battles', 'battle-surges',[5] not only for literary reasons but because both genres are concerned to re-imagine the pagan past of the human race, Irish or Greek or Trojan as the case may be. Such works to all appearances present themselves not as the productions of poetic imagination but as a kind of elevated historiography[6] – realistic in the sense that it supposedly derives from the record of those who witnessed it, in accordance with Isidore's definition of *historia*.[7] For the Latin-based narratives, translation and modification adjust the discourse in each case to produce a more-or-less consistent stylistic level despite the heterogeneous range of underlying sources. Some, like *In Cath Catharda* (The Civil War) or *Togail na Tebe* (The Destruction of Thebes), are founded on high epic poetry with elaborate artistic and mythical embellishments, while others like *Togail Troí* (The Destruction of Troy) derive from prose accounts whose authority

[1] For the once-conventional classification, see for example Dillon, *Early Irish Literature*, 1–3; and for a critique of the now-problematic term 'primary epic', see Martin, 'Epic as genre', 9–11.
[2] See Clarke, 'Achilles, Byrhtnoth'; Poppe, *Of Cycles*, especially 3–15.
[3] I have attempted a more impressionistic study in Clarke, 'Translation and transformation'.
[4] Miles, *Heroic Saga*, is now the fundamental work in this area.
[5] Mac Gearailt, '*Togail Troí* ein Vorbild'.
[6] See Toner, 'The Ulster Cycle'; Clarke, 'An Irish Achilles'; Poppe & Schlüter, 'Greece, Ireland'.
[7] Isidore, *Etymologies* I.41.1–2; compare *ibid*. VIII.7.9–10 (in Lindsay, *Isidori Etymologiarum Libri*, I, 81, 321).

came originally from the very fact that they were plain and unadorned;[8] others again, notably *Imtheachta Aeniasa* (The Adventures of Aeneas), minimize the artistry and rhetoric of the poetic original to produce a more down-to-earth account of events.[9]

Despite these different bases, in the resultant Irish texts the narrative conventions, canons of style, and even specialist vocabulary are largely consistent across the group. Given the historiographical character of the genre, it is a potential source of tension and ambiguity that the discourse so often shifts from concrete reality towards the fantastic, the imagined or the demonic – as, for example, in passages where a warrior undergoes a preternatural transformation in battle, like the *riastrad* ('distortion') of Cú Chulainn in the *Táin*[10] or the transformation of Murchad in *Cogadh Gáedhel re Gallaibh* (The War of the Irish against Vikings).[11]

Allecto and the Morrígan in the Táin

This tension is the subject of the most famous metaliterary commentary surviving from medieval Ireland, the Latin colophon to the *Táin* in the Book of Leinster.[12] Its author vacillates on assigning the *Táin* to history or myth, twice using *historia aut fabula* as alternative designations, and he assigns unacceptable parts of the work to a series of problematic categories: *praestrigia demonum* ('bewitchments made by demons' or 'bewitchments consisting in demons');[13] *figmenta poetica* ('poetic creations'), the opposite of *similia vero* ('things resembling the truth'); and finally mere nonsense for the delight of the foolish, *ad delectionem stultorum*. All of these labels apply to things that represent a departure from the veracity of *historia*, and they problematize the tendency of this kind of elevated narration to rise from concrete reality towards the fictive and the fantastic.

My concern in this essay will be with *praestrigia demonum*. Regardless of which way we construe the genitive *demonum*, a prominent example of such a *praestrigium* is the celebrated passage in Recension 1 of the *Táin* where a sinister being settles on a pillar-stone and prophesies the coming slaughter:

> Céin bátár didiu in tslóig oc tochim Maige Breg, forrumai Allechtu colléic, noch is í in Mórrígan són i ndeilb eúin, co mboí forsin chorthi hi Temair Cúalngi 7 asbert frisin tarb . . .[14]

[8] On Dares Phrygius's *De Excidio Troiae,* the ultimate source-text of *Togail Troí*, see Merkle, 'The truth'; Clark, 'Reading'; Kim, *Homer Between History and Fiction*.

[9] See Poppe, *New Introduction*, especially 19–28, and compare the revised views advanced by Poppe in this volume.

[10] The most famous example is that by the H-interpolator at O'Rahilly, *Táin Bó Cúailnge Recension I*, lines 2245–2315. For a recent discussion, see Dooley, *Playing the Hero*, 79–81, 132–5.

[11] Todd, *Cogadh*, sections 107–8. See further Ní Mhaonaigh in this volume.

[12] O'Rahilly, *Táin Bó Cúalnge from the Book of Leinster*, lines 4291–6. See Ó Néill, 'The Latin colophon', and Miles, *Heroic Saga*, 1–6 and 98, for antecedents in Latin sources for the opposition between *fabula* and *historia*, and compare the discussions in this volume by O'Connor (chapter 1) and Fulton (chapter 3).

[13] In favour of the former, Ó Néill ('The Latin colophon', 272) cites Ambrosiaster's phrase *praestigium satanae* of the vision conjured up by the Witch of Endor (Souter, *Pseudo-Augustini Quaestiones*, 54 line 12).

[14] O'Rahilly, *Táin Bó Cúailnge Recension I*, lines 954–6.

> While the army was going over Mag mBreg there came for a while Allecto, that is the Mórrígan, in the shape of a bird which perched on the pillarstone in Temair Cúailnge and said to the bull . . .

If we have shelved this work under 'Celtic literature', it is disconcerting to see the name of the Irish phantom or battle-deity Morrígan being matched with Allecto, one of the three Furies of Classical mythology. The passage has been much fought over. For Thurneysen, it indicated direct emulation of a passage in Virgil where Allecto appears;[15] for some modern scholars, more subtly, it signals the thematic aspiration of the *Táin* to the status of a national epic,[16] or makes a programmatic statement about the overall pattern of Virgilian *imitatio* in the context of prophecy.[17] Significantly, there is evidence for further classicizing references in the archaizing passage that follows: Corthals has convincingly suggested that *coigde* there is based on *cocytia virgo* 'the virgin from the river of Hades' in a nearby passage of the *Aeneid*.[18]

As I will try to suggest, the choice between such analyses may be less fundamental than the strategy of cross-cultural translation that motivates the text's choice of words. The equation between Allecto and the Morrígan is essentially a gloss: yet it is also more than that, because it reflects a practice that deserves to be called comparative mythology. It brings two naming systems and thus two worlds of storytelling – the Gaelic and the Roman – into parallel with each other and establishes an equivalence. It is especially remarkable that *Allechtu* is in the main text and *in Morrígan* is the interpretative aside: the Classical Fury has walked from the lore of the pagans to the landscape of county Louth, and the insight or explanation that translates her into an Irish-language spectre is a way of making sense of her presence against that background.[19] I will try to show how this belongs in an overall strategy of matching up phenomena in the old pagan lore of the Irish language with corresponding phenomena in the old pagan lore of the Mediterranean nations – a strategy which is the word-by-word microcosm of the literary project that establishes *Togail Troí* and *Táin Bó Cúailnge* as each other's counterparts in the grand narrative of pagan antiquity. Allecto and the Morrígan and are both part of the world of pagan delusion, whether that is seen in terms of mistaking demons for gods or of adorning language with vain fantasies.[20] The *Táin* belongs in that pagan world no less than the *Aeneid* – the *Annals of Tigernach*, for example, specify that Virgil died in the year of the cattle-raid itself[21] – so it makes sense in principle that a divinity described at that time in the language of an island at the edge of the Atlantic should correspond to one described by a poet of the same era in the heartlands of the south.

In terms of literary practice, the scholar-author who set up the equivalence was participating in a project whose roots lie far back in the history of European literature,

[15] Thurneysen, *Heldensage*, 96–7, adducing *Aeneid* VII.323–6. All references to the *Aeneid* in this chapter are to the text in Mynors, *P. Vergilii Maronis opera*. A more subtle interpretation of the possible Virgilian echo is advanced by Bernhardt-House, 'Interpretatio Hibernica', 49–51.

[16] Ó hUiginn, 'The background', 44.

[17] Miles, *Heroic Saga*, 148–9, 145–93.

[18] O'Rahilly, *Táin Bó Cúailnge Recension I*, line 961, with *Aeneid* VII.479: see Corthals, 'Early Irish *retoirics*', 23–4, with Miles, *Heroic Saga*, 149.

[19] Intriguingly, the Book of Leinster versions of this and other passages name the Morrígan as *ingen Ernmais*, the daughter of Ernmas. Although Ernmas is well attested as a female member of the Túatha Dé (see e.g. Gray, *Cath Maige Tuired*, 124), her name in its written form is similar to *Erinnas*, the expected form in this period of the Furies' Greek name *Erinys*.

[20] Compare Chance, *Medieval Mythography*, 18–64.

[21] See Stokes, *Annals of Tigernach*, 406.

and specifically in the classicizing yet Christian poetry composed in the first heyday of Christian Latin literature in the fifth and sixth centuries.[22] These poets regularly use the vocabulary of pagan mythology to name things that are part of revealed Christian truth about the world. Much of this vocabulary is cosmographical: Heaven is called *Olympus*, Hell *Tartara*,[23] and this may be seen as merely decorative, metaphorical, ornamental. But the effects can be more tricky. For a pagan Roman poet like Ovid, one of the epithets of Jupiter is *Tonans,* the Thunderer:

> Hac iter est superis ad magni tecta Tonantis
> regalemque domum . . .[24]
>
> Here lies the celestial ones' road to the abode of the great Thunderer
> and the royal house . . .

The Christian poet Prudentius uses the same name for the true God,[25] and Caelius Sedulius does likewise in his epic narrative of the Gospel story:

> Nec enim vindicta Tonanti
> conveniens humana fuit . . .[26]
>
> But human vengeance was not suitable for the Thunderer. . .

In the exordium of his poem, Sedulius explicitly compares his Christian poetic purpose with the bombastic *figmenta* of the pagan poets, in contrast to whom he will address himself to the genuine *dominum tonantem*, 'the Lord who thunders'.[27] People were still sacrificing to Jupiter so named in the lifetimes of these poets, and the naming strategy begs to be taken seriously. The God of the Bible *is* the god of the storm, just as Zeus was said to wield the thunderbolt; arguably, to give Him this name is to suggest in miniature that the Gentiles were reaching unguidedly towards the truth that was revealed to the Chosen People. Alternatively, the echo can be seen in terms of literary appropriation, with the Christian poets recruiting the forms of pagan poetry for a new purpose: it speaks to the theme Prudentius sets out when he recasts the Virgilian prophecy of Rome's eternal greatness as an assertion of the destiny of the Christian city.[28]

As we move further into the development of Christian Latinity, every such instance prompts the same question: is this a mere elegant equivalence, or is it something more? Carolingian poetry repeatedly foregrounds this problem. In a poem of about

[22] Bernhardt-House, 'Interpretatio Hibernica', compares medieval Irish cross-linguistic comparisons with the Classical technique of *interpretatio Romana*, whereby the names and identities of barbarian deities were routinely matched to their Graeco-Roman equivalents. His approach is complementary to that followed here: all three strategies are versions of the same cross-cultural approach to religious discourse. Compare Egeler, 'Condercum', on the dedication *LAMIIS TRIBVS* ('to the three Lamiae') at the Roman fort of Condercum on Hadrian's Wall.

[23] Prudentius, *Hamartigenia* 824, in Thomson, *Prudentius*, I, 262–3.

[24] Ovid, *Metamorphoses* I.170–1, in Miller, *Ovid Metamorphoses*, I, 14–15.

[25] E.g. *Hamartigenia* 669, *Psychomachia* 640, in Thomson, *Prudentius*, I, 250–1, 324–5.

[26] *Carmen Paschale* V.72–3, in Huemer, *Caelius Sedulius*, 119.

[27] See *Carmen Paschale* I.17–36, and compare II.205 (*ibid*., 16–17 and 58).

[28] Prudentius, *Contra Symmachum* I.541–2 (in Thomson, *Prudentius*, I, 390–1), with Virgil, *Aeneid* I.278–9, cited by Roberts, 'Poetry and hymnography', 632.

AD 798, the Northumbrian scholar Alcuin again calls God *Tonans*:[29] is this a trivial elegance, *variatio*, or does it reflect a thoughtful look at ancient recognitions of divine influence behind the weather, which is indeed the context in which he uses the name? Any participant in this cross-linguistic practice is somewhere between these two extremes, and the answer may be different in different contexts, even within the work of a single poet. For us, the question is all the more important because there is ample evidence that poets like Caelius Sedulius and his successors were read and studied by Irish intellectuals in the formative centuries of the tradition.[30]

This background gives us a new context for understanding the *Táin*'s equivalence between spectral females from two different linguistic traditions. The Morrígan, to synthesize the evidence of earlier and later medieval sources,[31] goes with her sisters Machae and the Badb to make up a trio virtually identified with each other, and they are further associated or identified with Nemain or Bé Néit, 'the wife of Néit'[32] who can drive an army into panic or confusion[33] and whose husband is glossed *dia catha la gentib Gaedel*, 'the god of war among the pagan Irish'.[34] These beings take to the battlefield in bird-like form and are associated with rending and harrying the slain. This role is clear in an entry in *O'Mulconry's Glossary*, a text probably from the eighth century: *Machae .i. badb. No así an tres morrígan, unde mesrad Machae .i. cendae doine iarna n-airlech* ('Macha, viz. Badb. Or: she is one Morrígan of three; whence "Macha's nut-harvest", viz. the heads of people after they are slain').[35]

The kenning that makes the heads of the slain their 'harvest of nuts' can only imply that they seize and feast on corpses. The version in the related *Irsan* glossary cites a quatrain ascribed to Dub Ruis:

> Garbæ adbae innon fil,
> i llomrad fir Maiche mes,
> i n-agat láichliu i llés,
> i lluaidet mná trogain tres.[36]
>
> There are rough places beyond, where men cut off the nut-harvest of Macha, where they drive young calves into the fold, where the raven women instigate battle.

[29] See the verses beginning *O mea cella* at line 15, in Godman, *Poetry*, 124.

[30] Herren, 'Literary and glossarial evidence', 52; Wright, 'The *Hisperica Famina*'. Note also the presence of a glossary to Sedulius in Laon MS 468, discussed below.

[31] I draw extensively here on the scholarship of Jacqueline Borsje, especially 'The "terror of the night"' and 'Demonising the enemy'. See also Egeler, *Walküren*, especially 143–4.

[32] Nemain is glossed as the Badb at O'Rahilly, *Táin Bó Cúailnge Recension I*, e.g. line 210; and Bé Neit is commonly conjoined with the three sisters, as *badb 7 bé Neit 7 Néamain* (*ibid*., lines 3942, 4033). For the later tradition, see especially O'Donovan, *Cath Maige Rath*, 241–2.

[33] O'Rahilly, *Táin Bó Cúailnge Recension I*, lines 2085, 3537; O'Rahilly, *Táin Bó Cúalnge from the Book of Leinster*, lines 2133, 4149.

[34] See *Cormac's Glossary*, Y965. Unless otherwise indicated, all glossary entries cited in this chapter refer to texts in the online Early Irish Glossaries Database (Arbuthnot *et al.*, *Early Irish Glossaries*, www.asnc.cam.ac.uk/irishglossaries/, last consulted 14 February 2013) and follow its referencing system.

[35] *O'Mulconry's Glossary*, text OM1 from the Yellow Book of Lecan, no. 820. Discussion by Borsje, 'The "terror of the night"', 86 n. 49.

[36] *Irsan Glossary*, no. 180.

They take the forms of carrion crows or ravens, and many of their names can be used non-mythically to label such birds;[37] but there is also a sense in which they are demons, as is clear from an entry in *Sanas Cormaic* (Cormac's Glossary), the most extensive and authoritative of the early Irish glossaries: *Gúdemain .i. úatha 7 morrígnae* ('Evil-demons, viz. horrors and *morrígnae*').[38]

Prophecy, shapechanging into the form of birds, death in war, and three sinister divine sisters with merging identities: these features of the Irish-language beings are also characteristic of the Classical imagery of the Furies, and this is evidently the basis of the correlation between the two sets of sisters – Morrígan, the Badb, Macha and Allecto, Tisiphone, Megara – with Bellona and Nemain on the edges of each group. It might be thought obvious that the Latin sources for such imagery would be poetic, including such passages as the celebrated appearance of Allecto in the *Aeneid* discussed above: but we will find a more direct and tangible route for this lore in the compilation and transmission of mythographic commentary in the period *before* the Irish heroic sagas were formed as we know them.

Furies and demons in Carolingian glosses

The earliest surviving witnesses to this particular example of confrontation between international learning and Irish-language lore are not in vernacular sources at all, but in Latin manuscripts from the world of Carolingian and post-Carolingian intellectualism in which the Irish *peregrini* participated. A remarkable example survives at St Gall in a tenth-century manuscript of Prudentius, the early Christian poet whose speciality is extravagant personifications of virtues, vices and abstract forces. The manuscript is glossed liberally in Latin and German, but has no other obvious Irish connection. In the poem *Hamartigenia* (The Origin of Sin'), Prudentius is describing the alluring figure of a temptress: *crinibus aureolisque riget coma texta catenis* ('Her hair is stiff, woven with tresses and golden bands').[39] Beside this line appear the words *scot*ice *Neman*, '*Nemain* in the Irish language' (Fig. 1).

As Pádraic Moran has pointed out to me, no one word is being glossed here, and it seems that the overall description has prompted the comparison with this item from Irish cultural baggage. If so, presumably the glossator's comparison has been prompted by the *visual* appearance of the seductress whose image the poet has conjured up, and it is intriguing to speculate that he may have been aware of a comparable depiction of Nemain herself.

The gloss finds a striking correlate in the vernacular Irish manuscript tradition of the succeeding centuries. On the top margin of a page of *Lebor na hUidre* (The Book of the Dun Cow, *c.* 1100 AD) there appears a quatrain of difficult poetry concerning the Badb, in the hand of the main scribe M:

[37] In the entry for *Macha* in the later *O'Clery's Glossary*, the collocation *Mol Macha* is explained as *cruinniughadh badhb, nó feannóg* ('a meeting of *badba*, or crows') (Miller, 'O'Clery's glossary', 19). This glossary also gives two entries for *Némhain*, first *dásacht no mire* 'fury or madness' and then *badhb catha no feannóg* ('*badb* of battle, or scaldcrow') (*ibid*., 29). The same ambiguity is seen in the glossary on *Bretha Nemed Déidenech*, which identifies the scaldcrows (*fennóga*) as *morrígna* and thus as demons of the air not demons of hell (see Binchy, *Corpus Iuris Hibernici*, II.604.1–4; cited by Borsje, 'The "terror of the night"', 88).

[38] *Cormac's Glossary*, Y698.

[39] Prudentius, *Hamartigenia* 271, in Thomson, *Prudentius*, I, 222–3.

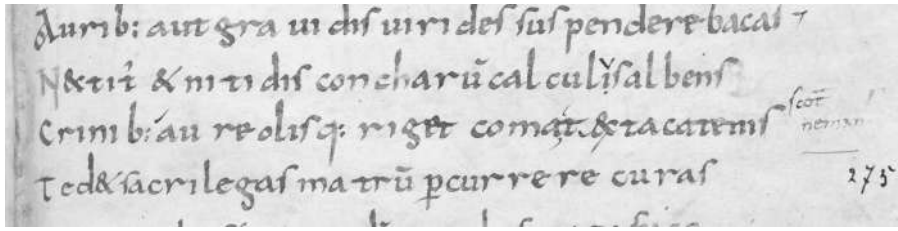


Fig. 1. St Gall, Stiftsbibliothek MS 136, p. 230 (Prudentius, *Hamartigenia*) reproduced by permission of the Stiftsbibliothek St Gallen (Switzerland) through the e-codices project (www.cesg.unifr.ch/en/); see Stokes & Strachan, *Thesaurus*, I.233.

Mac Lonan dixit
Mían mná Tethrach a tenid,
slaide sethnach iar sodain;
suba luba fo lubaib,
ugail troga dír drogain.[40]

Mac Lonan said:
The desire of the woman of the scaldcrow are her fires,
the slaughter of the body thereafter;
juices, body under bodies,
eyes, heads belonging to a raven.

Much of the vocabulary is obscure, and nearly every word carries a gloss in the hand of the same scribe: *mná Tethrach* is glossed *badb*, and *drogain* is glossed *fiaich* ('raven'), with an echo to the quatrain from the *Irsan* glossary discussed above. The overall image plainly refers to the supernatural females of the battlefield; and it has been forcibly argued that the quatrain is meant to resonate with the main text on the page, *Serglige Con Culainn* (The Wasting Sickness of Cú Chulainn), at a passage in which a poem of regret and desire is spoken by Fand, the beautiful Otherworld woman who tried to seduce Cú Chulainn and who originally took the form of a bird when she appeared before him.[41] While it would be fanciful to suggest a direct link between this and the *Neman* gloss on Prudentius, it is remarkable that in both cases a passage concerned with a sexually alluring phantom woman prompts a gloss concerned with the supernatural females of the Irish battlefield.

The *Neman* gloss was presumably culled from a commentary written by an Irishman or someone in touch with Irish lore; and indeed there is contemporary evidence for at least one Prudentius commentary with marked Irish associations,[42] containing (for example) an extended version of the note (best known from the ninth-century

[40] Dublin, Royal Irish Academy MS 23 E 25 (*Lebor na hUidre*), p. 50a; transcription in Best & Bergin, *Lebor na hUidre*, 124. I adapt Borsje's translation from her 'The "terror of the night"', 86.

[41] Findon, 'Dangerous siren', with further discussion by Borsje, 'The "terror of the night"', 85–7. The passage is at Dillon, *Serglige Con Culainn*, lines 767–818.

[42] Paris, Bibliotheque Nationale, MS Lat. 13953 (10th century), and Vatican, MS Palatinus Latinus 235 (11th or 12th century); edition by Burnam, *Glossemata*; on the origins of the collection see Manitius, 'Zu den Prudentiusglossen'. At *Psychomachia* 532 (see Thomson, *Prudentius*, I.316–17) there is a learned etymology of the word *parapsis*, and the same etymology appears in a commentary attributed to Remigius of Auxerre (Burnam, *Commentaire*) with the introduction *Johannes autem Scottus dicebat parobsis* ('Indeed Johannes Scottus said "parobsis"'). This suggests that Johannes Scottus

Bern scholia on Virgil) that associates the body-painting of the Scythian *Geloni* tribe with that of the Scotti, that is the Irish.[43] Given this possibility, it is remarkable that the closest thematic parallel for our *Neman* gloss is a well-known item in the mid-ninth-century biblical glosses of Johannes Scottus Eriugena.[44] Where Eriugena uses Irish words it is usually for precision, as with animal and plant names, or occasionally to specify legal phenomena for which accurate terms exist in Irish, such as *éric* and *imthadacht* ('fine', 'concubinage');[45] but in this case the parallelism is more daring. The context is the passage in Isaiah where strange monsters are described as inhabiting the ruins of Babylon and Edom after their destruction, and among them is Lamia, a demon of infanticide and abortion: *Ibi cubavit Lamia et invenit sibi requiem* ('there the Lamia has made her bed and found rest for herself').[46] Eriugena's note reads as follows: *Lamia: monstrum in feminae figura,* id est *Morrigain* ('Lamia: a monster in the shape of a woman, viz. Morrígan').[47]

What was the basis of the parallel? Haymo of Halberstadt (died AD 853) comments on this same passage of Isaiah with the information that Lamia has the face and body of a beautiful woman but the legs of a horse,[48] suggesting a vaguely comparable kind of human–animal hybrid: this lore has an antecedent in the writings of Gregory the Great,[49] and was presumably widespread. However, there is a stronger clue in Paschasius Radbertus's contemporary (or slightly later) commentary on the Lamentations of Jeremiah, where he gives an etymology of *Lamia* from the verb *laniare* 'rend', with the information that she tears apart her whelps, varying Isidore's information that she steals and rends apart human children.[50] This last image bears comparison with the idea of the Morrígan and her sisters seizing the heads of the slain, 'Macha's nut-harvest', in *O'Mulconry's Glossary*.[51] Presumably some such image

---

Eriugena might actually have been the author of the glosses (thus Silvestre, 'Jean Scot'; but compare the sceptical assessment by Cappuyns, 'Jean Scot').

[43] Where Prudentius mentions the tribe of the Geloni (*Apotheosis* 430, in Thomson, *Prudentius*, I.152–3) the *Glossemata* (see last note) has a comment on the name: *Gentes Scythiae stigmata ut Servius dicit more Scottorum sibi furentes* [leg. *ferientes*?] ('Pagans of Scythia who incise tattoos into themselves, as Servius says, in the manner of the Irish', Burnam, *Glossemata* 41). Compare Servius at *Georgics* II.115 and *Aeneid* 4.146 (Thilo & Hagen, *Servii Commentarii*, III.i, 229 and I, 490), and Isidore, *Etymologies* IX.2.103, in Lindsay, *Isidori Etymologiarum Libri*, I, 358. The closely related note in the Bern scholia to Virgil, a text with clear Irish affinities, is discussed by Miles, *Heroic Saga*, 29.

[44] The identification of the glossator as Johannes Scottus Eriugena was long dependent on the attribution 'IOH' marked in the glosses themselves, along with multiple lines of circumstantial evidence. Independent confirmation that Eriugena was their author has since been found: see Contreni & Ó Néill, *Glossae*, 28, citing Lendinara, 'On John Scottus's authorship'.

[45] Contreni and Ó Néill, *Glossae*, 97, 456.

[46] Isaiah 34.14.

[47] The parallel between this gloss and the Allecto of the *Táin* was highlighted by O'Rahilly in her note at *Táin Bó Cúailnge Recension I*, line 955. See further Ó Néill, 'The Old-Irish words'; Borsje, 'The "terror of the night"', 93; Bernhardt-House, 'Interpretatio Hibernica', 51–3.

[48] *Lamia monstrum est, habens faciem totumque corpus femineum perpulchrum, pedes tamen habet equinos* ('Lamia is a monster who has the face and entire body of a very beautiful woman but has the feet of a horse'): Haymo Halberstatensis, *Commentarium in Isaiam*, in Migne, *Patrologia Latina*, CXVI, col. 893.

[49] Gregorius, *Moralia in Iob*, in Migne, *Patrologia Latina*, LXXVI, col. 0707.

[50] *Lamia, quasi lania a multis sonare dicitur, eo quod dilaniat catulos suos* (Paschasius Radbertus, *In Threnos sive Lamentationes Ieremiae*, in Migne, *Patrologia Latina*, CXX, col. 1205). Compare Isidore, *Etymologies* VIII.102 in Lindsay, *Isidori Etymologiarum Libri*, I, 342. I am grateful to Jacqueline Borsje (pers. comm.) for suggesting this aspect of *Lamia* as a clue to the linkage with the Morrígan.

[51] There is further evidence for glossing *lamia*, but it seems to be the idea of a witch rather than a demonic spirit. In a very early Hiberno-Latin text, the 'First Synod of St Patrick', it is laid down that

motivates Eriugena's gloss. This comparative strategy is closely paralleled elsewhere in the same section of Isaiah: *Et habitabunt ill strutiones et pilosi saltabunt ibi* ('Birds will live there and the wild ones will dance there').[52] Eriugena's gloss reads: *Pylosi, daemonum genera vel* geltig ('*Pilosi*, types of demons or *geltig*').[53] The shaggy wildness of another of Isaiah's demons in the ruins prompts the commentator to set up an equivalence with the wild men known in Irish as *geltig*. For us, of course, *geltig* suggests the Irish lore of the bird-like wild man living in the trees, as in *Buile Shuibhne* (The Frenzy of Suibhne); but although that text is too late to be directly relevant here, Suibhne Geilt is associated with wild outdoor living as early as the Carinthia *Codex S. Pauli* of about AD 800, which identifies him as the speaker in the poem celebrating the wild isolation of the hermitage of Túaim Inbir.[54] Does the featheriness of the woodland *geltig* chime with the shaggy wildness of the *pilosi* identified as fauns?

The strategy of mapping such a word from language to language has venerable antecedents in the history of biblical commentary, and it is backed up by the authority of St Jerome himself, the central authority-figure for exploring and problematizing the relationships between different languages in reading and elucidating the words of Scripture. As Borsje has pointed out,[55] Eriugena's movement across languages to Irish equivalents emulates Jerome's discussion in his *Commentary on Isaiah*, which is known to have circulated among the Irish *peregrini* and was excerpted by Josephus Scottus very early in the 9th century.[56] Jerome lists various ways to understand the *pilosi*: as spectres of nightmare (*incubones*), as types of demons (*daemonum genera*), as satyrs (*satyri*) or as *silvestres quosdam homines, quos nonnulli fatuos ficarios vocant* ('certain people of the woods, whom some call the crazy ones of the fig-trees').[57] Later in the commentary, he characterizes Isaiah's beasts in the ruins as figures from pagan story and poetic invention: *Onocentauri, et pilosi, et lamia, quae gentilium fabulae et poetarum figmenta describunt* ('Onocentaurs, and shaggy ones, and the Lamia, which the tales of the pagans and the fictions of the poets describe').[58]

For Jerome, as for the author of the colophon to the *Táin*, there is a parallelism or even an ambiguity between pagan demons and poetic *figmenta*. In his account of Lamia in the same passage, Jerome develops the sense of cross-linguistic equivalence: *lamiam (quae hebraice dicitur Lilith; et a solo Symmacho translata est Lamia, quam quidam hebraeorum erinun, id est furiam, suspicantur)* ('Lamia, who is called Lilith in Hebrew; and by Symmachus alone it is translated *Lamia*, which some of the Hebrews interpret as [Greek] *Erinus*, that is [Latin] *Fury*').[59] Where Jerome brings the three sacred languages together, Eriugena makes a further cross-cultural leap and adds the Irish comparandum as a fourth member in the series of languages. This is

---

any Christian is to be anathematized who believes there is such a thing in the world as a *lamia* . . . *quae interpretatur striga* 'a *lamia*, which [word] is interpreted as *striga*' (Bieler, *Irish Penitentials*, 56, section 16). Bieler in his note on the passage translates *lamia* as 'vampire' and *striga* as 'witch', citing the seventh-century Lombard *Edictum Rothari* for a prohibition on killing a *striga* because 'no-one should believe that a woman should be able to devour a living man within'.

52 Isaiah 13.21.

53 Contreni & Ó Néill, *Glossae* no. 290 = Stokes & Strachan, *Thesaurus*, I, section 2.5.

54 St Paul in Lavanttal (Carinthia, Austria), Archiv des Benediktinerstifts, Cod. 86 b/1. Stokes & Strachan, *Thesaurus*, II, 294; Murphy, *Early Irish Lyrics*, 223–5.

55 Borsje, 'Omens', 23–4; compare Egeler, *Walküren*, 141.

56 Josephus's text (Lapidge & Sharpe, *Bibliography*, no. 649) is unpublished. There are only limited indications that Eriugena used Jerome directly (Contreni & Ó Néill, *Glossae*, 31–3).

57 Jerome, *Commentarii in Isaiam* 5.13, in Migne, *Patrologia Latina*, XXIV, col. 159.

58 *Commentarii in Isaiam* 10.34, in *ibid*., col. 373.

59 *Ibid.*

the equivalent in exegetical discourse of the lexicographical discipline followed by the authors of the early Irish glossaries, discovering or inventing systematic parallelisms between Irish on the one hand and Greek, Latin and Hebrew on the other.[60]

Fulgentius and the study of mythology: Irish scholars and the Ratio Fabularum

It is no accident that demons, *daemonum genera*, are the subject of these cross-linguistic leaps. From the viewpoint of an early medieval intellectual, one supernatural hostile female is self-evidently akin to another, whether you construct her as a sinister inhabitant of Edom, as the enemy of an ascetic monk,[61] or as an evil presence in a battlefield depicted in a narrative of the pre-Christian past. Such mapping depends on the principles of allegory: specifically, on the recognition that the forms of mythical and poetic discourse are underlain by simpler and more essential realities independent of the superficial codes of language and imagery. The key authority here is Fulgentius, the profoundly influential North African intellectual of the late fifth century AD who used this strategy to try to find a place for pagan mythology in a Christian universe.[62] Fulgentius's technique is to go behind the surface story about gods or goddesses or heroes to pinpoint an underlying meaning concerned with physics, or ethics, or the physical furniture of the world. His *Mitologiae* is a compilation of such interpretations, often arranged by threes and often assigning each trio of mythical beings to three successive stages in a universally recurring process. I give a typical example with his interpretations of Cerberus the hound of Hell:

> Cerberus vero dicitur quasi creoboros, hoc est carnem vorans et fingitur habere tria capita pro tribus aetatibus, infantia, iuventute, senectute, per quas introivit mors in orbem terrarum.[63]

> Cerberus is so called as if [Greek] *creo-boros*, that is 'devouring meat'; and he is imagined as having three heads for the three ages – infancy, youth, old age – through which death has entered into the world.

Fulgentius turns up repeatedly in the scholarship of the Carolingan *peregrini*.[64] A remarkable example survives in the manuscript Laon, Bibliothèque Municipale 468,

[60] Russell, '*Graece* . . . *Latine*'; Moran, 'Hebrew'; Moran, 'Greek'.

[61] Brakke, *Demons*.

[62] The principal modern student of Fulgentius is Gregory Hays: see especially Hays, 'The date and identity', and additional resources and bibliography at http://people.virginia.edu/~bgh2n/fulgbib.html. Hays's work will culminate in his much-awaited edition and commentary on the *Mitologiae* and Fulgentius's other works.

[63] Fulgentius, *Mitologiae* I.6, in Helm, *Fulgentii Opera*, I, 20. For a modern reprint of Helm's text of the *Mitologiae* with French translation, see Wolff & Dain, *Fulgence*.

[64] Evidence for such influence is clearly seen in Eriugena's commentary on Martianus Capella: see most recently Herren, 'John Scottus', who shows how Eriugena associated the Fulgentian approach to myth (*fabula*) with Neoplatonic allegorical discourse. Compare Laistner, 'Fulgentius'. In his discussion of the names of the Furies (Ramelli, *Scoto Eriugena . . . Tutti i Commenti*, 160), Eriugena cites but distances himself from Fulgentius's etymological explanations of the names. The *Scolica* formerly attributed to Martin of Laon also include much Fulgentian material: see Laistner, 'Notes on Greek', with Contreni's demonstration ('Three Carolingian texts') that Martinus Hiberniensis was not personally responsible for this text.

a learned miscellany compiled under the supervision and partly in the hand of one of Eriugena's contemporaries and acquaintances, Martinus Hiberniensis of Laon.[65] In this manuscript, there is much Virgilian commentary and a set of glosses on Sedulius, including explanations of pagan mythological terms comparable to those discussed above, as *potentem* for *Tonantem* and *inferna* for *Tartara*;[66] but the most instructive item for our purposes is the remarkable text headed *Ratio fabularum*, 'the system/explanation of myths'. This work is an index of names and motifs from Classical mythology. Much of the material is from Isidore, but there is also plenty from Fulgentius, who is even named in one of the marginal notes,[67] suggesting that the authors and/or users of the text had access to a fuller version.

A striking entry in the *Ratio* quotes virtually word-for-word from Fulgentius on the subject of the journeyings of Ulysses: *Ulixes in modum sapientiae pontitur, et interpretatur omnium peregrinus, quia sapientia ab omnibus mundi rebus peregrina est* ('Ulysses is set down as a measure of wisdom; and he is interpreted as the wanderer of all things, because wisdom is a wanderer from all the things of the world').[68] This in turn bears a close relationship with an entry in a Munich manuscript of the second half of the ninth century, which has been the subject of an important study by Dáibhí Ó Cróinín.[69] This manuscript includes an Old Irish gloss and carries in seventy places the abbreviation 'IOH' attributing a comment to Eriugena, which is also found labelling Eriugena's biblical glosses in the collection discussed above. The Munich manuscript mentions Fulgentius by name as one of its sources,[70] and it includes his explanation of Ulysses with an additional etymology for his Greek name Odysseus, interpreting it as *ὁδος σιος* (*odos sios* 'road [of] god') – an etymology which undoubtedly looks to a genuine ancient source, as *σιός* is the Laconian form of *θεός* (*theos* 'god').[71] Such parallels encourage a working hypothesis that Laon 468 belongs in the mainstream of the intellectual life of the Carolingian Irish *peregrini*, and that transference between languages was a major concern in their engagement with the pagan past.

Triplism is a recurrent feature of the *Ratio.* An example of this practice in its simplest form is the Fulgentian explanation of Cerberus's three heads standing for *tres aetates per quas mors hominem devorat* ('the three ages through which death devours

[65] Facsimile edited by Contreni, *Codex Laudunensis*. Contreni, *Cathedral School*, remains the authoritative study on Martin of Laon and his circle: for Laon 468, see especially 118–19. There is also much Fulgentian material in the related manuscript Laon 444: see Contreni, *Cathedral School*, 120–1.

[66] Fos 53r 19 and 53v 12.

[67] On fo. 6v, in the left margin at lines 20–1 the note before a series of Fulgentian allegories reads *quae sequuntur . . . gentio sunt*, begging to be restored as . . . *[e Ful]gentio sunt* (or similar), thus 'what follows is from Fulgentius'. Other marginalia refer to Servius and Isidore, while another note on fo. 7v 30, . . .*] oetio ē*, should very likely be restored as *[e B]oetio est*, '[this] is from Boethius'.

[68] Laon, Bibliothèque Municipale MS 468, fo. 7r 8–9, based on Fulgentius, *Mitologiae* II.8 (in Helm, *Fulgentii Opera*, I, 8–9). For further discussion of the affinities of this lore with the Irish text *Merugud Uilixis*, see Hillers in this volume, 92.

[69] Munich, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek MS clm 14429: see Ó Cróinín, 'An Eriugenian miscellany', 'A new Old Irish gloss'. I am grateful to Dáibhí Ó Cróinín for lending me his photographs of this manuscript.

[70] On fo. 221vb there is a heading *DE LIBRIS IIII FABII FULGENTII PLANCADIS AD CALCIDIUM GRAMMATICUM*, ('From the four books of Fabius Fulgentius Planciades [addressed] to Calcidius the Grammarian'). This refers to the dedicatee of Fulgentius's short work *Explanatio sermonum antiquorum* (Explanation of Ancient Words), in Helm, *Fulgentii Opera*, II, 108, but the reference to 'four books' shows that the authors of the Munich compilation were referring to a larger body of Fulgentian material.

[71] Fo. 227r 22–9, reproduced in Ó Cróinín, 'An Eriugenian miscellany'.

men');[72] but there are more complex examples in sets of co-ordinated names, where a single divinity or essence has a name for each of the three levels – heaven, earth, hell. A cluster of these explanations is gathered near the beginning of the *Ratio*:

> TRIA FATA quae et parcae dicunt*ur* eo q*uo*d minime parcant. Clotto. Lachesis. Atropos. Clotto dat vita*m* id *est* filat. Lachesis ordit*ur* vita*m* id *est* nodat. Atropos dat mortem id *est* disru*m*pit.
> ISTAE SUNT tres furiae. Allecto. Tisiphone. Megera. Impausibiles enim interp*ret*ant*ur* istae & semper furendo trahere dicunt*ur* animas in infernu*m*.
> TRES ARPIAE. Aello. Ocypete. Celeno. Arpuae eni*m* id *est* raptrices. Arpage eni*m* grece rapina d*icitur*. Istae dicunt*ur* rapere animas in infernu*m*.
> TRES DEAE in vocatione lunae. Lucina in caelo Diana in t*er*ra. P*ro*serpina in inferno. Ipsa et latonia d*icitu*r.
> TRES GORGONAE. Stenno. Euriale. Medusa. Quae tria terroris genera significant. .i. debilitatione*m*. sparsionem. caligine*m*. Quos t*er*rores Perseus interfecit. & post Athlantis regnu*m* invasit. unde in monte*m* conversus e*ss*e d*icitu*r. Istae tres fuerunt Forci regis filiae locupletes valde unde & Gorgo dicta e*st*. quasi georgico. Na*m* grece georgi agricultores dicuntur. Lege Isido*rum*.[73]

> THREE FATES which are also called Parcae because they spare [*parcant*] not at all: Clotto, Lachesis, Atropos. Clotto gives life, i.e. she stretches the thread. Lachesis spins life, i.e. she knots it. Atropos gives death, i.e. she breaks it.
> THESE ARE the three Furies: Allecto, Tisiphone, Megera. These ones are intepreted as 'unstoppable' and always by means of madness [? or 'by always stealing'] these ones are said to drag souls into Hell.
> THREE HARPIES: Aello, Ocypete, Celeno. *Arpuae* indeed, that is 'snatchers'. Indeed *arpage* is the Greek for 'seizing'. These ones are said to drag souls into Hell.
> THREE GODDESSES in calling upon the moon: Lucina in the sky, Diana on earth, Proserpina in Hell. The same one is also called Latonia.
> THREE GORGONS: Stenno, Euriale, Medusa. Which signify three types of terror, i.e. weakening, scattering, delusion. Which terrors Perseus killed. And afterwards he entered the kingdom of Athlas, from which he is said to have been turned into a mountain. These ones were three daughters of Forcus the king, very wealthy, and thus she is called Gorgo, as if *georgico*, because in Greek cultivators of the land are called *georgi*. Read Isidore.

The fourth item in this series, the names of the moon-goddesses, exemplifies the classic Fulgentian pattern where a single divinity or essence has three names for each of the three levels, heaven, earth, hell. Our concern is with Fates, Furies and Gorgons. Much of the information is commonplace: for example, there is partially similar lore in the standard Virgilian commentary of Servius, cited in many manuscripts including the Irish-authored tenth-century manuscript Bern, Burgerbibliothek 363,[74] and

[72] Laon, Bibliothèque Municipale MS 468, fo. 6v 17–19; see Fulgentius, *Mitologiae* I.6 (Helm, *Fulgentii Opera*), discussed above.

[73] MS Laon, Bibliothèque Municipale 468, fo. 5v 17–31.

[74] Servius on *Aeneid* IV.609 and *Georgics* IV.453, in Thilo & Hagen, *Servii Commentarii*, I, 570, and III, 354; for the version of this note in Bern, Burgerbibliothek MS 363, see Hagen, *Codex Bernensis*, 229 (= fo. 115r), with the related note in the quite separate collection published as *Scholia Bernensia* (Hagen, *Scholia Bernensia*, at *Eclogues* IV.47).

the correlation between Fates and Furies is repeated by an extraordinary letter full of Classical erudition written at St Gall about AD 850.[75] In our text, however, in the last line something unusual is said of the Furies: *istae dicuntur rapere animas in infernum*, they are said to snatch souls into Hell. Has this line been inserted by mistake from the following section about Harpies, which says the same thing? Whether or not a disorderly explanation of this kind is appropriate, it is certainly an unusual thing to say about the Furies, who may live in Hell or have sinister and Hellish associations but would not normally be described as bringing souls there.

The names of demons in Irish learning

This section of the *Ratio* finds a close parallel in the Middle Irish commentary on the authoritative Late Old Irish poem *Amra Choluimb Chille* (The Eulogy of Colm Cille). Versions of this commentary are found in many manuscripts from *c.* 1100 onwards, and it served as a repository of learning and speculation about language, theology and stories set in the receding past. The passage in question was used by Gerard Murphy in a celebrated note to show that the mention of Allecto in the *Táin* did not necessarily depend on a reading of Virgil;[76] but I hope to show that its significance is deeper still. The context is the prayer for salvation at the end of the poem, where the poet is asking for salvation:[77]

> RODOM-SIBSEA SECH RIAGA .i. rom-fuca sech dem[n]u ind æeoir ad requiem sanctorum. *No* sech riaga .i. sech ingena Oircc, tres filiae Orcci, quae diversis nominibus in caelo ⁊ in terra ⁊ in inferno. In caelo quidem .i. Stenna. Euriale. Medussa. IN terra .i. Clothos. Lachessis. Antropus. IN inferno. Allecto. Micera. Tessifone.[78]
>
> May he bring me past torments! *viz*., may he bear me past the demons of the air to the rest of the saints. Or *sech riaga*, i.e. past the daughters of Orcc, three daughters of Orcus, who [are called] by separate names in heaven and on earth and in hell. In heaven Stenna, Euriale, Medussa. On earth Clothos, Lachessis, Antropus. In hell Allecto, Micera, Tessifone.

This echoes the Laon text in several ways. When the note shifts into Latin, it gives an introductory heading parallel to those in the *Ratio*, followed by a tripartite location just like with the moon-goddesses, and then lists the three trios of sisters arranged as Gorgons, Fates and Furies.[79] It is doubly striking that they are daughters

[75] Dümmler, 'Ermenrici Elwangensis epistola', section 25.

[76] Murphy, review of Carney's *Studies*, 157; see now Miles, *Heroic Saga*, 148.

[77] The peculiar words of the lemma are echoed in Ultan's hymn on Brigit: *Ron-sóira Brigit sech drungu demna* ('May Brigit save us past throngs of devils', Stokes & Strachan, *Thesaurus*, II, 325 line 17), and similarly in *Félire Óengusso* for 28 March: *Don-rogra, ron-sóera sech phíana, ron-séna* ('May she [i.e. Mary Magdalene] call us, may she save us past pains, may she bless us', Stokes, *Félire Óengusso*, 84, noted by Bisagni *ad loc.* in his forthcoming commentary on the *Amra*).

[78] Commentary on *Amra* X.3, in Stokes, 'The Bodleian *Amra*', pp. 414–16. Here and in the notes that follow, I follow the modern system of line numbering for the poem itself, as in Clancy & Márkus, *Iona*, 96–128.

[79] Compare the distinction between demons of the air and demons of Hell in the entry on *fennóga* and *morrígna* in the glossary on *Bretha Nemed Déidenech* (see above).

of *Orcc* – Orcus, the god of the dead: this is a comparatively rare name for Hades elsewhere but it is the one used consistently in Eriugena's commentary on Martianus Capella. These indications are sufficient to argue strongly that this item in the *Amra* commentary is drawn from a Fulgentian compilation intimately related to the *Ratio*.

This is the only burst of Classical mythology in the recension of the *Amra* commentary contained in the manuscript Oxford, Bodleian Library, Rawlinson B502, and at first sight it seems out of place. However, scattered throughout the commentary there are a series of references to angels and demons battling for the Christian's soul, as when pride enters Colm Cille at the convention of Druim Cett and 'the air above his head became full of demons';[80] and in particular there are several *names* of angels and demons – Axal, famously, is Colm Cille's personal angel, as Victor was Patrick's,[81] and Demal is his demon.[82] Just as Axal is a chimera born of an early form of the word for 'apostle', and *Demal* is simply recruited from a word for 'demon', so the commentary makes the poem's phrase *i-negthiar* into another proper name backed up by a quatrain:

> Nó nim-reilge ic égim i lurg demna icam breith i n-iff*ern*. INegthiar no*men* demonis c*uiusque* ho*min*is, ut d*icitu*r:
> Inegthiar ainm demain duib
> dobeir muich for cach muintir;
> nim-reilgge Dia sair *nó* siar
> hi lurg anma ⁊ i n-egthiar.[83]
>
> Or: Let him not leave me wailing in the band of demons bearing me into hell. Inégthiar is the name of everyone's demon, as is said:
> 'Inégthiar is the name of the black demon who brings gloom on every family:
> may God not leave me, east or west, in the band of the name [?*or* soul] in which there is wailing!'

Against this background it becomes easier to see why the commentator has listed the Classical names for Furies, Fates and Gorgons: these are the Gentile equivalents to the demonic names that he has been listing and discussing throughout the commentary. Such presences are understood as real: in the Christian world they are the enemies of the dying man's soul, in the world of the Classical pagan poet they are terrifying divinities, and in a moral sense they are vices – the qualities that will cause the sinner to be dragged down to Hell.

Thus the equivalence between Allecto and the Morrígan in the *Táin* is part of a wider, more systematic equation between the two sets of names of battlefield demons. Part of its effect, as I suggested above, is to bring the Classical Fury to the Irish heroic landscape, elevating and internationalizing the heroic past of pagan Ireland. Considered in that light, it is remarkable that the converse equation is seen in *Togail na Tebe*, the subtle and complex Middle Irish version of Statius's *Thebaid.*

[80] *corbo lan in t-aaer thuas a chind do demnaib*, in Stokes, 'The Bodleian *Amra*', 180, on *Amra* IV.10. Similarly, *de thaibsin na n-imned nduaibsech* ('because of the apparition of the hideous multitudes [of demons]', *ibid.*, 182), and similarly the Preface, *ibid.*, 42. Colm Cille is described as fighting demons in the note on *Amra* VI.6, in Stokes, 'The Bodleian *Amra*', 262; see also the marginal note on *Amra* VIII.12 (*ibid.*, 402–3; compare also 428–9).

[81] Commentary on *Amra* III.1 (Stokes, 'The Bodleian *Amra*', 172); similarly on *Amra* IV.10 (*ibid*., 180).

[82] On *Amra* IV.2 (Stokes, 'The Bodleian *Amra*', 176).

[83] On *Amra*, Prefatory Prayer, 5 (Stokes, 'The Bodleian *Amra*', 154).

Statius's original describes the Fury Tisiphone rising up to bring about kinslaying between two warring brothers:

> Iamque potens scelerum geminaeque exercita gentis
> sanguine Tisiphone fraterna claudere quaerit
> bella tuba . . .[84]
>
> Now Tisiphone, powerful over crimes, and stirred by the blood of the twin race, seeks to end the wars through the trumpet.

The Irish version runs as follows:

> Is andsin ro erig in Badb granna geranach thindesnach thuasanach .i. Tisipone, a hichtar ifirn, do thendad ⁊ do thinninus na da derbrathar sin a cend aroili.[85]
>
> Then arose the hideous, complaining, hustling, pursuing Badb, viz. Tisiphone, from the depths of Hell, to urge and incite those two brothers against each other.

Badb here cannot carry its more literal or prosaic meaning as the name of a carrion-eating bird, the black crow: the passage only makes sense if the reference is to a demonic phantom. The translational strategy is the mirror image of that followed in the *Táin*: there the Classical Fury appears on the Irish landscape and is glossed by the name of her Irish equivalent, here the Irish phantom appears in Thebes and is glossed by her Greek and Latin name.

The same strategy is followed in *In Cath Catharda*, the Irish recreation of Lucan's *Civil War*, where in Lucan's original the Fury, named in Greek, sets Rome blazing among the dire portents of coming war:

> ingens urbem cingebat Erinys
> excutiens pronam flagranti vertice pinum
> stridentesque comas.[86]
>
> The huge Erinys [= Fury] encompassed the city, hurling an upturned pine-tree, top blazing, downward, and her tresses hissing.

Here the leap from Greek to Irish completes the series of equivalences in the three languages:

> Atcithea in Badb catha gach n-aidhchi ⁊ a haithin[n]i giuis for derglassad in a láimh ⁊ a trillsi natharda nemidi ic dresechtaigh immo cend ic aslach in catha for na Romanchaibh.[87]
>
> The Badb of battle was seen every night with her torch of pine red-flaming in her hand, and her snaky poisonous tresses rattling around her head, urging the Romans to battle.

[84] Statius, *Thebaid* XI.57–9, in Shackleton Bailey, *Statius*, II, 200–1.
[85] Calder, *Togail na Tebe*, lines 4313–14.
[86] Lucan, *Civil War* I.572–4, in Duff, *Lucan*, 44–5.
[87] Stokes, *In Cath Catharda*, line 902.

Significantly, the goddess Bellona becomes drawn into the same system of names. Statius describes her in images similar to those of the Furies:

> Prima manu rutilam de vertice Larisaeo
> ostendit Bellona facem dextraque trabalem
> hastam intorsit agens . . .[88]
>
> First from Larisa's peak Bellona showed her red torch and with her right hand sent her massive spear whirling . . .

In *Togail na Tebe* she too is the Badb:

> Et ergid in Badb catha cosnamach ⁊ rochraithistair aithindeda adanta uruada uas cathrachaibh na nGrec ⁊ na Tiauanda.[89]
>
> And the contentious Badb of battle arose, and brandished flaming baleful torches over the cities of the Greeks and the Thebans.

It is thought-provoking that Bellona appears in the Munich glossary mentioned above as *dea belli apud paganos*, the goddess of war among the pagans.[90] It is easy to see how such a definition could provide a bridge to the names of the Irish phantoms of battle. For example, in *Sanas Cormaic* the husband of Nemain carries the explanation *dia catha la genti Goideal*, 'the god of war among the pagans *of the Irish*', in turn paralleling the entry for the Roman god Mars, *dia catha la geinti*.[91]

For the medieval scholars, these equivalences will have belonged to the logic of comparative religion as much as of comparative linguistics. The Classically-named Furies or demonesses belong in Irish heroic narrative not simply because they are the trappings of high epic but because they answer to cosmic and psychological realities – realities that are associated with pagan error or deception but have an unchallenged place in the Christian world-view as much as in the pagan one which informs Latin epic. So it is that both the Classical heroes and the Ulster warriors face an afterlife *i-ngrianbhrugaibh Iffirn*, 'in the sunny abodes of Hell'. This phrase names the Elysian fields,[92] which must be part of the Hell of the Christian universe;[93] and Elysium corresponds to the Christian Heaven *i ngrianbrugaibh Parrduis*, 'in the sunny abodes of Paradise'.[94] This principle informs an instructive passage of the first recension of *Togail Troí*, describing the moment when Troilus is about to be slain:

> Ní rabi cumsanadh ann, tra, co find na matne for indriud ⁊ orcain na cathrach . . . Robúrestar ⁊ robécestar Badb úasu. R[o]gáirset demna aéoir úasu chind, ar

[88] Statius, *Thebaid* IV.5–7, in Shackleton Bailey, *Statius*, I, 204–5.
[89] Calder, *Togail na Tebe*, lines 1365–6.
[90] Munich, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, MS clm lat. 14429, fo. 222r column (c) 1. See above.
[91] *Sanas Cormaic* Y 965, 892.
[92] See e.g. Calder, *Imtheachta Æniasa*, lines 1199, 1326, 1416; Stokes, *In Cath Catharda*, line 4274.
[93] Compare e.g. Stokes, *Acallamh na Senórach*, lines 6249–50.
[94] Greene, *Saltair na Rann*, line 1868. The same term is used for the heavenly dwellings of the angels in the Second Recension of *In Tenga Bithnua*: see Carey, *Tenga*, sections 19.2–3, 92.7, and his note, p. 441.

> rop aitt léo martad mar sin do thabhairt for síl nÁdhaimh, fobíth rob fórmach muinntire dóibh sin.[95]
>
> Now until the white of the morning, there was no pause to the devastation and the ruin of the city . . . Badb bellowed and roared above it (?). Demons of the air shouted above its (?) head; for pleasant it was to them that slaughter should befall Adam's seed, because there was an increase to their household.

Here the Badb is again juxtaposed neatly with the demons of Hell itself, so closely that she seems to be understood as one of their number. Whether a pagan warrior is Irish or Greek or Trojan makes little difference when he is destined for the Hell that is below his feet, and the inhabitants of that Hell are the same beings regardless of the language in which their names are given.

The Furies in Cath Maige Rath

The theme that we have sketched undergoes a remarkable development in the later stages of Middle Irish heroic narrative. As Jacqueline Borsje has pointed out in an important study, the imagery of the Morrígan and her sisters is developed with unique intensity in the linked texts *Fled Dúin na nGéd* and *Cath Maige Rath* ('The Feast of the Fort of the Geese' and 'The Battle of Mag Rath').[96]

The first example is in *Fled Dúin na nGéd,* when Congal is filled with a violent indignation that will prove his ruin, and Tisiphone enters into him:

> Ro ling dásacht ⁊ mire menman a Congal fri haithesc in óclaig sin ⁊ ro ling in fúir demnach .i. Tesifone a cumgaise a chride do chumniugad cecha droch-chomairli dó. Ro érig didiu ina sheasam ⁊ ro gab a gaiscead fair ⁊ ro érig a bruth míled ⁊ a én gaile for folúamain úasa ⁊ ní tharat aichne for charait ná for nemcharait in tan sin . . .[97]
>
> At the young warrior's speech, wildness and frenzy of mind leapt onto Congal and the demonic Fury, Tisiphone, leapt to counsel his heart in order to remind him of all her bad advice. Then he stood up and put on his armour, and his soldier's fury arose, and his bird of valour hovering over him, and he did not recognize friends or foes at that time.

The Fury here is distinct from the usual bird-figure hovering in the air: as a giver of evil counsel, it assimilates much more closely to the demons that invade the inner self of the tempted one in the discourse of monasticism.[98] Borsje is, so far as I know, the only scholar to have highlighted an extraordinary passage which takes up and re-echoes this image in the later version of the sequel text *Cath Maige Rath*, preserved in the Yellow Book of Lecan (*c.* 1390).[99] At the climactic moment when Congal and Domnall stand opposite one another for combat, the Morrígan hovers over Domnall

[95] Stokes, 'The destruction of Troy', lines 1895–7.
[96] Borsje, 'Demonising the enemy'.
[97] Lehmann, *Fled Dúin na nGéd*, lines 289–94.
[98] Brakke, *Demons*, 127–56.
[99] Dublin, Trinity College, MS 1318.

and the Fury Tisiphone over Congal.[100] Throughout the tale, Domnall's portrayal is Christian and positive, Congal's is pagan and negative: at the comparatively late date of composition of this text, was the Classical demon associated specifically with the prospect of his damnation? One could even guess that the opposition between Fury and Morrígan is an allusion to the juxtaposition of traditions that we have been tracing through this chapter.[101] Congal has refused to listen to the advice of his friends, because the infernal enemies were preparing his destruction and attacking the citadel of his heart:

> uair nír tréicset na trí h-úire urbadacha ifernaidi eisium ó uair a thuismid co tráth a thiughbá, .i. Eleacto ⁊ Megera ⁊ Tesifóne, conad hé a siabrad ocus a saeb-forcetul sin fa-dera do-sum duscad cacha droch-dála ocus imrad cacha iomarbhais, ocus forbad cacha fír-uilc; uair is ann ro athaigestar in úir indlech, esidan, aidgill Electó ar cert-lár cleib ocus craide Congail, ic maidem cach mirúin ocus ic fiugrad cacha fír-uilc. Ocus didiu in mairch-miscnech, mírunach, mallachtnach Megéra do chosain a caladh-phort comnaidi ar cert-lár charbait Congail, ic tagra a taiblib a thengad, ocus ic buadnaisi a bunnsachaibh a briathar; ocus didiu in chenncleasach, cosaídech, conntrachta, thromda, thurrachtach, thuaithebrach Tesifóne tárraid sein ard-chomus airechais ar cúig cedfadaib comlana corparda Congail, comdís comdicra sein re forbhad cacha fír-uilc.[102]
>
> for the three contentious infernal Furies, Eleacto, Megera and Tesiphone, had not left him from the time he was born until the time of his death, so that it was their bewitchment and evil instruction that caused for him the awakening of every evil and the discussion of every transgression and the accomplishing of every true evil; for then did the slanderous, impure, and destructive Fury, Electo, visit[103] the very centre of the breast and heart of Congal, suggesting every evil resolution and presaging every true evil. And also the woeful, evil-planning, accursed Megera occupied her dwelling-harbour in the very middle of Congal's palate, vaunting from the battlements of his tongue, and threatening from the darts of his words. And the tricky, complaining, cursed, morose, calamitous, sinister Tesiphone assumed absolute sway over the five bodily senses of Congal, so that they were diligent to accomplish every true evil.

This passage looks merely wordy and overblown at first; but on a closer reading the thought is subtle and complex – in the right structural position and context, the purely mythological understanding of the Furies is combined with the psychological level of serious demonology. It continues with an allegorical interpretation which may have originated as an embedded gloss, though nothing in the manuscript marks it as such:

[100] O'Donovan, *The Banquet*, 198, noted by Borsje, 'Demonising the enemy', 36.
[101] See also Wong, 'Christianity'.
[102] O'Donovan, *The Banquet*, 166–8, checked against the facsimile by Atkinson, *Yellow Book of Lecan*, p. 304 (b), lines 5–8.
[103] O'Donovan reads *ro-thaigestar*, and takes this as an otherwise unattested verb meaning 'makes house'. However, the manuscript plainly reads *ro athaigestar,* which I take to be from *aithigid* 'visits' (compare Stokes, 'Poems', 22, poem 2 section 3, where this verb is used likewise for concourse with demons).

> Gurob trés na húirib ifernaidi sin tuicther na trí pudracha[104] aimsiges cach aen .i. scrúdud 7 imrádud 7 gnim, feib asbert Fothud na Canóine:
>
> Electo sgrudus cach col,
> Megera fri himradud,
> Tesifóne féin co fír
> cuireas cach cáir i corp-gním.[105]
>
> By these three Furies of Hell are understood the three evils which tempt every one, viz. Thought, Word and Deed, as Fothud na Canóine said:
>
> Electo ponders every sin,
> Megera is for discoursing,
> and Tesifóne herself it is truly
> who puts every crime into bodily action.

Startlingly, this is a reworking of Fulgentius's exact words:

> Allecto enim impausabilis dicitur; Tisiphone autem quasi *tuton phone*, id est istarum vox; Megera autem quasi megale eris, id est magna contentio. Primum est ergo non pausando furias concipere, secundum est in voce erumpere, tertium iurgium protelare.[106]
>
> Allecto is said to be unstoppable, Tisiphone is like [Greek] *tuton phone*, which means 'the voice of those ones', then Megera is *megale eris*, that is 'great quarreling'. For the first thing is to conceive insane anger by refusing to stop, the second is when it bursts out in the voice, the third is the prolonging of the dispute.

Although the name Fothud na Canóine as transmitted appears to refer to 'Fothad of the Bible', a prominent figure in the monastic renewal of the *céli Dé* to whom learned poems were pseudonymously attributed in the eleventh century,[107] it fits the context better to take this as the legendary Fothad Canainne, subject of the Old Irish poem *Reicne Fothaid Canainne* (The Recitation of Fothad Canainne).[108] According to the associated prose tale, Fothad is decapitated in battle and the poem is spoken by his decapitated head. I do not think it is a coincidence that the poem includes an account of the Morrígan gloating over the battlefield. I quote from Kuno Meyer's edition based on O'Clery's seventeenth-century copy:

> Atā[a]t immunn san c[h]an
> mór fodb asa fordercc bol,
> dreman inathor dīmar
> nodusnigh an Mórríoghan.
> Donārlaith do bil ōige,
> isi cotanasōide,

[104] O'Donovan supplies *pecadha* ('sins') and reads *pecadha pudracha* ('evil sins'), but it seems preferable to accept the Yellow Book of Lecan text with *pudrach* used substantively, as if equivalent to the abstract noun *pudraige* ('hurtfulness', 'thing of evil').

[105] O'Donovan, *The Banquet*, 168, checked against Atkinson, *Yellow Book of Lecan*, p. 304 (b).

[106] Fulgentius*, Mitologiae* I.7, in Helm, *Fulgentii Opera*, I, 20–1.

[107] Thus O'Donovan in his note on the passage, *The Banquet*, 168. See Follett, *Céli Dé*, 122–4.

[108] Text in Meyer, *Fianaigecht*, 4–21. For studies, see McQuillan, 'Finn'; Borsje, '*Fled Bricrenn*', 190–1; Borsje, 'The "terror of the night"'; and on Fothad as a legendary name see Toner, 'Authority', 75–6.

> is mōr do fhodboibh nigius
> dremhan an caisgen tibhes.[109]
>
> There are around us here and there many spoils whose luck is famous; horrible are the huge entrails which the Morrígan washes. She has come to us from the edge of a pillar (?), 'tis she who has egged us on; many are the spoils she washes, horrible the hateful laugh she laughs.

All this is familiar from the lore that we have observed for the Morrígan and her sisters: severed heads, the ominous presence delighting in corpses, and perhaps the rending or harrying of the corpses euphemistically referred to here as 'washing'. As the poem continues, the severed head speaks of its coming journey into the afterlife:

> Scarfit frit cēin mo chorp toll,
> m'anum do pīenadh la donn,
> serc bethu cé is miri,
> ingi adradh Rīgh nimhi.[110]
>
> My riddled body must part from thee awhile, my soul to be tortured by the dark one. Save for the worship of heaven's king, love of this world is folly.

The context of this passage exactly matches what we have seen for the Classical Furies in other Irish sources: close contextual association with the Morrígan in the context not only of death but of the journey of the damned to Hell and the demons' assault upon them. The word *donn* ('dark one') here almost certainly refers to the name given to a specific supernatural being associated in other medieval Irish sources with the punishment of pagan sinners immediately after death.[111] If so, it seems likely that the quatrain in *Cath Maige Rath*, listing the names of pagan Greek demons with similar associations, comes from a poem associated in theme and content with *Reicne Fothaid Canainne*. A corroborating suggestion comes from a marginal note in the manuscript *Lebor Brecc*, where a fragmentary quatrain is assigned to a poem 'on the pains of hell' spoken by the spirit of this same Fothad.[112]

But what was the source for this lore about the three Furies? While direct acquaintance with Fulgentius's work cannot be ruled out, there is a simpler and more likely route in the commentary tradition on Boethius's *Consolation of Philosophy* (*De consolatione philosophiae*). Pending systematic publication of the Boethius commentaries, I cite the key passage as it appears in the twelfth-century *Glosae super Boetium* (Glosses on Boethius) of William of Conches:

[109] Meyer, *Fianaigecht*, 16, sections 41–2.

[110] Meyer, *Fianaigecht*, 16, section 48.

[111] *Áirne Fíngein* mentions *Tech Duind frisndálait mairb* ('The house of Donn to which the dead gather', Vendryes, *Áirne Fíngein*, line 257). For further references to the House of Donn in *Lebor Gabála* and elsewhere, with the motif of the punishment of sinners, see Meyer, 'Der irische Totengott'; Mac Cana, *The Cult*, 222–4.

[112] *Spirut Fothaid Chanand .cc. ar tuarascbáil phēini hiffirn* 'The spirit of Fothad Canainne sang this describing the pains of hell': *Lebor Brecc* (Dublin, Royal Irish Academy MS 23 P 16), p. 115, top margin. See Meyer, 'Der irische Totengott', 544 n. 2, cited by Borsje, 'Demonising the enemy', 91 n. 62.

> ET DEAE SCELERUM. Deae scelerum dicuntur tres esse, quae vocantur tres furiae. Quarum nomina haec sunt: Alecto, Thesiphone, Megera, quia tria sunt quae omne malum commovent et perficiunt: furibunda cogitatio, furibunda vox, furibunda operatio. Prius enim malum cogitatur, deinde dicitur, deinde perficitur. Unde nomina conveniunt. Prima dicitur Alecto, id est impausabilis, scilicet prava cogitatio. Deinde Thesiphone, id est vox prava. Thesiphone enim dicitur supposita vox; thesis, id est positio vel propositio, phone vox vel sonus. Megera dicitur magna contentio, scilicet prava operatio.[113]

> AND THE GODDESSES OF SINS. The goddesses of sins are said to be three, who are called the three furies. Whose names are these: Alecto, Thesiphone, Megera – because there are three things which set in motion and achieve all evil: furious thought, furious speech, furious action. First evil is thought, then it is said, then it is acted. Whence the names are fitting. The first is called Alecto, that is 'unstoppable', i.e. wicked thought. Then *Thesiphone*, that is 'wicked speech'. *Thesiphone* indeed means 'speech imposed' – thesis, that is 'placing' or 'proposing', phone 'voice' or 'sound'. Megera means 'big quarrel', that is wicked action.

It is not impossible that materials in *Cath Maige Rath* could have come from this source, if they were added at a late stage in the development of the text: there are Irish glosses in a twelfth-century copy of the *Consolatio* with abundant commentary, and another Irish-glossed manuscript of the same period contains works by William of Conches.[114] For obvious reasons of dating, however, it is more likely that the relationship with William's writings is indirect. His Boethius commentary includes much lore derived from earlier commentaries and especially those of the tradition associated with Remigius of Auxerre, linked in turn to the circle of Martinus Hiberniensis and Eriugena.[115] There is evidence for Irish reading of the Boethius commentaries in the formative period of Middle Irish saga: influence on *Táin Bó Cúailnge* from one strand of this tradition has been identified by Brent Miles,[116] and although none of the known manuscripts of earlier Boethian commentary include this particular set of information on the Furies,[117] it is plausible that both William and the Irish author took this Fulgentian material from another earlier commentary that is now lost.

Conclusion

In the absence of direct evidence for the Boethian route of transmission, it is tempting to imagine a single crumbling copy of Fulgentius in a monastic library which Martin and Eriugena read before they left Ireland, and which the authors of the *Amra* commentary, the *Táin*, *Togail Troí* and *Cath Maige Rath* each consulted in turn. This

[113] Nauta, *Glossae super Boetium*, 210, at Boethius III *metrum* 12.

[114] Ó Néill, 'Irish glosses', 'An Irishman at Chartres'.

[115] See Chance, *Medieval Mythography*, 400–9; Bolton, 'Study of the *Consolation*', 64.

[116] Miles has identified affinities between mythological information in *Togail Troí* and that contained in recension K of the Remigian commentary on Boethius, whose use in Anglo-Saxon England is strongly documented (see Miles, 'Irish evidence', 138–48, and for recension K in general see Bolton, 'Study of the *Consolation*'). However, Rosalind Love (see next note) informs me that the note on the Furies discussed here is not found in the manuscripts of the K group.

[117] I thank Rosalind Love for discussion of this difficult matter, and for preparing a digest of Boethian commentaries on this passage, with advice which I summarize here.

is speculative, but something similar can be cited from an example supported by real evidence: Greek lore in *Sanas Cormaic* has been shown to derive from a Greek–Latin glossary akin to that in Laon, Bibliothèque Municipale MS 444, which was edited by Martin of Laon, and that manuscript was itself copied from an exemplar whose quire signatures were numbered in Irish – suggesting very strongly that that exemplar originated in Ireland.[118] The opposite extreme is simply to say that every learned man in Christendom with an interest in the relationship between paganism and Christianity read Fulgentius.

Both positions are unsatisfactory, if only because the texts exhibit not static and passive learning but analogous manifestations of a single creative activity. What draws them together is a shared mythological grammar, a grammar of syncretism. *Cath Maige Rath* expands and deepens the equation between Classical Fury and Irish battle-goddess which is represented in miniature by the glossing equivalence that we saw in the *Táin*; the Middle Irish Classical narratives ring the changes on the same equivalence with absolute consistency; and, most significant of all, the same sense of parallelism is already implicit in the Carolingian glosses of the earlier *peregrini*. If this deserves the name of tradition, it is a philological tradition that was vested in the practices of the *scriptorium* and the classroom. Once the Irish scholars accepted that the old lore of their people was defined by its paganism, it was ready to be matched with the equivalent shapes in the stories told by other ancient pagans nearer to the middle of the world. The Fulgentian approach made such cross-cultural leaps possible with deep intellectual rigour.

[118] Russell, '*Graece . . . Latine*', 413; Donisotti, 'Greek grammars', 10–13, 45–54; Contreni, *Cathedral School*, 58–9.

7

RECONSTRUCTING THE MEDIEVAL IRISH BOOKSHELF: A CASE STUDY OF *FINGAL RÓNÁIN* AND THE HORSE-EARED KINGS*

Michael Clarke

When the medieval scholar-authors constructed a narrative literature about the pre-Christian past of Ireland, its discourse was shaped by engagement with Graeco-Roman antiquity as well as with pre-existing lore originating in the Irish language. This claim is no longer controversial, but we are only beginning to engage with the challenges that it presents. We need to develop a new understanding of how Latin texts were read and appropriated – in effect, a new 'archaeology of reading'.[1] A key issue here is the relationship between text, commentary and world-knowledge. In this period, the canonical Latin texts were transmitted and assimilated in conjunction with a vast and ever-growing body of gloss commentary, in exactly the same way as the Bible itself. As a result, many texts that today would be classed as imaginative and artistic literature may have been valued at least as highly for the accumulated knowledge about language, ideas, history and myth that mediated and even fused with the words of the original author. This is most clearly documented for Virgil, Boethius and Martianus Capella, the authors who gathered the strongest commentary traditions;[2] but it applies in principle to any ancient author read by medieval Irish scholars.

This challenges our sense of genre categories. For example, if we are to explore the reception in the *Táin* of material from Virgil's *Aeneid*, we need to begin by reconfiguring our sense of the Latin work's cultural status. In our period it was not only a poetic artefact but also the carrier of a vast body of Servian commentary, and thus served as a repository of detailed concrete knowledge about the worlds of the ancient Mediterranean.[3] The vernacular narratives created in the shadow of those canonical works may be much closer to historiography (or pseudo-historiography) than modern literary classifications like *epic* or *heroic saga* might suggest.[4] The same perspective may help to contextualize the countless cross-echoes between *Táin Bó Cúailnge* (The Cattle-Raid of Cooley) and *Togail Troí* (The Destruction of Troy).

* Versions of this paper were presented at the Ó Cléirigh Institute, University College Dublin, and the Stichting A.G. van Hamel, Utrecht, while this book was in preparation in 2013. I am grateful to all who commented on those occasions, especially to Patricia Kelly for directing me to the Eochaid version of the 'horse-eared king' narrative; also to Ralph O'Connor for his encouragement.

1 See Reynolds, *Medieval Reading*. The excellent study of Latin-Germanic interactions by Grotans, *Reading in St Gall*, is a model for one strand in what needs to be done.

2 Useful resources on this theme are gathered in the *Marginal Scholarship* website, www.huygens.knaw.nl/marginal-scholarship-vidi.

3 For varying assessments of this issue, compare Miles, *Heroic Saga* (especially 95–144) with the respective positions taken by O'Connor and Burnyeat in this volume.

4 See Fulton in this volume, and for bibliography see my chapter 6 in this volume, n. 6.

The inclusion of the heroes of Emain Macha and those of Graeco-Roman antiquity in a single literary project followed naturally from the *historical* principle that both groups belonged in the primordial pagan phase of their nations' development, so that it may have seemed logical and unproblematic to depict an Irish *laoch* and a Greek hero through the same imagery and the same narrative motifs – just as it was logical both to use the word *draoi* for the Egyptian wizards of the Book of Exodus and to use *magus* for the druids who opposed St Patrick.[5]

The learned bookshelf

Any such discussion depends on a more fundamental question: what was available for the *literati* to read? Of course the answer must have varied from place to place and from time to time; but even if we restrict ourselves (say) to the formative period of Middle Irish narrative literature between about 900 and 1200, the question is very difficult to handle. This, of course, is partly because of the skewed patterns of manuscript survival.[6] Hardly any manuscripts of secular Latin from this period survive in Ireland itself, because of our damp weather and the subsequent effects of our troubled history, and there are no library lists to match those for Anglo-Saxon England.[7] The well-documented examples from the monastic foundations of Columbanus and Colm Cille, with the Bobbio library lists[8] on the one hand and the hypothetical reconstruction of Iona's library on the other,[9] are too early to shed useful light on the Middle Irish period. The same applies to most of the evidence of quotation and reception in Hiberno-Latin literature. Dáibhí Ó Cróinín has shown that in the seventh century the author of *De ratione conputandi* (On the System of Computus) had access to all or part of Macrobius's *Saturnalia* 1;[10] Michael Herren and others argue that bodies of Virgilian commentary transmitted with Old Irish glosses descend from a commentary made in Ireland in the seventh to early eighth century; likewise the glosses in the St Gall manuscript of Priscian almost certainly go back to an exemplar made in Ireland.[11] Any inference from such reception falls foul of the possibility (often assumed to be a certainty) that this learning would not have survived through the disruptions of the period associated with the Viking attacks. Likewise, evidence for original work by Irish *peregrini* on the Continent is problematic when applied to *subsequent* stages of learned culture in Ireland, because it is possible in each individual case that a scholar like Dungal or Eriugena or Martin of Laon encountered a given work for the first time after he went abroad – or, to frame it in less negative terms, it can be argued that he was exceptional in

[5] I survey this theme in Clarke, 'Linguistic education'.

[6] Sharpe, 'Books from Ireland'; Ó Corráin, 'What happened to Ireland's medieval manuscripts?'. I thank Donnchadh Ó Corráin for sending me this article in advance of publication.

[7] Lapidge, *Anglo-Saxon Library*.

[8] See Richter, *Bobbio*, especially 140–56.

[9] Clancy & Márkus, *Iona*, 211–22; O'Loughlin, 'The library of Iona'; O'Loughlin, 'The presence of the *Breuiarius*'.

[10] Miles, *Heroic Saga*, 37–8, based on the collection of sources and analogues in the apparatus assembled by Walsh & Ó Cróinín, *Cummian's Letter*, 131–69.

[11] Miles, *Heroic Saga*, 30–3. The evidence from citations should be carefully distinguished from palaeographical arguments for Insular transmission, which have become highly controversial: see Dumville, 'Early medieval Insular churches'.

the first place and represented a cultural community that withered after men like himself went on their travels.[12]

Within the Middle Irish period, evidence for engagement with Latin texts by Irish-language writers is rare but, given the odds against survival of such evidence, what does exist is significant. Pádraig Ó Néill has studied two twelfth-century manuscripts carrying Irish glosses, one with Calcidius's version of Plato's *Timaeus* and an epitome of Eriugena's *Periphyseon*,[13] the other with Boethius's *De consolatione philosophiae* (*Consolation of Philosophy*) and Lupus of Ferrières's metrical treatise, copiously annotated in Irish.[14] Ó Néill associates these examples of cosmopolitan study with the new ecclesiastical learning that came from renewed international contacts in the context of the 'twelfth-century reform' of the Church, and he associates them with the apparent *rejection* of the older Irish secular narrative traditions represented (for example) by the colophon to the Book of Leinster *Táin*.[15] Recently Elizabeth Duncan has provided an important piece of complementary evidence, suggesting that the relationship between secular and ecclesiastical learning may have been more fluid: she shows that one of the main scribes of *Lebor na hUidre*, Hand M, is formally indistinguishable from that in a surviving fragmentary manuscript of Boethius's *De re arithmetica* (On Arithmetical Science).[16] If M was working directly on Boethius as well as on venerable Irish texts – or, at the very least, if he was culturally close to people who did so – then we have an added sense of the intermingling of Latinate and vernacular scholarship in the period when our earliest surviving compilation of Irish literature was taking shape.[17] Here again, however, the possibility remains that the cultural horizons of the compilers were very different from those of the original author of a given text, even in cases where there may only be a generation between them.

We are perhaps on surer ground when Irish authors refer to specific sources by name. One of the most spectacular examples is remarkably early in date: the Preface to *O'Mulconry's Glossary*, presumably dating like the main text from the eighth century, names a range of sources including Jerome, Cassian, Augustine, Isidore, Virgil, Priscian and Cicero, with Cummian placed among them.[18] There is no reason to be sceptical about these claims – provided we remember that the reception of these authors' writings must often have been piecemeal, channelled through excerpts and summaries.

[12] The classic case is the emendations made to the oldest surviving manuscript of Lucretius by the Irish scholar Dungal at the court of Charlemagne. The theory of an 'insular stage' in the transmission of the text of Lucretius is now rejected in favour of the view that the likes of Dungal encountered Lucretius for the first time on the Continent – though this in turn opens up the question of how and where these scholars had gained the deep learning that they then applied to the study of the poem. See Reynolds, *Texts and Transmission*, 219, and compare Sharpe, 'Books in Ireland', 41.

[13] Oxford, Bodleian Library MS Auct. F.III.15, glossed in a French-influenced school after 1125: see Ó Néill, 'An Irishman at Chartres'.

[14] Florence, MS Laurentianus Pluteus 78.19: Ó Néill, 'Irish glosses'.

[15] Ó Néill, 'An Irishman at Chartres', 1. Compare the opening discussion in my chapter 6 in the present volume.

[16] Duncan, '*Lebor na hUidre*'.

[17] The same point can be applied to Ó Néill's observation ('An Irishman at Chartres', 8) that the hand of Scribe 1 of the Bodleian manuscript of Calcidius and Eriugena (see n. 13 above) closely resembles that of the scribe of one of the two eleventh-century manuscripts of the bilingual Irish *Liber Hymnorum* (Dublin, University College, MS Franciscan A2) – a witness to the creation of a canonical anthology in which Latin and the vernacular are intertwined.

[18] Stokes, 'O'Mulconry's glossary', at col. 88 (the Preface is not included in Arbuthnot *et al.*, *Early Irish Glossaries*, www.asnc.cam.ac.uk/irishglossaries).

Within the Middle Irish narrative corpus, we occasionally find references to specific source-texts, usually central and familiar authors – Isidore, Virgil, Dares Phrygius. Yet such references can be treacherous. For example, the extended third recension of *Togail Troí* attributes one of its sections, the encounter of the Argonauts with the Lemnian women, to *Sdait in fili so-cenelach do Franccaib*, 'Statius the noble poet of the Franks': this claim is broadly if not precisely justified, since the section in question is in fact lightly adapted from *Togail na Tebe* (The Destruction of Thebes), the Middle Irish adaptation of Statius's *Thebaid*.[19] But the same passage mentions that the story of the Lemnian women is *not* found in the works of *Feirgil*, *Dariet Frigeta*, or *Eitnir Gothach*. This is indeed true of Virgil and Dares Phrygius, whose names would be expected in any attribution of *Togail Troí* material: but who is *Eitnir Gothach*? Kuno Meyer brilliantly suggested that this is the same as a name found in the Ravenna Cosmography as *Aithanarit Gothorum philosophus* ('Aithanarit the philosopher of the Goths').[20] Unfortunately, however, the information cited from *Aithanarit* suggests that he was a cosmographer or encyclopaedist, not a mythographer or historian, so perhaps the resemblance between the names is coincidental. Either way, however, we have here an indication that an author or editor of the Irish Troy saga was accustomed to using a further reference source that is now lost.

The same version of *Togail Troí* begins with an extraordinary collection of apocryphal biblical material, concerned with the children of Adam and of Noah, and the ancestries of nations: this centres on the claim that the descendants of Cham son of Noah tried to take over the world from the other races. An abbreviated version of this section concludes as follows: *Occus ro gapad dano ricchi an domhain o chloind Caimh mec Noi iar seanchass ngeindtlidhe amahail raittear suntt* ('And the kingship of the world was seized by the family of Cham son of Noah according to pagan knowledge, as is said here').[21] The words translated as 'according to pagan knowledge' are puzzling: an account of the origins of nations classified according to ancestry from the sons of Noah is what pagan authors by definition do *not* give a reader, so this makes best sense either if *senchas gentlide* ('pagan knowledge') is either the name of a book – presumably a book in Irish like the many compilations of all sizes whose titles are headed *Senchas* – or if it refers specifically to genealogy,[22] so that the phrase means something like 'according to the lineages of the pagan peoples'. In either case, we have a reference to lore that appears to be completely lost from every other surviving source in any language. If we are to take such things at face value, the bookshelf of those who wrote this text contained many volumes whose contents we can only guess at.

In practice, we inevitably fall back on trying to reconstruct the Classical reading of the Irish scholars from clues that they have left in the words and imagery

[19] See Miles, *Heroic Saga*, 63–4.

[20] Meyer, 'Quellenangaben', 359, citing Pinder & Parthey, *Ravennatis Anonymi Cosmographia* 201, where the name appears in the variants *Aithanarit, Aitanaridus, Arthanarit, Athanarich.* It is one of several otherwise unattested names of learned cosmographers that appear in this text. Miles (*Heroic Saga*, 77–9) cites from the same version of *Togail Troí* a reference to the story of Jason and Medea as found in *sdair Mhuir 7 sdair Endia* ('the history of Muir and the history of Endia'): unless these are familiar names in strange forms, as Miles suggests, we have here an indication of still other sources used by the authors of this redaction.

[21] I cite this from Dublin, University College, Franciscan MS A11, fo. 1ra 20–3. The same sentence occurs at the corresponding point in *Togail Troí* in Dublin, King's Inns MS 12, and in Edinburgh, National Library of Scotland, Advocates' MSS 72.i.8 and 72.i.15.

[22] *DIL* s.v. *senchas* (b).

that they created. Sometimes this is uncontroversial: Brent Miles's demonstration that the *Táin* was composed by authors engaging with Virgil and Servius is vitally important but heuristically straightforward, given that of all Classical authors Virgil was the one most studied in the period. Sometimes, however, the reconstruction of the transmission is more complex. A classic case is a simile in the first recension of *Togail Troí* describing Achilles in battle,

> Tanic íar sin fó shlúag na Moesiánda amal leoman londcrechtaig íarna thocrád fo chuilenaib, no amal tarb ndasachtach día tabar drochbéim.[23]
>
> Then [Achilles] came through the host of Mysians like a fiercely-wounding lion worried on account of its cubs, or like a furious bull to which an evil blow is given.

The lion here seems to recall a famous simile in the *Iliad*, when Achilles mourns for Patroclus:

> πυκνὰ μάλα στενάχων, ὥς τε λὶς ἠυγένειος
> ᾧι ῥά θ' ὑπὸ σκύμνους ἐλαφηβόλος ἁρπάσηι ἀνήρ
> ὕλης ἐκ πυκινῆς, ὁ δέ τ' ἄχνυται ὕστερος ἐλθών,
> πολλὰ δέ τ' ἄγκε' ἐπῆλθε μετ' ἀνέρος ἴχνι' ἐρευνῶν
> εἴ ποθεν ἐξεύροι, μάλα γὰρ δριμὺς χόλος αἱρεῖ . . .
>
> very densely groaning, like a lion born to strength, whose cubs a deer-hunting man has stolen from out of the dense wood, and the lion comes after him in anger, and goes through the thickets hunting after the man's traces, in case it can find him, for bitter anger has seized it . . .[24]

Thus the simile is appropriate to Achilles, despite the change of context: but it is not in Dares's original Latin, so has it found its way into the Irish text? The curiosity is that an almost identical lion-simile is used in the Middle Irish prose rendering of Statius's Latin epic, the *Thebaid*:

> Do-impo fan samla sin risna sluagaib amal leoman lanfhergach risna gabaid gaiscedaig arna chrad 'ma chuilenaib, conid cuma leis bas no betha d' fagbail.[25]
>
> In this way he turned about upon the hosts like a full-angry lion whom heroes do not go against, because of its anguish concerning its cubs, so that it does not care whether it lives or dies.

In this case, however, the simile is indeed derived directly from Statius' words:

> Ut lea, quam saevo fetam pressere cubili
> Venantes Numidae, natos erecta superstat,
> Mente sub incerta torvum ac miserabile frendens;
> Illa quidem turbare globos et frangere morsu

[23] Stokes, 'The destruction of Troy', line 727.
[24] Homer, *Iliad* XVIII.318–22 (West, *Ilias*, II, 183).
[25] Calder, *Togail na Tebe*, lines 4017–19.

> Tela queat, sed prolis amor crudelia vincit
> Pectora, et a media catulos circumspicit ira.[26]
>
> So a lioness that has newly whelped, beset by Numidian hunters in her cruel den, stands upright over her young, gnashing her teeth grimly and pitiably, with her mind in doubt; she could disrupt their groups and break their weapons with her bite, but love for her offspring conquers her cruel breast, and in the midst of her rage she thinks of her cubs.

This invites the conclusion that the simile began in *Togail na Tebe* as a rendering of the Statian simile, and that from there it was lifted by the composer of *Togail Troí*.[27] This is surprising not just because *Togail na Tebe* is customarily dated decisively *later* than *Togail Troí*,[28] but also because of a more subtle problem. When the simile is used second-hand in *Togail Troí*, it is applied to the hero to whom it belonged in the Greek original of the poem from which Statius himself borrowed it.

I can find nothing in the commentary on Statius by Lactantius Placidus that might have encouraged that piece of intertextual cleverness. So what happened? Was the simile known to the Irish scholars as an isolated quotation before the composition of either Irish text, then inserted independently into both, at the correct point in each case? That seems barely plausible; and at this point a whole new possibility raises its head. The core text of *Togail Troí*, as represented by the earliest surviving recension,[29] is vastly expanded and poeticized from the bald prosaic Latin in the original text of Dares Phrygius. Scholars have always assumed that the expansion is the work of Irish *literati* weaving in extraneous material from Roman epics, histories and mythographies on the one hand and from the conventional repertoire of Irish prose saga on the other.[30] That is of course very reasonable; but it is also possible that the Latin text used by the Irish author was itself an expanded and embellished version of Dares, one that happens not to survive in its own right. If so, the Irish author may in fact have contributed very little new Classical material of his own, but simply put an Irish surface and style on a composite Latin text which he had inherited as a unity – just as his peers or successors did to produce the Irish versions of the *Aeneid* and the epics of Statius and Lucan. In short, an extraordinarily wide range of Latin texts *could* have been on the shelves of scholarly writers in the formative years of Middle Irish prose, and these may have included works that are nowadays very little-read as well as others that are now lost to the world.

The horse-eared kings

I proceed to a cautionary example. Few motifs from Irish tradition are better known than 'the king with horse's ears', famous from the story of Labraid Loingsech, legendary king of Leinster. This story tends to be casually categorized as 'folklore',[31]

[26] Statius, *Thebaid* X.414–19, in Shackleton Bailey, *Statius*, II, 156–7.
[27] Compare Miles, *Heroic Saga*, 135, for a different response to this problem.
[28] See e.g. Ní Mhaonaigh, 'Classical compositions', 1–2.
[29] Stokes, 'The destruction of Troy'.
[30] E.g. Myrick, *From the* De Excidio; Miles, *Heroic Saga.*
[31] The familiar anthology versions are usually traceable to Kennedy, *Legendary Fictions*, 219, where in fact the story is said to have been derived from a book of 'the history of Ireland', presumably Keating

but it comes from a learned literary milieu: the orally-recorded versions are closely related to that in Geoffrey Keating's seventeenth-century work *Foras Feasa ar Éirinn* (Foundation of Wisdom about Ireland),[32] which in turn was taken from a (probably) fourteenth-century version of the commentary on the poem *Amra Choluimb Cille* (The Eulogy of Colm Cille).[33] According to this brief account, the horse-eared king repeatedly murders his barbers but is persuaded to spare one of them by the man's mother, a poor widow; the barber tries to keep the secret but falls into sickness, with a swelling of the body,[34] and a druid advises him to go to a crossroads, take the right-hand path, and speak out the truth about the ears to the first tree he meets. When he goes to do so, he emits or vomits[35] what was in his breast, and tells the secret to a willow; from the wood of this tree Craiftine the harper makes a new harp, and at the king's court it reveals the secret in its music.

All this is paralleled in another narrative, more complex in structure yet attested in an earlier text, headed *Inní dia tá cuslinn Brighde ⁊ aided mic Dhíchōime* (The Origin of Brigid's Pipe and the Death of Díchoem's Son).[36] This is probably an eleventh-century composition, and is preserved in a later manuscript which is remarkable for containing many otherwise lost classicizing texts in Middle Irish.[37] The horse-eared king is Eochaid, king of Uí Fhailge just before the time of conversion to Christianity:

---

or a derivative of Keating, though influence from other sources cannot be ruled out (see Ó Cuív, 'Some items', 167). Ó Briain, 'The horse-eared kings', reviews the affinities of the many orally recorded versions of the stories of Labraid and Eochaid, which sometimes seem to contaminate each other and are often linked to Brigid, as in the written version of the Eochaid story discussed here.

[32] See Comyn & Dinneen, *Foras Feasa*, II, 172–5. For this translation of the title of the work, see Cunningham, *Geoffrey Keating*, 3.

[33] Keating is explicit as usual about his dependence on a written source: *Léaghthar ar Labhraidh Loingseach gurab cuma chluas gcapall do bhí ar a chluasaibh* ('It is *read* of Labhraidh Loingseach that his ears had the appearance of a horse's ears', Comyn & Dinneen, *Foras Feasa*, II, 172, lines 2662–3). For the likelihood that this refers to the *Amra* commentary, see Ó Cuív, 'Some items'. The item is found in at least four fourteenth-century and later *Amra* manuscripts. Stokes did not include it among the variant passages included in his main edition (Stokes, 'The Bodleian *Amra*') based on the version in Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Rawlinson B 502, having already published it from the version in Dublin, Trinity College, MS 1318, the Yellow Book of Lecan (Stokes, 'Mythological notes': the translation there is unreliable). Ó Cuív ('Some items', 171) suggested a date of composition in the late Middle Irish period and published the relevant sections in the version from Dublin, National Library of Ireland, MS G50, with discussion of variants and corrections to Stokes's translation of the Yellow Book of Lecan version (*ibid*., 174, 178–9).

[34] Reading *cor- fas at dicenn ann* in the Yellow Book of Lecan copy (Stokes, 'Mythological notes', 197 line 9; see *DIL* s.v. 2 *dícenn*), similarly *gur fhas at dioghoinn ann* in the G50 copy (Ó Cuív, 'Some items', 174 section 10). I thank Jacqueline Borsje for discussion of the vocabulary of illness and healing in this passage.

[35] The Yellow Book of Lecan copy has *ro scé* (Stokes, 'Mythological notes', 197 line 19); G50 has *ro sceith* (Ó Cuív, 'Some items', 174 section 11), both from *sceïd*; likewise *ro scé* at the corresponding point in the Eochaid story (see below).

[36] Meyer, 'Stories and songs', from Dublin, Royal Irish Academy, MS D iv 2, fos 50v–51r. Further study is needed to reassess the relationship with the subsequent episode of Brigid's conflict with Mac Díchoime (edition by Thurneysen, 'Die Flöte'; discussion by Ó Briain, 'The horse-eared kings', 91–3). Meyer assigns the text to the tenth century ('Stories and songs', 46, followed by Thurneysen, 'Die Flöte', 117, and Ó Briain, 'The horse-eared kings', 91–3). The verb appears to follow Middle Irish norms throughout, so a date later than (say) 1200 can be securely excluded, making dependence on Ovid's *Metamorphoses* problematic as an explanation. Further, Sharon Arbuthnot ('Only fools and horses') has argued that the phrase *dá n-ó pill* from the 'horse-eared king' tradition was circulating early enough to be re-interpreted by the compilers of *Sanas Cormaic* and the commentary to *Félire Óengusso*.

[37] For examples of other remarkable texts preserved in this manuscript, see Ó hAodha, 'The Irish version'; Miles, '*Riss in mundtuirc*'; Hillers, '*Sgél in Mínaduir*'. The present writer is currently preparing

he hides his blemish with a golden diadem (*mind*) and kills his barbers like Labraid. He has a handsome and popular nephew, Oengus, who is known as Mac Díchoime, 'the ugly woman's son': his accomplishments include horsemanship and hunting as well as the cutting of hair. It is known at the court that the king's wife desires to sleep with the young man; Eochaid is jealous and arranges that Mac Díchoime should take his turn at cutting his hair, so that he will have an excuse to kill him. When he tries to do the deed, his nephew defies him and threatens to kill him instead, lest he perpetrate a kinslaying (*fingal*) again;[38] the king relents and agrees to set him up in equality with his own rank (*hi comtomailt mo grada-sa*) in return for preserving the secret. When he tries to do so, Mac Díchoime is struck with a wasting sickness; he goes to seek the advice of a 'magical physician', (*fáithliaig*), and in this man's territory he is cured when he falls and injures his face, so that he expels the secret from his mouth in the form of three gushes of blood.[39] But later three saplings grow up at the place where the blood fell, and a harper is travelling to play music at the king's court when he hears one sapling tell the other the secret: *Eochaid fer scēith, dā n-óe n-eich fair* ('Eochaid, the man of the shield, two horse's ears upon him').[40] The harper repeats this when he plays before the king, who imprisons him and his companions as punishment; but the harper is pardoned when he explains how he learned the secret, and the king then agrees to reveal his deformity to his people, who respond by reassuring him of their loyalty. In recompense, he gives the harper the diadem with which he had concealed his ears, and in due course Mac Díchoime succeeds to the kingship.

The Classical comparandum is of course the story of Midas. The reader reared on a modern understanding of the Classical canon thinks at once of Ovid's *Metamorphoses*: Midas judges against Apollo when the god vies with Pan in a lyre-playing competition, and Apollo afflicts him with ears of an ass, which he hides under a turban. Midas's barber is unable to resist the urge to tell of the king's secret and speaks it into a hole in the ground; from the hole grow reeds which whisper the news of his deformity when they rustle in the wind.[41] However, evidence for reading of the *Metamorphoses* is weak at the likely period of composition of the Eochaid version,[42] and this encourages us to look further for a source.

It turns out that the Irish narratives more closely resemble those found in the prose handbooks of mythology known to have circulated among scholars from the Carolingian period onward. The closest surviving parallel appears to be the account of Midas in the text known as the Second Vatican Mythographer:[43]

---

an edition of the extraordinary Prologue in the expanded version of *Togail Troí* found in this manuscript (Clarke, 'The extended prologue').

38 Meyer, 'Stories and songs', section 4.

39 Meyer, 'Stories and songs', section 6.

40 Meyer, 'Stories and songs', section 7.

41 Ovid, *Metamorphoses* XI.172–93, in Miller, *Ovid*, II, 132–3.

42 The reception of Ovidian material anywhere in northern Europe is slight before about 1150 (see in general Tarrant in Reynolds, *Texts and Transmission*, 276–82, with Clark *et al.*, *Ovid*). The small group of earlier manuscripts from the Carolingian and post-Carolingian periods include the sections from the earlier books of the *Metamorphoses* found in the Irish-authored compilation in Bern, Burgerbibliothek MS 363, which however do not include Midas (Tarrant in Reynolds, *Texts and Transmission*, 277). The summary in Lactantius Placidus's *Narrationes* is too brief to explain the motifs in the Irish texts as Ovidian.

43 Of the three works known as the Vatican Mythographers, the First has yielded the most numerous parallels in Irish texts such as *Togail Troí* (Miles, *Heroic Saga*, 89–94, with references). However, in the case of Midas, one key motif in the Irish narratives of the horse-eared kings is found only in the Second (see next note). Given that the text of the Second Vatican Mythographer was much more

> Iratus Apollo eius stulticiam auribus dampnavit asininis. Quas omnium aspectui corona semper capiti suo imposita subtrahens dum a suo liberto tonsus ab eo metueret diffamari, ei coronam imposuit promittens ut si suum dedecus celaret, regni sui eum participem faceret. Qui cum visa intra se continere non posset, scrobem fecit et 'Midam regem aures habere asininas' terre narrando inculcavit. Siquidem in eadem scrobe orta canna, cum pastores ex ea fistulam sibi facerent, quod terre a tonsore regis inculcatum fuerat, fistula pastoribus aliquid cantare volentibus expresserat.[44]

> Apollo in anger punished Midas' stupidity with ass's ears. He hid them from the sight of all by putting a crown on his head; but when he had his hair cut by his freedman he was afraid that he would be slandered by him, so he put a crown upon him and promised that if he concealed his disgrace he would share his own kingship with him. He could not contain within himself what he had seen, so he made a ditch and impressed it into the earth by saying 'Midas the king has ass's ears'. A reed sprang up in that same ditch, and shepherds made a pipe for themselves out of it; and when the shepherds wanted to sing something, the pipe announced what had been impressed upon the earth by the king's barber.

There are several details here that correspond to the Irish accounts and are not to be found in Ovid. Midas hides his ears with a garland or crown (*corona*),[45] like the *mind* of Eochaid; he makes the barber a sharer in his kingship, *particeps regni*, just as Eochaid puts his nephew in equal rank with himself; and the inability of Midas's barber 'to contain within himself what he had seen' is suggestive of the idea that Mac Díchoime or Labraid's barber physically expels the secret from his breast. The image of the reed pipe revealing the secret with spontaneous music seems to be more closely reworked in the Labraid version, where the harp plays the tune unbidden; but it is easy to see how the image of the trees 'speaking' the secret to one another could also have been developed from the same Latin model.

The evidence of these texts in combination is that in the early Middle Irish period an author remodelled the mythographic story of Midas according to the norms of his own narrative art, grafting in the motifs of the lustful queen and kinslaying (*fingal*) and replacing the music of the reed pipe with the sound of the tree and/or the music of harp. It has been independently argued that the motif of the king with equine ears or head goes back to the roots of Irish tradition, and even looks back to Indo-European antiquity; but this is not inconsistent with the transmission proposed here.[46] Whoever adapted and remodelled the mythographic account of Midas onto an Irish king may have recognized motifs and themes in his vernacular heritage that echoed elements of his more cosmopolitan Classical learning, combining them to make implicit parallels between the pagan past of the Irish and those of nations in the mainstream of world history.

---

widely disseminated internationally than the First (Kulcsár, *Mythographi*, v–xvi), this is unproblematic for the present argument.

[44] Kulcsár, *Mythographi* at *Mythographus II*, 202–3 section 139; similar version at *ibid*., *Mythographus I*, 38 section 89, but lacking the reference to the king's *corona* ('garland, crown').

[45] The old meaning 'garland' would presumably have been secondary at the time the Irish narrative was composed, particularly since the Irish borrowing *corann* (later *coróin*) meant simply 'crown'.

[46] Doherty, 'Kingship', especially 22–3; cf. Ó Briain, 'The horse-eared kings'.

The Eochaid story summarized above is remarkable for another reason: its thematic affinities with the better-known text *Fingal Rónáin* (Rónán's Kin-Slaying),[47] which likewise hinges on a queen's lustful desire for a younger relative and the resultant mutual slaughter of family members (*fingal*). Given this thematic connection, it is remarkable that *Fingal Rónáin* offers another example of submerged Classical allusion; and, as we will see, the source is again likely to have belonged among learned compilations rather than full-scale literary texts.

It has always been noticed that the story of the kinslaying of Rónán sounds very like the Graeco-Roman story of the death of Theseus's son Hippolytus. In both cases the widowed king has married a much younger woman, and he has a son by his first marriage who is preoccupied with hunting, whom the young stepmother tries to seduce. When he spurns her, she tells the father that he tried to rape her, and in the ensuing violence the son and others are killed. Kuno Meyer noticed the resemblance to the *Hippolytus* of Euripides, especially the curiosity of the shared theme of the young man as huntsman,[48] but he left it unexplained:[49] it is inconceivable that anyone in medieval Ireland could have read Greek tragedy directly. One can always posit an intermediate mythographic source as the conduit, but no evidence has been found to substantiate this: there is little on the Hippolytus story in Servius or Macrobius, and there is not enough detail in the Vatican Mythographers to explain the resemblances.[50] Stories where a man is ruined by the false accusation of rape, often by his stepmother, are of course common internationally,[51] and the story-pattern can be seen as an international tale-type that 'floats' between cultures or even recurs independently at different times and contexts, a model that has been developed and critiqued in a series of studies by Ralph O'Connor.[52] However, in such a case as this, it seems difficult to avoid positing some form of direct influence to explain the presence in an identical story-pattern of a succession of identical motifs, especially the young man's predilection for hunting.

In recent years, a new solution has been proposed. In the mid-first century AD, the younger Seneca reworked and remodelled the Euripidean myth in his tragedy *Phaedra*; and Patrizia de Bernardo Stempel has pointed out a number of remarkably close correspondences between this play and *Fingal Rónáin*.[53] Not all de Bernardo Stempel's parallels are equally persuasive, and I will not repeat them all here, as they have been thoroughly reviewed by Uáitéar Mac Gearailt;[54] instead, I will concentrate on what I consider to be the most compelling of them all. Seneca's

[47] First edited by Meyer, '*Fingal Rónáin*'; standard edition by Greene, *Fingal Rónáin*; modern translation by Máirín Ní Dhonnchadha in Koch & Carey, *Celtic Heroic Age*, 274–85.

[48] Greene, *Fingal Rónáin*, line 233, etc.; Mac Gearailt, 'The making of *Fingal Rónáin*', 64.

[49] Meyer, '*Fingal Rónáin*', line 371.

[50] See Kulcsár, *Mythographi* at *Mythographus I*, 22–3, section 46; *Mythographus II*, 210–12, section 151; and compare Marshall, *Hygini Fabulae*, at *fabula* 47.

[51] See O'Connor, 'Stepmother sagas', with Yohannan, *Joseph and Potiphar's Wife*.

[52] The latest is O'Connor's unpublished paper 'Transforming tradition: the stepmother as seductress in Insular narrative', delivered at the University of Cambridge in April 2008 and currently being prepared for publication.

[53] De Bernardo Stempel, 'Phaedra und Hippolytos', with critique by Mac Gearailt, 'The making of *Fingal Rónáin*'. O'Connor independently observes several of the key parallels with Seneca's tragedy in a survey of possible Classical intertexts for *Fingal Rónáin* and a Norse analogue, *Hjálmþérs saga ok Ölvérs* ('Stepmother sagas', 22–3).

[54] Mac Gearailt, 'The making of *Fingal Rónáin*'.

Hippolytus responds with the following words of horror when Phaedra propositions him:

> cur dextra, divum rector atque hominum, vacat
> tua, nec trisulca mundus ardescit face?
> in me tona, me fige, me velox cremet
> transactus ignis: sum nocens, merui mori:
> placui novercae.[55]
>
> Ruler of gods and men, why does your right hand lie
> Idle, why does the world not burn with the three-pronged torch?
> Thunder against me, transfix me, let the swift flung-over
> Fire burn me up: I am to blame, I deserve to die: I have attracted my step-mother's desire.

At the corresponding point in *Fingal Rónáin*, Mael Fothartaig learns of his step-mother's incestuous desire from her servant (whom he has by now slept with); he assures her that he will protect her against the queen's jealous anger and declares that he would never accept the proposition anyway:

> Dianom bertha-sa, a ben, or sé, i cualchlais tened fo thrí co ndernad min 7 luaith dím, ní chomraicfind fri mnai Rónain.[56]
>
> 'If I were thrust,' said he, 'three times into a faggot-pile of a fire so that dust and ash was made out of me, I would not mate with Rónán's wife.'

The resemblance is unmistakeable when he protests his disgust at the idea of sex with his stepmother through an image of a *triple* fire burning him up. I do not think there can be any doubt here that the Latin text has influenced the Irish author. As a rule of thumb, a single parallel between isolated motifs might be trivial, as images and turns of phrase are freely borrowed and re-inserted; a parallel between *sequences* of motifs in a story-pattern is more significant, and usually indicates a more organic connection or a common origin; but if the same collocation of verbal images occurs at the point where two structurally parallel narratives coincide, the realistic explanation must be direct influence from one text on the other or their shared dependence on a third. Mac Gearailt has argued powerfully against De Bernardo Stempel's view that *Fingal Rónáin* is modelled as a quasi-dramatic work emulating the *Phaedra* as a whole, and has stressed the fact that its ideological concerns and literary forms are those of Irish narrative in its own time; but even on his more cautious analysis, it is irresistible to conclude that elements at least of the Irish tale have been modelled on lines from Seneca's play.[57]

If so, however, we have an overwhelming problem of relative chronology. The assembly of what is now known as the Book of Leinster (Dublin, Trinity College, MS 1339) cannot have gone on later than AD 1220, and this section was almost certainly

[55] Seneca, *Phaedra* 680–4: text quoted from Coffey & Mayer, *Seneca Phaedra*.
[56] Greene, *Fingal Rónáin*, lines 52–4.
[57] Mac Gearailt, 'The making of *Fingal Rónáin*', especially 71, 83–4.

completed by 1190;[58] in any case, the composition of *Fingal Rónáin* decisively predates the manuscript. *Fingal Rónáin* is dated on linguistic grounds to early in the Middle Irish period, and it would be problematic to propose a date of composition later than 1000.[59] Additionally, variant versions are summarized in two other manuscripts, one from the early twelfth century (see below), and it is reasonable to assume that our tale is the one referred in the Book of Leinster tale-list as *Aided Mael Fatharlaig maic Ronain* (The Death of Mael Fhatharlach son of Rónán),[60] so it must have become well established beforehand. All the evidence is that the tragedies of Seneca were unknown and unread anywhere north of the Alps at the time of composition.[61] Evidence for interest in the tragedies is very weak anywhere in the early Middle Ages, and in particular there is no evidence for their reception or dissemination in the Carolingian period. The transmission divides into two groups of manuscripts. The E ('Etruscus') class is based on a late eleventh-century manuscript derived probably from Montecassino, and the copies in this group are all Italian. The A class, which dominated the later medieval tradition, is represented by a number of manuscripts written in northern France and England in the thirteenth century and is probably based, according to the standard survey, on 'a manuscript discovered in a monastic centre of central or northern France in the second half of the twelfth century'.[62] Renewal of interest is virtually nil before the middle of the thirteenth century, but led thereafter led to rapid dissemination – initially, at least, because the plays were valued as a source for moral *sententiae* like those in Seneca's prose writings, which had always circulated widely. In England around 1250, Richard of Fournival in his *Biblionomia* includes a copy of the tragedies in his description of his own library;[63] and another English manuscript of about the same date has a glossed text of Isaiah in which are written thirteen lines from Seneca's *Trojan Women*, taken from one of the newly circulating copies of the plays and inserted to supplement a single line of the play quoted in the glosses.[64] But a generation separates these developments from the physical completion of the Book of Leinster, and it is quite implausible that a copy of the *Phaedra* (or *Hippolytus,* as it was then known) could have circulated quickly enough to be remodelled and 'nativized' in the form of our *Fingal Rónáin.*

At this point there is a temptation to posit an entirely independent route of survival. According to such a hypothesis, the Irish would have had access to Senecan tragedy when it was unknown elsewhere, perhaps as a survival from the educational culture of the earliest centuries of Irish Christianity. On this view, the model of the *Phaedra* lies somewhere close to the genesis of *Fingal Rónáin*, and one passage bearing particularly close witness to those origins happens to survive in our text – perhaps transmitted from version to version until the final redactor was no longer aware of the antecedents of Mael Fothartaig's words of dismay. Similar patterns have been posited for the independent survival of Macrobius, Servius Danielis and Orosius in Ireland before the age of the Carolingian revival,[65] and it cannot be ruled out here –

[58] O'Sullivan, 'Notes on scripts', 26–8.
[59] Mac Gearailt suggests composition early in the tenth century ('The making of *Fingal Rónáin*', 63–4).
[60] See Best *et al.*, *Book of Leinster*, IV, 189c, line 24952, with Mac Cana, *Learned Tales*, 44 and 67.
[61] My summary treatment here is based on Tarrant's in Reynolds, *Texts and Transmission*, 378–81; the detailed analyses by Philp ('The manuscript tradition') and McGregor (*Manuscripts of Seneca's Tragedies*) do not change the picture in any way relevant to the present study.
[62] Tarrant in Reynolds, *Texts and Transmission*, 379.
[63] Reynolds & Wilson, *Scribes and Scholars*, 117–18.
[64] Rouse & De la Mare, 'New light', on Oxford, New College MS 21, fo. 31.
[65] Miles, *Heroic Saga* 15–50, surveys the evidence.

the enthusiast can point to the fact that an ancient (fifth-century) manuscript of our author was palimpsested at Bobbio in the seventh century.[66] Yet such an explanation remains deeply unlikely, just as it would be for reception of the *Phaedra* in any other vernacular European literature in the period of composition.

Transmission through florilegia

There may be another way out of the impasse described above. The full-text transmission of Classical literature in medieval Europe was supplemented and expanded by the widespread circulation of excerpts and quotations in anthologies or *florilegia*. The *florilegium* tradition remains poorly understood and poorly studied, but it provided a route for the circulation of fragments, at least, of Classical texts that were otherwise inaccessible.[67] The celebrated Carolingian collection known as the Thuaneus[68] includes a number of quotations from Seneca's tragedies, transmitted from a branch of the tradition akin to what would later emerge as the E group. As it happens, none of the excerpts in the Thuaneus is from the *Phaedra*, and I cannot point to another *florilegium* of suitable date that contains such fragments;[69] but it remains plausible that a source of this kind may have provided the author of Mael Fothartaig's words with his model.

In this case, however, we have to posit an exceptionally subtle intertextual engagement on the part of the Irish scholar. Either the hypothetical *florilegium* included a plot-summary alongside the quotation, or (much more likely) it included a note of the names of the characters and the Irish writer was in a position to match these up with a known synopsis of the myth, perhaps derived from a mythographic compilation like those mentioned earlier in this article. Here the possibility arises that *Fingal Rónáin* may have been composed in several stages, with the Classical allusions added late in the sequence. There is no doubt that the Book of Leinster text is a reworked version: variant partial versions of the story, with different verse quatrains cited, exist in fragmentary form in two additional manuscripts, one of which dates from as early as the first half of the twelfth century,[70] and this can only be explained by a prior history of development and dissemination. If our text is the result of a series of reworkings, it may have begun as a relatively conventional example of the story of a young wife's disastrous lust for her stepson: as such it might have been derived from international models like the story of Joseph and Potiphar's wife, or alternatively it could be seen as one of a group of Irish instantiations of a conventional pattern that develops from the tension between an old man's lustful young wife and the hapless younger man whom she destroys.[71] At a later stage, an author aware of the plot and excerpts from

[66] Milan, Biblioteca Ambrosiana, MS G.82.

[67] Survey and catalogue of manuscripts by Olsen, *Réception*, 145–264.

[68] Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale, MS Lat. 8071. See Reynolds, *Texts and Transmission*, 10–12. The manuscript is best known as a unique source for Catullus Poem 62 other than the Verona manuscript, and as one of the two principal sources for the *Anthologia Latina* (see Shackleton Bailey, *Anthologia*, v).

[69] Of the manuscripts listed by Philp ('The manuscript tradition', 153), all but the Thuaneus and the Milan palimpsest (see above) are too late to be relevant here. However, the *florilegium* tradition has been very poorly studied, and relevant material may still await discovery in manuscripts like those surveyed in his study.

[70] The manuscripts are Oxford, Bodleian Library, Rawlinson B 502, and Brussels, Bibliothèque Royale, MS 4641. See Greene, *Fingal Rónáin*, 11–12.

[71] An early Irish example is the story of Nédiu and the wife of his foster-father in *Sanas Cormaic* (Y698: for text see the Early Irish Glossaries Database, www.asnc.cam.ac.uk/irishglossaries). For the

Seneca's tragedy remodelled the tale to fit the Hippolytus pattern more closely, and the passages with close verbal echoes of Seneca were added.

The strategy of parallelism

This reconstruction fits the observable facts, complex and tentative though it is: yet it prompts a further and more general question. Why did the author or redactor draw the tale into such a close intertextual relationship with a parallel narrative from Classical mythology? This question is all the more pressing when we consider how carefully the parallel is encoded – *Fingal Rónáin* is emphatically *not* a mere pastiche or imitation of Seneca, and indeed its combination of extreme staccato brevity with the intertwined themes of kinslaying, the discourse of honour, and the ironies and deceit worked out through the verse-capping espisode have given it classic status according to the normal standards of early Middle Irish saga narrative.[72] The key factor may be in the discourses of kingship: the significance of the parallelism between the situations of Rónán and of Theseus lies in the fact that in each case it is a king who allows manipulative lies to make him succumb to jealousy and brings about disaster to himself and his people. Together, the falls of the two kings speak to one of the central warnings repeated in the medieval literature of kingship. I quote from the Carolingian master Sedulius Scottus in his *De rectoribus christianis* (On Christian Rulers), describing one of the perils that beset kings:

> Etenim mulier inepta domus est ruina, divitiarum defectio, iniquorum saturatio, omnium malorum et vitiorum commoratio . . . Quem diligit hodie, odit in crastino; et, sicut quidam ait: *Naufragium rerum est mulier male fide marito*.[73]

> For a foolish woman is the ruin of a house, the disappearance of wealth, replete with iniquities and the habitation of all evils and vices . . . Whom she loves today, she hates tomorrow, and, as someone says,[74] 'A woman faithless to her husband is the shipwreck of things'.[75]

Against this universalizing background, the implicit resonances between the two stories, one from Classical and one from Irish antiquity, add depth and significance to the didactic or even moral meaning of the latter and perhaps to the contemporary relevance of the former. Such, I suggest, may have been the original context in which Mael Fothartaig and Hippolytus were drawn into synthesis with each other.

Can a similar context be posited for the Classical allusions in the stories of the horse-eared kings? Plainly, the starting-point is the notion that a physical blemish causes or represents the invalidation of royal status, and indeed the absence or

---

examples in *Eachtra Airt* (edited by Best, 'The Adventures of Art') and *Stair Nuadat*, see Poppe, '*Stair Nuadat*'; O'Connor, 'Stepmother sagas', 27–32. Thematically associated tales in the Lives of saints have yet to be studied in this context: for example, in *Betha Beraigh*, the wonderful child's wicked stepmother tries to destroy him by magic arts (Plummer, *Bethada Náem nÉrenn*, I, 30).

[72] Mac Gearailt, 'The making of *Fingal Rónáin*', especially 72–4; and compare Poppe, 'Deception'; Clancy, 'Fools and adultery'; Charles-Edwards, 'Honour and status', 130–41.

[73] Dyson, *Sedulius Scottus De rectoribus christianis*, 78.

[74] The quotation is from the *Disticha Catonis*, noted by Dyson, *ibid*., 78.

[75] Translation from *ibid*., 79.

mutilation of an ear is specified as one such blemish.[76] Beyond that, however, it is hard to suggest a didactic or ideological resonance for the story as a whole, unless it lies in the fact that Eochaid or Labraid wisely accepts the revelation of his ears and goes on reigning regardless.[77]

However, there is a clue of an unexpected kind in the *Mitologiae* of the late-antique mythographer Fulgentius, who was widely studied from the Carolingian period and whose influence has been documented elsewhere in Middle Irish literature.[78] Fulgentius is probably the source from which the Second Vatican Mythographer adapted the story, because the wording is often identical; but in his original treatment Fulgentius explains it through a complex allegorical interpretation concerned with the nature of music and the theory of numerical harmony.[79] The *Amra* commentary draws the stories of Labraid into an equally technical treatment of the naming of the parts of a harp and the chords of its music;[80] and the story of Eochaid's ears ends with the negotiation of peace and respect between king and harper, after which an additional episode centres on the magical music that Mac Díchoime makes on a pipe cut from the growth that sprang from his blood. St Brigid and a namesake fast against him when he refuses to return a nun whom he has abducted, and the people are forced to present the pipe to her monastery of Kildare, as a result of which Mac Díchoime dies.[81] The allegorical associations of the Midas story, linking the rights and wrongs of kingship with the lore of music and poetry, may be the key to its relevance for those who framed the Irish narratives.

Cross-cultural parallelism: the evidence of the glossaries

Such borrowings seem to bear witness to a project of appropriation similar to the synthesis between Irish and Graeco-Roman heroic pseudohistory that characterizes the progressive cross-influence between the developing text of *Togail Troí* and that of *Táin Bó Cúailnge*. However, there is a difference in that the appropriation of Classical materials in the texts studied in this chapter is less a matter of literary embellishment than of narrative structure, the skeleton of the tale: the Irish scholar has created a narrative that is outwardly unconnected to the Classical source but allows itself to be shaped along the same pattern or template.

In search of a context or background for this technique, it is instructive to look back to an earlier phase of medieval Irish creativity, in texts that had already become authoritative when the Middle Irish narratives took their present form. A possible

[76] See e.g. the list of blemished pretenders in the *Tripartite Life of Patrick*, which includes Echaid Oenáu, 'Echaid one-ear' (Stokes, *Tripartite Life*, I, 126, with Charles-Edwards, *Early Christian Ireland*, 25–6), and compare the episode in *Cath Maige Mucrama* where a supernatural female sucks off the ear of Ailill Ólomm ('Bare-ear'), king of Munster, declaring that she will bring about his ruin and destruction (O Daly, *Cath Maige Mucrama*, 38, sections 3–4).

[77] Meyer, 'Stories and songs', section 9, at end. Keating has the same conclusion in his version of the Labraid Loingsech story (Comyn & Dinneen, *Foras Feasa*, II, 174, lines 2700–4), but it does not appear in any surviving copy of the *Amra* commentary itself.

[78] See my chapter 6 and Ní Mhaonaigh's chapter in this volume. In the present case, the Irish material cannot have been influenced solely by Fulgentius, since there are several key details shared with the Vatican Mythographer (see above) that are absent from Fulgentius's account. Of course, excerpts from such texts were routinely excerpted and collated in the period under study.

[79] Fulgentius, *Mitologiae* III.9, in Helm, *Fulgentii Opera*, 73–4.

[80] Stokes, 'The Bodleian *Amra*', 165–7, 431–4; Ó Cuív, 'Some items', 171–4.

[81] For Thurneysen's edition of this part of the text see above, n. 36.

analogue to what we have seen in this study can be found in the early Irish glossaries, assembled from at least the eighth century onward. These glossaries include a group of entries in which gods and goddesses of Irish paganism are described in terms mirroring those applied to Graeco-Roman subjects. Sometimes the parallel is simple and implicit, as when the Roman god Mars is described as *dia catha la geinti*, 'the god of battle among the pagans', while the Irish Néit is described as *dia catha la genti Goideal*, 'the god of battle among the pagans of the Irish'.[82] It is more subtle when *Sanas Cormaic* (Cormac's Glossary) explains Manannán Mac Lir as a mortal seaman of great skill who was elevated after death to the status of a sea-god and called 'son of sea':[83] regardless of whether this incorporates genuine survivals from Irish paganism, it shadows the euhemerizing accounts of pagan mythological figures from antiquity found in such sources as the *Chronicle* of Eusebius-Jerome.[84]

A remarkable example of this strategy is the entry in *Sanas Cormaic* for *Ana*, the *mater deorum Hibernensium* ('mother of the Irish gods' or 'mother of the gods of the Irish people'), personification of richness and fertility and linked to the shapely mountains in West Kerry called *Dá Chích nAnand*, 'the two breasts of Ana'.[85] This account can be seen to pivot on an implied parallelism with the ancient goddess Cybele of Mount Ida. Servius explains that Cybele is the same as Earth, which is 'the mother of the gods', *mater deorum*,[86] and the Carolingian mythographies supplement this with the information that she is *montium domina*, mistress of mountains.[87] Isidore identifies this divinity with many Greek and Roman goddesses, whose diversity of outward forms and names in different languages is underlain by a single fundamental concept: Earth and Great Mother, the source of life and fertility and abundance.[88] In later literature, *Dá Chích nAnand* seem seamlessly integrated into the traditional landscape, and there is no telling whether this lore has been reabsorbed from sources like *Sanas Cormaic* itself or gleaned from an unbroken tradition quite independent of glossaries and mythographies.[89] For the present discussion, the lesson is that even if Ana was indeed a genuine presence in archaic Irish tradition, among the *literati* her image was filtered and crystallized through universal knowledge of pagan lore, gleaned from the authoritative Latin texts. It is part of the art of the scholars responsible that they left the correspondences hidden or half-hidden in the discourse of Irish antiquity that was produced as a result.

The texts examined in this chapter suggest that, in the Middle Irish period, a later group of scholarly wordsmiths were prepared to craft their narratives in the light of

[82] *Cormac's Glossary* Y892, Y965. See my discussion in chapter 6, this volume. My references to this glossary are taken from the online Early Irish Glossaries Database (Arbuthnot *et al.*, *Early Irish Glossaries*, www.asnc.cam.ac.uk/irishglossaries/, last consulted 14 February 2013) and follow its referencing system.

[83] *Cormac's Glossary* Y896.

[84] See e.g. Jerome on Prometheus at Year 332 from Abraham, and on Atlas at Year 380 from Abraham (Schoene, *Eusebi Chronicorum Canonum*, 19, 21).

[85] *Cormac's Glossary* Y31. I present this analysis of Ana at greater length in Clarke, 'Linguistic education'.

[86] E.g. on Virgil, *Georgics* IV.64, *Aeneid* X.252, and compare VII.136, all in Thilo & Hagen, *Servii Commentarii*, II, 419, 136; III, 325.

[87] See Kulcsár, *Mythographi*, at *Mythgraphus I*, 89, section 225.4; *ibid*, at *Mythographus II*, 142–3 and 214–15, sections 58 and 153.

[88] Isidore, *Etymologies* VIII.11.61, in Lindsay, *Isidori Etymologiarum Libri*, I, 336.

[89] Compare MacLeod, '*Mater deorum*', with the well-known poem celebrating the preternatural richness of the dwelling-place of Créde on Ana's hills in *Acallam na Senórach* (Stokes, *Acallamh na Senórach*, lines 772–819).

a similarly audacious parallelism, developing or recasting their materials with an eye to resonances with analogous material from the Graeco-Roman heritage. It is an extraordinary aspect of their project that such concerns were liable to motivate even texts and images whose authors, no less than modern scholars and anthologists, presented them as radically indigenous in origin.

8

‘THE METAPHORICAL HECTOR’: THE LITERARY PORTRAYAL OF MURCHAD MAC BRÍAIN*

Máire Ní Mhaonaigh

Introduction

One of the most important and influential narratives composed in the Middle Irish period was *Togail Troí* (The Destruction of Troy), a vernacular expansion and elaboration of *De excidio Troiae historia* (History of the Destruction of Troy), an influential fifth-century Latin account of the Trojan war, purporting to be translated from the account of Dares Phrygius, who was allegedly an eye-witness to the events he described.[1] Cast into Irish in the eleventh century or perhaps a little earlier,[2] along with *Scéla Alaxandair* (The Alexander Saga),[3] it constitutes the earliest strand of Irish adaptations of Classical secular history. This type of writing became increasingly popular in the eleventh and twelfth centuries, during which time the Troy tale was also reworked.[4] A poetic version of it has been dated to the early twelfth century;[5] a second, much-expanded prose recension is preserved in the Book of Leinster, which has been dated to the second half of that century.[6] Such intensive literary activity concerning the narrative underlines the significance of the story of Troy for Irish authors of this time.[7] Moreover, its inclusion in a substantial vernacular codex, the subject-matter of which is predominantly historical, indicates its importance in the

* I am greatly indebted to Ralph O’Connor and Erich Poppe, and in particular to Michael Clarke, for stimulating discussion, as well as specific comments on the material presented here.

1 Meister, *Daretis Phrygii de Excidio Troiae Historia*.

2 See Mac Eoin, ‘Das Verbalsystem’, 193–202 for a summary of his arguments pertaining to date. This recension is the shortest and earliest of the extant versions: Stokes, ‘The destruction of Troy’ and Mac Eoin, ‘Ein Text’. For more recent discussion of date, see Mac Gearailt, ‘Change and innovation’, 459–62, and his ‘Zur literarischen Sprache’, 111–18.

3 Peters, ‘Die irische Alexandersage’, 93–7 on the date of the text.

4 For examples of this type of text, see Calder, *Imtheachta Æniasa*, and Poppe’s introduction to the second edition which was also published separately as Poppe, *New Introduction*; Stokes, *In Cath Catharda*; and Calder, *Togail na Tebe*. For discussion, see Ní Mhaonaigh, ‘Classical compositions’ and Poppe, ‘Mittelalterliche Übersetzungsliteratur’. Brent Miles provides a detailed account of ‘The Irish Classical tales’ as part of his *Heroic Saga*, 51–94.

5 Mac Eoin, ‘Dán’.

6 Stokes, *Togail Troí*; Best *et al.*, *Book of Leinster*, IV, 1063–117; this recension is also preserved in other manuscripts.

7 It retained some of its significance for Irish authors in the later medieval period also; see Mac Gearailt, ‘*Togail Troí*: ein Vorbild’, 127. A third prose recension of *Togail Troí* also exists but has not yet been published; Miles refers to unpublished transcriptions (*Heroic Saga*, 54, n. 16).

construction of Ireland's own past by the learned classes, as Michael Clarke, as well as Erich Poppe and Dagmar Schlüter have shown.[8]

Not only its content but also the manner in which the story of Troy was related proved influential and deliberate echoes of *Togail Troí* are found in other Middle Irish texts. The lengthy battle-descriptions which are a feature of the vernacular versions (but not of Dares) informed elaborate accounts of combat in tales such as *Cogadh Gáedhel re Gallaibh* (The War of the Gaídil [Irish] against Gaill [Vikings])[9] and *Cath Ruis na Ríg* (The Battle of Ross na Ríg),[10] as Uáitéar Mac Gearailt has suggested.[11] In the case of a particular passage in one of these narratives, the *Cogadh*, Brent Miles has demonstrated clear dependency on the first recension of *Togail Troí*.[12] The depiction of the premier Trojan hero, Hector son of Priam, also proved to be attractive to Irish authors. Accorded an enhanced role in the Middle Irish renderings of the Troy tale, Hector came to function as a heroic yardstick against whom Irish heroes were measured, as I have discussed elsewhere.[13] As defender of his territory, he becomes a paradigmatic hero. In the Irish version of the Alexander Saga, he is described as the bravest warrior in the world and his widespread fame is also underlined in *Togail Troí*.[14] Since his exploits were witnessed by 'Dares', as emphasized in the Book of Leinster version of that narrative,[15] they had been authenticated. Any hero worthy of comparison, therefore, was verily great. Conall Cernach is most frequently likened to him, most notably in the twelfth-century poem, *Clann Ollaman Uaisle Emna* (The Children of Ollam are the Nobles of Emain), where both function as 'a fierce strength against the iron of conflict'.[16] Other heroes too were formed in his image and it is one such portrayal I propose to examine here. In so doing, I wish to illuminate the sources at the disposal of a twelfth-century Irish author and more importantly his learned mindset and the broad intellectual context in which he operated when creating his 'metaphorical Hector', Murchad mac Bríain.[17]

[8] Clarke, 'An Irish Achilles'; Poppe & Schlüter, 'Greece, Ireland'. See also Fulton's chapter in this volume.

[9] Todd, *Cogadh*.

[10] Hogan, *Battle of Rosnaree*.

[11] Mac Gearailt, '*Togail Troí*: ein Vorbild'. See also his '*Togail Troí*: an example', 81–3.

[12] Miles, *Heroic Saga*, 142–3. He alludes to three specific parallels which are discussed below.

[13] Ní Mhaonaigh, 'The Hectors of Ireland'.

[14] Peters, 'Die irische Alexandersage', 102, 168: *in laech is gaisgedachu taraill talmuin* 'the bravest warrior who trod the earth'; his international fame is described in detail in Stokes, 'The destruction of Troy', 34–5, 101–2, lines 1067–1102.

[15] *Marbaid ocus mudaigid cach oen risa comarnaic ba hesein innas in ruathair. ruc Hectoir fo chath na nGrec. Cora thrascair tiug cach shluaig risra thennastar amal atbeir Dariet ar iss eside ras fegastar o shulib* ('He killed and destroyed everyone whom he encountered; that was the kind of onslaught in which Hector engaged against the Greeks, so that he laid low the major part of every host against which he fought, as Dares says, for he it was who saw him [Hector] with his own eyes'): Best *et al.*, *Book of Leinster*, IV, 1008, lines 32552–5. For discussion, see Schlüter, *History or Fable*, 47, and Poppe & Schlüter, 'Greece, Ireland', 141–2.

[16] *Echtair mar Chonall cert Cernach* / *nert ro-garb re hernach n*-áig ('Hector is like just Conall Cernach, a fierce strength against the iron of conflict'): Byrne, '*Clann Ollaman*', 62, 76 (stanza 5). For discussion, see further Ní Mhaonaigh, 'The Hectors of Ireland'.

[17] Todd, *Cogadh*. The phrase occurs twice in the text: *in Hechtoir intamlaigtech* (166–7, section 95) and *int Ectoir intamlaigtech* (186–7, section 107).

Son of his more famous father, Brían Bórama, king of Munster and the most important king of Ireland in his day, Murchad was killed alongside the former at the battle of Clontarf in 1014. His heroic exploits are described in detail in *Cogadh Gáedhel re Gallaibh*, a partisan account of Brían's career, composed in the early years of the twelfth century for his descendants. In this grand family narrative, Brían's son, Murchad, also had an important part to play. His role is most crucial in the final battle where he assumes command of his father's battalion.[18] In the ultimate encounter, therefore, it is Murchad who is the active hero, rather than Brían.[19]

Owing to a lacuna in the Book of Leinster (Dublin, Trinity College, MS 1339), the earliest manuscript witness to the composition, only the first seventh or so of the *Cogadh* is preserved therein. Thus, the text breaks off long before the account of the battle of Clontarf. A complete version of the narrative has come down to us in a seventeenth-century codex written by Míchéal Ó Cléirigh. A related copy is extant in an earlier fourteenth-century manuscript in the library of Trinity College Dublin, and while both the beginning and end of the text are missing, the depiction of Murchad is found therein.[20] The language of the description is Middle Irish and hence it could also once have been contained in the Book of Leinster version of the *Cogadh*. If it was, it is likely to have differed somewhat from the depiction as it survives in the two later manuscripts, since they preserve a different recension of the text to that in the twelfth-century codex. All three copies ultimately derive from a text composed in the early years of the twelfth century for Murchad's grand-nephew and Brían's great-grandson, Muirchertach Ua Bríain.[21] How an early reviser, the Book of Leinster's Scribe T, modified his exemplar cannot now be known.

Notwithstanding this caveat, the version of this scribe is also likely to have contained an account of Brían's final battle at Clontarf in which Murchad takes centre stage. He is one of a small band of advisors in whom Brían confides as they prepare for combat on that occasion.[22] His fame is such that some Viking allies are said to have retreated before the battle *uair rib egail leo gaisced Murchaid, ocus Dálcais archena*, 'for they dreaded the valour of Murchad and of the Dál Cais in general'.[23] He is the *de facto* leader of Brían's army, commanding Dál Cais who were accorded prime position forming *tosach catha Briain*, 'the van of Brían's battalion'.[24] It is in this role that he personifies Hector:

> Bai rompu side in Hechtoir intamlaigtech ilbuadach na hAdam clainni ilcenealaichi allatai .i. Murchad mac Briain, eo Rossa, rigdraidi Erend; cend gaili, ocus gascid, ocus gnimrada, enig ocus engnuma, ocus aebdachta fear talman, re

[18] *Ibid*., 166–7 (section 95).

[19] Brían is depicted as praying while the battle was underway (Todd, *Cogadh*, 196–203, section 113); no specific reason is given for his inactivity.

[20] There is a discussion of the relationship between the manuscript versions of the *Cogadh* in Ní Mhaonaigh, 'Bréifne bias', 138–40.

[21] Ní Mhaonaigh, '*Cogad*'.

[22] Todd, *Cogadh*, 154–5 (section 88). Murchad is mentioned in passing previously in the narrative: according to the account in Trinity College Dublin, MS 1319 (formerly H.2.17), he attacked Leinster in the lead-up to the battle (Todd, *Cogadh*, 150–1, section 86). A reference in a poem preserved only in Míchéal Ó Cléirigh's copy of the text suggests that Murchad will defeat Máel Múad mac Brain, slayer of his uncle, Brían's brother, Mathgamain (Todd, *Cogadh*, 104–5, section 64).

[23] *Ibid*., 156–7 (section 90).

[24] *Ibid*., 166–7 (section 95); Todd translates *tosach* as 'front' rather than 'van'.

> re ocus re remis; daig ni armit senchaidi goedel combeth don Adamclaind re re fein oen duni no chongbad sciath comrestail imbualta do.
>
> At the head of these was the matchless, ever-victorious Hector of the many-nationed, heroic children of Adam, namely Murchad son of Brían, the Yew of Ross of the princes of Ireland;[25] the head of the valour and bravery, and chivalry, munificence and liberality, and beauty, of the men of the world in his time and in his career; for the historians of the Irish do not relate that there was any man of the sons of Adam in his time who could hold a shield in mutual interchange of blows with him.[26]

The embodiment of Hector as the battle gets underway, Murchad is compared directly to the Trojan hero as it reaches its height in a remarkable passage in which the author of the *Cogadh* reveals his considerable learning and skill.[27] Representing the pinnacle of heroism, and thus also marking its end, 'he [Murchad] was the last man who had true valour in Ireland' (*is e duni dedenach irrabi in firgaisced in Erind é*); 'he was the last man who killed a hundred in a single day' (*ise duni dedenach ro marb cet in oen lo e*).[28] Presented as the last in a descending line of six illustrious heroes commencing with Hector, Murchad and his Trojan superior mark the beginning and end points of a glorious heroic age that encompassed Conall Cernach, along with Mac Samáin, a member of the household of Finn mac Cumaill,[29] the Munster warrior, Lug Lága, as well as his namesake, the multidexterous deity, Lug Lámfhata.[30] Moreover the decline of that heroic age over time is depicted dramatically in the stark calculation that seven of each hero is required to form the equivalent of his predecessor, so that Conall Cernach would be a match for 343 Murchads, and Hector is reckoned to be the latter's equal 16,807 times over.[31] Despite this apparent discrepancy, both represent the period of both primary and prime valour (*gaisced*), the prefix *prím* denoting the chronological and qualitative meaning of the term.[32] Before Hector, the world was in its infancy (*uair naidin e conici sin*, 'because it was a child up to that') and thus incapable of prowess, a state to which it shall return after

[25] *Eo Rossa* 'the Yew of Ross', was one of five famous trees of Ireland; see, for example, Gwynn, *Metrical Dindshenchas*, III, 147–8.

[26] Todd, *Cogadh*, 166–7 (section 95).

[27] *Ibid*., 186–9 (section 107).

[28] *Ibid*., 186–7 (section 107).

[29] MacNeill et al., *Duanaire Finn*, I, 27.

[30] This specific comparison is also made in a later poem to the detriment of Lug Lámfhata: *Ní chuala ar lámhach Logha leithéid lámhaigh Murchadha* ('I have heard nought of the feats of Lug to compare with Murchad's'): McKenna, *Dioghluim Dána*, 85.50. I am indebted to Michael Clarke for this reference.

[31] Todd, *Cogadh*, 186–7 (section 107): *Daig ised innisit senchaidi na nGodel, morfesiur amhail Murchad comlond Mac Shamain, ocus .uii. amail Mac Shamain comlond Luga Laga, ocus .uii. amail Lug Laga comlond Conaill Cernaig, ocus .uii. amail Conall Cernach comlond Loga Lamafata mic Etlenn, ocus .uii. amail Log Lamafata comlond Hechtoir mac Priam* ('For this is what the historians of the Irish say, that seven like Murchad, would be a match for Mac Samáin; and seven like Mac Samáin a match for Lug Lága; and seven like Lug Lága a match for Conall Cernach; and seven like Conall Cernach a match for Lug Lámfhata mac Ethlenn; and seven like Lug Lámfhata, a match for Hector, son of Priam'). Shakespeare plays on a similar formula in his description of Falstaff in *Henry IV, Part 2*, II.iv: 'as valorous as Hector of Troy, worth five of Agamemnon, and ten times better than the Nine Worthies' (I am grateful to Kilian Meißner for reminding me of this passage).

[32] *DIL*, *s.v.* 4 *prím-*.

Murchad, *uair senoir crithach crindiblidi e o hin amach* ('because it will be a palsied drivelling dotard ever after').[33]

Aetates mundi et aetates hominis, *the ages of the world and the ages of man*

The overarching concept underpinning this passage is *senectus mundi*, the ageing and increasing decrepitude of the world through time, and the parallel linked process of humans growing old.[34] Divided into six (or seven) periods from infancy to old age, a stage in the world's macrocosmic development was harmonized with a particular phase in its microcosm, human life.[35] This in turn was intertwined with the common scheme of periodization based on *Sex aetates mundi* 'the Six Ages of the World'.[36] Irish scholars drew on sources in which this Christian chronology was paramount from at least the eighth century.[37] Particularly influential was the model popularized by Augustine in his *De civitate Dei* (The City of God) with its divisions from Creation to the Flood; from the Flood to Abraham; from Abraham to David; from David to the Babylonian Exile; from the Exile to the Incarnation; from the Incarnation to the End.[38] It was this variant which was drawn on by Isidore of Seville who, when writing his *Chronicon* (Chronicles) and *Etymologiae* (Etymologies), skilfully combined it with the chronology familiar from Jerome's Latin version of the fourth-century Chronicle of Eusebius of Caesarea.[39] The Irish had access to Isidorean material from shortly after its composition in the seventh century, and it was also drawn on by the Venerable Bede of Northumbria in his writings on time, *De temporibus* (Time) and *De tempore ratione* (The Reckoning of Time).[40] In addition, Bede had direct access to Augustine's work and he is also likely to have been influenced by Irish authors.[41] It was Augustine himself who had linked this temporal categorization into phases of man's existence – infancy, childhood, adolescence, youth, the period of decline from youth to old age,[42] old age itself – so that the Six Ages of the World were deemed analogous with the Ages of Man.[43] This correlation is also present in Bede,[44] and it clearly lies behind the

[33] Todd, *Cogadh*, 186–7 (section 107): Todd translates the first passage 'because it was only an infant till his time'.

[34] See, for example, Dean, *The World Grown Old*.

[35] The correspondence between microcosm and macrocosm is Augustinian (Dean, *The World Grown Old*, 3), but it continued to be influential: see Constable, *Three Studies*, 165.

[36] Hildegard Tristram (*Sex aetates mundi*) discusses many of the medieval Irish texts in which the framework is utilized. An edition of the Middle Irish tract *Sex aetates mundi* is provided by Tristram (*ibid*., 207–78) and by Dáibhí Ó Cróinín, *The Irish* Sex Aetates Mundi. For comment, see Herbert, 'The Irish *Sex Aetates Mundi*'; Ó Néill, 'The ages of the world'.

[37] See, for example, Herbert, 'The Irish *Sex Aetates Mundi*', 97–8; Palmer, 'The ordering of time', 608. I am grateful to Elizabeth Boyle for the latter reference.

[38] See, for example, Palmer, 'Calculating time'; Verbist, *Duelling with the Past*.

[39] See, for example, Wallis, *Bede*, 357. For the Chronicles, see Martin, *Isidori Hispalensis Chronica*; Bassett, 'The use of history'.

[40] Jones, *Beda venerabilis, opera didascalica, 2*; Jones, *Beda venerabilis, opera didascalica, 3*.

[41] Wallis, *Bede*, 357–9. His debt to Irish authors is explored in Ó Cróinín, 'The Irish provenance' and Mc Carthy, 'Bede's primary source'; see also Palmer, 'Calculating time', 1310, n. 17.

[42] For discussion, see, for example, Burrow, *Ages of Man*, 80–2.

[43] See Palmer, 'The ordering of time', 610, and in particular Sears, *Ages of Man*, and Archambault, 'The ages of man'.

[44] Jones, *Beda venerabilis, opera didascalica, 2* (*De temporum ratione*), 463–5; Wallis, *Bede*, 156–8 (section 66). For commentary, see Wallis, *Bede*, 358.

passage in the *Cogadh* also, since Hector is deemed to have come when the world was in its infancy and it will descend into senility on Murchad's death.[45]

Furthermore, an interpretative comment occurring at the end of the statement concerning the skill of Hector and Murchad places the passage firmly in the Ages of Man/Ages of the World scheme: *ocus cosmaillius aisi duneta tomtenaigit amlaid sin don gaisced ocus don domun ar nintamlugud intliuchta* ('and in that way valour and the world is compared with the Ages of Man, according to intellectual metaphor').[46] It may also be noted that in the preceding sentences calculating their valour, Hector and Murchad are separated by four other heroes. It seems likely that this number of heroes is deliberate. Thus, by this reckoning, Hector may be taken to represent a first sub-age, and Murchad a sixth, while Lug Lámfhata, Conall Cernach, Lug Lága and Mac Samáin symbolize the intervening four sub-ages in turn. While the author of the *Cogadh* adopts a universal chronological framework, that of the Six Ages, therefore, he deploys it in a particularly creative and inventive way. The catalyst for this imaginative thought-process may conceivably have been a passing reference to the world being *i mmedon a aísi ocus a brotha* ('in the middle of its life and valour') in the various versions of *Togail Troí*.[47] If so, by drawing on a range of other sources to develop the idea and by anchoring it within a well-known time structure, the Middle Irish writer displayed considerable learning and skill.

A chronology of heroes

While the heroes in question were accommodated in the overarching chronology based on the concept of the Ages of Man/Ages of the World in this particular text, in other sources many of them appear, alongside other personages, on a timeline upon which the coming of Christianity to Ireland under St Patrick was a significant point. Events deemed to have taken place in pre-Christian times were recounted at a much later period and incorporated into interrelated annalistic compilations. Based on Eusebius's Chronicle and other Latin sources, including Bede's *Chronicon maior* (Greater Chronicle) of 725, this account of pre-Patrician occurrences was augmented by Irish material.[48] Various versions survive in the extant chronicles, the earliest manuscript

[45] Todd, *Cogadh*, 186–7 (section 106).

[46] *Ibid*., 186 (my translation); Todd translates 'And thus championship and the world are compared with human life, according to intellectual metaphor' (*ibid*., 187, section 107).

[47] Best *et al*., *The Book of Leinster*, IV, 1098, lines 32159–6, for which reference I am grateful to Michael Clarke. The complete passage reads: *Deithbir ón dano ar cind chomraim 7 chomthocbala. renna áig 7 imgona. forgla slúaig 7 sochaidi. combáig tend 7 trenfher in genemna* Ádaim *in sluagsain na hEorpa. Fó dágin is and ro baí in domun i mmedon a aísi 7 a brotha 7 a borrfaid. i mmedón a úalli 7 a allaid. a déini 7 a díumsa. a nirt 7 a niachais. a crotha is a chalmachta. Is and raptar tressiu a thrénfhir 7 rap fherdu a fhir. 7 roptar calmu a churaid. 7 roptar menmnachu a mílidi. Is airesin nad rabi remaib nó iarmaib fiallach bad cumma gaisced frisin dínisin*. 'That was proper then when going into battle and war: sharp spears for slaying; the best of hosts and troops. That European host was a match for the forces and strong men of the race of Adam. Since the world was then in the middle of its life, valour and magnificence, its pride and glory, its impetuosity and arrogance, its power and prowess, its beauty and bravery, it is then that its strong men were strongest and its men most manly; its heroes were heroic and its soldiers were spirited. For that reason, there did not come before or after them a warrior-band who were as valorous as those people'. See also Stokes, 'The destruction of Troy', 27–8, 93 (lines 828–35); Myrick, *From the* De Excidio, 126–7.

[48] There is no scholarly consensus concerning the nature and date of this material which Thomas F. O'Rahilly termed the 'Irish World Chronicle': *Early Irish History and Mythology*, 235–59. A useful overview of contributions to the debate is provided by Mc Carthy, 'The status', 100–16. For

witness to which is the twelfth-century codex, Rawlinson B 502.[49] It remains to locate the heroes mentioned in the passage in the *Cogadh* on this chronological line, as well as to assess why they came to embody particular phases of heroic time.

In the version of the account of pre-Christian history surviving as part of the Cottonian Annals, Hector's slaying by Achilles, together with Helen's abduction and Achilles's own death, is recorded in the midst of Old Testament events.[50] Conall Cernach occupies a later place in the same timeline around the death of Christ. His killing of Mac Cécht in revenge for the latter's slaying of Cúscraid, son of Conchobor mac Nessa, is recorded immediately after the notice of Conchobor's death and the beginning of Cúscraid's reign in the Annals of Tigernach.[51] According to Conchobor's death-tale, that king died on hearing of the crucifixion of Christ,[52] an event noted a few entries previously in the same chronicle.[53] A short time later, in the reign of Emperor Tiberius, Iriel Glúnmar, son of Conall Cernach, reigned.[54] Strictly speaking, therefore, Conall Cernach belonged in the Sixth Age which began with the Incarnation.

Cú Chulainn occurs around the same place in this constructed chronology;[55] indeed Conall Cernach's revenge killing of his slayers, Erc mac Coirpre, king of Tara, and Lugaid mac Con Roí, is recorded in a marginal note in the Annals of Tigernach.[56] His supernatural father, Lug Lámfhata mac Ethlenn, occupies the position between Hector and Conall Cernach in the *Cogadh* passage, as noted above.[57] Lug is primarily associated with the Túatha Dé Danann, though he was born of an alliance between them and another mythical group, the Fomoiri, symbolized by a union between their representative, Cían, son of Dían Cécht, and Ethliu (Ethne), daughter of Balor of the Fomoiri. His military credentials are set out clearly in the Middle Irish tale, *Cath Maige Tuired* (The [Second] Battle of Mag Tuired), where, accorded the epithet *samildánach* ('multi-skilled'), he was the architect of a major victory by the Túatha Dé Danann against the Fomoiri.[58] Possessed of exceptional leadership qualities, as well as military might, he is said to have killed his maternal grandfather, Balor, in the fray.[59] *Cath Maige Tuired* was reworked in the eleventh century[60] and Lug also

---

subsequent discussion, see Charles-Edwards, *Chronicle of Ireland*, I, 3. Mc Carthy himself, contrary to most other commentators, views the pre-Patrician material as early, deriving from a late-antique chronicle: see most recently his *Irish Annals*. For salient objections to this view, see the review of Mc Carthy's *Irish Annals* by Evans.

49 Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Rawlinson B 502; Stokes, 'The annals of Tigernach I'. The first twelve folios of this manuscript in which the Annals of Tigernach are found form a separate vellum codex dating from the late eleventh or early twelfth centuries; it was bound together with a second manuscript of roughly the same date in the seventeenth century under the direction of James Ware: Ó Cuív, *Catalogue*, I, 162–6, 181–2.

50 Freeman, 'The annals', 307. Maund ('Sources') has noted that this section of the text, along with those concerning later events, was revised in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries.

51 Stokes, 'The annals of Tigernach I', 410.

52 Meyer, *Death-tales*, 2–21.

53 Stokes, 'The annals of Tigernach I', 409.

54 Freeman, 'The annals', 314; Stokes, 'The annals of Tigernach I', 411.

55 See, for example, *ibid*., 404, 407; Freeman, 'The annals', 314.

56 Stokes, 'The annals of Tigernach I', 407.

57 For this paternal relationship, see, for example, van Hamel, *Compert Con Culainn*, 5 (section 4).

58 Gray, *Cath Maige Tuired*, 24–5 (section 8). Balor is described as *rí na nInnsi* 'king of the Hebrides' elsewhere in the tale (*ibid*., 36–7, section 50).

59 *Ibid*., 54–5, 58–9, 60–1 (sections 120, 129, 135).

60 See *ibid*., 11–21, for a discussion of the tale's language and date; see also Carey, 'Myth and mythography', 53–4.

figures prominently in *Lebor Gabála* (The Book of the Taking [of Ireland], commonly known as 'The Book of Invasions'), which was also composed about that time.[61] In establishing his heroic chronology, it is not surprising that the author of the *Cogadh* should have recourse to texts like these concerned with creating and schematizing Ireland's legendary past. John Carey has demonstrated how passages of *Lebor Gabála* were interpolated into *Cath Maige Tuired*,[62] and other works of chronology such as *Sex aetates mundi* were also written in the same intellectual milieu.[63] Moreover, a specific parallel is drawn between *Cath Maige Tuired* and the Trojan War by the eleventh-century poet, Gilla Cóemáin.[64] The composer of the *Cogadh* was operating in the same cultural climate. It is understandable, therefore, that he should choose as the hero closest to Hector in strength,[65] Lug Lámfhata, a champion whose place in Ireland's illustrious prehistory had been secured.[66]

Seven Lug Lámfhatas are deemed the equivalent of Conall Cernach, while seven Lug Lágas are said to be a match for the latter.[67] Lug(aid) Lága appears some two hundred years after Conall Cernach in the pre-Patrician chronological scheme preserved in the annals.[68] A brother of Ailill Ólomm in literary texts, he was linked through fosterage with Lugaid Mac Con and fought on his side against his sibling's son Éogan in *Cath Maige Mucrama* (The Battle of Mag Mucrama), in which encounter he killed the king of Ireland, Art mac Cuinn.[69] Renowned for his military prowess, he is listed along with four other warriors, including Conall Cernach and Lug Lámfhata, in a poem put into the mouth of Caílte mac Rónáin in *Acallam na Senórach* (The Colloquy of the Ancients): *cúiger laech . . . as ferr tharaill iath nElga*, 'the five best heroes who traversed the land of Ireland'.[70] That the other two were Cú Chulainn and Finn mac Cumaill demonstrates the exalted company in which Lugaid Lága was placed.[71] The *Acallam* was composed later than the *Cogadh*;[72] nonetheless, these prototypical superheroes could have been linked together before either

[61] See, for example, Macalister, *Lebor Gabála Érenn*, IV, 56–7 (section 11), 106–7 (section 305), 118–19 (section 312), etc.. On the text in general, see Carey, *New Introduction*, and Carey, '*Lebor Gabála* and the legendary history of Ireland', where he suggests that the text from which our extant versions derive may have been written during the lifetime of Gilla Cóemáin mac Gilla Shamthaine (*fl.* 1072).

[62] Carey, 'Myth and mythography', 53–4.

[63] See Carey, '*Lebor Gabála* and the legendary history of Ireland', 46 and n. 55.

[64] The reference occurs in his historical poem, *Annálad anall uile* ('All the annal-writing heretofore'): Smith, *Three Historical Poems*, 186–7 (stanza 17). See Myrick, *From the* De Excidio, 84. In *Cath Maige Tuired* itself, the battle of Mag Tuired is also said to have occurred *a n-áonaimsir* ('at the same time') as *togail Traoi* ('the destruction of Troy'): Gray, *Cath Maige Tuired*, 40–1 (section 69).

[65] Todd, *Cogadh*, 186–7 (section 107).

[66] Lug Lámfhata and Hector are also listed together in the version of *Táin Bó Flidais* preserved in the Glenmason manuscript. Together with Hercules, they are presented as three premier heroes whom Fergus mac Róich is said to surpass: Mackinnon, 'The Glenmason manuscript' (1906), 315.

[67] Todd, *Cogadh*, 186–7 (section 107).

[68] Stokes, 'The Annals of Tigernach: second fragment', 11–12; see also Stokes, 'The Dublin fragment', 378 = Mac Airt & Mac Niocaill, *Annals of Ulster*, 12–13.

[69] O Daly, *Cath Maige Mucrama*, 38–63 and 89–93 (*Cath Cinn Abrad*).

[70] O'Grady, *Silva Gadelica*, I, 151.

[71] He is termed 'one of three strong men of the men of the world' (*an tres tréinfher d'fhearaibh an domhain é*) in a later genealogical tract, *An Leabhar Muimhneach*, the other two being Conall Cernach again and Caílte mac Rónáin, the text continuing, *7 robé an tres laoch is fherr tug a láimh i láimh thigerna i nÉirinn ríamh é .i. Conall Cearnach 7 Lughidh Lágha 7 Caolte mac Rónáin* ('and he was one of the three warriors who best supported their lord in Ireland, i.e. Conall Cernnach, Lugaid Lága and Caílte mac Rónáin'): Ó Donnchadha, *An Leabhar Muimhneach*, 64, 66. See also O Daly, *Cath Maige Mucrama*, 12.

[72] See Dooley, 'The date and purpose'.

text was written. That this is likely to have been the case is suggested by the content of the poem in which they appear, which places these five heroes alongside the five best druids, doctors and poets, among others, who traversed the land of Ireland. Moreover, this is prefaced by a versified king-list, followed by a catalogue of the succession of leaders of the *fíana* (warrior-bands).[73] Thus, the composition in question appears to derive from pre-existing classificatory material cast in poetic form.

The poem in the *Acallam* does not allude to Mac Samáin, the last warrior separating Hector and Murchad in the *Cogadh*, though he is linked with Finn mac Cumaill elsewhere. He is the most difficult to locate both chronologically and spatially, since he is not associated with other superheroes in surviving sources. The connection with Finn mac Cumaill is found in a poem roughly contemporary with the *Cogadh*, in which he is designated a member of that leader's household, serving specifically as *breithem* ('a judge') therein.[74] The composition in question, 'The Household of Almha', beginning *Fégthar tech Finn a nAlmhain* ('Let Finn's household in Almha be considered'), is likely to date from the twelfth century.[75] This at least brings Mac Samáin into warrior circles, though it does not in itself make him a warrior. In another late eleventh- or twelfth-century narrative, *Aislinge Meic Con Glinne* (The Vision of Mac Con Glinne), Mac Samáin appears as one of eight Armagh figures with whom Mac Con Glinne is associated in the version of the tale surviving in the late fourteenth-century manuscript, the *Lebor Brecc* (Speckled Book).[76] Jackson regards them as a group of 'oddities'.[77] They include Mac Dá Cherda (Comgán), a holy fool whose death is recorded in seventh-century annals[78] and who is associated with St Cummíne Fota.[79] He is described as *ardfili na Hérenn ocus óinmit na Hérenn* ('chief poet and the fool of Ireland') in what may be a ninth-century tale, 'Líadain and Cuirithir'.[80] He shares a stanza with another seventh-century character, Mac Rustaing (Critán), who is described as a uterine brother to St Cóemán Brecc in the Notes to *Félire Óengusso* (The Calendar of Óengus).[81] According to that source, no woman could see his grave without farting (*cen maidm a delma esti*) or laughing loudly and foolishly (*cen ardgaire boeth*).[82] This reaction accounts for the inclusion

[73] O'Grady, *Silva Gadelica*, I, 149–51.

[74] MacNeill *et al*., *Duanaire Finn*, I, 27; he is said to be Finn's *breithem coir* ('proper/just judge').

[75] For the dating of the poem, see MacNeill *et al*., *Duanaire Finn*, II, 23–4.

[76] Jackson, *Aislinge*, 2; for an earlier edition with translation, see Meyer, *Aislinge*, 6–7. A loose translation of the tale has been published by Preston-Matto, *Aislinge* (4–5 for this poem). In placing Mac Con Glinne in the north of Ireland (*Aniér for Mac Con Glinde* / *do brú Banda barr-binde* ('Aniér is the name of Mac Con Glinne from the bank of the sweet-topped River Bann'), the poem agrees with the shorter version of the tale in Dublin, Trinity College, MS 1337 (formerly H.3.18): Meyer, *Aislinge*, 114–29, 148–55. Elsewhere in the *Lebor Brecc* version, however, he is a Munsterman: see Jackson, *Aislinge*, xxxix, and Clancy, 'Mac Steléne', 84.

[77] Jackson, *Aislinge*, xl; elsewhere he remarks that the poem 'describes a collection of strange characters' (47). He discusses their identity at *ibid*., 47–9; see also Meyer, *Aislinge*, 131–4, and most recently Clancy, 'Mac Steléne'.

[78] Mac Airt, *Annals of Inisfallen*, *s.a.* 645. See Clancy, 'Fools and adultery', 113–17; Ó Coileáin, 'The structure'.

[79] See O'Keeffe, 'Mac Dá Cherda'; Ó Coileáin, 'The making', 53–4; Clancy, 'Fools and adultery'; Ó Coileáin, 'The structure'.

[80] Meyer, *Liadain and Curithir*, 12–13.

[81] Stokes, 'On the Calendar of Oengus', cxlv, and his later edition of the text, *Félire* Óengusso, 206.

[82] Stokes, 'On the Calendar of Oengus', cxlv, who translates coyly as 'No woman can see it *sine crepitu ventris eius* or without a loud foolish laugh afterwards'. This is corroborated immediately afterwards by a stanza introduced by *ut dixit*: *Lige Mic Rustaing ráide* / *hi Ross Each cen imnaire* / *matchí cech ben báigid* / *braigid 7 bán gáirid* ('Mac Rustaing's grave I say in Ross Ech without shame. If she sees it every woman talks, farts and laughs aloud' [Stokes renders 'farts' *pedit*]).

of his grave among the wonders of Ireland in what may be eleventh- or twelfth-century Latin and vernacular texts.[83] His association with a saint suggests that he too may have been a holy fool; Meyer termed him 'a famous jester'.[84] The stanza in the Notes from the *Lebor Brecc* to the *Félire* is followed by another in which Mac Rustaing, Mac Samáin and Mac Con Glinne appear side by side:

> Critan ainm Mic Rustaing ráin,
> Garb Daire ainm Mic Samáin,
> Aindiairr ar Mac Conglinde,
> mor do laidib dorinde.
>
> Critán was noble Mac Rustaing's name; Garb Daire was Mac Samáin's name;
> Aindiairr was Mac Conglinde's – many lays he made.[85]

This is clearly related to the poem in the *Aislinge* in which Mac Samáin's alternative name is also given as 'Garb Daire'.[86] However, in the latter composition he appears alongside Dub Dá Thúath and the well-known literary character, the Caillech Bérre,[87] in the third stanza (of five) immediately following a stanza concerned with Mac Rustaing and Mac Dá Cherda:[88]

> Dub Dá Thuath, ba togairm nglé,
> ba h-é ainm meic Stéléne;
> Don[n]-Fhiach, Caillech Bérre bán;
> Garb Daire for Mac Samán.[89]
>
> Dub Dá Thúath – a clear appellation – that was the name of the son of Steléne;
> Donn Fhíach [was] the white Caillech Bérre; Garb Daire was Mac Samáin's name.[90]

Dub Dá Thúath, *alias* Mac Steléne, has been skilfully identified by Thomas Owen Clancy with Mac Teléne, *cend imarbaga hErend* ('chief strife-fomenter in Ireland'),[91] who is associated with Mac Dá Cherda and St Cummíne Fota in a tale preserved in the Yellow Book of Lecan (Dublin, Trinity College, MS 1318).[92] Clancy also notes

[83] See *Do ingantaib Erenn* 'On the wonders of Ireland', Todd, *Irish Version*, 200–3; see also Meyer, 'The Irish mirabilia', 14.

[84] Meyer, *Aislinge*, 131. Clancy ('Mac Steléne', 83) proposes an identification with either Crítán, abbot of Bangor (d. 669) or Crítán of Airéne, cellarer of Bangor (d. 616).

[85] Stokes, 'On the Calendar of Oengus', cxlv.

[86] The meaning of the name is discussed below.

[87] Renowned for her great age, this ancestor-figure looks back on her youth in the poem put into her mouth, for which see, Ó hAodha, 'The Lament'.

[88] I follow Meyer and Clancy in taking Donn Fhíach as an alternative appellation for the Caillech Bérre, since the function of the poem seems to be to provide alternative names for the characters in question: Meyer, *Aislinge*, 7, and Clancy, 'Mac Steléne', 81 and n. 11. She is not, however, called by this name elsewhere, and by conflating the two, seven figures rather than the eight announced are mentioned in the poem; hence, Jackson (*Aislinge*, 48) preferred to take them as two separate individuals.

[89] Jackson, *Aislinge*, 3.

[90] My translation; see also Meyer, *Aislinge*, 7; I agree with Clancy's identification of this figure as Mac Teléne and hence follow him in making the first 'e' short: 'Mac Steléne', 86–7.

[91] O'Keeffe, 'Mac Dá Cherda', 26–7.

[92] Clancy, 'Mac Steléne', 86–7; see also Ó Coileáin, 'The making', 53–4. For the tale in question, see

the connection between the Caillech Bérre and Cummíne Fota asserted in the Middle Irish prose introduction to her Lament, *Aithbe dam-sa bés mara* (Ebb-tide to me as to the sea),[93] noting that 'this places her in the same seventh-century timescale along with the others [in the poem]'.[94] More importantly, it indicates that her name was suggested to the author of the poem by association (through Cummíne Fota) with Mac Dá Cherda and Mac Teléne. The final name in the poem, Marbán, who is enumerated alongside his father (Becán) and mother (Becnait) in the same stanza as Mac Con Glinne himself, also comes from the same literary context. Like Mac Dá Cherda, with whom he is often associated, and perhaps Mac Rustaing, he too was a holy fool; he and Cummíne Fota appear to share a literary persona in the twelfth- or thirteenth-century tale, *Tromdám Guaire* (Guaire's Oppressive Band of Poets).[95]

Where Mac Samáin fits into this company is unclear. Jackson suggested that his given name Garb Daire, 'Rough One of the Oak Woods', cast him as a 'Wild Man of the Woods' figure, similar to Suibne Geilt.[96] A stanza attributed to him or Máel Odráin on *aitenn* ('furze, gorse') in *Sanas Cormaic* (Cormac's Glossary) provides some support for this view, since the poet complains that a particular thicket which grows near Tuirbe is not dear to him: *adomchumben a dule* / *nīmanaicc a fidrube* ('its leaves wound me, its thicket does not shelter me').[97] This may provide an association with foolishness which would link Mac Samáin with other characters in the poem in the *Aislinge*. Like others among them, he too is a poet.[98] This is far from the heroic figure Mac Samáin strikes in the *Cogadh*, primarily because of the company (Hector and Conall Cernach) he keeps there. For this reason, it is more likely that the Mac Samáin associated with Finn mac Cumaill is the hero alluded to in that text.

The name Garb Daire is not associated with him in the *Cogadh*. However, it may be noted that *daire* is used metaphorically in the meaning 'dense cluster, mass' and in this sense is applied to both warriors and weapons, particularly in twelfth-century battle-texts.[99] Interpreted as 'Rough One of Clusters of Weapons/Warriors', Garb Daire Mac Samáin bore a suitably militaristic name to form part of a group of champions, though his exploits must also have been sufficiently well known for him to retain a place in such a group. What may be his death-tale (or that of another Mac Samáin) is noted in the list of tale titles (List A) preserved in the Book of Leinster as *Aided Maic Samáin*,[100] but it is not extant. Clancy has drawn attention to later Scottish Gaelic proverbs which indicate that Mac Samáin was deemed a man of

---

O'Keeffe, 'Mac Dá Cherda', 26–33, and the analysis by Clancy, 'Reading medieval Irish satire' (I am grateful to Thomas Owen Clancy for drawing his article to my attention and for providing me with a copy of it).

93 For the poem, see Ó hAodha, 'The Lament'. The passage in question in the introduction reads: *7 cet mbliadna di fo cailliu iarna shenad do Chuiminiu for a cend* ('And for a hundred years she wore the veil, after Cuimíne had blessed it and placed it on her head'), 309.

94 Clancy, 'Mac Steléne', 83–4.

95 Ó Coileáin, 'The making', 55–6.

96 Jackson, *Aislinge*, 48.

97 Meyer, '*Sanas Cormaic*', 6 (no. 56); Jackson, *Aislinge*, 48 (my translation). For a variation on this verse, see Stokes, *Three Irish Glossaries*, 4, 8. For discussion, see Clancy, 'Mac Steléne', 84, 88–9.

98 Clancy ('Mac Steléne', 84) observes the reference to Ionan mac Samain in the late seventh-century guarantor list of *Cáin Adomnáin* (The Law of Adomnán) but rightly notes the difficulty in identifying this historical character with the figure in the poem.

99 *DIL s.v.*, *daire*, where examples in this meaning are cited from *Togail Troí*, *In Cath Catharda* and *Cath Ruis na Ríg*.

100 Mac Cana, *Learned Tales*, 44.

considerable strength.[101] Furthermore, *samhanach* is attested in Modern Scottish Gaelic in the meaning 'savage, giant, monster', though the etymology is unclear.[102] This accords with Mac Samáin's presentation in the *Cogadh* where he is considered the equivalent of seven Murchads.[103] However, contemporary evidence corroborating this image is lacking.

Notwithstanding this, it is clear that the author of the *Cogadh* had an established champion in mind when citing Mac Samáin as Murchad's precursor in his heroic chronology. The six figures named do not map precisely onto the Six Ages scheme. Nonetheless, they are associated with different periods in the past and are listed in the correct order to represent decline in valour with the passing of time. Thus, the tenth-/eleventh-century battle-leader, Murchad, is separated by some distance from Mac Samáin whether associated with seventh-century figures or with the third-century through his leader, Finn mac Cumaill, who led his *fíana* (warrior-bands) during the rule of King Cormac mac Airt. Lugaid Lága is an older contemporary of Cormac whose father, Art, he slew.[104] Conall Cernach is aligned temporally with Christ, while Lug Lámfhata, as a member of the Túatha Dé Danann, belonged to the pre-Christian period and is, therefore, deemed closest in time to Hector himself. As worthy exponents of *gaisced* (valour), they each belong to a period between the age after infancy when heroism embodied by Hector was at its pinnacle and the age before senility symbolized by Murchad, the time immediately preceding terminal decline.[105] This, then, is a carefully constructed comparison (*intamlugud*). Moreover, it is specifically denoted as being of the mind (*intliucht*).

The precise source for this learned interpretation (*intamlugud intliuchta*) offered by the author of the *Cogadh* is difficult to ascertain. The Six Ages of the World/Ages of Man framework was commonplace,[106] but his particular development of it is, to my knowledge, unique. In a treatise, *De aetatibus mundi et hominis* (The Ages of the World and Man), by the fifth-/sixth-century North African writer, Fulgentius, the Six Ages are aligned with 'historical' events.[107] Individuals rather than events are made to typify an era in the *Cogadh*; nonetheless, a broadly similar approach is adopted in these two texts.[108] The allegorical interpretations of Graeco-Roman mythology advanced by this influential intellectual had a pervasive influence on early medieval interpretation of pagan literature and lore,[109] and their impact has

[101] Clancy, 'Mac Steléne', 89, where he cites an example from Nicolson, *Gaelic Proverbs*, 45: *culaidh 'mharbhadh Mhic Samhain* ('it would kill Mac Samáin'). A parallel saying to which Dwelly assigns an Islay provenance uses the common noun *samhanach* in the meaning 'savage, giant, monster': *Illustrated Gaelic-English Dictionary*, *s.v.* samhanach. See also Ó Baoill & Bateman, *The Harps' Cry*, 190–8, 234–5, for which reference I am indebted to Thomas Owen Clancy.

[102] Dwelly, *Illustrated Gaelic-English Dictionary*, *s.v.* (and see previous note); see also Jackson, *Aislinge*, 48.

[103] Todd, *Cogadh*, 186 (section 107).

[104] O Daly, *Cath Maige Mucrama*.

[105] The period of *senectus* was not entirely negative, however, according to the scheme set out by St Augustine; the exterior might be decrepit, while the interior could be renewed in preparation for the seventh stage of eternal life. See Burrow, *Ages of Man*, 81–2.

[106] At the end of the eleventh century, for example, Gilla Cóemáin used this framework in *Annálad anall uile*: Smith, *Three Historical Poems*, 188–91 (stanzas 2–6).

[107] Helm, *Fulgentii Opera*, 127–79; for Helm's text of this treatise with facing translation, see Manca, *Fulgenzi*.

[108] In addition, Fulgentius also subdivides the Six Ages: see Archimbault, 'The ages of man', 206.

[109] See Burrow, *Ages of Man*, 118–19; Jones, 'The so-called Silvestris Commentary', 847. See also Binder, 'Der brauchbare Held', 324–6.

been detected in the work of Irish scholars throughout the Middle Ages.[110] His particular development of the notion of the equivalence between the life of man and the life of the world is likely to have found resonance in Irish learned circles also. This is not to suggest that the author of the *Cogadh* was consciously imitating Fulgentius in the chronological creativity in which he engages in his own composition. However, *De aetatibus mundi et hominis* and other writings by this important allegorist, including *Mitologiae*,[111] would have formed part of the library to which the Irish scholar and his learned contemporaries had access and could have provided inspiration.

Intellectuals elsewhere were imaginatively exploiting Fulgentius and other mythographers around the same time and skilful manipulation of the Ages of the World framework can be observed in other cultural milieux.[112] By way of example, the scheme of the Six Ages was applied elsewhere to Classical literature, most notably to Virgil's *Aeneid* in the twelfth century, the first six books of which were read allegorically as the journey of the soul through life.[113] Moreover, the allegorical comparison between Aeneas's voyage and the life of man is most likely derivative of Fulgentius's fanciful explanation of the contents of the *Aeneid*, *Expositio Vergilii continentiae* (The Exposition of the Content of Virgil).[114] While Aeneas himself is not depicted as the personification of any particular age in this Virgilian commentary, the text provides clear evidence for the adaptation of Classical heroes to the Christian scheme of the Ages of World/Man. This type of material might equally provide a model for the association of another classical hero, Hector, with the Six Ages framework in the *Cogadh*.

Such commentaries certainly formed part of the cultural world in which the author of the Irish narrative worked. The Virgilian commentary just mentioned, in which the interpretation pertaining to the Six Ages occurs, was once attributed to Bernardus Silvestris. It has been argued, however, that it was in fact the work of another twelfth-century intellectual, Bernard of Chartres.[115] The latter's work was drawn on by Irish authors; his commentaries on Plato's *Timaeus*, along with those of his prolific student at Chartres, William of Conches, are preserved in the twelfth-century Irish manuscript, Oxford, Bodleian Library, Auct. F.III.15.[116] Moreover, as Pádraig Ó Néill has demonstrated, a particular Irish scribe named Tuilecnad, a

[110] See, for example, Miles, *Heroic Saga*, 89–93, and Michael Clarke's chapter 6, this volume.

[111] For a text of the *Mitologiae*, see Helm, *Fulgentii opera*, I, 1–80. Helm's text of the *Mitologiae* has recently been reprinted and translated: Wolff and Dain, *Fulgence*.

[112] My colleague, Rosalind Love, has drawn my attention to a relevant passage in a glossed copy of Boethius's *Consolation of Philosophy*. Drawing directly on an allegorization of the four horses of Apollo in another of Fulgentius's writings, *Mitologiae* (Helm, *Fulgentii Opera*, 1.12 and 16), an eleventh-century English commentator equated the four horses with the four divisions of the human life-span. The horses are thus given appropriate names, representing infancy, childhood, maturity and old age in turn: Cambridge, University Library, MS Kk.3.21, formerly Cologny-Genève, Bibliotheca Bodmeriana, MS Codex 175 (see Love, 'Latin commentaries'). Operating in a comparable intellectual milieu, Irish authors read Fulgentius in similar ways.

[113] Jones & Jones, *Commentum quod dicitur Bernardi Silvestris*, 4, 14, 15, 23, 25; Schreiber & Maresca, *Commentary*; see also Wetherbee, *Platonism and Poetry*, 106–11.

[114] See, for example Ziolkowski & Putnam, *The Virgilian Tradition*, 670–2, 726–7, for which reference I am indebted to Michael Clarke.

[115] Smits, 'New evidence'. The attribution of authorship to Bernard of Chartres had been made earlier by Vernet, *Recherches*, 50–1. However, it has been rejected by Jones, 'The so-called Silvestris Commentary'.

[116] Ó Néill, 'An Irishman at Chartres'. For the attribution of this Commentary on the *Timaeus* to Bernard of Chartres, see Dutton, 'The uncovering of the *Glosae*', at 206–10; see also his edition, *Glosae*, 10–14.

contemporary of the author of the *Cogadh* who had been spent time in the school of Chartres in the first half of the twelfth century, glossed and interpreted the work with erudition and skill.[117]

Scholastic encyclopaedic lore is also reflected in other media and a vivid parallel to the Six Ages of the World/Ages of Man image developed in the *Cogadh* is found in the iconographic scheme depicted visually on two of the twelve 'typological windows' from Christ Church Cathedral, Canterbury.[118] Dating from the late twelfth century, and so somewhat later than the Irish text composed towards the beginning of that century, they portray biblical characters which are most usual in this chronological scheme. In one window, Adam, Noah, Abraham, David, Iechonius and Christ are specifically labelled *sex etates sunt mundi* ('these are the Six Ages of the World'). The Six Ages of Man (termed *sex etates hominis*) form the subject of another image nearby, consisting of six male figures of increasing age, of whom *adolescentia* holds a sceptre and *iuventus* (youth) a sword.[119] According to this portrayal, therefore, the Fourth Age (*iuventus*) is identified with warriors, providing a general point of contact with the much enhanced heroic era presented in the *Cogadh*. As we have seen, biblical figures form no part of this section of the text, Hector and his Irish counterparts denoting the various periods in their stead, echoing the application of the Six Ages scheme to Classical literature noted above. The key point, however, is that scholastic concepts of history are reflected in Irish writing in the twelfth century, as demonstrated by the passage in the *Cogadh* under consideration, just as they influenced contemporary learning elsewhere expressed in a variety of forms. The Canterbury windows provide a clear visual depiction of ideas emanating from the same broader intellectual world.

Educated contemporaries in other places engaged with similar concepts and had access to well-stocked libraries of their own. Writing about the same time as the *Cogadh* author, Lambert, a Canon at Saint-Omer, compiled an ambitious encyclopaedia, the *Liber Floridus* (Book of Flowers), in the second decade of the twelfth century.[120] He appears to have drawn on about one hundred sources in the process and may have had access to the important neighbouring scriptorium of Saint-Bertin, as well as the literary resources of his own institution of Saint-Omer.[121] This encyclopaedia is best known for its striking illustrations and maps,[122] which are integrated with the wide-ranging accompanying text, and one commentator has perceived the Ages of Man and the Ages of the World, along with the End of Time, as its dominant theme.[123] Referred to at various places throughout the work, in stereotypical fashion, the Ages are linked with the biblical characters associated with them. In what bears a general resemblance to the passage under discussion in the *Cogadh*, however, the first Roman Emperor Octavianus (Augustus Caesar) is linked with

[117] Ó Néill, 'An Irishman at Chartres', 29–30, 33–5.

[118] The connection between scholasticism and parallel windows from Northern France and elsewhere is discussed in Panofsky, *Gothic Architecture*, for which reference I am grateful to Michael Clarke. See also Markschies, *Gibt es eine Theologie der gotischen Kathedrale'?* For links between the Canterbury windows and Anglo-Saxon sources, see Pfaff, 'Some Anglo-Saxon sources'.

[119] Caviness, *Windows*, and her earlier work, *Early Stained Glass*, 127.

[120] Derolez, *Lamberti S. Audomari canonici Liber Floridus*. For discussion, see the companion volume edited by Derolez, *Liber Floridus Colloquium*, and his later monograph, *Autograph Manuscript.*

[121] Derolez, *Autograph Manuscript*, 29–33.

[122] *Ibid*., 22–4. See also Swarzenski, 'Comments'; Lecoq, 'La mappemonde'.

[123] De Smet, 'Aanteekeningen'; for this and other interpretations, see Derolez, *Autograph Manuscript*, 182–3.

the Sixth Age, and a contemporary historical personage, the late eleventh-century Frankish knight Godfrey of Bouillon, one of the leaders of the First Crusade and the first ruler of the kingdom of Jerusalem, is given as the final name associated with that Age. His importance to Lambert is indicated by the title given to this section: *mundi etates usque ad Godefridum regem* ('the Ages of the World down to the Age of Godfrey').[124] Indeed, it has been suggested that Lambert sought through Godfrey's fame to accord Flanders and Saint-Omer a central place in world history.[125] In a very different way, the *Cogadh* too is concerned with historical posterity and to this end capitalizes on the deeds of Brían Bórama and Murchad, his son. In situating their heroes in a chronological framework, two independent authors place them in the Sixth and current Age, looking back to Classical precursors, Augustus Caesar and Hector in turn.

The correspondence is noteworthy and provides a point of comparison in this one matter of detail in two otherwise contrasting texts. Notwithstanding the existence of an underlying basic framework and the enduring influence of the works of St Augustine and Isidore of Seville on how divisions of time were expressed, there was considerable variation in the manner in which parallels between the ordering of universal time and the course of human life were presented in early medieval texts.[126] Within this creative space, two skilful authors, the one of an exceptional encyclopaedia biased towards his own particular region, the other of a remarkable pseudo-history designed to present his own dynasty in a positive light, chose to cast their own heroes as representatives of their own Sixth Age, seeing in them the natural successors of Classical forebears. They are likely to have done so independently; nonetheless, the analogy underlines the resemblances between the intellectual contexts in which both men worked. This in itself is not surprising; traffic of ideas and books between Ireland, England and the Continent in the eleventh and twelfth centuries was continuous. Lambert included English history in his work, drawing on Bede, the *Historia Brittonum* (a History of the Britons attributed to Nennius) and a Latin version of the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle.[127] Contacts with centres in which such sources were available must have been close. Communication between Irish ecclesiastical establishments and churches overseas in this period were manifold and deepened in the context of the Church Reform movement as the period progressed.[128] Such interaction manifested itself in the sphere of learning and Ó Néill has drawn attention to two twelfth-century manuscripts that bear witness to the international dimension of Irish scholarship in the period.[129] Texts were transmitted between Ireland and the Continent; Irish scholars were educated in Continental schools.[130] Reference to this learned interaction is found in the *Cogadh* itself, in which Brían is said to have sent

[124] Derolez, *Autograph Manuscript*, 47–8; the text is combined with circular diagrams (*sperae*).
[125] *Ibid*., 182.
[126] See the range of material examined in Burrow, *Ages of Man*; particularly influential material, including excerpts from Bede, Augustine and Isidore, is reproduced in *ibid*., 191–202.
[127] Derolez, *Autograph Manuscript*, 88.
[128] Bethell, 'English monks'; Flanagan, *Transformation*; Richter, 'The European dimension'.
[129] Ó Néill, 'An Irishman at Chartres'; Ó Néill, 'Irish glosses'. See also Bieler & Bischoff, 'Fragmente'; Boyle, 'Neoplatonic thought'.
[130] These include Tuilecnad, scribe of Auct. F. 3.15, on whom see Ó Néill, 'An Irishman at Chartres'.

out teachers to instruct and had books purchased overseas.[131] Moreover, its author displays some of the reform ideals of his day.[132]

Imitatio

Comparable rhetorical techniques are also a feature of texts emanating from these different areas, trained as their authors were in similar schools. Ó Néill has illuminated the Latin colophon of the Book of Leinster version of *Táin Bó Cúailnge* by reading it in the context of the broad educational culture from which it emanated,[133] and Abigail Burnyeat has examined the use of *compilatio* and the related *ordinatio* in the case of some manuscripts of the same text.[134] Imitation of literary models in the form of *imitatio* and *aemulatio* permeates much of Middle Irish literature. While *imitatio* originally referred to paraphrase of Latin pagan authors, and classicizing influences are prevalent in many texts of the time,[135] deliberate emulation of earlier vernacular narratives too was common and might be encompassed by the same term.[136] In the passage under discussion in the *Cogadh*, the author consciously alludes to Murchad as *imitatio Hectoris* but the Irish warrior is modelled on Mac Samáin, Lugaid Lága, Conall Cernach and Lug Lámfhata as well. Moreover, he concludes his sustained chronological comparison between the heroes with reference to *intamlugud intliuchta* ('learned interpretation') specifying the analogy between the Ages of the World and human valour, as noted above.[137] The phrase may in fact be a direct loan-translation of the Latin formula *similitudo intellectus*, a comparison to be interpreted rationally.[138] Significantly, this is used as a technical term in twelfth-century scholastic philosophy, the intellectual context in which the Irish author may have encountered the *senectus mundi* image he employed, as we have seen. If so, he could have classified it in terms of contemporary rhetorical theory also by casting a learned Latin term in vernacular dress.[139]

Alternatively, or perhaps additionally, *in(n)t(s)amlugud*, verbal noun of *in-samlathar* and its simplified form *intamlaigid* ('imitation, act of imitating, comparison'),[140] may have been employed as a vernacular rendering of *imitatio*. Its further qualification by means of *intliucht* (Latin *intellectus* 'mind, intellect') to signal that the comparison is of a specifically intellectual kind (*intamlugud intliuchta*) supports this view.[141] The point is reinforced by the use of the adjectival form of *intamlugud* in the very next sentence, bringing Hector and Murchad together again: *Rob e sin int Ectoir intamlaigtech na Erend* ('It was he [Murchad] who was the metaphorical Hector of

[131] Todd, *Cogadh*, 138–9 (section 80); I have argued elsewhere that this reflects the activity of his great-grandson, Muirchertach (Ní Mhaonaigh, '*Cogad*', 374–5).
[132] Ní Mhaonaigh, 'Pagans and holy men', 149–51 and Ní Mhaonaigh, *Brian Boru*, 77–8.
[133] Ó Néill, 'The Latin colophon'.
[134] Burnyeat, '*Córugud* and *compilatio*'.
[135] See Miles, *Heroic Saga*.
[136] See the broad-ranging discussion of *imitatio* by Ralph O'Connor in this volume (chapter 10).
[137] Todd, *Cogadh*, 186–7 (section 107); the full phrase is quoted above.
[138] I owe this suggestion to Michael Clarke.
[139] For a general introduction to the scholarship on medieval rhetoric, see Camargo, 'Defining medieval rhetoric'.
[140] *DIL s.v.*; the related word *intamail* occurs in the same meaning.
[141] See Boyle, 'Neoplatonic thought', 223, on the use of the term *intliucht* to emphasize the intellectual strand in the contemplation of the divine in a roughly contemporary text.

Ireland').[142] This echoes deliberately the audience's first introduction to Murchad as battle-leader at Clontarf where the two heroes were first paired, the phrase 'the metaphorical Hector' being used on both occasions.[143] The *gal* ('valour'), *gaisced* ('skill'), *enech* ('honour') and *engnam* ('generosity'/'prowess') that form an implicit part of the comparison in the earlier portrayal are made to link the two warriors explicitly in this section of the text.[144]

Murchad mac Bríain and other heroes

Comparison between Murchad and other great figures follows this sustained analogy between him and Hector. As well as being the equal of the Trojan warrior *ar gail, ocus ar gaisced, ar eneach, ocus ar engnum*, 'in valour, and in championship, in generosity and in munificence', the Munster warrior is likened to Samson of the Hebrews: *Rob e sin in Samson suairc, socomaind, seg(d)aind, soerbesach na nEbraidi* ('He was the pleasant, affable, intelligent, accomplished Samson of the Hebrews').[145] While Samson's phenomenal strength is undoubtedly being recalled, in a unique phrase the fourteenth-century version of the text suggests that both were concerned with securing the rights and privileges of their patrimony and kin.[146] He is also another Hercules (*Rob e sin int Ercoil totachtach tanasi*, 'He was the second powerful Hercules'), capable of translating the Classical hero's extraordinary deeds into an Irish context. A reference to the destruction and elimination of serpents and monsters from Ireland brings the slaying of the Lernaean Hydra by Hercules to mind. The same episode most likely informs the subsequent mention of the traversing of the lakes, pools and caves of Ireland.[147] Guardian of the Underworld, the Hydra had her home in a cave in the lake of Lerna to which Hercules travelled to defeat her. In seeking out Ireland's waters and caverns, Murchad was following in his heroic wake.

As one of Hercules's Twelve Labours, the encounter with the Hydra was well known and it is recounted, alongside other adventures engaged in by Hercules, in the Irish versions of *Togail Troí*.[148] The account of 'the deeds of Hercules' (*gnímrada Hercoil*), as it is termed in the Book of Leinster version of this text,[149] did not form part of *De excidio Troiae historia* and was added by the Irish author from another source. Among the additional information concerning Hercules is a story of sibling rivalry in which he proves his supremacy over his twin, Iphicles (Fichlus), by overcoming snakes. While his brother screamed and avoided the two creatures that had

[142] Todd, *Cogadh*, 186–7 (section 107). This passage is not found in Míchéal Ó Cléirigh's copy of the text, but only in the earlier fourteenth-century manuscript version: see Todd, *Cogadh*, 186, n. 2.

[143] *Ibid*., 166 (section 95); the phrase is quoted above.

[144] *Ro be sin int Ectoir intamlaigtech na Erend, ilbuadaig(i), ar credium, ocus ar gail, ocus ar gaisced, ar eneach, ocus ar engnum* ('He was the metaphorical Hector of all-victorious Ireland, in religion, and in valour, and in championship, in generosity, and in munificence'): *ibid*., 186–7 (section 107). The adjective *ilbuadach* may originally have been applied to Hector, as it is in the earlier passage. The association of Hector with *cretem* ('religion') is noteworthy.

[145] *Ibid*., 186–7 (section 107); the full sentence is cited in the previous note.

[146] *… im sochar ocus im sairi a atarda ocus a ceneoil re ré fen, ocus re amsir* ('for promoting the prosperity and freedom of his fatherland and of his race, during his own career and time'): *ibid*., 186–7 (section 107).

[147] *Ibid*., 186–9 (section 107).

[148] Stokes, 'The destruction of Troy', 4, lines 52–3; Best *et al.*, *Book of Leinster*, IV, 1074, lines 31243–4.

[149] The account ends *Conid gnímrada Hercoil connice sin* ('And that was "The Deeds of Hercules" to that point'): Best *et al.*, *Book of Leinster*, IV, 1075, line 31288.

been sent deliberately in his direction, Hercules took one in each of his two hands (*geibid nathraig cechtar a da lám*) and wrestled them to the ground (*7 nos essairg imbi don talmain*).[150] This and other tales of Hercules's heroism underlie the reference to him in the *Cogadh* and it may be that the author was drawing on a copy of *Togail Troí* for his information, though verbal parallels between the two texts in this instance cannot be drawn. Murchad is also said to resemble his Classical counterpart in that no fort or fortress in the world (*dun no digenn is in domun*) can withstand them.[151] This may well be a veiled allusion to Hercules's easy taking of the stronghold of Troy.[152]

As Murchad's deeds mirror those of international battle-heroes, they are also the equivalent of warriors closer to home. The author recalls Lug Lámfhata again at this point in his narrative, specifically his success in expelling foreigners (*gullu oucus allmarathu*) from Ireland.[153] It is likely that *Cath Maige Tuired* is once more being alluded to here, since the Fomoiri whom Lug defeated resemble Vikings in many tales.[154] The description of the oppressive nature of their king, Bres, who had assumed the sovereignty of Ireland (*flaith Érenn*),[155] and under whose rule tribute was imposed on even the smoke from every house,[156] resonates with the elaborate depiction of Viking tyranny at an earlier point in the *Cogadh*.[157] Having been removed from the kingship, he sought allies to help him take Ireland by force (*ar éigin*)[158] and these came ó *Lochlainn siar do slúag doqum nÉrenn, do astad a cisa 7 a rígi foruib, gur 'ba háondroichet long ó Indsib Gallad co hÉrinn leo* ('from Lochlainn westwards to Ireland, to impose their tribute and their rule upon them by force, and they made a single bridge of ships from the Hebrides to Ireland').[159] The Vikings at Clontarf sought reinforcements from the same regions.[160] In view of these broad resemblances, it seems likely that the author of the *Cogadh* was familiar with *Cath Maige Tuired* and in identifying Murchad with Lug it was the latter's exploits in the earlier narrative that were being recalled. Like Lug, *ro ling cach docair* ('he sprang over every obstacle'):[161] both warriors seek to defend their *atharda* ('fatherland') against external foes.[162]

[150] *Ibid*., IV, 1073, lines 31023–4.
[151] Todd, *Cogadh*, 188–9 (section 107).
[152] *Imthúsa Ercoil, rosiacht cósin Tróí 7 fóuair in Tróí n-oslaicthe cen nech ocá dítin nách 'cá gabáil* ('Concerning Hercules, he reached Troy and found Troy open with nobody either defending or attacking it'): Stokes, 'The destruction of Troy', 7, lines 154–6. The portrayal of Hercules in Early Modern Irish literature (with some reference to the earlier period) is discussed by Ross, *Bildungsidol*; see her later article, 'The transformation', 186–7, for brief remarks concerning Hercules in *Togail Troí* and *Togail na Tebe*.
[153] Todd, *Cogadh*, 188–9 (section 107), where the phrase is translated 'foreigners and pirates'.
[154] Gray, *Cath Maige Tuired*; Gray '*Cath Maige Tuired*: myth and structure', 16. See also Carey, 'Myth and mythography' and Ó Corráin, 'Vikings', 310–13.
[155] Gray, *Cath Maige Tuired*, 28–9 (section 24).
[156] *Ibid*., 28–9 (section 25).
[157] Todd, *Cogadh*, 48–53 (section 40).
[158] Gray, *Cath Maige Tuired*, 36–7 (section 47).
[159] *Ibid*., 36–7 (section 50).
[160] Todd, *Cogadh*, 150–3 (section 87).
[161] *Ibid*., 188–9 (section 107); this may subtly refer to the fact that Lug had to escape from his own protectors who did not want him to be killed, in order to enter the fray: Gray, *Cath Maige Tuired*, 50–1 (section 95), 58–9 (section 129).
[162] Murchad is a *tor* (tower) against the enemies of his fatherland: Todd, *Cogadh*, 188–9 (section 107), while Lug urges his followers to fight to the death *oc díden a n-athardho* ('protecting their fatherland'): Gray, *Cath Maige Tuired*, 58–9 (section 129).

Murchad's pedigree, therefore, aligns him with biblical, Classical and Irish heroes and provides a clear example of the range of learning drawn on by the author of the *Cogadh* in composing his work. Its function in the narrative is to set the scene for his dramatic entry into battle; as the equivalent of Hector, Samson, Hercules and Lug, great deeds are anticipated and in this Murchad does not disappoint.[163] Marked out as a champion by the bird of valour (*en gaili ocus gaiscid*) which rose within him and fluttered on his breath,[164] he is said to have killed fifty with his right hand and fifty with his left in the first attack. This is authenticated by reference to *senchaidi Gall ocus Lagen*, 'the historians of the Vikings and the Leinstermen'; that it is chroniclers of the enemy side that attest (*forglit*) to his greatness gives added weight. Moreover, the magnitude of his loyal following marching swiftly after him into the fight is witnessed by *daini Atha Cliath, batar forsna scemlib* ('the people of Áth Cliath who were on the ramparts'), including the king of Dublin, Sitric mac Amlaíb, and his wife, Murchad's half-sister Sláine. In having recourse to such 'testimony' to provide authority for his account, the author of the *Cogadh* is employing a commonplace literary trope. Yet, in this case, the report of what the onlookers saw may be derived from an identifiable source.

The influence of Togail Troí

According to Brent Miles, this particular passage of the *Cogadh*, pertaining to Murchad's activity in battle, shows clear dependence on the first recension of *Togail Troí*.[165] On commenting on the size of Murchad's host, the Dublin onlookers opined *conar ba lia leo serrthlaigi eturuuas o mor methil ic buain goirt coirci* ('that not more numerous would be the sheaves floating over a great company reaping a field of oats').[166] The same simile is used to describe the destruction wrought by Hector in *Togail Troí*:

> Imthá samlaid connach lía punnand chorcai i fogomor d'éis mórmethle … andáit cind ⁊ chossa ⁊ cholla ⁊ medóin íarná timdibe d'fáibur a chlaidib do rinn gái …
>
> It is even so that not more numerous are the sheaves of oats in autumn after a great party's reaping … than are the heads and feet and bodies and waists cut by the end of his [Hector's] sword, the point of his spear …[167]

Murchad's appearance in battle *amal dam dian, denmnetach dasachtach ar na drochgabail, no amail leoman lond, letartach, luthmar, lanchalma, toduscithir, ocus cratir ima culenaibh* ('like a violent, impetuous, furious ox, that is difficult to catch, or like a fierce, tearing, swift all-powerful lioness that has been roused and robbed of

[163] Murchad's entry into battle is described Todd, *Cogadh*, 188–91 (section 108); it is paraphrased in what follows.

[164] See Clarke, 'Translation and transformation'.

[165] Miles, *Heroic Saga*, 142–3. Connections between the texts were also noted by Myrick, *From the* De Excidio, 141–57. Miles describes three specific parallels which, following him, I set out here.

[166] Todd, *Cogadh*, 190–1 (section 108).

[167] Stokes, 'The destruction of Troy', 37, lines 1161–5; translated in Miles, *Heroic Saga*, 135–6.

her whelps')[168] also recalls images found in the same source: *Tanic íarsin fó shlúag na Moesiánda amal leoman londcrechtaig íarna thocrád fo chuilenaib, no amal tarb ndasachtach día tabar drochbéim* ('Then he [Achilles] went throughout the host of the Moesians like a fierce-wounded lion which has been provoked on account of its cubs, or like a wild bull which has been given a heavy blow').[169] Having been likened to an ox and a lion, Murchad is then compared to a roaring torrent in the *Cogadh*: *mar borbruathur dian bunni dilend, brisseas ocus brecas cach ni cos a ricc* ('like the fierce roll of an impetuous, deluging torrent, which shatters and smashes everything that opposes it').[170] In the same way, Achilles approaches *amal tic banni dían dílend a hucht airshlébi co trascrand feda ⁊ fidbada remi cona scailend i fánaib ⁊ i fánglentaib na ferand* ('as comes the furious torrent of a flood from the breast of the hill, levelling tree and tree-slope before it until it scatters them into the depressions and the hollows of the earth').[171]

Such images are not unique to the *Cogadh* and *Togail Troí*.[172] In addition, likening a hero to a fierce animal or deluge may be said to be commonplace. As Miles has observed, however, their occurrence within what he terms 'one compact stretch' of the *Cogadh* is highly suggestive of the fact that its author was drawing directly from *Togail Troí* in this particular instance.[173] To the parallels observed by Miles may be added the fact that the comment made of Murchad – *nir aitheraig beim riam do neoch acht oen beim* ('he never repeated a blow to anyone but only the one blow') – is similarly applied to Hector in the account of his death in the Book of Leinster version of *Togail Troí*.[174] In this case the result was fatal, since after he had failed to kill Achilles with that single blow, Hector's opponent returned and slew him treacherously.[175] In the account of Murchad's own death, on the other hand, more than one blow appears to have been exchanged between him and his slayer, Ebric's son, before they fall at each other's hands.[176]

Elsewhere too other parallels with Hector, while less explicit, can be perceived. In the case of both heroes, a loved one experiences a premonition of their death in battle. Hector's wife, Andromache, imagines his beheading in her sleep,[177] while a companion of Murchad, Dúnlaing ua hArtacáin, returns from the Otherworld to warn the Irish leader of his impending demise.[178] Both serve as their father's prime

[168] Todd, *Cogadh*, 188–9 (section 108).

[169] Stokes, 'The destruction of Troy', 24, lines 727–9; translated in Miles, *Heroic Saga*, 134. A similar image without the reference to the whelps is applied to Hector in the version of *Togail Troí* in the Book of Leinster, for which see Miles, *Heroic Saga*, 133. On this passage in *Togail Troí*, see also Michael Clarke, chapter 7 of this volume, 127–8.

[170] Todd, *Cogadh*, 188–9 (section 108).

[171] Miles, *Heroic Saga*, 131; this passage is found in the Book of Leinster version of *Togail Troí*: Best *et al.*, *Book of Leinster*, IV, 1114, lines 32776–9.

[172] Mac Gearailt, '*Togail Troí*: ein Vorbild', 124, n. 1.

[173] Miles, *Heroic Saga*, 142, referring to Todd, *Cogadh*, 188–91 (section 108).

[174] *Ibid*., 188–9 (section 108); Best *et al.*, *Book of Leinster*, IV, 1116, lines 32840–7, where this section is introduced as *Aided Hectoir so sís* ('Here follows "The Death-tale of Hector"').

[175] *Is tria cheilg tra amlaidsein darochair Hectoir co fír* ('Thus, it was because of treachery that Hector really fell'). For discussion of Hector's death, see Mac Eoin, 'Dán', 20; Miles, *Heroic Saga*, 64–6; and Ní Mhaonaigh, 'The Hectors of Ireland'.

[176] Todd, *Cogadh*, 194–7 (section 112).

[177] Stokes, 'The destruction of Troy', 36, lines 1126–37.

[178] Todd, *Cogadh*, 170–3 (section 93). This passage is unique to the fourteenth-century version of the *Cogadh*: see Ní Mhaonaigh, 'Bréifne bias', 140–1. There is also an earlier prophecy in *Togail Troí* concerning Hector's death, to which he responds, *Ni mór fórmsa fein íarum anisin', ar Hechtair. Bid tercbáil anma, ⁊ bid fotha mo chlua darmése*' ('"That does not perturb me much", said Hector. "It will

commander; it is only when Murchad's standard has fallen that Brían Bórama accepts that all is lost.[179] Although the manner of the death of the two heroes is different, both face a worthy opponent, Murchad's 'Achilles' being the son of Ebric, a son of the king of Lochlainn, *cend gaili ocus gaiscid sluaig Lochland ocus gall uli arcena* ('the head of valour and bravery of the army of Lochlainn, and of all the foreigners also').[180] Moreover, the ritual of death is conducted appropriately in the case of both warriors: the wounded Murchad survives for long enough to receive the sacraments and make a will.[181] For Hector, *dorónta cluiche chointe dó amal robái i smachtaib 7 besaib na Troiandae* ('funeral rites were conducted for him, according to the regulations and customs of the Trojans')[182] and he was commemorated again on the first anniversary of his death.[183]

Murchad, therefore, is created in Hector's image. The passage concerned with his entry into battle is directly drawing on *Togail Troí*, as we have seen,[184] while less specific correspondences of the kind just noted suggest the Troy story remained at the forefront of the author's mind. Thus, in forming his battle-leader, the author of the *Cogadh* had recourse to a specific mould of Hector – that found in the Irish versions of *Togail Troí*. Some of the specific parallels noted are found in Recension 1 of that narrative, while others correspond to the text of Recension 2 as it survives in the Book of Leinster. Both versions hail Hector as hero: his mighty deeds would be recounted in tales and stories until Doomsday;[185] his fame was widespread throughout Asia and Europe as well.[186] Recension 1 contains an elaborate, rhetorical set-piece concerning him which is not preserved in the Book of Leinster.[187] Nonetheless, the claim in that manuscript that Dares actually witnessed Hector's exploits himself added especial value to that version as source.[188]

Conclusion

While having recourse to a recognized authority in his depiction of Murchad, the creator of *Cogadh Gáedhel re Gallaibh* applied considerable imagination in its execution. His ingenuity is seen most clearly in the extended comparison between the Irishman and Hector immediately preceding the battle-scene derived from *Togail Troí*, the passage which has been my main focus here. A carefully crafted set piece, it serves to alert the audience to Murchad's exceptional qualities and undoubtedly owes a general debt to the Troy material. What marks it out, however, is its skilful, inventive use of a wide range of sources to construct a literary panegyric of Murchad which bears witness to an adept author, making calculated and creative allusion to works and ideas

---

raise my soul and it will be the basis for my fame after me'"): Stokes, 'The destruction of Troy', 25, lines 758–60.

179 Todd, *Cogadh*, 200–1 (section 113).

180 *Ibid*., 194–5 (section 112). There is some uncertainty as to the precise form of the name of Murchad's slayer he is also called 'Elbric' and 'Ellric': see also *ibid*., 259.

181 *Ibid*., 196–7 (section 113).

182 Stokes, 'The destruction of Troy', 39, lines 1229–30.

183 *Ibid*., 41, lines 1273–8.

184 Todd, *Cogadh*, 188–91 (section 108).

185 Stokes, 'The destruction of Troy', 31, lines 947–9.

186 *Ibid*., 34, line 1067.

187 *Ibid*., 34–5, lines 1067–82. Conversely, as noted by Miles (*Heroic Saga*, 189, n. 118), the Book of Leinster contains a different set-piece eulogizing Hector which is not found in Recension 1.

188 Best *et al.*, *Book of Leinster*, IV, 1008, lines, 32552–5; the passage is quoted in note 15 above.

that were part of his staple learned fare. Reference to Hercules may have been contained in whatever copy of *Togail Troí* he had to hand and that material too was put to use, since Murchad is compared with that Classical hero also in the *Cogadh*. Biblical and mythographic texts were similarly utilized and his portrayal of Murchad was coloured by reference to other tales. Weaving narrative material with chronographic matter within a conceptual structure that cleverly manipulated the universal scheme of the Ages of Man/Ages of the World, he created a striking image of Murchad. In elaborate eloquence, it was the equivalent of that of Hector of Troy; the eulogy of Brían's son as 'the metaphorical Hector' (*int Ectoir intamlaigtech*)[189] was more than a literary flourish. In short, what an analysis of this section of his composition reveals is a sophisticated and learned author, skilfully weaving a cloth of his own design reflecting motifs and patterns from his entire scholarly wardrobe. Literary fashion may have influenced his choice of Hector as model for his own battle hero. In refashioning him, however, he demonstrated consummate artistry and craft.

The fate of Hector and the Trojans might well have been read as resonant of that of Murchad and Brían and their allies at Clontarf. Defeated in battle like the fallen heroes of Troy, the Munstermen and their supporters ultimately triumph through the supremacy of their descendants.[190] The author of the *Cogadh* too is concerned with the recreation of history, though of a more recent kind than that engaged in by his contemporaries who moulded the Troy legend and set out their own prehistory in such narratives as *Táin Bó Cúailnge* and *Cath Ruis na Ríg*. Yet the figure of Hector is one strand that binds these authors together, since Murchad is but one of a number of heroes likened to Hector in Middle Irish tales. A pre-Christian warrior of the Ulaid, Conall Cernach, is associated with the Classical hero most frequently, as I have discussed elsewhere.[191] It is in the case of the Christian opponent of Vikings, Murchad mac Bríain Bórama, however, that the characteristics of the premier Trojan fighter are most developed and pronounced, as presented in the detailed literary portrayal of him which forms part of the early twelfth-century Úa Bríain narrative, *Cogadh Gáedhel re Gallaibh*. In drawing attention to that depiction here and to one remarkable passage in particular, I have sought to illuminate the rich and learned cultural context in which the author of the *Cogadh* and his contemporaries operated. Figures like 'the metaphorical Hector' provide an invaluable glimpse into this vibrant intellectual world.

[189] Todd, *Cogadh*, 166–7, 186–7.

[190] As Clarke, 'An Irish Achilles', as well as Poppe & Schlüter 'Greece, Ireland', have argued in relation to the events of the *Táin*.

[191] Ní Mhaonaigh, 'The Hectors of Ireland'.

Part III

Classical models for vernacular ‘epic’?

9

WAS CLASSICAL IMITATION NECESSARY FOR THE WRITING OF LARGE-SCALE IRISH SAGAS? REFLECTIONS ON *TÁIN BÓ CÚAILNGE* AND THE 'WATCHMAN DEVICE'*

Ralph O'Connor

In his 1955 monograph, *Studies in Irish Literature and History*, James Carney pitted himself against what he saw as a 'nativist' orthodoxy which held to a national-Romantic view of the best-known Irish sagas as relics of native myths and legends, isolated from (or only superficially linked with) the wider world of European Latin learning. Against this orthodoxy, Carney asserted that Irish sagas achieved literary greatness and 'epic' status only when their authors embraced and imitated the Latin epic tradition. His statement about *Táin Bó Cúailnge* (The Cattle-Raid of Cooley), which in practice (and problematically) he took as representative of the whole corpus, forms my starting-point: 'Those features which are part of the epic scale of presentation *must* be due to imitation of the classics or of Christian developments of them.'[1]

Carney's views have been influential among those who analyse the sagas primarily as products of their time of writing rather than in terms of their presumed oral antecedents. The importance of Carney's insights cannot be denied: if he sometimes argued them in a breezy or unsystematic manner,[2] this lack has been remedied by his followers, especially since the 1970s when the concerted application of literary-critical techniques began to make real inroads into the study of medieval Irish texts. Yet the search for Latin models, no less than the search for mythological or oral-traditional models, becomes one-sided when pursued as if Latin texts and translations – hagiography, biblical texts, Patristic writings, Classical learning – constituted the only meaningful part of the saga-authors' literary and narrative environment. Texts are necessarily our starting-point, but that does not mean Irish authors had access only to texts, or that their use of other media (such as conversation) is not worth considering, as philological and source-critical orthodoxy sometimes seems to assume.

My own approach to the sagas is oriented almost exclusively around the literate and learned contexts of their time of writing, toeing the philological line; but in this chapter I will caution against an 'either-or' view of the sagas' origins and procedures. Rather than offering a specific case-study, I will examine recent attempts to argue that Classical models were necessary for the writing of the longer native Irish sagas, revisiting some of the evidence cited and drawing on previous work on the Classical

* I am very grateful to Michael Clarke, Barbara Hillers, Máire Ní Mhaonaigh and Erich Poppe for their comments on earlier drafts of this chapter.

1 Carney, *Studies in Irish Literature*, 321–2, emphasis mine. On the great differences between the *Táin* and the other Ulster sagas, see Clarke, 'An Irish Achilles', 240–1.

2 For contrasting assessments, see Murphy's review of *Studies in Irish Literature*, and McCaughey, 'James Patrick Carney', 188.

affinities of the Middle Irish saga *Togail Bruidne Da Derga* (The Destruction of Da Derga's Hostel).[3] My aim is to ensure that we do not foreclose potentially interesting questions when we approach this massive and complex body of literature about whose early development so little hard evidence survives. This analysis is intended to contribute towards the ongoing scholarly reconstruction of the creative activity of Irish authors as an eclectic project in which elements of inherited and cosmopolitan narrative and learning, acquired via literate and oral media, functioned together in written literature which could be seen as both parallel to, and fundamentally distinct from, the Greek and Roman classics.

Much of my discussion will focus on the *Táin*, since it is the primary exhibit brought forward by scholars who argue that the longer Irish sagas must be imitations or emulations of Classical epic.[4] But it is important to remember that the *Táin*, while by far the longest of the earlier native sagas and structurally distinctive, was not alone in being a 'macro-form', that is, an extended narrative built by weaving existing narratives into a single structure.[5] My discussion will also include *Togail Bruidne Da Derga*, which boasts a structure of equal complexity to that of the *Táin*. As with the *Táin*, so with the *Togail*, Classical comparisons abound, but with Greek tragedy rather than Classical epic.[6] A fuller discussion of the early sagas' Classical affinities would need to consider a much wider range of so-called 'macro-forms', and to attend to the considerable diversity of texts we might include under that loose label. Erich Poppe's discussion of cyclic tendencies in Hiberno-Latin and Irish narrative would bear directly on such a discussion.[7] Within the saga corpus, obvious candidates for comparison would include *Tochmarc Étaíne* (The Wooing of Étaín), *Cath Maige Tuired* (The [Second] Battle of Mag Tuired), *Fled Bricrenn* (Bricriu's Feast), *Mesca Ulad* (The Drunkenness of the Ulstermen), and perhaps especially *Immram Curaig Máele Dúin* (The Voyage of Máel Dúin) with its concluding quotation from Virgil's *Aeneid* and its close parallels with Hiberno-Latin hagiography.[8] But such a discussion must await a future opportunity – apart from noting that it is, on the face of it, unsurprising that Christian Latin subtexts should float closer to the surface in an explicitly ecclesiastical wonder-tale like *Immram Curaig Máele Dúin* than in heroic sagas set in the pre-Christian past.

[3] See O'Connor, *Destruction*, 230–43. A condensed summary of my argument in the first part of this chapter may be found in *ibid*., 233–6, and a few of the individual points made in the second part of this chapter are briefly addressed in *ibid*., 236–41.

[4] Contrary to Clarke ('An Irish Achilles', 240), I do not consider evidence for Irish imitation of Classical epic to be necessarily distinct from evidence for Irish emulation of Classical epic, since the two practices operate on different and complementary levels. As Miles shows in *Heroic Saga*, the rhetorical techniques involved in *imitatio* (imitating a specific text) often helped to achieve a larger artistic aim of *aemulatio* (see Miles, *Heroic Saga*, 193).

[5] The term 'macro-form' has been widely used in a medieval Irish context by Tristram (e.g. 'The "Cattle-Raid"'), although it still wants a fuller definition.

[6] On the structure of *Togail Bruidne Da Derga*, see O'Connor, *Destruction*. On the comparison with tragedy, see *ibid*., 51–3, and for an example, Gerard Murphy *apud* Knott & Murphy, *Early Irish Literature*, 140.

[7] Poppe, *Of Cycles*. On *compilatio* and Classical macro-forms, see Burnyeat, this volume.

[8] For this last example, see Oskamp, *Voyage*, 177–8. Insightful discussions include Eldevik, 'A Vergilian model'; Miles, *Heroic Saga*, 46–8.

General considerations

Carney's view that the *Táin* and other large-scale sagas would have been unthinkable without Classical examples to imitate has been forcefully amplified by Hildegard L.C. Tristram. In a stimulating paper published in 1995, Tristram has used this hypothesis to propose that the *Táin* could not have existed in a large-scale version prior to the tenth century.[9] Despite its real value as food for thought, her hypothesis about Classical adaptations is, I think, unconvincing; yet it continues to be widely and positively cited in more recent studies of medieval Irish classicism. Brief critiques of certain aspects of Tristram's argument have been offered in passing,[10] but her central hypothesis has not been systematically challenged. As her discussion touches on several matters which are directly relevant to the literary-historical questions I am addressing, a reassessment of her argument will provide the main thread for this section of my discussion.

According to Tristram, the *Táin* as we have it 'could not have been compiled without the knowledge of the written translations of lengthy Classical texts' since, before this knowledge arrived, 'Irish authors did not have extended discourse models to go by in connecting short … episodes in a macro-form composition with the attempt to integrate them as a consistent whole.'[11] I will deal with this central point below, but first I need to tackle two statements made to support it. First, Tristram states that 'oral cultures tend to feature short narratives which may … be concatenated to form extended oral narratives.… More complex and truly integrated narratives are rare and seem to develop mainly in written cultures.' At this point in her argument, she explicitly includes *Togail Bruidne Da Derga* as well as the *Táin* as 'complex and truly integrated narratives'.[12]

Tristram's statement about what usually happens in oral cultures, while not backed up by any references, is more defensible if taken to refer to oral prose rather than oral poetry (a difficult distinction to draw in reality). Even if we give it the benefit of the doubt in this way, it proves a problematic claim. Carol Clover's 1986 comparative survey on the 'long prose form' in literary history, while regrettably dismissive of the Irish evidence, usefully brings together several examples of illiterate storytellers performing 'complex and truly integrated narratives' in various prosimetrum or ornamented prose forms at the request of collectors. Although Clover's purpose was to show, like Tristram, that these prose forms are generally very short (unlike the best-known Icelandic sagas), some of the unequivocally oral tales she cites are in fact longer than *Togail Bruidne Da Derga*, although none approach the *Táin* in length. They are certainly complex and elaborate, with one Congolese telling of the Nyanga *Mwindo Epic* being performed over a twelve-day period: far from being a mere 'concatenation' of episodes, it is a coherent and sophisticated macro-form in its own right, if the translation is a fair reflection of the original.[13] Such performances are typically the direct result of intervention by a literate outsider (the collector who

[9] Tristram, 'The "Cattle-Raid"', 69–75.

[10] Ní Mhaonaigh, 'Classical compositions', 11–12. I am grateful to Máire Ní Mhaonaigh for helping me to develop my own position in this debate, in her comments on an early draft of my book, *Destruction*, in 2000. See also Herbert, 'Reading Recension 1', 208; Clarke, 'An Irish Achilles', 243. All three scholars likewise consider the *Táin* to be influenced by Classical literature, but take issue with the larger claims offered by Tristram.

[11] Tristram, 'The "Cattle-Raid"', 75 and 70.

[12] *Ibid.*, 70.

[13] Biebuyck & Mateene, *The Mwindo epic*; Clover, 'The long prose form', 22–3.

requests the 'whole story'), but they are still oral compositions.[14] So, to reconfigure Tristram's statement, 'complex and truly integrated narratives' may develop as a result of contact with written cultures, but they are not necessarily the products of literacy.

Tristram's second supporting claim for her central hypothesis is the statement that 'translation movements' in the Middle Ages have generally resulted in 'a subsequent literary boom in the receiving languages'.[15] She does not mention specific examples in support of this claim, but cites relevant scholarship on medieval English and Welsh literature. One could additionally cite the role of translated romances in the development of indigenous chivalric sagas (*riddarasögur*) in thirteenth- and fourteenth-century Iceland, although the early dates proposed for the relevant adaptations no longer command universal scholarly consensus.[16] But this is a long way from claiming – and Tristram herself falls short of claiming – that the reverse is true, that medieval literary booms usually or even frequently resulted from translation movements. Stimulation or influence from texts in another language, especially Latin, clearly energized vernacular textual production across the medieval Celtic and Germanic worlds in the Middle Ages; but there is no evidence that Latin texts and their translations were the only thing to stimulate the rise of new genres. Further comparative investigation of medieval translation movements and the literary booms they enabled may yield useful analogies for the Irish situation, but they do not support Tristram's hypothesis that extended native sagas could only have resulted from the imitation of Classical translations.

With these two supporting statements out of the way, we return to Tristram's core hypothesis. First, as Máire Ní Mhaonaigh has pointed out in her own rebuttal, Irish authors did in fact have access to other 'extended discourse models' besides Classical translations, above all the Bible, which she calls 'the ultimate macro-text'. As evidence that the Bible provided authors in the Middle Irish period with a large-scale narrative template for composition in Irish, Ní Mhaonaigh cites *Saltair na Rann* (The Psalter of the Quatrains), a verse retelling of sacred history in 150 cantos normally dated to the tenth century on linguistic grounds;[17] she also cites the synthetic historical compilation *Lebor Gabála* (The Book of Invasions) as evidence that Irish scholars were already 'drawing extensively on foreign sources of varying length and complexity' in the ninth century and possibly even earlier.[18]

In fairness to Tristram, it should be noted that she herself cites both texts (alongside other chronicle-type macro-forms) in her own discussion but, since neither text survives in its extant form before the tenth century, she does not consider them to affect her hypothesis.[19] Certainly *Lebor Gabála*, whose extant version is a late Middle Irish production, provides scant evidence of written macro-forms

[14] For more examples see Clover, 'The long prose form'; Lord, *The Singer of Tales*.

[15] Tristram, 'The "Cattle Raid"', 71.

[16] For a balanced overview of the arguments, see Marti, 'Kingship, chivalry and religion', 49-50.

[17] Ní Mhaonaigh, 'Classical compositions', 11; Mac Eoin, 'The date and authorship'. The 150-psalm structure of *Saltair na Rann* is clearly modelled on the Psalms, a macro-text within a macro-text; and Brian Murdoch has shown that its author also drew on extended apocryphal narratives such as *Vita Adae et Evae* (The Life of Adam and Eve): see his commentary in Greene, Kelly & Murdoch, *The Irish Adam*, II. Also relevant in this connection, but less stable as a single macro-form, is the so-called 'Gospel History' in Irish prose, preserved in divergent versions and sections: see Poppe, *Of Cycles*, 23–7.

[18] Ní Mhaonaigh, 'Classical compositions', 11–12.

[19] Tristram, 'The "Cattle Raid"', 73–4 and n. 48.

before the tenth century. As John Carey has shown, a considerable body of Irish 'pseudo-historical lore' about migrations and settlements related in *Lebor Gabála* clearly existed by the ninth century, and (some of) this may have taken the form of a text, 'a kind of proto-*Lebar Gabála*' on which diverse extant chronicles, poems and sagas may have drawn;[20] but while the events narrated in such a text span many generations, there is no evidence that this hypothesized text was itself extensive.[21] Tristram's failure to consider *Saltair na Rann* is, however, more damaging and perhaps stems from her view that it is 'non-narrative' (in fact it intersperses hymns of praise with a large-scale narration of salvation history, dwelling in detail on episodes such as the rise of King David).[22]

A further point to be made on Tristram's side here is that the heroic sagas she discusses, the *Táin* and *Togail Bruidne Da Derga*, represent a very different kind of narrative extension from the macro-forms mentioned by Ní Mhaonaigh, which are more akin to chronicles than to the saga literature which is Tristram's primary focus.[23] The Bible, *Saltair na Rann*, and *Lebor Gabála* all narrate national or salvation history on a very large scale, covering many generations and centuries, whereas the *Táin* and *Togail Bruidne Da Derga*, each in their very different ways, focus primarily on a single sequence of events which they extend using devices of *amplificatio* (discussed below): a failed attempt to steal a prize bull, the rise and fall of a single king. In this simple matter of plot and focus, Classical histories and epics as different from each other (and from Irish sagas) as Dares Phrygius's *De excidio Troiae historia* (History of the Destruction of Troy) and Virgil's *Aeneid* are more analogous to the two Irish sagas than are the texts cited by Ní Mhaonaigh, and the Irish adaptations of these two Latin texts capitalize on this resemblance.[24]

However, Tristram's hypothesis ultimately falls down on the question of chronology. Her argument only works if Classical adaptations into Irish can be plausibly envisaged as having predated the composition of complex macro-form native sagas like the *Táin* and *Togail Bruidne Da Derga*. As Michael Clarke has pointed out, the textual evidence does not lend plausibility to this chronology.[25]

As outlined in chapter 1, it is generally agreed by scholars that the earliest Classical adaptations were *Togail Troí* (The Destruction of Troy), an innovative and widely circulated adaptation of Dares Phrygius's history of the Trojan War, and *Scéla Alaxandair* (The Alexander Saga), a history of Alexander the Great based on three Latin source-texts (and possibly influenced by a version of *Togail Troí*).[26] The remaining Classical adaptations are generally agreed to date from the twelfth century or later (barring a possibility that *Imtheachta Aeniasa* and the lost source of the extant *Achilleid* adaptations may date from the end of the eleventh).[27] The language

[20] Carey, *Irish National Origin-Legend*, 13–18 (quoting 16–17).

[21] Unlike the *Táin*, there is nothing in the extant recensions of *Lebor Gabála* which can be linguistically dated to the ninth century.

[22] *Ibid*., 73 n. 48. On the need to consider texts like these on a level with better-known 'macro-forms' such as the *Táin*, see Abigail Burnyeat's chapter in this volume.

[23] On the distinction between saga and chronicle (both of which exist in diverse forms), see chapter 1 above, 7.

[24] One could adapt Ní Mhaonaigh's point and suggest individual narratives within the Bible as possible templates for sagas. I have elsewhere suggested that the story of Saul in the first book of Samuel may have provided such a template for *Togail Bruidne Da Derga*: see O'Connor, *Destruction*, 243–328.

[25] Clarke, 'An Irish Achilles', 243.

[26] On *Togail Troí*, see above, 13–16, and Helen Fulton's chapter in this volume. On the possible influence of *Togail Troí* on *Scéla Alaxandair*, see Peters, 'Die irische Alexandersage', 94.

[27] See chapter 1 above, 14–15.

of the earliest extant versions of the Troy and Alexander adaptations has been dated to the eleventh century, but scattered earlier word-forms have led Gearóid Mac Eoin and Erik Peters respectively to suggest that, in each case, a lost tenth-century version underlies the extant eleventh-century version.[28]

The suggestion of lost tenth-century versions has not gone unquestioned,[29] but if accepted, this dating would make *Togail Troí* and *Scéla Alaxandair* roughly contemporary with, rather than predating, the earliest extant versions of the *Táin* and *Togail Bruidne Da Derga*. Thurneysen's view that the surviving first recensions of the *Táin* and the *Togail* were compiled in the eleventh century still commands widespread assent,[30] although several scholars push the date of the archetype of the *Táin* back into the tenth century on linguistic grounds, as does Máire West for *Togail Bruidne Da Derga*.[31] In asserting the priority of *Togail Troí* over the two native sagas, Tristram makes much of its older word-forms as identified by Mac Eoin;[32] but this argument, too, backfires when it is seen that the older word-forms found in the *Táin* and *Togail Bruidne Da Derga* are Old Irish and thus datable to the ninth century or earlier, whereas the older word-forms found in *Togail Troí* (and *Scéla Alaxandair*) are Middle Irish and thus unlikely to predate the tenth century.

Admittedly, considerations of dating also invalidate some of the more obvious objections to Tristram's hypothesis. In defence of the priority of the *Táin* over *Togail Troí* it is often said that the many references to the *Táin* in other Old and Middle Irish literature indicates that the saga was prestigious and existed in written form by the ninth century.[33] These references undoubtedly confirm that the *Táin* was prestigious, but (as with the case of *Lebor Gabála*) they do not have any bearing on the length of the Old Irish *Táin* or even its existence in written form.[34] The one spectacular exception to this rule, flagged up by Máire Herbert, does not help much.[35] The author of the short tale *Do fhallsigud Tána Bó Cúailnge* (Of the Revelation of *Táin Bó Cúailnge*) clearly had a macro-form and both written and oral media in mind when referring to the *Táin*: its story hinges on the notion that the *Táin* was once swapped for Isidore's *Etymologies* and thus lost, and was subsequently narrated orally by one of its protagonists (a resuscitated Fergus mac Róich) and committed to writing by

[28] Mac Eoin, 'Das Verbalsystem', 201–2; Peters, 'Die irische Alexandersage', 94–5. See also Mac Gearailt, 'Change and innovation', 459–62 and 466; Miles, *Heroic Saga*, 53–5.

[29] Ní Mhaonaigh, 'Classical compositions', 1, n. 3, notes that many of the early forms observed by Peters in *Scéla Alaxandair* persisted well into the eleventh century. Michael Clarke (pers. comm.) has suggested that the text of *Togail Troí* preserving early forms is from the clearly amplified Recension 2, and that the early forms could be examples of learned archaizing in this text. Another possibility would be that the author of Recension 2 drew sporadically on a second, older source.

[30] Thurneysen, *Heldensage*, 24–7 and 101–13 (but, unlike most modern scholars, Thurneysen believed the same person to be responsible for both 'compilations'). For a lucid discussion of the dating and sources of the *Táin*, see Ó hUiginn, 'The background'.

[31] Thurneysen, *Heldensage*, 627; West, 'An Edition', 350–1. West's edition is currently being prepared for publication. Máire West has informed me (pers. comm.) that she still considers the *Togail* to be a tenth-century composition based on earlier sources. See also Manning, 'The verbal system of *Táin Bó Cúailnge*'.

[32] Tristram, 'The "Cattle-Raid"', 73–4. The flaw in this reasoning is discussed by Clarke, 'An Irish Achilles', 243, n. 25.

[33] Ó hUiginn, 'The background', 34–5; Herbert, 'Reading Recension 1', 208.

[34] By analogy with similar cross-references in Icelandic sagas, intertextual references to the *Táin* by the narrators of what became its *remscéla* need not be referring to a written *Táin*, although it seems likely to me that at least some of them do.

[35] Herbert, 'Reading Recension 1', 208.

Senchán Torpéist. Here, too, the uncertainties of dating Middle Irish texts muddy the waters. Kevin Murray considers the story to be basically Old Irish, with a Middle Irish 'veneer', but Tristram herself has suggested that it is eleventh-century, presumably because she takes the Middle Irish element to be more than just a veneer.[36] This tale cannot settle the question of whether the *Táin* existed as a written macro-form prior to the tenth century, and its representation of the writing of the *Táin* beautifully blurs the boundary between orality and literacy which modern scholars so often treat as a necessary dichotomy.

As for *Togail Bruidne Da Derga*, Ní Mhaonaigh has countered Tristram's hypothesis by suggesting that, because the Old Irish linguistic stratum runs right through the extant saga, we must consider the possibility that not only did its author use Old Irish sources, but that at least one of those sources was 'a reasonably lengthy, elaborate … composition'.[37] Ní Mhaonaigh's argument here recalls Thurneysen's view that the saga was based on no more than two ninth-century versions of the story, each of which was elaborate enough to contain an extended 'watchman device' furnishing this saga with its most prominent means of amplification. The textual evidence underpinning Ní Mhaonaigh's and Thurneysen's suggestions is, however, ambivalent. West's reassessment of Thurneysen's 'two-source' theory uses text-critical evidence of inconsistencies and doublets to demolish that theory, proposing instead that the saga-author brought together at least three variant versions of the tale, not just two.[38] This increase in the number of texts brought together to form the extant saga implies a corresponding reduction in the necessary dimensions of those texts. Furthermore, I have recently argued that many of the inconsistencies which Thurneysen, West, and others have found in the extant saga and explained with reference to lost variant versions of the story are not really inconsistencies at all, but deliberate literary strategies by a master storyteller or figments of the text-critical imagination.[39] If my position were taken to an extreme (to which I have not taken it), it would be possible to abandon the notion that *Togail Bruidne Da Derga* is compilatory in any meaningful sense of that term, and to view it instead as an original Middle Irish composition drawing freely on earlier sources whose own extent and nature are more inaccessible to us than ever.

These considerations bear out Tristram's repeated insistence that arguments from linguistic dating are not to be trusted, and thus invalidate her own argument for the priority of Classical adaptations over native sagas.[40] All that we can say, on the general evidence discussed so far, is that both the earliest Classical adaptations and the two longest early native sagas can be argued to date from the same period.

A test-case revisited: the 'watchman device' in Toichim na mBuiden

The question of priority might seem easier to settle by close examination of the texts themselves, rather than by weighing up the general issues just discussed. One could

[36] Murray, 'The finding', 19; Tristram, 'Warum Cenn Faelad', 238.
[37] Ní Mhaonaigh, 'Classical compositions', 11.
[38] West, 'The genesis'.
[39] O'Connor, 'Compilation as creative artistry'.
[40] Tristram has emphasized the fragility of linguistic dating in 'The "Cattle-Raid"', 67–9, and 'Narratology and salvation', 38–9; see also Clarke, 'An Irish Achilles', 242–3.

thus examine the borrowing of motifs or narrative patterns from one text to another. This procedure has its own potential for circularity when the dating of the two groups of texts is as close and uncertain as has been made clear, but it is more promising than a purely abstract approach.

The first recension of *Togail Troí* contains several narrative devices resembling those in native sagas, especially the *Táin*: this has led scholars to conclude that these techniques were borrowed from native stories to Gaelicize the Troy story, familiarizing it for its target audience. This 'Gaelicizing' model is the received view of the origins and procedures of *Togail Troí* and, by extension, later Classical adaptations; Leslie Diane Myrick's and Úaitéar Mac Gearailt's discussions are the most detailed.[41] Conversely, Brent Miles has recently argued that both *Togail Troí* and the *Táin* participate in a classicizing aesthetic, and that many of the so-called 'native' techniques are in fact imitations of Classical literature.[42]

Miles's ground-breaking work gives form and structure to the view which Carney and Tristram had expressed in polemical assertions. He has achieved this by engaging in a detailed reconstruction of the overall environment of Irish classicism and its likely routes of transmission, and by closely analysing the stylistic techniques employed in the texts themselves. He shows convincingly that *Togail Troí* was written using a rich palette of Classical devices; he also makes a strong case for Recension 2 and the later strata of Recension 1 of the *Táin* having been informed by Classical techniques. More problematically, he argues that the *Táin* was originally composed as a macro-text in imitation and emulation of *Togail Troí* and its Classical forebears.[43] He avoids making sweeping claims about necessary and sufficient causes, since his primary concern is to analyse neoclassical practices within medieval Irish vernacular narrative: in his book, he claims to address 'only indirectly' the question of 'the origins of early Irish literature'.[44] Yet the origins of the *Táin* as a literary text are directly addressed, and Miles also offers one or two hints about how his conclusions fit into a wider picture; he cites Tristram's hypothesis with approval and presents his evidence as a means of improving on Carney's and Thurneysen's insights about the Classical origins of longer sagas such as the *Táin*.[45] He has brought a wealth of important new evidence to bear on the origins question, and no serious discussion of that question can now proceed without taking account of his work.

Miles has made the 'classicizing' case more plausible and defensible than it was before. However, I will now suggest that the evidence he adduces does not adequately support the view, trumpeted by Carney and Tristram and hinted at by Miles, that Classical *imitatio* was necessary to the composition of longer native sagas. Instead, I believe that his analysis confirms the notion of a dramatic increase of Classical *imitatio* and *aemulatio* through the Middle Irish period, and on the other hand suggests that the evidence for large-scale imitation of Classical texts and adaptations in the oldest extended native sagas (such as the first recension of the *Táin* – as seen in its older strata – and the second recension of *Togail Bruidne Da Derga*) is highly equivocal. I will substantiate this view by revisiting one of Miles's prime case-studies from the *Táin* (which also happens to be one of Carney's) and asking

[41] Myrick, *From the* De Excidio; Mac Gearailt, '*Togail Troí*: an example'; Mac Gearailt, 'Change and innovation', 454–5 and 484–5.
[42] Miles, *Heroic Saga*.
[43] *Ibid*., 145–244; Miles, 'The literary set piece'.
[44] Miles, *Heroic Saga*, 13.
[45] Miles, 'The literary set piece', 78; Miles, *Heroic Saga*, 150, 192–3.

again what conclusions about the saga's origins can be drawn from this example. While some holes will necessarily be picked, that is not my main intention, nor do I intend to imply that Miles's whole approach is mistaken. On the contrary, his contribution to the debate is of fundamental importance to the field. I merely hope to add further nuance and chronological definition to the picture of a classicizing vernacular literary culture which he presents, and to set this picture within a larger context of storytelling, both oral and written.

I will focus on the literary technique most often cited in connection with the Classical hypothesis, namely the 'watchman device', a structuring device and means of rhetorical *amplificatio* found in Classical epic, Irish Classical adaptations, and native Irish sagas (besides other ancient and medieval literatures). In a 'watchman' sequence, successive individuals, such as the chiefs in an invading army, are described and identified in a repeating series. In the Irish examples, the descriptions are often elaborate, and the device as a whole helps lend epic scale and tone to a saga. In some texts, the device is given what Patrick Sims-Williams has called 'erroneous' or 'riddling' treatment: a watcher describes a set of natural features like mist or lightning which are then correctly identified as properties of an invading army, such as warriors' breath or their flashing eyes.[46] Carney proposed that the presence of the 'watchman device' in both Classical epic (Homer's *Iliad* and Statius's *Thebaid*) and Irish saga (the *Táin*, *Togail Bruidne Da Derga*, *Mesca Ulad*, *Fled Bricrenn*, and others) showed that Irish saga-authors must have been imitating Classical epic via unknown intermediary sources.[47]

Carney did not take into account the presence of a watchman sequence in *Togail Troí*: this sequence was not in Dares's *De Excidio*, and constitutes one of the Irish translator's many innovations to his source-text. It displays similarities of both form and overall placing to a watchman-sequence towards the end of the *Táin*. In *Togail Troí*, when the Greek fleet arrives at the coast near Troy, the translator inserts a riddling watchman-device describing the enemy fleet as a conversation between King Priam and a Trojan messenger. The messenger describes the fleet in terms of natural phenomena which he then explains as the breathing and noise of the warriors as they row ashore. In the first recension, preserved in the Trinity College Dublin manuscript 1319 (formerly H.2.17),[48] the riddling parts of the description (i.e. those not literally 'real') run as follows. I provide the 'solutions' to the riddling elements in the translation, in italics, but in the Irish text these solutions are provided in more detail by the speaker himself after the third paragraph, in a passage omitted here:

> 'Andar-lem ém amal rodercvs,' ar sé, 'domárfás tromchéo tiughaide ⁊ glasnél dub dorchaidhe forsind fhairce, co roleth co níulu nime, cona acus nem huasa cind ⁊ coná hacvs ler fona longaib, ar rolín dorchatu in cocái [= *cócháin*?] ó nem co talmain.
>
> 'Domárfás íarsin fogur gáeithe gére gailbighe: indar-lem noth[r]ascérad fidbada in betha, amal esnad mbrátha.
>
> 'Rochvala breisim thornige móre: andar-lem ba hé in nem dorochair, no in muir rotráigh, no in talam roscáil i n-ilrannaib, no amal nothut[it]ís frosa rétland for dreich an talman.

[46] Sims-Williams, 'Riddling treatment', now revised in his *Irish Influence*, 95–133.
[47] Carney, *Studies*, 318–22.
[48] This manuscript also contains fragments of a text of Recension 2 of *Togail Troí*.

> . . . 'Atchonnarc iarsin brechtrad ind étaig illathaig co n-áille cech datha roleth darsin fairgi ule: indar-let bá do phuplib ildathachaib robrecad ind fhairge uile. Ni aca ernail dhatha isin domun ná rabi and, etir glas 7 gorm 7 dérg 7 huaine 7 chorcair, etir dub 7 fhind 7 odhor 7 buide, etir brec 7 dond 7 alad 7 rúad.
>
> 'Atchondarc íarsin coméirge in marv i n-aírde fo chosmailius slíab n-árd. Atchonnarc cach slíab andiaid araile. Iss ed airdmius lem nolethfadh cech sliab 7 cech tonn dib darsna Troianda ule.'[49]

> 'Indeed, it seemed to me as I looked,' he said, 'that there appeared to me a heavy, thick mist and a dark, dusky cloud on the sea, and it spread to the clouds of heaven, so that heaven above them was not near, and the sea under the ships was not near, for darkness filled the void from heaven to earth. [= *the breath and ardour of the warriors*]
>
> 'Then there appeared to me the sound of a keen tempestuous wind: it seemed to me that it would cast down the forests of the world, like the blast of Judgement Day. [= *the panting of the warriors rowing ashore*]
>
> 'I heard the noise of a mighty thunder: it seemed to me that it was the heaven that fell, or the sea that ebbed away, or the earth that split into many fragments, or as if showers of stars were falling on the face of the earth.' [= *the grinding of the warriors' teeth and the noise of their weapons*]
>
> … 'After that I saw the diversity of many-hued clothing, with the beauty of every colour that spread over the whole sea. It would seem to you as if the whole sea was speckled with many-coloured awnings. I have not seen any colour in the world that was not there, both grey and blue and red and green and purple, both black and white and dun and yellow, both speckled and brown and motley and red. [= *the sails over their ships*]
>
> 'After that I saw the rising of the sea on high in the semblance of lofty mountains. I saw each mountain after the other. [= *the surge of waves ?before the ships (explanation uncertain)*] This is my estimate, that each mountain and each wave of them would spread over all the Trojans.'

In the *Táin*, the messenger Mac Roth describes the approaching Ulster armies to Ailill and Medb in similar riddling terms, in an elaborate watchman-episode entitled *Toichim na mBuiden* (The March of the Companies). This time, as in other native Irish watchman-devices but unlike the device in *Togail Troí*, it is a second speaker who explains the meaning of what the messenger saw. The riddling sequence is much more elaborate (and almost twice as long) in the second recension than in the first. Since the relationship between the two recensions' texts of *Toichim na mBuiden* is central to the 'classicizing' argument proposed by Miles, I reproduce both below, again providing the 'solutions' in italics (based on Fergus mac Róich's explanations in the passage itself):[50]

[49] Adapted from Stokes & Windisch, *Irische Texte*, II part 2 (1884), 1–142, lines 847–55 and 877–82; my translation is adapted from *ibid*., 93–5. The watchman's explanation of the first riddling elements intervenes between the two parts of the passage quoted here. A much more elaborate version appears in Recension 2, preserved in the Book of Leinster: see Stokes, *Togail Troi*, lines 1358–1458. On the dates of the two recensions, see Mac Gearailt, '*Togail Troí*: an example', 77–9.

[50] The texts and line-numbers given below are from O'Rahilly, *Táin Bó Cúailnge Recension 1* and O'Rahilly, *Táin Bó Cúalnge from the Book of Leinster* respectively. My translations follow O'Rahilly's, with minor changes.

Táin, recension 1, lines 3554–64	*Táin*, recension 2, lines 4166–74 and 4183–92
In cétna fecht íarom doréccacha Mac Roth húad do accmac Slébe Fúaid, co n-acca jar sin dorrala ina huili fiadmíla asin fidbaid co rabadar isin maig huile.	Tánic Mac Roth reime d'fharcsi maigi mórfharsing Mide. Nírbo chían do Mac Roth dá mbáe and co cúala inní, in fúaim 7 in fothrom, in sestán 7 in sésilbi. Nír shúail ní risbud shamalta leiss acht marbad hí in fhirmimint dothuitted bar dunegnúis in talman, ná marbad hí ind fhairrge eithrech ochargorm tísad for tulmoing in bethad, ná marbad é in talam barrálad assa thalamchumscugud, ná marbad hí ind fhidbad ra thuitted cách díb i nglaccaib 7 gablaib 7 géscaib araile. Cid trá acht barrafnit na fiadmíla barsin mag connárbo réil tulmonga maige Mide fóthib.
'In fecht n-aili didiu,' or Mac Roth, 'doréccacha úaim in mag co n-acca in tromchiaich ro lín na glendu 7 na fántu co nderna na tilcha eturru amail indsi i llochaib.	… Fecht n-aill forréccaig Mac Roth in mag. Confhacca ní, in nglascheó mór ra ercc in comás eter nem 7 talmain. Andar leiss batar indsi ás lochaib atchondaic ás fhánglentaib na cíach. Andar leis batar úama ursloicthi atchonnaic and i rremthús na cíach cétna. Andar leis na línanarta lín lángela ná bá snechta síthalta ac snigi ratafarfáit and tri urdluich na cíach cétna, na andar leis ba éochain de ilénaib ilerda ingantacha imda,
'Dommárfas iar sin ina oíble tened asin mórc[h]iaich sin. Iar suidiu domárfas ilbrechtrad cach illdatha isin bith. Atchondarc íar sin in saignénraith 7 in mbreisimnich 7 in tornich 7 in gaíth móir – bec nád rucc mo fholt dom chind 7 nácharam trascair dar m'aiss 7 ní bu mór gáeth in loí chena.'	ná ba hilbrec[h]tnugud rétland roglan i n-aidchi reóid rosholais, nó ba haíble teined trichemrúaid. Atchúala ní, in fúaim 7 in fothrom 7 in fidréan, in toirm 7 in torand, in sestainib 7 in sésilbi.
The first time Mac Roth gazed into the distance around Slíab Fúait, he saw that all the wild beasts had come out of the wood into the whole plain. [= *the Ulster warriors rushing into the wood and shaking it, so that the animals flee from them*]	Mac Roth came forward to reconnoitre the great plain of Meath. Not long was he there when he heard a noise and a tumult and a clamour. It seemed to him almost as if the sky had fallen onto the surface of the earth, or as if the fish-abounding, blue-bordered sea had swept across the face of the world, or as if the earth had split in an earthquake, or as if the trees of the forest had all fallen into each other's forks and bifurcations and branches. However, the wild beasts were driven across the plain [in such numbers] that the surface of the

	plain of Meath was not visible beneath them. [= *the Ulster warriors cutting down the trees in the wood and driving out the beasts*] . . . [*Here is inserted Fergus's explanation of the above, lines 4175–82*]
'The second time I looked out over the plain,' said Mac Roth, 'I saw that a dense mist had filled the glens and valleys, so that the hills between them rose up like islands in lakes. [= *the warriors' breath*]	Once more Mac Roth scanned the plain. He saw a great grey mist which filled the void between sky and earth. [= *warriors' and horses' breath and dust*]
	He seemed to see islands in lakes above the slopes of the mist. [= *warriors' heads above their chariots*] He seemed to see yawning caverns in the forefront of the mist itself. [= *warriors' and horses' mouths and nostrils*] It seemed to him that pure-white linen cloths or sifted snow dropping down appeared to him through a rift in the same mist. [= *foam at horses' mouths*] He seemed to see a flock of varied, wonderful, numerous birds [= *clods thrown up by horses' hooves*]
'Then I saw sparks of fire flashing in that dense mist, and I seemed to see the variegation of every colour in the world. Then I saw lightning[51] [= *the warriors' eyes flashing*]	or the shimmering of shining stars on a bright, frosty night, or the sparks of a blazing fire. [= *warriors' flashing eyes*]
'and I heard a din and thunder, and [I felt] a great wind – which almost blew the hair from my head and threw me on my back, and yet the wind that day was not strong.' [= *the warriors' shouts, the clatter of their weapons and the galloping of their horses*]	He heard a noise and a tumult, a din and thunder, a clamour and uproar. [= *the warriors' voices, the clatter of their weapons and the galloping of their horses*]
[*Fergus explains what Mac Roth has seen*]	[*Fergus explains what Mac Roth has seen*] [*Ailill and Medb's armies set up camp; they fight amongst themselves and are attacked by an Ulster troop led by Conchobor; the Ulster troop then withdraws for the night*]
[*Mac Roth spies again on the Ulster armies, and a long 'realistic' watchman sequence follows immediately, with Mac Roth's descriptions and Fergus's identifications*]	[*Mac Roth spies again on the Ulster armies, and a long 'realistic' watchman sequence follows immediately, with Mac Roth's descriptions and Fergus's identifications*]

[51] Hyper-literally, 'the lightning', as in O'Rahilly's translation; but as this usage of the definite article in Irish corresponds roughly to the indefinite article in English (or, more closely but colloquially, to the demonstrative 'this lightning'), I substitute the indefinite article or nothing, here and elsewhere.

The riddling sequences in the *Táin* are followed immediately (or, for the second recension of the *Táin*, after a short hiatus) by a second watchman-sequence in which the messenger describes individual enemy warriors and troops in a more conventional mimetic manner, an example of what is often labelled the 'realistic watchman device'.[52] The two parts of the sequence, riddling and realistic, are clearly delineated. *Togail Troí* 1, by contrast, contains no descriptions of individual warriors, but its descriptions of the approaching fleet make a similar, if gradual, transition from riddling to realistic, becoming progressively less fantastical until they merge with realistic description which requires no explanation.

To complete this overview of watchman sequences in the various recensions of the two sagas, it is worth noting that the second recension of *Togail Troí*, which postdates the extant *Toichim na mBuiden*, thoroughly reorganizes (and amplifies) the whole watchman episode in a manner which is much more akin to *Toichim na mBuiden* and may reflect its influence.[53] Its author has shuffled descriptive elements around to produce a much clearer bipartite structure (riddling followed by realistic) and the watchman's descriptions are identified by a different speaker in direct speech (Priam) rather than by the watchman himself.[54]

For Myrick, the resemblance between the two watchman sequences in the first recensions of the *Táin* and *Togail Troí* shows that the author of *Togail Troí* 1 borrowed the device from the first recension of the *Táin* in order to Gaelicize the Classical tale, to make it intelligible and appealing for a native audience.[55] She defends this position by invoking Sims-Williams's argument that the watchman device is an international oral-traditional storytelling technique with examples all over ancient and mediaeval Europe, west Asia, and India. Sims-Williams has recently reaffirmed this argument: now adding *Togail Troí* to the roster of comparanda, he has shown that the variant pattern 'recognition from description without seeing' (of which the 'erroneous' and 'riddling' forms are a subset) was an Insular innovation, a collective narrative resource developed in self-conscious and contrasting ways by the authors of medieval Welsh, Icelandic, Old English, and especially Irish literature.[56] The erroneous and riddling variants result from combining the 'watchman' framework with the rhetorical device of giving alternative explanations for a single phenomenon, which Sims-Williams has termed the 'alternatives device' and which is even more widely attested than the watchman device.[57]

[52] *Togail Troí*, recension 1: Stokes &Windisch, *Irische Texte*, II part 2 (1884), 1–142, lines 847–55.*Táin*, Recension 1: O'Rahilly, *Táin Bó Cúailnge*, lines 3585–3870. *Táin*, Recension 2: O'Rahilly, *Táin Bó Cúalnge from the Book of Leinster*, lines 4296–4593. For a comparative table of the key descriptive elements, see Miles, 'Middle Irish saga', 189–90; for discussion, see Miles, *Heroic Saga*, 177–9.

[53] Mac Gearailt, 'Zur literarischen Sprache', 112, offers linguistic evidence that Recension 2 of *Togail Troí* reflects a younger stage in transmission than Recension 1 and is contemporary with Recension 2 of the *Táin*. Clarke ('An Irish Achilles', 242, n. 22) suggests that the language of Recension 2 of *Togail Troí* postdates Recension 2 of the *Táin*. Nevertheless, it draws on lost earlier sources, so the possibility that the influence went in the opposite direction cannot be absolutely excluded.

[54] Stokes, *Togail Troi*, lines 1358–1458. On these adjustments, see Myrick, *From the* De Excidio, 136–8.

[55] Myrick, *From the* De Excidio, 137–40.

[56] Sims-Williams, 'Riddling treatment'; Sims-Williams, *Irish Influence*, 95–133.

[57] Sims-Williams, '"Is it fog"'; Sims-Williams, *Irish Influence*, 79–94. See also Henry, *The Early English and Celtic Lyric*, 216–21. These devices have also been discussed in an unpublished paper by Barbara Hillers, '*Ní hé Cormac beus*: permutations of the watchman device in early Irish saga', given at the Fourth Annual Medievalist Conference, Maynooth, in summer 1992. I am grateful to her for sending me a copy.

For Miles, oral storytelling has very little to do with the Irish watchman-sequences. In his view, the riddling passages in both recensions of the *Táin* and the passage in *Togail Troí* 1 are free imitations of the 'Panic episode' in Book 7 of Statius's *Thebaid*, and the overall sequence in the *Táin* (riddling followed by realistic) was patterned on the sequence in *Togail Troí*. To be precise, Miles considers that the author of a lost tenth- or eleventh-century *Táin* (on which the extant Recensions 1 and 2 drew) both imitated Statius's episode directly (for his riddling description) *and* drew on the Statius-imitating watchman-sequence in *Togail Troí* (when structuring his watchman episode as a whole).[58] Recension 2, for Miles, reflects that lost early *Táin* text better than does Recension 1: I will revisit that point after discussing the Classical parallels themselves, but for now we must accept the priority of Recension 2 for the sake of considering Miles's main argument.

In the episode from the *Thebaid*, the god Mars sends his companion Pavor (Panic) to rouse the Greeks to action by creating the illusion that the Theban armies are attacking them; Panic then terrifies the Greeks with apocalyptic clouds of dust, thundering noises and other signs of an approaching army.[59] The parallel is not exact (for one thing, the Panic episode is not framed as a watchman device), but Miles points to coincidences of imagery, and in the sequencing of those images, which make it possible that the author of the *Táin* was imitating the *Thebaid*:

> si geminos soles ruituraque suadeat astra,
> aut nutare solum aut veteres descendere silvas,
> a! miseri vidisse putant. tunc acre novabat
> ingenium: falso Nemeaeum pulvere campum
> erigit; attoniti tenebrosam a vertice nubem
> respexere duces; falso clamore tumultum
> auget, et arma virum pulsusque imitatur equorum,
> terribilemque vagas ululatum spargit in auras.
> exsiluere animi, dubiumque in murmure vulgus
> pendet: 'ubi iste fragor? ni fallimur aure. sed unde
> pulvereo stant astra globo? num Ismenius ultro
> miles? ita est: veniunt.'[60]

> If he [Panic] persuades them [cities] of two suns or of stars about to plunge or ground wobbling or ancient forests descending, why, the poor souls think they have seen it. Then he bethought him of something new and clever. He raises false dust on the plain of Nemea. The leaders gaze astounded at a dark cloud above their heads. He swells the tumult with false clamour, imitating men's arms and horses' gallop, scattering a fearsome yell upon the wandering winds. Their hearts leapt and the multitude hangs doubtful and murmuring, 'Where is this noise? – unless our ears deceive us. But why stand the stars in a ball of dust? Is it the Ismenian [=Theban] army challenging us? So it is: they come.'

As Miles observes, the sequence of the first three images in the Latin text (falling stars [*astra*], earthquake, falling trees) appears in the same order in the second recension

[58] Miles, *Heroic Saga*, 175–93; Miles, 'The literary set piece'.
[59] Shackleton Bailey, *Statius*, I, 406–8; Miles, 'The literary set piece'; Miles, *Heroic Saga*, 175–83.
[60] Shackleton Bailey, *Statius*, I, 406. My translation is based on Shackleton Bailey's in this edition; Miles (*Heroic Saga*, 177–9) provides a more literal translation alongside the corresponding passage from the second recension of the *Táin*.

of the *Táin* (falling sky [*nem*], earthquake, falling trees), albeit with a fourth image, the sea flooding the land, inserted between the first and second images in the *Táin*. Miles suggests that 'the coincidence of this sequence alone is adequate to suggest that the *Thebaid* is the ultimate literary model'.[61] He then observes further parallels between subsequent images, some of which appear in Mac Roth's descriptions and others in Fergus's explanations. Panic's renewed invention (*novabat ingenium*) is analogous to Mac Roth presenting a fresh riddling sequence based on his second reconnoitre; Panic's cloud of dust resembles the grey mist which Mac Roth sees (really, in part, dust raised by the warriors); Panic's illusion of men's arms and galloping horses corresponds both to Fergus's explanation of Mac Roth's 'linen cloths or sifted snow' (foam at the horses' mouths) and to Fergus's explanation of one element in the martial din heard by Mac Roth (the galloping of horses); the noise (*fragor*) heard by Panic's victims corresponds to the same martial din; and Panic's image of stars in a ball of dust correspond to the image of stars on a frosty night seen by Mac Roth (in reality, the flashing eyes of the warriors). Finally, Panic's purpose in frightening the Greeks is paralleled by Ailill's accusing Fergus of trying to frighten them with his explanations of Mac Roth's visions.[62]

Some of these parallels are closer than others. But, according to Miles, overall they confirm that the author of the text which underlies Recension 2 of the *Táin* imitated Statius's *Thebaid*, either at first or second hand. The parallels are indeed striking, and Classical imitation seems a reasonable hypothesis here. Miles's argument about *Toichim na mBuiden* becomes more precarious, however, when the Irish Troy-saga is brought in. The presence of some of these same images in the riddling sequence of *Togail Troí* 1 (cloudy mist, falling sky, falling trees, din) indicates to Miles that its author, too, was imitating Statius's Panic episode, albeit more distantly;[63] but when all the texts quoted above are compared, the *Táin* itself (especially as represented by Recension 2) seems a more plausible source for *Togail Troí* at this point than does the *Thebaid*.[64]

More boldly, Miles goes on to suggest that the 'realistic' watchman-sequence which follows the riddling passage in *Toichim na mBuiden*, and indeed the structure of the entire first day of battle in the *Táin* built around these watchman-episodes, was modelled on the analogous sequence in *Togail Troí*. For the latter's equivalent to the *Táin*'s 'realistic' watchman-device, Miles is not thinking of the realistic descriptions of Greek ships which the riddling passage (in Recension 1) introduces in its second half. He is thinking of a much closer equivalent in *Togail Troí* to the 'realistic' sequence in *Toichim na mBuiden*, where the leading warriors would be described individually and 'catalogued' in the epic manner. Unfortunately, the passage in question no longer survives. Miles argues that a 'realistic' watchman-scene may have been present in the lost original tenth-century adaptation of *De excidio Troiae historia*, just after (some form of) the riddling watchman-sequence discussed above. At this point, the H.2.17 manuscript of *Togail Troí* 1 signals a defect (*esbaid*) in the exemplar. According to Miles, the lost passage could have taken the form of

[61] Miles, 'The literary set piece', 70; *Heroic Saga*, 179.
[62] Miles, 'The literary set piece', 67–72; *Heroic Saga*, 177–80.
[63] Miles, *Heroic Saga*, 182.
[64] Miles's reasons for excluding that possibility are discussed below. It is worth noting that the only example of possible influence from the *Thebaid* discussed in Miles's long chapter on Classical techniques in *Togail Troí* (*Heroic Saga*, 95–144) is, by his own admission, highly problematic: *Heroic Saga*, 135.

a further 'realistic' watchman-device, and if so, it could have stood in place of the so-called 'Portrait Catalogue', a dry list of descriptions of the main warriors included at a much earlier point in Dares's Latin text.[65]

As Miles points out, Dares's Portrait Catalogue is not included (either in its original place or elsewhere) in any of the earliest texts of *Togail Troí* – neither Recension 1 nor the Book of Leinster's version of Recension 2 – so internal support for his conjecture is lacking. He finds support, instead, in the fact that the H.2.17 text of Recension 1, just after its own watchman-sequence and just before the note about the *esbaid*, mentions that the same messenger returned to Priam to tell him what each of the Greek warriors looked like. This cue partly resembles the introduction to the Portrait Catalogue in the later recensions of *Togail Troí* (later texts of Recension 2, and Recension 3), where that catalogue has been transplanted to yet another position in the narrative.[66] The support of these later recensions is weakened, however, by the fact that none of them attempts to elaborate the Portrait Catalogue into a 'realistic' watchman-sequence, despite their considerable freedom with the Latin source in other ways; they merely translate the dry catalogue into Irish. In fact, they do the opposite of dramatizing it, framing it extra-diegetically (outside the narrative world) as the utterance of the original (eyewitness) author, rather than as the utterance of a messenger or anyone else within the story: *atfet dano Dariet stairscribhnidh* ('now Dares the historian said/reported').[67] Finally, the Portrait Catalogue is not a description of the Greek warriors, which would be required at this point in *Togail Troí*; it is a description of the leading Greek and Trojan warriors, and thus fit for purpose only after drastic pruning.

None of these considerations rules out the possibility that the author of the original Irish adaptation of *De excidio Troiae historia* adapted its laconic catalogue of warriors into a watchman device at this point in the story, but the evidence does not look compelling. It seems more likely that the author of the earliest version of *Togail Troí* considered that his own elaborate watchman-sequences fulfilled the ekphrastic and amplificatory functions of the Latin warrior-descriptions much better than the Portrait Catalogue itself, which he omitted for that reason. That the author of the Book of Leinster text of *Togail Troí* 2 was likewise well aware of the original catalogue, but shared the earlier author's desire to replace it with something other than a 'realistic' watchman-device, is suggested by his own amplification of the first day of battle so as to include Trojan as well as Greek warrior-descriptions, via a second riddling watchman-sequence from the Greek perspective, and via the inclusion of long ekphrastic portraits of Achilles and Hector soon afterwards.[68] The Latin text has here been transformed almost beyond recognition, informed by an ambitiously classicizing aesthetic but clearly drawing on the narrative procedures of existing Irish sagas.

Miles adduces further support for his putative 'realistic' watchman-sequence by returning to Book 7 of the *Thebaid*. In a passage long before the Panic episode, a genuine watchman-sequence is preceded by a scene involving the arrival and report of a messenger, with different speakers (an arrangement paralleled in Books 2 and 3 of the *Iliad*, Statius's model for the overall sequence).[69] The similarity in narrative

[65] Miles, *Heroic Saga*, 186–90.
[66] *Ibid*., 188–90.
[67] Dublin, Royal Irish Academy, MS D iv 2, fo. 35rb, as quoted by Miles, *Heroic Saga*, 188.
[68] This sequence begins at Best *et al*., *Book of Leinster*, IV, 1105 (line 32410), and is summarized by Miles, *Heroic Saga*, 189 n. 118.
[69] Shackleton Bailey, *Statius*, I, 416–26.

procedure between a messenger's report and a watchman sequence has suggested to some scholars that the latter passage, in both Homer and Statius, is meant to echo the former, or the former to prefigure the latter.[70] On this basis, Miles suggests that the author of the lost original *Togail Troí* could have intended a similar prefiguring of a now-lost 'realistic' watchman-sequence when he mentioned the return of Priam's messenger just before the *esbaid*.[71] This intention is of course possible, but the mere mention of a messenger appearing is not sufficient to indicate the presence of such a sequence.

As Miles acknowledges, his suggestion that a tenth-century version of *Togail Troí* probably contained an extended 'realistic' watchman-sequence like that in *Toichim na mBuiden* is based on unverifiable suppositions about the structure of a text which no longer exists, and his suggestion therefore 'cannot be pressed'. He nevertheless invites us to accept it as 'probable';[72] but leaving aside its unverifiable nature, the circumstantial evidence supporting it seems to me too slight for it to seem more than a remote (but undeniably attractive) possibility.

More importantly, perhaps, even if the lost original adaptation of *De excidio Troiae historia* did contain such a 'realistic' watchman-sequence – thus bringing its overall structure for the first day of battle even closer to Recension 2 of the *Táin* than it already is in the extant *Togail Troí* – then this would by no means settle the question of which text imitated which. Miles suggests that the priority should be obvious:

> The initial expectation that *Togail Troí* borrowed this sequence from *Toichim na mBuiden* itself founders on the fact that the underlying sequence in *Togail Troí* verifiably goes back to Dares, elaborated with reference to Statius and the illusions of Panic. With so much to take from Dares and Statius, it follows that *Togail Troí* needed so much less to take from *Toichim na mBuiden*.[73]

But this neat chain of logic makes the evidence sound more straightforward than it is. *Toichim na mBuiden*, as reflected in Recension 2 of the *Táin*, already makes (much fuller) direct use of Statius's Panic episode – if we accept that part of Miles's argument – so the Panic episode is immaterial to the relationship between the *Táin* and the Irish Troy-saga. Second, the underlying sequence in *Togail Troí* can hardly be said to be a simple replication of Dares's narrative, but represents a radical restructuring. Finally, we are not compelled to choose between Classical and native sources for such structural patterns, since an author who draws on one source will not for that reason ignore another if it is available and useful to him or her. The existence of (distant and localized) analogues in Statius and Dares by no means reduces the likelihood of borrowing from (much closer and large-scale) analogues in a native saga. In short, there is nothing so far to rule out the scenario that the archetype of *Toichim na mBuiden* (itself perhaps influenced by Statius's Panic episode) provided the author of *Togail Troí* with a dramatically satisfying means of elaborating and reorganizing Dares's bare narrative.

[70] See Smolenaars, *Statius Thebaid VII*, 114–15.

[71] Miles, *Heroic Saga*, 185–6, 190. The possibility that Statius's 'watchman' sequence or *teichoskopia* was imitated in the archetype of *Toichim na mBuiden* was also briefly raised by Carney (*Studies*, 312–13).

[72] Miles, *Heroic Saga*, 191.

[73] Miles, *Heroic Saga*, 191.

By pushing the Classical evidence as far as it can be pushed, Miles's conjectures add weight to the point of view which argues against the old one-sided assumption that the macro-narrative techniques of Middle Irish sagas (including Classical adaptations) are, in all essentials, those of native storytelling. But his argument goes further than merely raising the profile of Classical imitation in the composition of these sagas. While Miles grants 'native *senchas*' some limited role in saga-writing, mainly as content, his argument for the presence of Classical *imitatio* in the *Táin* is geared towards supporting a view, not unlike that of Carney and Tristram, that the most ambitious artistic techniques of the saga-authors were Classical *rather than* 'native' in inspiration. Here, for Miles as for Carney, the watchman device takes on a special importance because of its structural importance as a device of extension and amplification in the earliest large-scale Irish sagas: it is central to their identification as 'macro-texts', therefore much depends on where it comes from. Thus, in his chapter-conclusion Miles states, on the basis of the arguments discussed above, that Classical '*imitatio* is structurally essential to the *Táin*, and underlies, for example, both the shape and the content of the sequence of 'erroneous' and 'realistic' watchman-devices from *Toichim na mBuiden*.'[74] The possible contribution of oral-traditional models is excluded: 'If anything, it was *Togail Troí* which gave native tradition, represented by *Toichim na mBuiden*, its first day in the confrontation between two great armies.'[75] Here the episode from the *Táin* stands proxy for native saga-writing generally. Indeed, at one point, it seems to stand proxy for oral-traditional techniques across the entire northern world: the Statian parallels in the riddling section of *Toichim na mBuiden* raise 'the possibility that the alternatives device itself [as seen in 'riddling' or 'erroneous' watchman-devices] may have been, in origin, literary'.[76]

These last two statements in particular make very large claims and raise the stakes of Miles's discussion considerably. They assume or imply that

> (a) the riddling sequence in the Recension 2 text of *Toichim na mBuiden* (or its archetype) was the first use of the alternatives device in Irish literature, predating those in other sagas such as *Togail Bruidne Da Derga* and *Mesca Ulad*,[77]

and that

> (b) those other examples were patterned, either directly or indirectly, on the sequence in the Recension 2 text of *Toichim na mBuiden*.

Third, the last statement quoted above, about the literary origin of the alternatives device, only makes sense if we make one of the following two assumptions about non-Irish sources which have not been discussed in this chapter:

> (c) the parallel examples attested in the Old English *Finnesburg Fragment* and the medieval Welsh tale *Branwen* themselves also imitate Classical or Irish sources; or else their resemblance to the Irish examples is purely coincidental.

[74] Miles, *Heroic Saga*, 193. Compare Carney, *Studies*, 313, 321–2.
[75] Miles, *Heroic Saga*, 191.
[76] Miles, 'The literary set piece', 67; *Heroic Saga*, 176.
[77] Miles does not discuss the dating of the *Táin* in relation to other relevant native sagas in *Heroic Saga*. In 'The literary set piece', 79, he treats the erroneous watchman-sequence in *Mesca Ulad* as if it must be later than *Toichim na mBuiden*, but provides no evidence for this and again mentions no dates.

None of these three sets of assumptions is discussed directly by Miles, since his chief concern is to analyse instances of Classical *imitatio* in specific texts; but some discussion is called for, because if they are seen to be implausible, Miles's stronger claims about the origin of Irish sagas (peripheral as these are to his expressed main aim) need to be fundamentally reassessed.

Claims (a) and (b) return us to the problem of relative dating discussed earlier in this chapter. The only attempt so far to plot a relative chronology of all the pre-1200 Irish watchman-devices is that made by Carney, using stylistic evidence: specifically, how 'reasonable' (= early) or 'extravagant' and 'fantastic' (= late) they appear. On this basis, but without giving any examples of 'reasonable' or 'extravagant' style (or defending his developmental assumptions about narrative 'extravagance'), Carney considered *Toichim na mBuiden* to represent the earliest extant example ('not far from the archetype of such scenes'), while the rest he judged extravagant or self-conscious to varying degrees, indicating their later date.[78] Personally, I find the riddling sequence of *Toichim na mBuiden* to be far more extravagant than the watchman-sequence in *Fled Bricrenn*, but this only goes to show how unhelpfully subjective Carney's criterion is without proper analysis of the texts concerned.

One of the riddling sequences has, in fact, been analysed fairly closely, namely the contention between the two druid-watchmen in *Mesca Ulad* (The Drunkenness of the Ulstermen). This sequence, and the entire 'watchman device' of which it forms a part, is found only in the later (B) recension of that saga, which Mac Gearailt has tentatively dated to the early eleventh century. J. Carmichael Watson argued on stylistic and linguistic grounds (which he sets out in some detail) that the riddling sequence was largely the invention of the Middle Irish B-redactor, and that the overall watchman-sequence was at least significantly amplified, if not invented, by that redactor.[79] If these points are accepted, the riddling sequence in *Mesca Ulad* probably did postdate *Toichim na mBuiden*, and parallels with the latter suggest that the *Táin* may have provided at least a partial model.[80]

The riddling description of Mac Cécht in the long watchman sequence of *Togail Bruidne Da Derga*, however, contains many more Old Irish forms, making it very difficult to argue that *Toichim na mBuiden* predated it. This riddling description exists as one of two parallel descriptions which, according to textual studies of this saga by Thurneysen and West, derive from extensive Old Irish source-material, perhaps even (as they see it) from independent recensions of the entire saga.[81]

The most important, but also the most difficult, variable to consider is the relative dating of *Toichim na mBuiden* itself. Miles places its composition in the tenth or eleventh century, allowing *Togail Troí* to have helped shape its overall structure. Here he draws on Thurneysen's widely accepted suggestion that *Toichim na mBuiden* (with its variant accounts of certain warriors) may have been a late addition to the Recension 1 *Táin*.[82] However, that suggestion has little bearing on when *Toichim*

[78] Carney, *Studies*, 318–19. Carney's developmental assumptions have been criticized by Sims-Williams, *Irish Influence*, 106.

[79] Watson, *Mesca Ulad*, lines 361–491; Mac Gearailt, 'The Edinburgh text', 155; Watson, '*Mesca Ulad*: the redactor's contribution', 103–6.

[80] This is the position argued by Watson (*ibid*., 104–8) and employed by Miles ('The literary set piece') and myself (O'Connor, *Destruction*, 163–5).

[81] Thurneysen, *Heldensage*, 623–7; West, 'The genesis'. West, as already mentioned, does not restrict the sources to two alone, but only two seem to have included descriptions of Mac Cécht.

[82] That suggestion has passed into 'fact' in the diagrammatic representation of the *Táin*'s strata in Edel, *The Celtic West*, 289, and Edel, 'Off the mainstream', 33.

na mBuiden was itself composed, only on when it was inserted into the *Táin*.[83] Thurneysen made this suggestion as part of his argument that the Recension 1 *Táin* was mainly based on two divergent Old Irish sources. He did suggest that *Toichim na mBuiden* may have circulated independently and been amplified before (re)incorporation into the *Táin*, but the only evidence for amplification which he mentioned was the inconsistent information given in parts of the 'realistic' section. He mentioned no linguistic evidence for a late date of the episode as a whole. Thurneysen's suggestion therefore has no bearing on the design of the whole episode or its riddling sequence which is our main concern here.

Here, too, we need to consider a point which materially affects Miles's case for Statian influence on *Toichim na mBuiden*, and which turns out to add a further layer of conjecture to his chain of evidence for a 'strong classicizing' input into the episode as a whole. The parallels between Statius's Panic episode and *Toichim na mBuiden* are much more evident in Recension 2 than in Recension 1 of *Táin Bó Cúailnge*, since Recension 1 contains very few of the relevant images. The same is true of an alleged Lucanian allusion which Miles detects in Conchobor's apocalyptic oath invoking sky, earth, and sea (on hearing Sualtaim's call to arms): here, the Classical parallels are present in Recension 2 and non-existent in Recension 1.[84] If Recension 2 were based on Recension 1, as used to be thought, the obvious explanation of such variation would be that Classical influence was exerted at a later stage. But the two recensions have since been shown to draw independently on a common source dating perhaps to the eleventh century;[85] and Sims-Williams has independently suggested that the author of Recension 1 abbreviated his exemplar when composing the riddling watchman-sequence.[86] On this basis, Miles considers the two passages in Recension 2 to be faithful representations of a common source containing the full Classical package, whereas the author of Recension 1 has not only abbreviated both passages but has de-classicized them (by accident or design).[87] Miles also goes further than this, giving Recension 2 textual priority *in itself* over Recension 1 by citing evidence that Recension 1 has in places drawn on a lost earlier version of Recension 2. The strongest evidence for this is the episode *In Carpat Serda 7 Breslech Mór Maige Murthemne* ('The Sickled Chariot and the Great Rout on the Plain of Murthemne'), which has long been agreed to be linguistically later than most other parts of Recension 1: Mac Gearailt has argued that it was originally included in an earlier version of Recension 2 and was incorporated into Recension 1 at a later stage.[88]

Miles's suggestion about Recension 2's more faithful reproduction of the common source has the benefit of explaining how the riddling passage in Recension 1 came to contain scattered fragments of images which flag up their possible Statian model

[83] Thurneysen, *Heldensage*, 106–7; Miles, 'The literary set piece', 77. Cecile O'Rahilly (*Táin Bó Cúailnge Recension I*, xx) disputed Thurneysen's suggestion by pointing to the other examples of the watchman device in Irish sagas, but this suggests that she, too, had misunderstood the point of Thurneysen's suggestion.

[84] Miles, 'The literary set piece', 72–7. The argument for a Classical allusion here seems weaker than in the Statian example. Miles argues that the combination of images of flooding with falling stars as signs of the end of the world must derive from the parallel example in Lucan. Despite his objections to the notion of coincidental similarity (*ibid*., 75), it is difficult, in the absence of other classicizing markers, to rule this out as the more probable explanation.

[85] O'Rahilly, *Táin Bó Cúalnge from the Book of Leinster*, xxv–xlv, and (for the lost source's eleventh-century date), Mac Gearailt, 'Forbairt na stíle', 12–28.

[86] Sims-Williams, 'Is it fog', 508 n. 1.

[87] Miles, 'The literary set piece', 76–7.

[88] Miles, 'The literary set piece', 76; Mac Gearailt, 'Forbairt', 18; see also Mac Gearailt, *On the Date*, 26.

only in their fuller treatment in Recension 2. Consistent de-classicization is, furthermore, not found in Recension 1's version of *Toichim na mBuiden*. It is Recension 1, not Recension 2, which contains Fergus's claim that the Ulster army is superior to any other in Eurasia, citing Greece by name – a passage which Miles cites as a 'flag' for the classicizing purpose of the whole episode.[89] And it is Recension 1, not 2, which contains (rather limited) parallels to descriptions of warriors in Dares's 'Portrait Catalogue'.[90] For Miles, these two examples provide further evidence of the classicizing purpose of the lost source behind both recensions, of which traces are still evident in Recension 1 despite its author's unclassical stylistic preferences.

However, there are two serious difficulties with the proposition that the Recension 2 version of *Toichim na mBuiden* has 'priority', textually speaking, over the Recension 1 version. First, evidence of discrete episodes (such as *In Carpat Serda ⁊ Breslech Mór*) added at a late stage of transmission into Recension 1 does not indicate that Recension 1 borrowed from a lost version of Recension 2 in other episodes which lack such clear evidence of later language (such as *Toichim na mBuiden*), nor does Mac Gearailt claim this.[91] Second, Mac Gearailt's view that Recension 2 often contains a more faithful reflection than Recension 1 of the lost common source needs to be balanced against what Mac Gearailt has elsewhere demonstrated about Recension 2's procedures: namely that its original (probably eleventh-century) author made large-scale stylistic and rhetorical adjustments to his Old Irish source-material. Mac Gearailt treats the style of that source-material as being, in the main, well reflected by Recension 1.[92] Recension 2 is stylistically innovative, often self-consciously so, and represents a refinement and amplification on Recension 1. In this light, Recension 2's fuller Classical allusions seem more likely to form part of its author's overall project of stylistic revision and updating, rather than deriving from the Old Irish source.[93] If the *Thebaid* was as widely read and studied by Irish scholars as Miles has (convincingly) suggested, it is not necessary to posit direct allusion every time its influence is apparent: the limited and veiled Statian parallels in Recension 1's *Toichim na mBuiden* could be seen as evidence of the author having tentatively drawn on Statius's images, in a passage which has been reworked into a full-scale allusion in Recension 2.

A further potential difficulty with drawing conclusions about the Old Irish source through Recension 2's text of *Toichim na mBuiden* is that Recension 2's text, at this point, is no longer accessible to us except in twelfth-century and later reworkings. As Mac Gearailt has demonstrated in detail, what we see in the Book of Leinster – not only here but for the whole second half of the *Táin* – is the result of radical rewriting and further amplification by a twelfth-century redactor, who subjected other texts in

[89] O'Rahilly, *Táin Bó Cúailnge Recension 1*, lines 3581–4; Miles, *Heroic Saga*, 182.

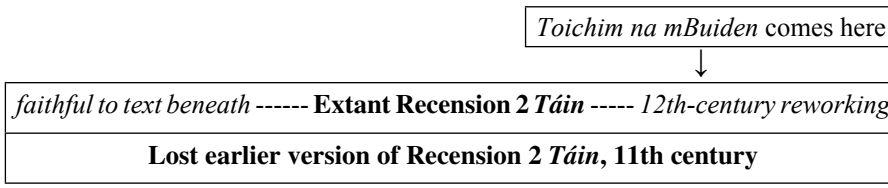
[90] Both sequences include a pair of identical brothers with yellow hair, and both describe leading heroes (Aeneas and Cú Chulainn) as red-faced and 'four-square/four-broad' (*quadratus*, *cetherlethan*). See O'Rahilly, *Táin Bó Cúailnge Recension 1*, lines 3761–2 and 3851;McLoughlin, 'Rhetorical description', 182–3; Miles, *Heroic Saga*, 187–8.

[91] Furthermore, Mac Gearailt's arguments about *In Carpat Serda ⁊ Breslech Mór* do not rule out the possibility that the episode in question existed as a discrete eleventh-century composition which the authors of both Recensions 1 and 2 assimilated into their larger *Táin* structures, rather than necessarily being borrowed from one *Táin* to another. This appears to have been the case with the episode of Cú Chulainn's combat with Fer Diad, as Mac Gearailt has elsewhere suggested ('Change and innovation', 447): on this narrative, see Thurneysen, *Heldensage*, 219–35, and Rutten, 'Displacement'.

[92] Mac Gearailt, 'Change and innovation', 444–7.

[93] Mac Gearailt has more recently emphasized the 'distinctive style and narrative method' of Recension 2 (*On the Date*, 31).

the manuscript to similar treatment (such as *Cath Ruis na Ríg*, 'The Battle of Ross na Ríg').[94] The lost earlier version of the 'watchman' sequence in Recension 2 is thus concealed, not only beneath the large-scale amplifications of the extant recension, but also beneath a thick subsequent layer of late Middle Irish reworking:



This is, in fact, less of a problem than might appear – at least for the Statian allusions identified by Miles – because the Book of Leinster text can be triangulated against a linguistically modernized late medieval reworking of the original Recension 2. This is the so-called 'Stowe version' of the *Táin*, also known as Recension 2b and surviving in many manuscripts from the seventeenth to nineteenth centuries (it was by far the most popular recension of the *Táin* before English translations and adaptations were printed).[95] The Stowe text's version of the introductory, riddling part of *Toichim na mBuiden*, where all the possible Statian allusions cluster, preserves virtually the same sequence of images as the equivalent part of the Book of Leinster, suggesting that this sequence of images was, after all, part of the original Recension 2 and was not created by the later redactor of the Book of Leinster text.[96] That said, the Stowe text is not safe as a window onto the original Recension 2's text of *Toichim na mBuiden* as a whole, because in the much longer 'realistic' watchman-sequence which follows the riddling sequence, the Stowe text diverges sharply from both Recensions 1 and 2. It contains nine extra tableaux of description and identification (which draw on a range of other Middle Irish sagas as well as the first recension of the *Táin*), and it presents the other tableaux in a different order.[97] More importantly for the present discussion, the Stowe text provides no basis for the idea that Recension 2 has textual 'priority' over Recension 1.

Overall, Miles's argument for the priority of Recension 2's text of *Toichim na mBuiden* – like his argument for *Togail Troí* providing a model for the episode as a whole – depends too much on detailed conjectures about lost earlier versions whose plot outlines may be (partly) guessable but whose narrative and stylistic choices are invisible to us. This does not invalidate these arguments, but it weakens them and reminds us of the need to consider alternatives.

An alternative genealogy of the Classical allusions in *Toichim na mBuiden* (always assuming we accept that the Statian parallels indicate some level of Classical

[94] Mac Gearailt, 'Change and innovation', 448; Mac Gearailt, *On the Date*. See also Mac Gearailt, 'The language', 186–90.

[95] On this version's textual history and its relationship with earlier recensions, see O'Rahilly, *The Stowe Version*, vii–xxx.

[96] O'Rahilly, *The Stowe Version*, lines 4074–4126. Some of the images are omitted from Mac Roth's description and only included in Fergus's identifications, which disrupts the sequence of images identified by Miles. The other significant divergence in this version is that Mac Roth's second description (lines 4089–97) is couched in direct speech as in Recension 1, not indirect speech as in the Book of Leinster's text of Recension 2, but the images contained in this passage are closer to the latter than to the former.

[97] O'Rahilly, *The Stowe Version*, lines 4183–4721. See O'Rahilly's notes at *ibid*., 188–95. Recension 3 of the *Táin*, another eclectic reworking, is fragmentary and does not preserve *Toichim na mBuiden*.

allusion) could work as follows, based on the evidence brought forward by Miles and taking account of O'Rahilly's and Mac Gearailt's reconstructions of the textual history of the *Táin*:

1. A version of the description-sequence *Toichim na mBuiden* was composed (or reworked) in the late Old Irish or early Middle Irish period (perhaps the tenth century), either as an independent text or (more likely) as part of a lost early version of the *Táin*, and possibly drawing on Statius in the choice of images.
2. This text may have been used in at least four ways in the Middle Irish period:
   a. It was drawn on in *Togail Troí* for its own watchman sequence.
   b. It was incorporated into the extant Recension 1 of the *Táin*, and may have been abbreviated there (but evidence of abbreviation is not sufficient to indicate that the original text contained more substantial Statian allusions).
   c. It was amplified, and its Statian allusions were greatly expanded, resulting in the lost original text of Recension 2; this text was later amplified again to create, independently, the extant Recensions 2 and 2b respectively.
   d. (If Watson's argument is accepted) 'it provided a model for the amplified watchman-device in *Mesca Ulad*.

Toichim na mBuiden in some form may have provided a model for other watchman devices in Irish saga, but this may be to claim too much: it makes the unlikely assumption that the watchman device of *Togail Bruidne Da Derga*, with its many Old Irish verbal forms, postdates and was influenced by *Toichim na mBuiden*.

The more elaborate second recension of *Togail Troí* fits into this genealogy as follows. It, too, is preserved in the Book of Leinster. Its riddling sequence contains several features which bring it closer to *Toichim na mBuiden* than its predecessor, such as its clearer separation of riddling and mimetic descriptions, its assignment of the explanations to a different character from the watchman, and the addition of specific elements such as bristling trees. It is unclear whether Recension 1 or 2 of the *Táin*, or another *Táin* altogether, provided the model: its language has been variously judged to be either contemporary with, or later than, the original Recension 2 of the *Táin*.[98] Either way, it seems likely that a version of the *Táin* was one of its sources. At the same time, this recension of *Togail Troí* also shows an even higher degree of Virgilian *imitatio* than its predecessor.[99] Like the author of Recension 2 of the *Táin*, the author of *Togail Troí* 2 realized his artistic ambitions by outdoing his predecessor in terms of more elaborate *imitatio* of both native and Classical models.

This overall pattern conforms to Clarke's view that the *Táin* and *Togail Troí*

> grow up *together* over a number of centuries, and we must see the influence as potentially running in both directions: the relative antiquity of their origins is less significant than the fact that over several recensions they develop in parallel, and their stylistic and literary character progressively merge in the course of their development.[100]

Not all will agree that origins are unimportant. Accordingly, I would add that the evidence discussed above tends to push compositional priority as a macro-text more

[98] Mac Gearailt, 'Zur literarischen Sprache', 112; Clarke, 'An Irish Achilles', 242 n. 22. I have not been able to consult Campion's unpublished linguistic study 'Córas bríathartha *Togail Troí* (LL)', on which Mac Gearailt has drawn.

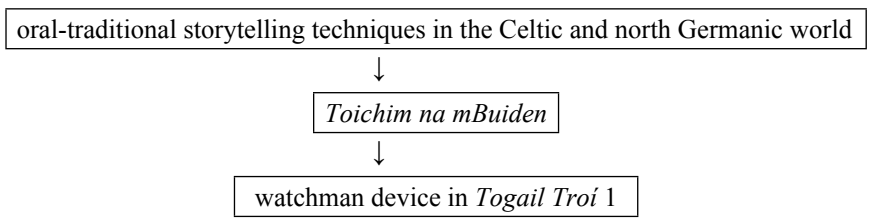
[99] As argued by Mac Gearailt, 'Change and innovation', 489.

[100] Clarke, 'An Irish Achilles', 243.

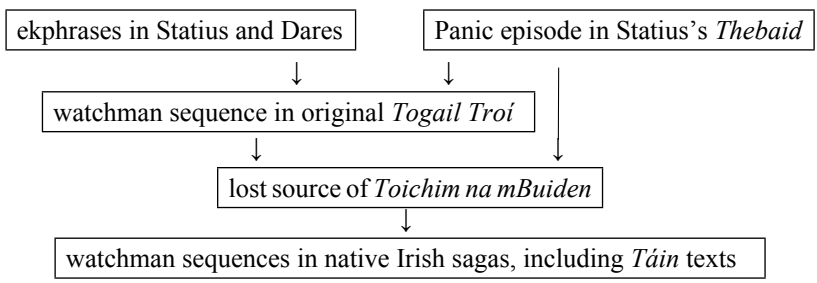
towards the *Táin* than *Togail Troí*.[101] This adds weight to Ní Mhaonaigh's suggestion that the Classical translation-adaptation movement began as a result of, rather than as a precondition of, a new enthusiasm for macro-form composition seen throughout Middle Irish literature.[102]

The question remains: where does the watchman device itself come from? Miles suggests that the 'alternatives device' which informs several of the Irish watchman-sequences comes from the imitation of Statius; as for the watchman device as an overarching framework, Carney asserted that it came from unknown Classical models, an argument Miles has refined by pointing to its origins in the *imitatio* of Dares and Statius via the lost original of *Togail Troí*. Myrick, meanwhile, derives it ultimately from oral-traditional storytelling.[103]

It may be helpful at this point to set out visually how the Irish watchman-device can be plotted from Gaelicizing and classicizing perspectives, as represented by Myrick and Miles respectively. Myrick's 'Gaelicizing' genealogy is as follows:



There is no doubt that Myrick's genealogy is too simple, both in not adequately discussing textual history and in not considering Classical sources for the device as seen in *Togail Troí*. Miles's analysis more than supplies this lack:



But, leaving aside the problems with some of the specific relationships presented in this genealogy (especially Statius vis-à-vis *Toichim na mBuiden*, and the latter vis-à-vis *Togail Troí*, discussed above), it does not engage in more than an offhand way with the international parallels set out by Sims-Williams. If Miles is right about the alternatives device as a whole deriving from *imitatio* of Statius, then the examples of this device in the Old English *Finnesburg Fragment* and the medieval Welsh

[101] This is not the same as suggesting, with Mac Gearailt ('*Togail Troí*: an example'), that *Togail Troí* drew on purely oral tales, a position rejected by Clarke as too conjectural ('An Irish Achilles', 243 n. 25). Mac Gearailt's suggestion seems reasonable to me, but I do not wish to press it here.

[102] Ní Mhaonaigh, 'Classical compositions', 13.

[103] Myrick, *From the* De Excidio, 137–40. The same conclusion seems to be implied by Edel, 'Off the mainstream', 38.

tale *Branwen* must either themselves imitate Statius or derive from Irish narrative at first or second hand.[104] Since these Insular texts resemble each other much more closely than they resemble Statius (and the identification of Classical *imitatio* in even a long and learned heroic Old English narrative like *Beowulf* remains deeply problematic),[105] common imitation of Statius seems unlikely. Sims-Williams, meanwhile, has carefully re-examined the similarities between these various Irish, Welsh, and Old English texts, showing that there is no sound basis on which to erect speculations about influence in either direction.[106] It seems much more likely, on balance, that the Irish 'alternatives device' resembles the Welsh and Old English examples because they are independent (and highly literate) expressions of a common narrative template related to riddles and rooted in oral tradition, which subsequently – and in certain texts – took on Classical features.

The same seems likely to be the case with the watchman device itself. A literary-historical framework for all this, combining aspects of both 'classicizing' and 'Gaelicizing' models and taking account of critiques on both sides, could work as follows: a narrative technique already rooted in traditional storytelling, and enhanced by reference to Latin learning, gradually takes on more specifically Classical features in later texts (especially from the eleventh century onwards).[107] The result is a feedback loop between Classical and native stories, enabling the kind of epic *aemulatio* hinted at by Miles – both between Classical and native tales, and between different tellings of the same Classical or native story. This framework, with its gradient of Classical engagement, makes better sense of the fact that the most convincing examples of possible Classical *imitatio* in the *Táin* are those in Recension 2 (the riddling watchman episode) and the latest strata of Recension 1 (the long description of Cú Chulainn's *ríastrad*) rather than in the older parts of Recension 1.[108] They also absolve us from the need to shoehorn all the other sagas' watchman devices into a classicizing paradigm, and from the need to explain away the linguistic evidence for earlier recensions of those other watchman devices.

The framework suggested here fits the evidence in another way, by confirming a pattern which has often been observed across the corpus of Middle Irish narrative. We see a marked change taking place between the earlier and later parts of the Middle Irish period. In the upsurge of Irish learning which took place from the late tenth century, an increasing valorization of extended, sometimes compilatory texts encouraged the development of new techniques of amplification and connections with other literary traditions. This process gathered momentum as it went along. More and longer Classical compositions were produced in the late Middle Irish period than in the earlier period, including (for the first time) prose adaptations of verse epics like the *Thebaid* and *Aeneid*, free adaptations of Classical subject-matter such as *Merugud Uilixis* (The Wandering of Ulysses) and *Fingal Chlainne Tanntail* (The Kin-Slaying of the Children of Tantalus), and new, innovative recensions of older adaptations,

[104] The possibility of Irish influence on these two texts' use of this device was broached by Henry, *The Early English and Celtic Lyric*, 216–21, and Mac Cana, *Branwen*, 24–7.

[105] Clarke, 'Achilles, Byrhtnoth', 247; for a measured summary, see Orchard, *A Critical Companion*, 132–7. See now also the controversial proposals advanced by North, *The Origins of* Beowulf.

[106] Sims-Williams, *Irish Influence*, 79–94 and 95–133 (based on Sims-Williams, '"Is it fog"' and 'Riddling treatment' respectively).

[107] Michael Clarke proposes an analogous model for the classicizing development of *Fingal Rónáin* (Rónán's Kin-Slaying) in chapter 7 of this volume.

[108] Miles, *Heroic Saga*, 194–242. The Classical features of *In Carpat Serda 7 Breslech Mór Maige Murthemne* are amplified still further in the Book of Leinster's reworking of Recension 2 of the *Táin*.

including at least two different new recensions of *Togail Troí*.[109] In this context, to adapt Tristram's argument, we would expect to see a more confident approach to Classical *imitatio* in native sagas. We would also expect more extensive *imitatio*, since later recensions were often longer. Late Middle Irish sagas, both native and translated, are often said to display a more overt self-consciousness as literary creations than are earlier sagas; this studied artificiality includes a more rigid use of Classical ekphrastic patterns, which parallels emerging orthodoxies in Continental Latin rhetoric.[110] *Aemulatio* is self-consciously artistic, so again we would expect a more self-conscious saga-writing tradition to emulate the Classics more directly.

As Clarke and others have commented, this heightened enthusiasm for Classical allusion dovetails with renewed attempts to bring the 'matter of Ireland' within the prestigious textual domain of world history: both activities suggest a desire to set the Irish tradition alongside the Classical and biblical.[111] Comparisons between the heroes of Emain Macha and those of Troy proliferated in the late Middle Irish period, most famously in the poem *Clann Ollaman Uaisle Emna* (The 'Children of Ollam are the nobles of Emain') comparing Cú Chulainn to Troilus, Hector to Conall Cernach, and so on.[112] It is only in the amplified twelfth-century recension of *Togail Bruidne Da Derga* that this saga incorporates explicit Classical allusion, also comparing Conall with Hector and giving him an international reputation for the first time.[113] Fergus's statement in Recension 1 of the *Táin*, comparing the Ulster armies favourably with those in the rest of Europe (including Greece), fits smoothly into this context and may for that reason represent a late interpolation into that recension's text of *Toichim na mBuiden*.[114]

This analysis suggests that Classical literature and techniques had a profound influence on compositional technique in the Middle Irish period, and that *imitatio* was practised by saga-authors in the later part of that period. But it also points towards a clear gradient of engagement with Classical epic between earlier and later texts, and it complicates genealogies of Classical influence on the prime exhibit for such influence on native sagas, namely the *Táin*. Rather than being a necessary precondition for the development of extended native sagas in the first place, Classical *imitatio* emerges as one of several kinds of narrative resource available to ambitious saga-authors.

Conclusion

This undermining of firm conclusions about the sagas' origins should not be taken as a negative move. On the contrary, it is offered in the spirit of the 'invitation to research' with which Miles's book generously concludes. The case of *Togail Bruidne*

[109] See above, 14–16.

[110] On the new self-consciousness in late Middle Irish saga style, see Mac Gearailt, 'Change and innovation', who takes a dim view of it (and documents its features in detail). Swartz ('Stylistic parallels') has discussed the increasingly rigid Classical patterning in Recension 2 of the *Táin*, and (less convincingly) has suggested that it was a symptom of monkish sexual repression.

[111] Ó hUiginn, 'The background', 37–8; Poppe, *New Introduction*; Clarke, 'An Irish Achilles'; Herbert, 'Reading Recension 1', 214–17.

[112] Byrne, '*Clann Ollaman*'; 37–41; Poppe, *New Introduction*, 28–30; Clarke, 'An Irish Achilles', 247–8. This poem is quoted above, 12.

[113] Stokes, 'The destruction of Dá Derga's Hostel', 396, discussed in Ní Mhaonaigh's forthcoming study 'The Hectors of Ireland'. I am grateful to Máire Ní Mhaonaigh for sending me a copy of her text.

[114] See discussion above, 185.

Da Derga is a welcome reminder that the question is still open, because at one level it appears to confirm the essential 'classicism' of Irish macro-form native sagas even better than the *Táin*. It does so because of its unusually thorough use of ekphrasis as a means of *amplificatio* to structure an extended narrative. In the *Táin*, the chief devices of narrative extension are the accumulation of separate episodes and the insertion of embedded verses; these techniques are balanced, as Miles shows, by a few set-pieces of large-scale description which heighten key moments in the story, especially in later versions of the saga. But in *Togail Bruidne Da Derga*, more than half the text is built on ekphrastic structures, whereas its episodic accumulation is brief. It begins and ends with vivid description; its protagonist's journey towards the fatal Hostel is punctuated by shorter bursts of similar description; and at its heart is the great tragic set-piece of the description-sequence or catalogue depicting the king and his retinue just before the final battle.[115] This is by far the most ambitious example of the watchman device in Irish literature and indeed any European narrative. In it, lyrical descriptions are multiplied, dramatized and nested within each other in a manner which (some may find) recalls the visual layout of the great Irish illuminated manuscripts. This sequence takes up half the saga's length. If the use of ekphrasis to amplify a story is a classicizing technique, then *Togail Bruidne Da Derga* is the most Classical of all the early sagas.

But if classicism is present in these structures, it seems not to be the only force at play. There are great differences between the watchman device in Classical epic (exemplified by the *Iliad* and *Thebaid*) and in native sagas. In the sagas, the device is far more elaborate and structurally predominant than anything in Classical epic. Such passages in Classical epic repeat their pattern only a few times and the descriptions are not especially detailed; instead, the identifications become springboards for detailed back-stories about the warriors, their homes and relatives. Their Irish equivalents, by contrast, typically repeat their pattern many times, contain detailed descriptions of individuals' appearance and accoutrements, and offer only short and occasional back-stories. These striking differences cast doubt on the notion that the Irish watchman-device was purely Classical in origin, especially since the best-known Latin example for the Irish – Antigone's conversation with Phorbas in the *Thebaid* – is even more alien to the Irish mode than is Homer's.[116] Leaving aside the riddling variants with their medieval Insular parallels, the closest analogues to Irish examples – especially to those in *Togail Bruidne Da Derga* – are not found in any texts known to the Irish, but in the eleventh-century Middle Persian epic *Shahnameh* and the ancient Greek tragedy *Seven Against Thebes* by Aeschylus.[117]

[115] Knott, *Togail*, lines 677–1394. For full analysis, see O'Connor, *Destruction*.

[116] The late Middle Irish translation of the *Thebaid*, *Togail na Tebe*, contains no indication that either Statius's watchman-device or his description of Panic's illusions were felt to share anything with existing Middle Irish patterns. Statius's watchman-episode is here translated with minimal alteration, while the Panic sequence is drastically cut and shorn of any features (such as the appearance of a dusty cloud or the illusion of armies) which give Miles cause to suggest the original passage as a source for the *Táin*. See Calder, *Togail na Tebe*, 168–72, and O'Connor, *Destruction*, 240–1. The lack of 'fit' between Statius and the Irish examples has been remarked on by Sims-Williams, 'Riddling treatment', 87.

[117] For the parallels with *Seven Against Thebes*, see O'Connor, *Destruction*, 239–42. Of the *Shahnameh*, Dick Davis has suggested (essentially by disregarding all other watchman-devices) that its watchman episode was modelled on Homer's *Iliad*, in his 'In the enemy's camp'. Barbara Hillers has also observed that the Persian example is closer than the Latin example to the Irish ones in her unpublished paper '*Ní hé Cormac beus*'.

To explain the divergences between the Irish watchman-device and its Latin analogues we could say, with Carney and Miles, that Classical *imitatio* was not slavish imitation but involved freedom and variety of execution. This is clearly true, but that very freedom makes it harder to argue for the presence of *imitatio* in the first place. If, however, we grant that it probably did feed, at some level, into the watchman-passages in *Togail Bruidne Da Derga* and other Middle Irish sagas, that influence would probably have been indirect in many cases, rather than resting on deep knowledge of the original Classical epics as literary wholes. As both Miles and Clarke have emphasized, saga-authors in the earlier period probably encountered the Classics in the form of excerpts, synopses, and commentaries in *florilegia* and the wider world of grammatical pedagogy, rather than whole epics or even books from epics.[118] This situation was conducive to a free and flexible approach to Classical themes and techniques in the development of large-scale structures, as Miles's book makes clear. My point, however, is that this situation would have laid narrative composition open to the influence of other existing models as well. Classical training offered one structural 'toolkit'; but the sophistication of Irish classicism should not mean ignoring other possible toolkits.

One of these is the Bible: Kim McCone, again following Carney's lead, has suggested its possible significance as a source of narrative templates for sagas, and much more work needs to be done on this possibility.[119] But, as discussed earlier in the chapter, the Bible is insufficient by itself as a model for macro-form narrative. When Carney urged scholars to treat sagas as the products of their authors' 'total literary experience', he meant not just Latin learning but also oral learning and storytelling, and his suggestion needs to be taken more seriously than he himself took it. I do not see any alternative to allowing oral-traditional composition (however that is to be envisaged) at least *some* role in the formation of literary narrative techniques, because it seems inconceivable that monastic authors in the Middle Irish period were unaffected by the ordering principles of oral tradition, given their interest in the contents of that tradition and its relation to literacy, and given the prevalence of oral modes of transmission even in their literate culture.[120] A saga like *Togail Bruidne Da Derga*, so effective when read aloud, is unlikely have been untouched by the procedures of oral storytelling which surrounded it, and its central watchman-sequence shows off these techniques to their fullest extent.

It therefore seems extremely unlikely that Classical *imitatio* was a *sufficient* cause of these sagas' development, a view which Carney and Tristram have expressed. Such a view can also be read into Miles's occasional suggestions that identifying possible Classical allusions in sagas absolves us from any need to consider other sources or models for these passages, especially native oral-traditional ones. At one point, he closes an analysis of ekphrasis in *Togail Troí* with the words, 'There should be no need to argue that there is any native Irish tradition behind the passages examined.'[121] A similar logic is applied to the discussion of *Toichim na mBuiden*, as was seen above. Discussing the parallels between the *Táin* and the *Thebaid*, he

[118] On these sources, see Miles, *Heroic Saga*, 15–50; Miles, '*Riss in mundtuirc*'; Clarke, 'Achilles, Byrhtnoth', 264–71.

[119] McCone, *Pagan Past*, 29–52. Layzer, *Signs of Weakness*, discusses biblical analogues in some sagas, but without drawing conclusions about the Bible as a possible source.

[120] This last point is emphasized by Miles, *Heroic Saga*, 243. See now Johnston, *Literacy and Identity*, 157–76. For 'total literary experience', see Carney 'The ecclesiastic background', 221.

[121] Miles, *Heroic Saga*, 122. Compare Crampton, this volume, 78–9.

tells us that 'it is necessary to suspend the view that the Irish text represents the performance of an oral storyteller, and read the passage as a written text pure and simple'.[122] Few folklorists today would consider labelling the second recension of the *Táin* as a 'recording' of a 'performance', whether dictated or orally composed. The reader is here invited to think of these texts as originating in *either* oral *or* written composition, when in reality these two elements are unlikely to have been mutually exclusive. Oral and written elements surely fed into the writing, as well as into the performance, of these stories, and Mac Gearailt's intriguing suggestion of how these two elements could have reacted on each other – controversial as that suggestion has proved among other scholars – is only one among many possible models.[123] These questions are worth exploring.

Both Carney and Miles treat oral narrative, in theory, as a contributing factor in saga-writing; but in practice, this factor vanishes as soon as any possible Classical context comes into view. This is more than just a matter of their chosen focus. Carney saw oral narrative templates as, by definition, a hindrance to significant artistic achievement. For him, the great variety exhibited within the Irish 'watchman' sequences, and their rapid development in written texts, were clear signs that they could not have derived from oral tradition, because if they had they would be much more 'stereotyped'.[124] This argument makes an unwarranted assumption about the influence of folk narrative on literary narrative. One only has to consider other demonstrably oral-traditional storytelling patterns, such as the 'Bear's Son tale', and the extraordinary variety and sophistication which these patterns exhibit in their medieval literary developments, from *Beowulf* to the Icelandic sagas.[125]

Miles, for his part, suggests that there is no need to consider the oral-traditional component of medieval narrative because 'it is written tradition, exclusively, which we have before us to evaluate'; our knowledge of medieval oral storytelling, by contrast, rests only on a distant analogy with the techniques of modern storytelling, which he suggests 'are post-literary innovations in a society that, prior to material and linguistic dispossession in the modern period, was as literate … as any in Europe.'[126] Leaving aside the startling (and undefended) claim about modern storytelling, medieval Irish society was also as oral, and as aural, as any in Europe; and the evaluation of written texts, especially in a comparative context where textual influence is often an unlikely explanation, does invite some consideration of the international storytelling dimension. To do so brings us into the realm of informed speculation, but it need not be any more wild (and can be considerably tamer) than the baroque hypotheses of textual transmission and *Urtexte* in which textual scholars routinely participate.

The search for Classical models has helped to refresh and re-invigorate both our aesthetic appreciation of the sagas and the debate about their origins. Yet it would be unwise to carry out this quest as if other questions were less relevant. I wish to point out one last danger in allowing the Classical paradigm to dominate discussion of the sagas to the *exclusion* of other elements, however nebulous and ill-defined those may be. That danger is the still lively tradition of literary-critical *neo*classicism which judges texts like the *Táin*, the *Togail* and later large-scale sagas like *Acallam na*

[122] Miles, *Heroic Saga*, 179.
[123] Mac Gearailt, 'Change and innovation'. Another model is sketched out by Edel, 'Off the mainstream', drawing on recent work by Lauri Honko on modern folk epic and see now Hillers, this volume.
[124] Carney, *Studies*, 318–19.
[125] See Stitt, *Beowulf and The Bear's Son*.
[126] Miles, *Heroic Saga*, 243–4.

Senórach according to modern concepts of literary unity and psychological realism, and finds them wanting.

This attitude creeps in around the edges of even Miles's own alert readings of the native sagas. Of the *Táin*'s concluding apocalyptic battle between the two bulls, depositing fragments of their dying bodies across Ireland, and that saga's 'bizarre' failure to narrate the final human battle in detail, Miles suggests that this incongruity 'leaves it [the *Táin*] one of the most uneven texts in the international heroic canon'. Only by recovering a possible set of allusions to the *Thebaid* in the bull-fight can he restore aesthetic dignity and purpose to the saga's conclusion; conversely, if one rejects Miles's case for a Classical *imitatio* here, the saga suddenly looks unsatisfactory.[127] Yet a detailed battle-narrative was rarely the main point of Irish heroic sagas before the late Middle Irish period: that was a later innovation, characteristic of the *cath* genre and possibly itself introduced in imitation of Classical texts such as the *Aeneid* and *Thebaid*.[128] Within a native context, a more appropriate starting-point from which to appreciate the artistry of the bull-fight is that of native literature: the equally grotesque and symbolically loaded conclusion to the equally 'anticlimactic' *Togail Bruidne Da Derga*, and the *dindshenchas* tradition of place-name lore which serves as a vital unifying strand throughout the composition. These features are not Classical, but they are no less artistically accomplished for all that; the possible Statian allusion adds lustre to an already potent and dramatically multi-layered conclusion.

Another example is the *Táin*'s magnificent ekphrastic diptych in which Cú Chulainn's terrifying *ríastrad* is followed abruptly by a detailed description of his appearance to the lovestruck women of Connacht.[129] Classicists and neoclassicists (and even some folklorists) might see in this passage a failure of logical progression or balance, an absence of psychological realism, or a clumsy conflation of two descriptions. Evidence of Statian *imitatio* shows it to be none of these things, but a sophisticated literary creation after all, 'rehabilitating the ambitious literary artist we feel to be behind' this text.[130] But, independently of the Classical context, it can be read as a typical (if elaborate) example of pictorial narrative-by-contrast, setting aspects of the hero's character and significance into counterpoint to evoke sharply contrasting emotions, and leaving the meaning implicit.[131] To identify a possible Statian allusion enhances our sense of the author's skill, but the episode needs no rehabilitation: it has its own logic which is not dependent on our understanding of the Classical example.[132]

Examples such as these suggest that the answer to the question in my title is, on balance, 'no': Classical imitation was not necessary for the composition of large-scale native Irish sagas. It plays an important part in some of those sagas, increasingly

[127] Miles, *Heroic Saga*, 157–63. But the saga is also often seen as aesthetically unsatisfactory by scholars inspired by folk-epic scholarship: Edel makes her case for the oral-derived nature of the *Táin* in part by accusing all its recensions of a 'lack of stylistic balance and wellformedness' ('Off the mainstream', 24).

[128] This has been argued by Mac Gearailt, 'Change and innovation', 486–9, and more forcibly in his '*Togail Troí*: ein Vorbild'.

[129] Recension 1: O'Rahilly, *Táin Bó Cúailnge Recension I*, lines 2245–2370. Recension 2: O'Rahilly, *Táin Bó Cúalnge from the Book of Leinster*, lines 2262–2375.

[130] Miles, *Heroic Saga*, 222.

[131] On the centrality of such bipolar contrasts to Cú Chulainn's portrayal in the *Táin*, see Dooley, *Playing the Hero*, 73–7.

[132] A similar point has been made by Hillers, '*Ní hé Cormac beus*', concerning the varieties of 'dramatic narrative' of which Irish 'watchman' sequences form a subset.

so as the Middle Irish period neared its end; but those same sagas also display signs of other forms of large-scale organization which have not yet been convincingly shown to depend on Classical models, and for which other analogues exist beyond the Greek and Latin classics.

This conclusion may need to be revised in light of future studies of the learned contexts of saga-writing, but it need not be seen as a negative conclusion. Granted, unearthing the Classical dimension of Irish literary production certainly offers a way of securing a more central place for the sagas in the history of Western literature by pulling them out of the oral-traditional Celtic 'fringe' and recasting them as pioneers of a pan-European classicism, anticipating developments in France by more than a century.[133] Yet the sagas are more than just northern prefigurations of a Renaissance achieved with more widely recognized accomplishment further south. In their blend of Latin and native modes and content, they present a distinctive, perhaps even unique body of literature, not just a precocious one. The challenge now is to combine the renewed Classical perspective with a continued exploration of their distinctive features, in order to move further down the road we have only recently begun to travel: that of exploring, as precisely as we can, the artistry of medieval Irish narrative literature.

[133] Miles, *Heroic Saga*, 245–9.

10

‘WRENCHING THE CLUB FROM THE HAND OF HERCULES’: CLASSICAL MODELS FOR MEDIEVAL IRISH *COMPILATIO*

Abigail Burnyeat

This short chapter will present an attempt to respond to two metaphorical statements that have played a part in the delineation of responses to the role of Classical literary models in the inspiration and interpretation of medieval Irish narrative material. One of these statements is old, one more contemporary. The newer one is the widespread critical assumption that *Táin Bó Cúailnge* (The Cattle-Raid of Cooley) represents an Irish equivalent to Virgil’s *Aeneid*, the older is a late-antique and medieval commonplace examining Virgil’s relationship to his Homeric sources, and assessing his work in the creation of the *Aeneid* as that of *compilator*, or compiler, as much as *auctor*, or author.

A developing scholarly awareness of the significance of medieval ideas of *compilatio* has enhanced our appreciation of compilation as an aspect of Irish literary practice, and a consideration of medieval views of compilation invites us to look at the medieval treatment of authors understood as compilers in this light. Alongside the fine-grained studies of lexical and thematic borrowing and modelling represented in other chapters in this volume, it seems appropriate to explore the understanding of Classical compilatory practice available to the producers of medieval Irish narrative, and to examine the relationship between the Virgilian inheritance and the production of vernacular Irish narrative within the broad interpretative and theoretical framework that *compilatio* provides. It is hoped that an examination of these aspects of Irish engagement with Virgil may offer some new perspectives on the connections between the medieval Irish experiences of reading Latin texts and writing vernacular ones.

Nineteenth- and early twentieth-century responses to *Táin Bó Cúailnge* are readily contextualized in Revivalist attempts to gather status for a redefined and independent national identity, as well as in a contemporary assumption that the content of the text represented survivals from an earlier mythological stratum. They drew on a critical classification of the text as an Irish formulation of ‘epic’ to invoke comparisons and analogies with Classical epic narratives. As recent commentators have pointed out, the early commentators on this issue looked to the Homeric corpus as the first point of comparison.[1] Analogies were drawn at a number of levels, ranging from the form and scope of the tale to direct comparisons between individual characters and episodes.

Joseph Dunn described the text as

[1] Clarke, ‘An Irish Achilles’; Clarke, ‘Achilles, Byrhtnoth’; Miles, *Heroic Saga*, 145–6.

> the great Táin, the Táin Bó Cúalnge, "The Cualnge Cattle-raid", the Iliad of Ireland, as it has been called, the queen of Irish epic tales, and the wildest and most fascinating saga-tale, not only of the entire Celtic world, but even of all western Europe.[2]

Douglas Hyde touched on the issue as part of his consideration of the relationship between verse and prose in the *Táin*, presenting the Homeric texts as the culmination of a process of development not completed in the Irish examples:

> The complete versified epic, the Iliad, the Odyssey, the Mahabharata, are indeed 'the hatch and brood of time', embodying not the first but the *last* results of a long series of national poetry. But to this last result, so close to them, so easily attainable, the Irish never arrived, and hence the various ballads that compose the books of their Red Branch Iliad, or Fenian Odyssey, remains separate to this day, and find their unity, if at all, only by means of a bridge of prose thrown across from poem to poem, by men who were not poets.[3]

Comparisons between individual characters are widespread, but one might look to Eleanor Hull's identification of Hercules as the prototype of Cú Chulainn to exemplify the tendency, or to the correlation drawn by Aodh De Blácam between the duels between Hector and Achilles and between Cú Chulainn and Fer Diad.[4]

Brent Miles has made a convincing case for seeing the critics' choice of Homer as the 'natural comparandum' as a reflection of their perception of *Táin Bó Cúailnge* as similarly 'primary epic', 'a written record of what was still experienced as a preponderantly oral tradition by contemporaries.'[5] The move towards the use of the *Aeneid* as a comparator seems to have gained currency after Rudolf Thurneysen's suggestion that the model of the *Aeneid* could have been the stimulus for the development of the 'macro-text' of the *Táin*:

> Frägt man, was ihr eine solche Vorzugsstellung verschafft hat, so scheint sich mir diese daraus zu erklären, daß in der Grunderzählung, deren Ausläufer wir besitzen, zum erstenmal ein Irländer den Versuch gemacht hatte, aus den kurzen Erzählungen und Episoden, wie die Sagenerzähler sie vorzutragen pflegten, ein großes, umfangreiches Ganzes zu schaffen, das den antiken Epen, vor allem der vielgelesenen Aeneis Vergils an die Seite gestellt werden konnte.[6]

> If someone were to ask what has given it such a privileged position, I believe that this can be explained from the fact that in the basic narrative, whose offshoots we possess, an Irishman had for the first time attempted to create, out of the brief tales and episodes as the tale-teller was accustomed to recite them, a large, comprehensive whole that could be compared to the ancient epics, in particular to Virgil's widely read *Aeneid*.

The comparison has gained some traction, and has triggered a variety of careful stylistic and content-orientated explorations of aspects of *Táin Bó Cúailnge* which might demonstrate influences or borrowings from the *Aeneid*, as well as the spread

[2] Dunn, *Ancient Irish Epic*, xi.
[3] Hyde, *Literary History of Ireland*, 399.
[4] Hull, *Cuchullin Saga*, xxv, De Blácam, *Gaelic Literature Surveyed*, 31–2.
[5] Miles, *Heroic Saga*, 146. On 'primary epic', see also Michael Clarke's discussion in chapter 6 of this volume, 101.
[6] Thurneysen, *Heldensage*, 96. The term 'macro-text' has been used in Hildegard Tristram's statements of a similar hypothesis: see her 'The "Cattle-Raid"'.

of the more populist common-place that the *Táin* is the Irish 'equivalent' of Virgil's poem.[7]

Thurneysen's statement about the creation of the *Táin* appears, however, to place significant focus on the practical and technical aspects of the gathering together of pre-existing shorter tales and episodes into the composition of the extended texts represented by the manuscript tradition. His comments are striking in their stress on the creative role of his putative compiler, presenting a view of the activity involved in creating the extant texts of *Táin Bó Cúailnge* as a deliberate gathering of short narratives and episodes into a larger unified whole, responding to the model provided by the *Aeneid.* More recently, Hildegard L.C. Tristram has emphasized the significance of Middle Irish translations of long Latin narrative texts as triggers for gathering multiform pre-existing episodes and sequences into the the developing macro-text of *Táin Bó Cúailnge.*[8] This spotlight on the practice of compilation and its role in the development of the 'full' text of the *Táin* provides an opportunity to bring together the two starting points from which this essay began: the twentieth-century postulation that the length and status of the *Aeneid* provided an inspiration for the compiler of *Táin Bó Cúailnge*, and the late-antique and medieval analyses of Virgil's own literary activity as compilation.

I have written elsewhere about potential reflexes of the technical aspects of *compilatio* in the manuscripts of *Táin Bó Cúailnge*, in particular the arrangement and presentation of textual material and the demarcation and discussion of its sources, and the insights that these matters might give us into the intentions and the theoretical stance of its compilers.[9] In that context, I suggested that the literary project that led to the accumulation of *Táin* materials into extended narrative form might be seen in the light of some of the intriguing theoretical positions that arose from medieval critical approaches to compilation, in which not only grammatical teaching materials, encyclopaedic material or *florilegia*, but also extended narrative and poetic texts like those of Virgil, came to be regarded as *compilationes*.[10] In order to consider further the potential relevance of these medieval approaches to our consideration of the compilation of *Táin Bó Cúailnge*, in the present discussion I will examine more closely a number of examples of discussions identifying Virgil as *compilator*, analysing his activity with a variety of different interpretative nuances which address in different ways the charge that Virgil, in the creation of his work, stole or usurped the work of others.

The *locus classicus* for the discussion is Jerome's preface to his *Liber Hebraicarum Quaestionum in Genesim* (Book of Hebrew Questions on Genesis), in which he defends his own compilatory activity in gathering material together:

[7] For a straightforward comparison between the *Táin* and the *Aeneid*, see Ó Buachalla's review of O'Rahilly's edition of the *Táin*, 15: 'Is í *Táin Bo Cuailnge* an scéal is mó le rá sa nGaeilge. Eipic is ea í – eipic náisiúnta na hÉireann ar féidir í a chur i gcomparáid ar mhóran slite leis an Aeneid' ('*Táin Bó Cúailnge* is the greatest story in Irish. It is an epic – the national epic of Ireland, which can be compared in many ways with the *Aeneid*'). Studies of formal aspects of the text (characterization, rhetorical set-pieces or techniques such as similes) have been fruitful. See, for example, Glennon, 'The similes'; Swartz, 'The problem of Classical influence'; Clarke, 'An Irish Achilles'; Miles, *Heroic Saga*, 145–244; Poppe's chapter in this volume; and O'Connor's chapter 9 in this volume.

[8] Tristram, 'The Cattle-Raid', especially 74–6, 79–80, and compare O'Connor's discussion in chapter 9 of this volume.

[9] Burnyeat, '*Córugud* and *compilatio*' 360-5.

[10] Minnis, 'Late-medieval discussions', 420.

> Qui in principiis librorum debebam secuturi operis argumenta proponere, cogor prius respondere maledictis, Terentii quippiam sustinens, qui comoediarum prologos in defensionem sui scenis dabat. Urgebat enim eum Luscius Lanuinus, nostro Luscio similis, et quasi publici aerarii poetam furem criminabatur. Hoc idem passus est ab aemulis et Mantuanus vates, ut cum quosdam versus Homeri transtulisset ad verbum, compilator veterum diceretur. Quibus ille respondit, magnarum esse virium, clavam Herculi extorquere de manu.[11]
>
> At the beginning of these volumes, I should set forth the argument of the work that follows, but I am compelled first of all to reply to the slanders, following the example of Terence, who put prologues to his comedies on stage in defence of himself. For Luscius Lanuinus, just like our Luscius, pursued him with vigour, and accused the poet of being a thief of the public treasury. The bard of Mantua also suffered the same from his rivals, because since he translated certain lines of Homer word for word, he was called a plunderer of the ancients. He replied to them: 'it takes great strength to wrench the club from the hand of Hercules.'

Jerome's stress here is on the respectability and usefulness of compilation as a practice, appropriately enough in an opening passage designed to justify his own compilatory project. His characterization of Virgil's activity is as direct borrowing and translation, however, and it is striking that other examples of the topos place much greater emphasis on the creativity and skill required for compilatory work, and on the engagement of the compiler with his sources. Macrobius presents an account of Virgil's relationship to Homer in the fictional scholarly discussions set out in his *Saturnalia.* Avienus, one of the young interlocutors in the dialogues, suggests that Virgil's borrowings from Greek literature in effect preserved its glories, and stresses the artistry involved in his judicious selection and placement of his source material:

> 'Perge quaeso', inquit Avienus, 'omnia quae Homero subtraxit investigare. Quid enim suavius quam duos praecipuos vates audire idem loquentes? Quia cum tria haec ex aequo impossibilia putentur, vel Iovi fulmen vel Herculi clavam vel versum Homero subtrahere, quod etsi fieri possent, alium tamen nullum deceret vel fulmen praeter Iovem iacere, vel certare praeter Herculem robore, vel canere quod cecinit Homerus: hic opportune in opus sum quae prior vates dixerat transferendo fecit ut sua esse credantur. Ergo pro voto omnium feceris si cum hoc coetu communicata velis quaecumque vestro noster poeta mutuatus est.'
>
> 'Please do go on,' Avienus said, 'and track down everything [Virgil] took from Homer: for what could be more pleasant than hearing the two foremost poets treating the same subjects? These three things are all reckoned equally impossible: taking a thunderbolt from Jupiter, his club from Hercules, or a line from Homer. And even if it could be managed, still no one could fittingly hurl a thunderbolt save Jupiter, or wield a club in combat save Hercules, or sing what Homer sang: yet by choosing just the right spot in his own work to take over the earlier bard's words he caused them to be thought his own. So you'll satisfy us all if you'll kindly share with the present company all that our poet borrowed from yours.'[12]

[11] Jerome, *Liber Hebraicarum Quaestionum in Genesim*, in Migne, *Patrologia Latina*, XXIII, col. 935.
[12] Kaster, *Macrobius Saturnalia*, V.3.16.

The widely circulated definition of *compilator* in Isidore's *Etymologiae* works with a sense of *compilare* that means 'to mix' rather than 'plunder'. It recasts Jerome's presentation of the accusations of the rivals to show them complaining that he 'translated certain verses of Homer and mixed them with his own', and in so doing again emphasizes the creative – and compositional – nature of *compilatio* as a means of generating texts:

> *Conpilator*, qui aliena dicta suis praemmiscet sicut solent pigmentarii in pila diversa mixta contundere. Hoc scelere quondam accusabatur Mantuanus ille vates, cum quosdam versus Homeri transferens suis permiscuisset et conpilator veterum ab aemulis diceretur. Ille respondit: 'Magnarum esse virium clavam Herculi extorquere de manu.'[13]
>
> *Compilator*, one who mixes things said by others with his own words as pigment makers are accustomed to pound together various mixes in a mortar. The Mantuan poet [Virgil] was once accused of this crime when, translating certain verses of Homer, he blended them in with his own and was called a plunderer (*conpilator*) of the ancients by his rivals. He replied: 'it takes great strength to wrench the club from the hand of Hercules'.

Next in this tour of exempla, we see uses of the topos in the short *Lives* of Virgil transmitted as introductory material to the various versions of commentaries on Virgil's works that were used as core didactic texts in the teaching of the medieval schools. The *Vita Donatiana* or *Vita Suetonii vulgo Donatiana*, Donatus's elaboration of the lost *Life* of Virgil contained in Suetonius's *De poetis* (Lives of the Poets), again uses the impossibility topos as a means of stressing Virgil's artistry and skill:

> Asconius Pedianus libro, quem contra obtrectatores Vergilii scripsit, pauca admodum obiecta ei proponit eaque circa historiam fere et quod pleraque ab Homero sumpsiset; sed hoc ipsum crimen sic defendere adsuetum ait: 'cur non illi quoque eadem furta temptarent? verum intellecturos facilius esse Herculi clavam quam Homero versum subripere'; et tamen destinasse secedere ut omnia ad satietatem malevolorum decideret.
>
> In a book which he wrote as a response to Virgil's detractors, Asconius Pedianus set forth a few of their objections, especially those concerning his plot and the fact that he took most [of his material] from Homer; but he says that [Virgil] was wont to defend this very crime thus: 'Why is it that they, too, do not attempt the same thefts? Indeed, they will perceive that it is easier to steal the club of Hercules than a line from Homer.' Nevertheless, he decided to retire [according to Asconius], in order to settle everything to the satisfaction of his ill-wishers.[14]

The presentation of the topos here appears to legitimize Virgil's activity and emphasize his pre-eminent status, and in so doing to confirm the standing of the 'compiled' text. The topos is also seen in these introductory *vitae* to be directed towards the charge of direct translation or quotation from Homeric sources, visible here in the later fifth-century *Vita Philargyriana* (Life of Virgil by Philargyrius):

[13] Isidore, *Etymologies* X.44, in Lindsay, *Isidori Etymologiarum Libri*.
[14] *Vita Donatiana*, in Brugnoli & Stok, *Vitae Vergilianae Antiquae*, 40–1.

> Obtraectatores Virgilio numquam defuerunt nec mirum; nam nec Homero quidem, eo quod pleraque ab Homero sumpsit, unde, cum quosdam uersus ad uerbum transtulisset, compilator ueterum diceretur. Sed hoc ipsum crimen sic disperdere consueuit; cur non illi quoque eadem furta temptarent? Uerum intellecturos facilius esse clauam Herculi extorquere de manu, quam Homero uersum subripere.'
>
> Virgil always had detractors, unsurprisingly; for so did Homer, all the more because he took many things from Homer, and it is for this reason, since he translated certain lines word for word, he was called a plunderer of the ancients. But he used to repudiate this very crime thus; 'Why is it that they too do not attempt the same thefts? Indeed, they will discover that it is easier to wrench the club of Hercules from his hand than to steal a line from Homer.'[15]

As the last in this series of examples of the topos, one might include the version used in the eighth-century Hiberno-Latin compilation of biblical commentary known as *Das Bibelwerk*, the 'Reference Bible', to introduce a collection of commentary material on the Psalms. While the text, which draws on introductory material from Cassiodorus's *Expositio Psalmorum*, does not use Virgil's name directly and the term *compilator* is not used, the passage is used to provide an illustration of the compilatory process within a discussion of the synthesizing approach taken by the compiler in the adaptation of his source:

> Post tantam copiam sancti patris Augustini qui avidos populos ecclesiasticis dapibus fluentes tam magne predicationis emanans saciavit, ego memor infirmitatis mee mare tam magnum defusum multis fontibus divinis, Deo adiuvante, in rivulos vadosos conpendiosa brevitate deduxi, uno codice tam defuso conplectens que illi in decadas quindecim explicavit. Sed ut quidam de Homero dicit: 'tale est de eius sensu aliquid subripere quale Ercolis de manu clavim tollere'. Ille litterarum omnium magister et fons purissimus, nulla fece pollutes, in fide perseverens [*sic*] catholicus. Et ego post eum istum librum per quinquaginta psalmos cum prefationibus suis trina divisione sum partitus.[16]
>
> After such abundance from the holy father Augustine, who satisfied the hungry congregations with ecclesiastical feasting, pouring out the streams of such great preaching, I, mindful of my own weakness, with God's help have reduced into shallow little streams with compressed brevity so great a sea poured out from many divine springs; embracing in one book such outpourings as he developed into fifteen decades. But, as someone says about Homer: 'to steal anything from his meaning is like taking the club from the hand of Hercules'. He [Augustine] is the master of all literature and a most pure spring, polluted by no filth, steadfastly orthodox in the faith. And I, following his example, have divided this book in a three-fold division, each of fifty psalms with their prefaces.[17]

The uses of this commonplace can be seen, then, to place emphasis upon different aspects of the practice of compilation. In some cases the positioning of Virgil as

[15] *Vitae Philargyrianae* in *ibid.*, 181. See also Ziolkowski, *Virgilian Tradition*, 212.
[16] Text from McNamara & Sheehy, 'Psalter text', 298. See also Miles, *Heroic Saga*, 41.
[17] The first section of this passage presents some textual difficulties and I am grateful to Allan Hood, Gavin Kelly and Jane Stevenson for their advice on my provisional interpretation.

compilator appears to focus on his pre-eminence and status; others allow a greater focus on the technicalities of compilatory text-production, stressing the gathering, mixing and placement of source material required in the creation of the compiled text, along with the acknowledgement of Virgil's own artistry.

These discussions of the legitimacy and value of compilation have their roots in statements that arise in the course of critical approaches to literary material, and the location of these critical statements is of some significance in establishing their value for our present purposes. Apart from the example in Isidore's *Etymologiae*, a text which has an obvious didactic function in its own right, the Virgil-as-*compilator* topos is located in critical and educational apparatus designed to support the reader to engage with, understand and interpret the material which it introduces or comments upon. The assessment of Virgil as *compilator* can, then, be contextualized within medieval educational approaches to textual criticism and interpretation.

The potential significance of these discussions of Virgil's activity for an exploration of the medieval Irish understanding of *compilatio,* and its resonance for our understanding of the status and development of vernacular 'macro-form' narratives like *Táin Bó Cúailnge*, invite an examination of the contexts in which one might look for evidence of the relevance of these kinds of critical approaches within medieval Irish literary culture. Recent discussion of the state of Virgilian studies in early medieval Ireland has reinforced the significance of the commentary tradition as evidence for Irish engagement with the Virgilian tradition, and has demonstrated the extent of Irish participation in the development and transmission of key Virgilian commentary materials.[18] It is also possible to indicate the particular relevance of some of the pertinent textual *loci* to an Irish milieu. As Rijcklof Hofman's analysis of evidence for knowledge of Virgil in early medieval Irish contexts demonstrates, key late-antique commentaries on Virgil's work share Insular and Irish tradition-markers. Three eighth- and ninth-century Tours manuscripts containing the fifth-century commentary on the *Aeneid* by Tiberius Claudius Donatus seem to share an Irish archetype; Servius the grammarian's commentary on the *Aeneid*, *Bucolics* and *Georgics* was known in Ireland at an early date, and Hofman has ascribed the creation of an augmented Servian text with additions drawn from Aelius Donatus's lost commentary on Vergil known as the *Servius Auctus* or *Servius Danielis* to a seventh- or eighth-century Irish context. Finally, the 'Philargyrius' commentaries on the *Bucolics* and *Georgics*, now partially surviving in a compilation including extensive quotations from the Servius and Servius Danielis commentaries, have been assigned to a seventh-century Irish milieu.[19]

Most significantly for our exploration of the potential relevance of the portrayal of Virgil as *compilator* to the understanding of compilation available to the producers of vernacular narrative, there is also direct evidence for the use of this kind of commentary material and critical approach in bilingual or vernacular contexts. Old Irish glossing is found in some of the Virgil commentaries, and Pierre-Yves Lambert has shown that the entry in *Sanas Cormaic* (Cormac's Glossary) on *ecloga* is drawn from the Virgilian *accessus* in Laon, Bibliotheque Municipale MS 468 (Martinus Hiberniensis's 'Virgilian handbook').[20] The approaches to textual interpretation and

[18] See, for example, Ó Cuív, 'Medieval Irish scholars'; Hofman, 'Some new facts'; Herren, 'Literary and glossarial evidence'; Miles, *Heroic Saga*, 23–33, 37.

[19] Hofman, 'Some new facts', 191.

[20] Lambert, 'Les gloses celtiques', 83; Hofman, 'Some new facts', 191. Glossarial practices in *Sanas Cormaic* and the Laon manuscript are discussed in a different context by Michael Clarke in chapter 6 of this volume.

criticism within which we may situate this interest in describing Virgil's compilatory activity can be seen, therefore, to have been present in early Irish educational contexts which also incorporated the use of the vernacular.

One might make a very tentative proposition, therefore, that this particular idea about Virgil and his work was one that could have had resonance for the producers of vernacular Irish compiled texts. Such a proposition would invite a consideration of whether the medieval Irish creators of narrative texts could have characterized their gathering, adding to, and arranging textual material as a similar activity to that invoked in these assessments of Virgil's creative technique. Could we, then, suggest that the status accorded to *compilatio* by associating it with Virgil's work might have contributed to the stimulus for the development of extended vernacular narrative material in which compilation contributed to the development of the texts?

Overt literary-critical statements are infrequent in vernacular Irish contexts, of course, but one re-use of the Virgil-as-*compilator* topos in the opening to a piece of vernacular verse might encourage us to explore these postulations further. In the opening verses of *Ailech II*, a poem contained within the collection of onomastic verse narratives known as the Metrical *Dindshenchas*, the eleventh-century poet, scholar and historian Flann Mainistrech appears to suggest that his composition draws upon, or follows, a previous treatment of his topic, evidently by his colleague Eochaid Eolach ua Céirín. He does so in terms which clearly recall the topos examining Virgil's use of his Homeric source-material:

> Cía triallaid nech aisneis senchais Ailig eltaig
> d'éis Echdach áin, is gait claidib al-láim Ercail.[21]
>
> Whoever attempts the telling of Ailech of the herds after the noble Eochaid, it is robbing the sword from the hands of Hercules.

While this couplet clearly makes allusion to the commonplace describing Virgil as *compilator*, its significance for our view of Flann's portrayal of himself and his literary activity is not entirely straightforward. At first sight it appears to be complimentary, giving Eochaid due respect as the author of an inspiration to his own work by placing him as the 'Homer' figure in the topos. However, if we read the couplet with fuller versions of the image in mind, Flann might be seen to be back-handedly asserting a higher status for himself, as the one who can, as Virgil did, select and arrange the best of his source material and thus claim it as his own.

Either or both of these readings seem to me to be possible. The use of the Virgil-as-*compilator* topos as an introduction to the poem may also have implications for Flann's portrayal of his own compositional activity. Does it indicate that Flann is characterizing his literary practice, and his response to Eochaid's precedent in treating the topic, as including *compilatio*? Could it be seen as a claim to the status of a Virgilian text? *Ailech II* is not in itself a text which would invite comparisons with high-status Virgilian material; it comprises only thirty-five stanzas, and although it does deal with the origins of place and people, it does not appear to aspire to or engage with the form or status of Classical epic. It might, however, fit well within medieval assessments of material seen as *compilatio*. The poem is contained within *dindshenchas* collections which are almost by definition accretive in nature, and the

[21] Gwynn, *Metrical Dindshenchas*, IV, 101–2; see also the discussions by Ó Cróinin, 'Na mainistrecha', 23–4, Miles, *Heroic Saga*, 40, and Thanisch, 'Perspectives', 37–8.

gathering of associated commentary and prose narrative in later recensions underlines the compilatory process of gathering the material together.[22]

The activity of Flann and Eochaid as compilers is noted elsewhere. In the colophon to the *Lebor na hUidre* copy of *Aided Nath Í* (The Violent Death of Nath Í), a rare overt critical statement from an early Irish context outlines their involvement in the practical process of gathering and compiling textual material, in this case that which went to make up the text on the lore of the royal burial places of Ireland, *Senchas na Relec* (The History of Burial-Places):

> Fland tra ⁊ Eochaid eolach hua Cérin is iat ro thinolsat so a llebraib Eochoda hui Flandacan i nArd Macha ⁊ a llebraib Manistrech ⁊ asna lebraib togaidib archena .i. asin Libur Budi testo asin carcar in nArd Macha ⁊ as in Libur Girr boí i mManistir ⁊ is side ruc in mac legend leis in gait dar mur ⁊ ni fríth riam di éis. Conid senchas na relec insin.[23]

> It is Fland, then, and Eochaid Eolach hua Cérin who compiled this from the books of Eochaid hua Flannacán in Armagh, and from the books of Monasterboice, and from the other selected books besides, that is, the Yellow Book which has been lost from the strong-room in Armagh, and from the Short Book that was in Monasterboice, and that is the one the student stole and took with him overseas and was never got back. So that is *Senchas na Relec*.

This view of 'on the ground' compilatory practice is firmly rooted in the practicalities of working with books, and located in the libraries and holdings of individual scholars and monasteries. A few further observations on what we know of Flann and Eochaid's body of work and its monastic and educational context may help to evaluate how active Flann's engagement might be with the topos he is drawing upon in the *Ailech* poem, and whether it should be seen simply as a rhetorical flourish, or whether Flann himself might be characterized as a likely candidate to have brought to bear on the production of vernacular literature the critical and educational traditions in which we find the assessments of Virgil's work as *compilatio*.

Flann Mainistrech had an obvious educational role, of course, as the lector at Monasterboice.[24] While he attained a semi-legendary posthumous status that led to a number of poems being incorrectly attributed to him, he is identified relatively securely as the composer of a number of poems included in *Lebor Gabála* (The Book of Invasions) – another highly accretive, compilatory text, or, perhaps, complex of texts – as well as of *dindshenchas* material and his famous historical synchronisms.[25] His Irish historical interests are demonstrably influenced by his Latin learning, and he presents a useful embodiment of coexisting Irish and Latin scholarly interests. Eochaid, associated probably with Monasterboice, is claimed as the author of *Duan na Cethrachat Cest* (Poem of the Forty Questions), one of the texts in a clearly educationally-focused compilation of school dialogue-texts in Irish

[22] See Ó Concheanainn, 'The three forms of *Dinnshenchas Érenn*'.

[23] Best & Bergin, *Lebor na hUidre*, lines 2919–24; see also Ó Concheanainn, '*Aided Nath Í*', 146–62, and Herbert, 'Crossing historical and literary boundaries', 92–3.

[24] Carey, 'Flann Mainistrech'.

[25] Macalister, *Lebor Gabála Érenn*, IV, 224–41, and V, 104–11; Thurneysen, 'Flann Manistrech's Gedicht'; MacNeill, 'An Irish historical tract'; MacNeill, 'Poems by Flann Mainistrech'.

gathered in the British Library manuscript Egerton 1782.[26] These teaching texts are indebted in both form and function to the catechistical dialogue texts known as the *Ioca Monachorum* (The Jokes of Monks), but take as their subject-material topics and details drawn from vernacular Irish pseudo-historical and literary tradition, rather than the biblical and Classical matter found in their models and elsewhere in the Egerton collection.[27]

Flann and Eochaid, then, can be associated not just with literary and educational contexts, but with exactly the kind of milieux in which the transfer of critical attitudes and interpretative approaches from Latin to the vernacular might be possible. We might, then, take Flann's allusion to the Virgil-as-*compilator* topos as an indication that he was mindful of the comparability that it suggests between his own literary production and that of his Mantuan predecessor. It should, however, be noted that no extant attributions enable us to place Flann and Eochaid at work on the type of narrative story-material compared most readily by some modern critics to the Classical texts that triggered late-antique and medieval critiques of Virgil's compositional practice. This constrains further investigation concerning the perceived status of *Táin Bó Cúailnge* and other extended vernacular narratives, as well as the question of conscious engagement on the part of medieval Irish writers with critical evaluation of *compilatio* as a literary form. It is not possible, of course, to conclude that Flann and Eochaid were not involved in the production of prose narrative, our information about their activity and that of other Irish scholar-authors being necessarily partial. Nevertheless, the context of Flann's invocation of the Virgil topos may serve as a cue to expand our search for the kinds of Irish text that might have drawn inspiration from contemporary critical approaches to Classical material. Rather than responding to a modern positioning of *Táin Bó Cúailnge* as an equivalent to Classical narrative, it may be more productive to examine other genres of Irish literary production with which we do see Flann, Eochaid and a multitude of other Irish scholar-authors engaging.

In order to develop this suggestion further, I would like to return to a consideration of the nature of early Irish scholars', writers' and compilers' access to Virgil and ideas about Virgil and the Classical tradition. This is not the place to rehearse old debates about the degree of direct access to Virgilian texts available in early medieval Ireland, and I would in any case be happy to concur that for the early Irish schools, as for schools across Europe, Virgil's work formed the canonical core of an established system of grammatical education. However well the texts themselves were known, however, this canonical status meant that individual scholars' experience of them would have been consistently and profoundly mediated by the apparatus of grammatical criticism, commentary and interpretative tradition; the extant critical material from Irish sources bears ample witness to this.[28] 'Virgil' was not just the *Aeneid*, the *Eclogues* or the *Georgics*, but also a source for vocabulary, for grammatical, rhetorical, and metrical *exempla*, for mythographic, historical and ethnographic information, and for school exercises and presumably classroom teaching in all these areas.[29] It is probable, then, that the medieval Irish experience of Virgil at an individual level may have been much more an educational than an artistic one.

[26] Thurneysen, 'Das Gedicht der vierzig Fragen', 132–6.

[27] See Burnyeat, 'A miscellany in the medieval Irish classroom'. For discussion of the content of London, British Library MS Egerton 1782, see also Hazard, 'Gaelic political scripture', 163–4.

[28] Hofman, 'Some new facts', 195.

[29] Ziolkowski & Putnam, *Virgilian Tradition*, 623–5. See also, for comparison, Baswell, *Virgil in Medieval England*, especially 5–8.

What might this mean for our consideration of vernacular Irish texts whose authors may have taken Virgilian material as inspiration or may have engaged with the idea of Virgil as *compilator*? Firstly, we should remember that our view of what might be comparable to the Classical inheritance is affected not just by the historical appropriation of the *Táin* as an epic basis for a new Irish cultural identity, but also by our experience of meeting the Homeric and Virgilian texts as modern readers. The emphasis placed in modern readings on the heroic and personal aspects of Classical narrative tends to obscure the historical and genealogical material which was of great interest and significance to medieval readers and adaptors, and this inevitably affects our ideas about which branches of early Irish literature might be most likely to reflect their composers' engagement with Classical models.[30]

It is evident that *Táin Bó Cúailnge* is a product of conscious compilatory practice, and I have discussed elsewhere the evidence for its compilers' use of contemporary technical developments in *compilatio*.[31] It would be much more difficult, however, to demonstrate that they were also deliberately aligning themselves with a theoretical positioning of Virgil as *compilator*, or using the *Aeneid* as a model in compiling the macro-texts of the *Táin* in particular. The technical features visible in manuscript presentations of *Táin Bó Cúailnge* are also present in a range of other Irish literary materials. As scholarly attempts to identify medieval Irish texts which might have been viewed by their compilers as providing a vernacular equivalent to their experience of Classical narrative move beyond the particular historical trajectory that promoted the *Táin* as national epic, other texts and genres may come more sharply into view as potential comparators.

Remembering the centrality of the Virgilian corpus to the materials of educational and critical training, one might look to materials which contributed to the core of the medieval Irish curriculum as set out in the *Duodecim partes poeticae* or *XII. Ernail na Filideachta* (Twelve Parts of Poetry).[32] Alternatively, one might take the categorizations in the medieval Irish tale-lists as a guide to the texts considered as core parts of Irish literary training. Either strategy would broaden the field considerably beyond *Táin Bó Cúailnge* as it is currently constituted. If the practice of *compilatio* were to emerge as a key feature in the medieval Irish response to Classical models, it would be possible to open up a wide range of different genres, forms, and types of text for consideration, including those such as the *dindshenchas* collections, and the accumulations of *Lebor Gabála* materials on which we see self-professed compilers such as Flann Mainistrech at work. To do this, however, it may be necessary to put aside preconceptions regarding what 'ought to' take priority and be of high status within Irish literary tradition, and find ways of reclaiming the significance of texts which might have been of higher value to their contemporary creators than they have so far been to the modern reader.

A final, highly tentative, suggestion responds to the critical contexts in which the assessment of Virgil as compiler is found. Commentaries on Virgil's work approach his texts at a number of different levels, as we have seen, but among the grammatical and rhetorical expositions which make up the greater proportion of the discussion we also find evaluations of genre, and historical and chronological discussion that

[30] The historicizing aspects of medieval Irish presentations of Classical material have been stressed by recent commentators: see for instance Poppe, '*Imtheachta Aeniasa*', 76–7; Myrick, *From the* De Excidio, 70–1; Clarke, 'An Irish Achilles', 244–51; Fulton, this volume; Ní Mhaonaigh, this volume.

[31] Burnyeat, '*Córugud* and *Compilatio*', 360-3.

[32] Thurneysen, 'Mittelirische Verslehren', 29–51.

makes it clear that the basic critical categorization of the *Aeneid* in particular was as *historia*.[33] As recent work by Erich Poppe and Gregory Toner has demonstrated, this assessment was also the one applied by medieval Irish scholar-authors to a wide range of vernacular narratives, not least *Táin Bó Cúailnge* itself.[34] But with medieval critical practice in mind, the *Táin* may perhaps not be the Irish text most comparable to Virgil's in terms of its contextual placement and presentation. An investigation seeking material key to the literary tradition overall, deriving from, developed, and extended by sustained compilatory activity, and demonstrating the status associated with it, might choose to focus upon rather different areas of literary production. If we were to identify one which has obvious value for those engaging with ideas of *historia* and which (perhaps not incidentally) echoes the Classical epics in their treatment of the origins of peoples and their struggles over lands and seas to reach and take possession of their kingdoms, then the lengthy, multiform compilations, surrounded by commentary and gloss, that make up the various versions of *Lebor Gabála* might present a more obvious choice than the relatively circumscribed subject-matter dealt with in the *Táin*.[35] Reading and using material like this might, in practice, have felt similar to reading and using a heavily mediated Virgilian text. It would not be judicious, of course, to propose that the creation and compilation of *Lebor Gabála* is more readily understood as a deliberate attempt to create an 'Irish *Aeneid*' than that of *Táin Bó Cúailnge.* Nevertheless, it is intriguing to consider how the historical course of the search for medieval Irish responses to Virgilian models might have varied had there not been an *a priori* assumption that the *Táin* was the most obvious candidate.

[33] Deitz, '*Historia* in the commentary of Servius', 61–3.

[34] Toner, 'The Ulster cycle'; Poppe, *Of Cycles*; Poppe, 'Literature as history'. See O'Connor's and Fulton's discussions above, 19–21 and 40–57.

[35] Compare Helen Fulton's discussion of *Lebor Gabála* and *Togail Troí* above, 49–52.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

AARNE, Antti, & Stith THOMPSON *The Types of the Folktale*, FF Communications 184 (Helsinki 1961)

AHL, Frederick '*Uilix Mac Leirtis*: the classical hero in Irish metamorphosis', in *Art of Translation*, ed. Warren, 173–98

AINSWORTH, Peter 'Contemporary and "eyewitness" history', in *Historiography in the Middle Ages*, ed. Deliyannis, 249–76

ALLARD, Guy-H. (ed.) *Jean Scot Écrivain* (Montreal 1986)

ALLEN, Michael I. 'University history 300–1000: origins and western developments', in *Historiography in the Middle Ages*, ed. Deliyannis, 17–42

ALMQVIST, Bo, & Roibeard Ó CATHASAIGH (ed.) *Coiglímis an Tine: Cnuasach Seanchais agus Scéalta Bhab Feiritéar* (Ballyferriter 2010)

ANDERSON, O.O. (ed. & tr.) 'The constellations', *Revue celtique* 30 (1909), 404–17

ARBUTHNOT, Sharon J. 'Only fools and horses: *dá n-ó bill* and *dá n-ó pill* in medieval Irish texts', *Cambrian Medieval Celtic Studies* 65 (2013), 49–56

ARBUTHNOT, Sharon, Pádraic MORAN & Paul RUSSELL (ed.) *The Early Irish Glossaries Database* (2006, rev. 2009), online resource available at www.asnc.cam.ac.uk/irishglossaries/

ARCHAMBAULT, P. 'The ages of man and the ages of the world: a study of two traditions', *Revue des etudes augustiniennes* 12 (1966), 193–22

ATKINSON, Robert (ed.) *The Yellow Book of Lecan* (Dublin 1896)

BARNICLE, Mary (ed.) *The Seege or Batayle of Troye*, Early English Text Society 172 (London 1927)

BASSETT, Paul Merritt 'The use of history in the *Chronicon* of Isidore of Seville', *History and Theory* 15 (1976), 278–92

BASWELL, Christopher 'Marvels of translation and crises of transition in the romances of Antiquity', in *Cambridge Companion*, ed. Krueger, 29–44

BASWELL, Christopher *Virgil in Medieval England: Figuring the* Aeneid *from the Twelfth Century to Chaucer* (Cambridge 1995)

BECK, Heinrich, & Else EBEL (ed.) *Studien zur Isländersaga: Festschrift für Rolf Heller* (Berlin 2000)

BEK-PEDERSEN, Karen, & Daniel SÄVBORG (ed.) *Folklore in Old Norse – Old Norse in Folklore*, Nordistica Tartuensia 20 (Tartu forthcoming)

BENSON, C. David *The History of Troy in Middle English Literature: Guido delle Colonne's* Historia Destructiones Troiae *in Medieval England* (Cambridge 1980)

BENSON, Larry D. (ed.) *The Riverside Chaucer*, 3rd edn (Oxford 2008)

BERGIN, Osborn, *et al.* (ed.) *Anecdota from Irish Manuscripts II* (Halle 1908)

BERNHARDT-HOUSE, P.A. 'Interpretatio Hibernica', *Eolas* 2 (2007), 45–61

BEST, R.I. (ed. & tr.) 'The Adventures of Art son of Conn', *Ériu* 3 (1907), 149–73

BEST, R.I., & Osborn BERGIN (ed.) *Lebor na hUidre: Book of the Dun Cow* (Dublin 1929)

BEST, R.I., & M.A. O'BRIEN (ed.) *Togail Troí, from the Book of Leinster, Vol. IV* (Dublin 1966)

BEST, R.I., *et al*. (ed.) *The Book of Leinster, formerly Lebar na Núachongbála*, 6 vols (Dublin 1954–83)

BETHELL, D. 'English monks and Irish reform in the eleventh and twelfth centuries', *Historical Studies* 8 (1971), 111–35

BHREATHNACH, Edel (ed.) *The Kingship and Landscape of Tara* (Dublin 2005)

BIEBUYCK, Daniel, & Kahambo C. MATEENE (ed. & tr.) *The Mwindo Epic from the Banyaga (Congo Republic)* (Berkeley CA 1969)
BIELER, Ludwig (ed.) *The Irish Penitentials* (Dublin 1963)
BIELER, Ludwig 'The island of scholars', *Revue du moyen âge latin* 8 (1952), 213–34
BIELER, Ludwig, & Bernhard BISCHOFF 'Fragmente zweier frühmittelalterlicher Schulbücher aus Glendalough', *Celtica* 3 (1956), 211–20
BINCHY, D.A. (ed.) *Corpus Iuris Hibernici*, 6 vols (Dublin 1978)
BINDER, G. 'Der brauchbare Held, Aneas: Stationen der Funktionalisierung eines Ursprungsmythos', in *Die Allegorese*, ed. Horn & Walter, 331–30
BOLTON, Diane K. 'The study of the *Consolation of Philosophy* in Anglo-Saxon England', *Archives d' histoire doctrinale et littéraire du Moyen Age* 44 (1977), 33–78
BORSJE, Jacqueline 'Demonising the enemy: a study of Congal Cáech', in *Proceedings*, ed. Rekdal & Ó Corráin, 21–38
BORSJE, Jacqueline '*Fled Bricrenn* and tales of terror', *Peritia* 19 (2005), 173–92
BORSJE, Jacqueline 'Omens, ordeals and oracles: on demons and weapons in early Irish texts', *Peritia* 13 (1999), 224–48
BORSJE, Jacqueline 'The "terror of the night" and the Morrígain: shifting faces of the supernatural", in *Proceedings*, ed. Ó Flaithearta, 71–98
BOSOLD-DASGUPTA, Bettina, *et al.* (ed.) *Nachleben der Antike – Formen ihrer Einigung: Festschrift anlässlich des 60. Geburtstages von Klaus Ley* (Berlin 2006)
BOYLE, Elizabeth 'Neoplatonic thought in medieval Ireland: the evidence of *Scéla na esérgi*', *Medium Ævum* 78 (2009), 216–30
BRACKEN, Damian, & Dagmar Ó RIAIN-RAEDEL (ed.) *Ireland and Europe in the Twelfth Century: Reform and Renewal* (Dublin 2006)
BRAKKE, David *Demons and the Making of the Monk: Spiritual Combat in Early Christianity* (Cambridge MA 2006)
BREATNACH, Liam (ed. & tr.) *Uraicecht na Ríar: The Poetic Grades in Early Irish Law* (Dublin 1987)
BROMWICH, Rachel, A.O.H. JARMAN & Brynley F. ROBERTS (ed.) *The Arthur of the Welsh: The Arthurian Legend in Medieval Welsh Literature* (Cardiff 1991)
BRUGNOLI, Giorgio, & Fabio STOK (ed.) *Vitæ Vergilianæ Antiquæ* (Rome 1997)
BURNAM, J. (ed.) *Commentaire anonyme sur Prudence d'après le manuscrit 413 de Valenciennes* (Paris 1910)
BURNAM, J. (ed.) *Glossemata de Prudentio*, University Studies Cincinnati 2 (Cincinnati OH 1903)
BURNYEAT, Abigail '*Córugud* and *compilatio* in some manuscripts of *Táin Bó Cúailnge*', in *Ulidia 2*, ed. Ó hUiginn & Ó Catháin, 356–74
BURNYEAT, Abigail 'A miscellany in the medieval Irish classroom: *compilatio*, commentary and criticism in B.M. Egerton 1782', forthcoming in *Insular Books*, ed. Connolly & Radulescu
BURROW, J.A. *The Ages of Man: A Study in Medieval Writing and Thought* (Oxford 1986)
BYRNE, F.J. (ed. & tr.) 'Clann Ollaman Uaisle Emna', *Studia Hibernica* 4 (1964), 54–94
BYRNE, Mary (ed. & tr.) 'The parricides of the children of Tantalus', *Revue Celtique* 44 (1927), 14–33
CABALL, Marc, & Kaarina HOLLO 'The literature of later medieval Ireland, 1200–1600: from the Normans to the Tudors', in *Cambridge History*, ed. Kelleher & O'Leary, I, 74–139
CAHILL, Thomas *How the Irish Saved Civilization* (London 1995)
CALDER, George (ed. & tr.) *Imtheachta Æniasa: The Irish* Æneid, Irish Texts Society 6 (London 1907)
CALDER, George (ed. & tr.) *Togail na Tebe: The* Thebaid *of Statius: The Irish Text* (Cambridge 1922)
CAMARGO, Martin 'Defining medieval rhetoric', in *Rhetoric and Renewal*, ed. Mews *et al*., 21–34; reprinted in his *Essays on Medieval Rhetoric* (Farnham 2012), essay I

CAMERON, Averil (ed.) *History as Text: The Writing of Ancient History* (London 1989)
CAMPION, L. (ed.) 'Córas bríathartha *Togail Troí* (LL)', unpublished Masters diss., University College Galway, 1954
CAPPUYNS, Maïeul. 'Jean Scot Eriugène commentateur de Prudence?', *Bulletin de théologie ancienne et médievale* 7 (1954–7), 657
CAREY, John 'Flann Mainistrech (*d.* 1056)', in *ODNB*
CAREY, John *The Irish National Origin-Legend: Synthetic Pseudo-History*, E.C. Quiggin Memorial Lectures 1 (Cambridge 1994)
CAREY, John '*Lebor Gabála* and the legendary history of Ireland', in *Medieval Celtic Literature*, ed. Fulton, 32–48
CAREY, John (ed.) *Lebor Gabála Érenn: Textual History and Pseudo-History*, Irish Texts Society Subsidiary Series 20 (Dublin 2009)
CAREY, John 'Myth and mythography in *Cath Maige Tuired*', *Studia Celtica* 24–5 (1989–90), 53–69
CAREY, John *A New Introduction to Lebor Gabála Érenn*, Irish Texts Society Subsidiary Series 1 (Dublin 1993)
CAREY, John (ed. & tr.) *In Tenga Bithnua: The Ever-New Tongue*, Corpus Christianorum Series Apocryphorum 16: Apocrypha Hiberniae 2, Apocalyptica 1 (Turnhout 2009)
CAREY, John 'The uses of tradition in *Serglige Con Culainn*', in *Ulidia*, ed. Mallory & Stockman, 77–84
CAREY, John, Kevin MURRAY & Caitríona Ó DOCHARTAIGH (ed.) *Sacred Histories* (Aberystwyth forthcoming)
CARNEY, James 'The ecclesiastic background to Irish saga', in Furumark *et al.*, ed., *Arctica*, 221–7
CARNEY, James 'Literature in Irish, 1169–1534', in *New History of Ireland II*, ed. Cosgrove, 780–815
CARNEY, James *Studies in Irish Literature and History* (Dublin 1955)
CARPENTER, Rhys *Folk Tale, Fiction and Saga in the Homeric Epics* (Berkeley CA 1946)
CAVINESS, M.H. *The Early Stained Glass of Canterbury Cathedral, circa 1175–1220* (Princeton NJ 1977)
CAVINESS, M.H. *The Windows of Christ Church Cathedral Canterbury* (London 1981)
CHANCE, Jane *Medieval Mythography from Roman North Africa to the School of Chartres, AD 433–1177* (Gainesville 1994)
CHARLES-EDWARDS, T.M. (tr.) *The Chronicle of Ireland*, Translated Texts for Historians 44, 2 vols (Liverpool 2006)
CHARLES-EDWARDS, T.M. 'The context and uses of literacy in early Christian Ireland', in *Literacy*, ed. Pryce, 62–82
CHARLES-EDWARDS, T.M. *Early Christian Ireland* (Cambridge 2000)
CHARLES-EDWARDS, T.M. 'Honour and status in some Irish and Welsh prose tales', *Ériu* 29 (1978), 130–41
CHARLES-EDWARDS, T.M. 'Language and society among the insular Celts, AD 400–1000', in *The Celtic World*, ed. Green, 703–36
CHRISTIANSEN, Reidar T., & Seán Ó SÚILLEABHÁIN *The Types of the Irish Folktale*, FF Communications 188 (Helsinki 1963)
CLANCY, Thomas Owen 'Fools and adultery in some Early Irish texts', *Ériu* 44 (1992), 104–24
CLANCY, Thomas Owen 'Mac Steléne and the eight in Armagh: identity and context', *Éigse* 26 (1992), 80–91
CLANCY, Thomas Owen 'Reading medieval Irish satire: "The Trial of Mac Teléne"', in *Saturna*, ed. Reale & Sternglantz, 20–47
CLANCY, Thomas Owen, & Gilbert MÁRKUS (ed.) *Iona: The Earliest Poetry of a Christian Monastery* (Edinburgh 1995)
CLARK, F. 'Reading the "First pagan historiographer": Dares Phrygius and medieval genealogy', *Viator* 41 (2010) 203–26

CLARK, J.G., F.T. COULSON and K.L. MCKINLEY (ed.) *Ovid in the Middle Ages* (Cambridge 2011)
CLARKE, Michael 'Achilles, Byrhtnoth, and Cú Chulainn: continuity and analogy from Homer to the medieval North', in *Epic Interactions*, ed. Clarke *et al*., 243–71
CLARKE, Michael 'The extended prologue of *Togail Troi*: from the children of Adam to the wars of Troy', *Ériu* (forthcoming, 2015)
CLARKE, Michael 'An Irish Achilles and a Greek Cú Chulainn', in *Ulidia* 2, ed. Ó hUiginn & Ó Catháin, 238–51
CLARKE, Michael 'Linguistic education and literary creativity in medieval Ireland', in *Ireland and Its Contacts*, ed. Ronan, 39–71
CLARKE, Michael 'Translation and transformation: a case study from medieval Irish and English', in *Translating Emotion*, ed. Clarke & Shields, 27–46
CLARKE, Michael, B.G.F. CURRIE & R.O.A.M. LYNE (ed.) *Epic Interactions: Perspectives on Homer, Virgil, and the Epic Tradition* (Oxford 2006)
CLARKE, Michael, & K.M. SHIELDS (ed.) *Translating Emotion: Studies in Transformation and Renewal between Languages*, Intercultural Studies and Foreign Language Learning 4 (Oxford 2011)
CLOVER, Carol 'The long prose form', *Arkiv för nordisk filologi* 101 (1986), 10–39
COFFEY, Michael, & Roland MAYER (ed. & tr.) *Seneca: Phaedra* (Cambridge 1990)
COMYN, David, & Patrick S. DINEEN (ed. & tr.) *Foras Feasa ar Éirinn: The History of Ireland by Geoffrey Keating*, Irish Texts Society 4, 8, 9 and 15 (London 1902–14)
CONNOLLY, Margaret, & Raluca RADULESCU (ed.) *Insular Books: Vernacular Miscellanies in Late Medieval Britain* (forthcoming)
CONRAD-Ó BRÍAIN, Helen, Anne-Marie D'ARCY & John SCATTERGOOD (ed.), *Text and Gloss: Studies in Insular Learning and Literature Presented to J.D. Pheifer* (Dublin 1999)
CONSTABLE, G. *Three Studies in Medieval Religious and Social Thought* (Cambridge 1995)
CONTAMINE, G. (ed.) *Traduction et traducteurs au moyen âge* (Paris 1989)
CONTRENI, John J. *The Cathedral School of Laon: Its Manuscripts and Masters* (Munich 1978)
CONTRENI, John J. (ed.) *Codex Laudunensis 468: A Ninth-Century Guide to Virgil, Sedulius, and the Liberal Arts*, Armarium Codicum Insignium 3 (Turnhout 1984)
CONTRENI, John J. 'Three Carolingian texts attributed to Laon: reconsiderations', *Studi Medievali* 17.2 (1976), 797–813
CONTRENI, John J., & Pádraig Ó NÉILL (ed.) *Glossae Divinae Historiae: The Biblical Glosses of John Scottus Eriugena* (Florence 1997)
COPELAND, Rita (ed.) *Criticism and Dissent in the Middle Ages* (Cambridge 1996)
CORTHALS, Johan 'Early Irish *retoirics* and their late antique background', *Cambrian Medieval Celtic Studies* 31 (1996), 17–36
COSGROVE, Art (ed.) *A New History of Ireland II: Medieval Ireland 1169–1534* (Oxford 1987)
COX, Fiona 'Virgilian transformations – the *Aeneid* in the history of translation', in *Translations*, ed. Murray, 69–82
CRAMPTON, Robert (ed. & tr.) '*Fingal Chlainne Tanntail*: text and context', unpublished PhD diss., University of Cambridge, 2010
CRONIN, Michael *Translating Ireland: Translation, Languages, Culture* (Cork 1996)
CUNNINGHAM, Bernadette *Geoffrey Keating and his World* (Dublin 2000)
DALL, N.F.G. 'A seventh-century English edition of Virgil', *Classical Quarterly* 12 (1918), 171–8
DAMIAN-GRINT, Peter *The New Historians of the Twelfth-Century Renaissance: Inventing Vernacular Authority* (Woodbridge 1999)
DAVIES, Sioned *Crefft y Cyfarwydd* (Cardiff 1995)
DAVIS, Dick 'In the enemy's camp: Homer's Helen and Ferdowsi's Hojir', *Iranian Studies* 25.3–4 (1992), 17–26

DE BERNARDO STEMPEL, Patrizia 'Phaedra und Hippolytos in irischem Gewand: Die mitterlalterliche *Fingal Rónáin* als Theaterstück', in *Nachleben der Antike*, ed. Bosold-DasGupta *et al.*, 20–47
DE BLÁCAM, Aodh *Gaelic Literature Surveyed* (Dublin 1929; repr. 1973)
DE SMET, J.M. 'Aanteekeningen over Lambert van Sint-Bertijns, Lambert van Sint-Omaars en Petrus Pictor in verband met het "Liber Floridus"', in *Miscellanea historica in honorem Leonis van der Essen* (no ed.), 2 vols (Brussels 1947), I, 229–43
DEAN, J.M. *The World Grown Old in Later Medieval Literature*, Medieval Academy Books 101 (Cambridge MA 1997)
DELARGY, James 'The Gaelic story-teller', *Proceedings of the British Academy* 31 (1945), 177–221
DELEUZE, Gilles, & Félix GUATTARI *A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia*, tr. B. Massumi (London 1988)
DELIYANNIS, Deborah Mauskopf (ed.) *Historiography in the Middle Ages* (Leiden 2003)
DEROLEZ, A. *The Autograph Manuscript of the* Liber Floridus*: A Key to the Encyclopedia of Lambert of Saint-Omer*, Corpus Christianorum Autographa Medii Aeui 4 (Turnhout 1998)
DEROLEZ, A. (ed.) *Lamberti S. Audomari canonici Liber Floridus: Codex autographus Bibliothecae Universitatis Gandavensis* (Ghent 1968)
DEROLEZ, A. (ed.) *Liber Floridus Colloquium: Papers Read at the International Meeting* (Ghent 1973)
DIETZ, David B. '*Historia* in the commentary of Servius', *Transactions of the American Philological Association* 125 (1995), 61–97
DILLON, Myles *Early Irish Literature* (Chicago 1948)
DILLON, Myles (ed.) *Serglige Con Culainn*, Mediaeval and Modern Irish Series 14 (Dublin 1953)
DISCENZA, Nicole Guenther, & Paul E. SZARMACH (ed.) *The Brill Companion to Alfred the Great* (Leiden forthcoming)
DOHERTY, Charles, 'Kingship in early Ireland', in *Kingship and Landscape*, ed. Bhreathnach, 3–31
DONISOTTI, A.C. 'Greek grammars and dictionaries in the Carolingian empire', in *Sacred Nectar*, ed. Herren & Brown, 1–56
DOOLEY, Ann 'The date and purpose of *Acallam na Senórach*', *Éigse* 34 (2004), 97–126
DOOLEY, Ann *Playing the Hero: Reading the Irish Saga* Táin Bó Cúailnge (Toronto 2006)
DORAN, Robert (ed.) *Hayden White: The Fiction of Narrative. Essays on History, Literature, and Theory 1957–2007* (Baltimore MD 2010)
DOTTIN, G. 'Les légendes greques dans l'ancienne Irlande', *Revue des études grecques* 35 (1922), 391–407
DRONKE, Peter 'Thierry of Chartres', in *A History of Twelfth-Century Philosophy*, ed. Dronke, 358–85
DRONKE, Peter (ed.) *A History of Twelfth-Century Philosophy* (Cambridge 1988)
DUFF, J.D. (ed. & tr.) *Lucan: The Civil War* (Cambridge MA 1928)
DÜMMLER, E. (ed.) 'Ermenrici Elwangensis epistola ad Grimaldum Abbatem', in *Epistolae Karolini Aevi* 3, Monumenta Germaniae Historica: Epistolae 5 (Berlin 1898), 534–79
DUMVILLE, David N. 'The early mediaeval Insular churches and the preservation of Roman literature: towards a historical and palaeographical reevaluation', in *Formative Stages of Classical Traditions*, ed. Pecere & Reeve, 197–237
DUMVILLE, David N. *The Early Mediaeval Insular Churches and the Preservation of Roman Literature: Towards a Historical and Palaeographical Reëvaluation*, 2nd edn (Cambridge 2004)
DUNCAN, Elizabeth '*Lebor na hUidre* and a copy of Boethius's *De re arithmetica*: a palaeographical note', *Ériu* 62 (2012), 1–32
DUNN, Joseph (tr.) *The Ancient Irish Epic Tale* Táin Bó Cúalnge (London 1914)
DUTTON, P.E. (ed. & tr.) *The Glosae super Platonem of Bernard of Chartres*, Studies and Texts 107 (Toronto 1991)

DUTTON, P.E. 'The uncovering of the *Glosae super Platonem* of Bernard of Chartres', *Medieval Studies* 46 (1984) 192–221
DWELLY, E. *The Illustrated Gaelic-English Dictionary*, 9th edn (Glasgow 1977)
DYSON, R.W. (ed. & tr.), *Sedulius Scottus: De rectoribus christianis – On Christian Rulers* (Woodbridge 2010)
EDEL, Doris *The Celtic West and Europe: Studies in Celtic Literature and the Early Irish Church* (Dublin 2001)
EDEL, Doris (ed.) *Cultural Identity and Cultural Integration: Ireland and Europe in the Early Middle Ages* (Dublin 1995)
EDEL, Doris 'Off the mainstream: a literature in search of its criteria', *Zeitschrift für celtische Philologie* 58 (2011), 23–44
EDMUNDS, L. (ed.) *Approaches to Greek Myth* (Baltimore MD 1990)
EGELER, Matthias 'Condercum: some considerations on the religious life of a Roman fort on Hadrian's Wall and the Celtic character of the *lamiae tres* of the dedication stone *CIL* VII, 507', *Studi Celtici* 7 (2008–9), 129–76
EGELER, Matthias *Walküren, Bodbs, Sirenen: Gedanken zur religionsgeschichtlichen Anbindung Nordwesteuropas an den mediterranen Raum* (Berlin 2011)
EHWALD, Rudolf (ed.) *Aldhelmi Opera* (Berlin 1919)
ELDEVIK, Randi 'A Vergilian model for the *immrama*?', *Proceedings of the Harvard Celtic Colloquium* 4 (1984), 1–8
ERZGRÄBER, Willi (ed.) *Kontinuität und Transformation der Antike im Mittelalter* (Sigmaringen 1989)
EVANS, Nicholas Review of Daniel McCarthy's *The Irish Annals: Their Genesis, Evolution and History*, *Medieval Review* 09.04.09
FAIRCLOUGH, H. Rushton (ed. & tr.) *Virgil*, 2 vols (Cambridge MA 1986)
FARRELL, Joseph, & Michael C.J. PUTNAM (eds) *A Companion to Vergil's* Aeneid *and its Tradition* (Oxford 2010)
FIELITZ, Sonja (ed.) *Literature as History / History as Literature: Fact and Fiction in Medieval to Eighteenth-Century British Literature* (Frankfurt 2007)
FINDON, Joanne 'Dangerous siren or abandoned wife? Gloss versus text on an early Irish manuscript page', in *Signs on the Edge*, ed. Larratt Keefer & Bremmer, 187–202
FITCH, John (ed. & tr.) *Seneca*: *Tragedies*, 2 vols (Cambridge MA 2002–4)
FLANAGAN, Marie Therese *The Transformation of the Irish Church in the Twelfth Century*, Studies in Celtic History 29 (Woodbridge 2010)
FOLEY, J.M. (ed.) *A Companion to Ancient Epic* (Oxford 2009)
FOLLETT, Westley *Célí Dé in Ireland*, Studies in Celtic History 23 (Woodbridge 2006)
FORD, Patrick K. (ed.) *Celtic Folklore and Christianity: Studies in Memory of William W. Heist* (Santa Barbara CA 1983)
FRAZER, James (ed. & tr.) *Apollodorus*: *The Library*, 2 vols (London 1962–3)
FRAZER, R.M. *The Trojan War: The Chronicles of Dictys of Crete and Dares the Phrygian* (Bloomington IN 1966)
FREEMAN, A. Martin (ed.) 'The annals in Cotton MS. Titus A. XXV', *Revue celtique* 41 (1924), 301–30
FULTON, Helen 'Literature of the Welsh gentry: uses of the vernacular in medieval Wales', in *Vernacularity*, ed. Salter & Wicker, 199–223
FULTON, Helen (ed.) *Medieval Celtic Literature and Society* (Dublin 2005)
FULTON, Helen 'Troy story: the medieval Welsh *Ystorya Dared* and the *brut* tradition of British history', *Medieval Chronicle* 7 (2011), 137–50
FURUMARK, A., *et al.* (ed.) *Arctica: Essays presented to Åke Campbell* (Uppsala 1956)
GENEE, Inge 'Latin influence on Old Irish? A case study in medieval language contact', *Journal of Celtic Linguistics* 9 (2005), 33–72
GÍSLI PÁLSSON (ed.) *From Sagas to Society: Comparative Approaches to Early Iceland* (London 1992)

GLENNON, William F.X. 'The similes in the Book of Leinster *Tain Bó Cúailnge*', *Proceedings of the Harvard Celtic Colloquium* 16/17 (1996–7), 206–22
GODMAN, Peter (ed.) *Poetry of the Carolingian Renaissance* (London 1985)
GOFFART, Walter *The Narrators of Barbarian History (A.D. 550–800): Jordanes, Gregory of Tours, Bede, and Paul the Deacon* (Princeton NJ 1988)
GOSMAN, M., & J. VAN OS (ed.) *Non nova, sed nove: mélanges de civilisation médiévale, dediés à Willem Noomen*, Mediaevalia Groningana 5 (Groningen 1984)
GRAY, Elizabeth A. '*Cath Maige Tuired*: myth and structure', *Éigse* 19 (1982–3), 1–35, 230–62
GRAY, Elizabeth A. (ed. & tr.) *Cath Maige Tuired: The Second Battle of Mag Tuired*, Irish Texts Society 52 (Dublin 1983)
GREEN, D.H. *The Beginnings of Medieval Romance: Fact and Fiction, 1150–1220* (Cambridge 2002)
GREEN, D.H. *Medieval Listening and Reading: The Primary Reception of German Literature, 800–1300* (Cambridge 1994)
GREEN, Miranda (ed.) *The Celtic World* (New York 1996)
GREENE, David (ed.) *Fingal Rónáin and other Stories*, Mediaeval and Modern Irish Series 16 (Dublin 1955)
GREENE, David (ed. & tr.) *Saltair na Rann*, typescript and translation (n.d.), available at www.dias.ie under 'Online publications'
GREENE, David, Fergus KELLY & Brian O. MURDOCH (ed. & tr.) *The Irish Adam and Eve Story from Saltair na Rann*, 2 vols (Dublin 1976)
GREGORY, Tullio 'The Platonic inheritance', in *A History of Twelfth-Century Philosophy*, ed. Dronke, 54–80
GRIFFIN, Nathaniel (ed.) *Guido de Columnis: Historia Destructionis Troiae* (Cambridge MA 1936)
GROTANS, Anna, *Reading in Medieval St Gall* (Cambridge 2012)
GWYNN, Edward J. (ed. & tr.) *The Metrical Dindshenchas*, Royal Irish Academy Todd Lecture Series 8–12, 5 vols (Dublin 1903–35)
HAGEN, H. (ed.) *Codex Bernensis 363 phototypice editus* (Leiden 1897)
HAGEN, H. (ed.) *Scholia Bernensia ad Virgili Bucolica atque Georgica*, Jahrbücher für classische Philologie 4. suppl. (Leipzig 1867)
HANSEN, William *Ariadne's Thread: A Guide to International Tales Found in Classical Literature* (Ithaca NY 2002)
HANSEN, William 'Odysseus and the oar: a folkloric approach', in *Approaches to Greek Myth*, ed. Edmunds, 241–72
HARRIS, John R. *Adaptations of Roman Epic in Medieval Ireland: Three Studies in the Interplay of Erudition and Oral Tradition* (Lewiston NY 1998)
HARVEY, Susan Ashbrook, & David G. HUNTER (ed.) *The Oxford Handbook of Early Christian Studies* (Oxford 2008)
HAY, Denys *Annalists and Historians: Western Historiography from the Eighth to the Eighteenth Centuries* (London 1977)
HAYS, Gregory 'The date and identity of the mythographer Fulgentius', *Journal of Medieval Latin* 13 (2003), 163–252
HAZARD, Benjamin 'Gaelic political scripture: Uí Mhaoil Chonaire scribes and the Book of Mac Murchadha Caomhánach', *Proceedings of the Harvard Celtic Colloquium* 23 (2003), 149–64
HEBRON, Malcolm *The Medieval Siege: Theme and Image in Middle English Romance* (Oxford 1997)
HELM, R. (ed.) *Fabii Planciadis Fulgentii V.C. opera* (Leipzig 1898)
HENRY, Françoise, & Geneviève MARSH-MICHELI 'Manuscripts and illuminations, 1169–1603', in *New History of Ireland II*, ed. Cosgrove, 780–815
HENRY, P.L. *The Early English and Celtic Lyric* (London 1966)
HERBERT, Máire 'Crossing historical and literary boundaries: Irish written culture around the year 1000', in *Crossing Boundaries*, ed. Sims-Williams & Williams, 87–101

HERBERT, Máire 'The Irish *Sex Aetates Mundi*: first editions', *Cambridge Medieval Celtic Studies* 11 (1986), 97–112
HERBERT, Máire 'Reading Recension 1 of the *Táin*', in *Ulidia 2*, ed. Ó hUiginn & Ó Catháin, 208–17
HERMAN, Arthur *How the Scots Invented the Modern World: The True Story of How Western Europe's Poorest Nation Created Our World and Everything in It* (New York 2001)
HERREN, Michael W. 'Classical and secular learning among the Irish before the Carolingian renaissance', in Herren, *Latin Letters*, section I, 1–39
HERREN, Michael W. 'The commentary on Martianus attributed to John Scottus: its Hiberno-Latin background', in Herren, *Latin Letters*, section IV, 251–86
HERREN, Michael 'John Scottus and Greek mythology: reprising an ancient hermeneutic in the Paris commentary on Martianus Capella', *Journal of Medieval Latin* 22 (2012), 95–116
HERREN, Michael W. *Latin Letters in Early Christian Ireland* (Aldershot 1996)
HERREN, Michael 'Literary and glossarial evidence for the study of classical mythology in Ireland, AD 600–800', in *Text and Gloss*, ed. Conrad-Ó Briain *et al.*, 49–67
HERREN, Michael W., & Shirley Ann BROWN (ed.) *The Sacred Nectar of the Greeks: The Study of Greek in the West in the Early Middle Ages* (London 1988)
HILLERS, Barbara '*In fer fiamach firglic*: Ulysses in medieval Irish literature', *Proceedings of the Harvard Celtic Colloquium* 16 (1996), 15–38
HILLERS, Barbara (ed.) *The Medieval Irish Odyssey: Merugud Uilixis meic Leirtis* (Ann Arbor MI 1997)
HILLERS, Barbara 'The odyssey of a folktale: *Merugud Uilix meic Leirtis*', *Proceedings of the Harvard Celtic Colloquium* 12 (1992), 63–79
HILLERS, Barbara '*Sgél in Mínaduir*: Dädalus und der Minotaurus in Irland', in *Übersetzung*, ed. Poppe & Tristram, 131–44
HILLERS, Barbara 'Ulysses and the judge of truth: sources and meanings in the Irish *Odyssey*', *Peritia* 13 (1999), 194–223
HOFMAN, Rijcklof 'Some new facts concerning the knowledge of Vergil in early medieval Ireland', *Études celtiques* 25 (1988), 189–212
HOGAN, Edmund (ed. & tr.) *The Battle of Rosnaree*, Royal Irish Academy Todd Lecture Series 4 (Dublin 1892)
HOLBEK, Bengt *Interpretation of Fairy Tales: Danish Folklore in a European Perspective*, FF Communications 239 (Helsinki 1987)
HOLMES, Urban Tigner *A History of Old French Literature from the Origins to 1300* (New York 1962)
HOOFNAGLE, Wendy Marie, & Wolfram R. KELLER (ed.) *Other Nations: The Hybridization of Medieval Insular Mythology and Identity*, Britannica et Americana 3rd series 27 (Heidelberg 2011)
HORN, Hans-Jürgen, & Hermann WALTER (ed.) *Die Allegorese des antiken Mythos in der Literatur, Wissenschaft und Kunst* (Wiesbaden 1997)
HOWLETT, David R. 'The earliest Irish writers at home and abroad', *Peritia* 8 (1994), 1–17
HOWLETT, David R. 'Hellenic learning in Insular Latin: an essay on supported claims', *Peritia* 12 (1998), 54–78
HUCHER, Eugène (ed.) *Le Saint-Graal ou le Joseph d'Arimathie*, 3 vols (Paris 1875–8)
HUDSON, Benjamin T., & Vicki ZIEGLER (ed.), *Crossed Paths: Methodological Approaches to the Celtic Aspect of the European Middle Ages* (Lanham MD 1991)
HUEMER, J. (ed.) *Caelius Sedulius: opera omnia*, Corpus Scriptorum Ecclesiasticorum Latinorum 10 (Vienna 1885)
HUGHES, Kathleen *Early Christian Ireland: Introduction to the Sources* (London 1972)
HULL, Eleanor (tr.) *The Cuchullin Saga* (London 1898)
HUWS, Daniel *Medieval Welsh Manuscripts* (Aberystwyth 2000)
HUWS, Daniel 'The Welsh book', in *Cambridge History*, ed. Morgan & Thomson, 390–6
HYDE, Douglas *A Literary History of Ireland: From Earliest Times to the Present Day* (London 1899)

JACKSON, Kenneth (ed.) *Aislinge Meic Con Glinne* (Dublin 1990)
JASKI, Bart '"We are of the Greeks in our origin": new perspectives on the Irish origin legend', *Cambrian Medieval Celtic Studies* 46 (2003), 1–53
JOHANTERWAGE, Vera, & Stefanie WÜRTH (ed.) *Übersetzen im skandinavischen Mittelalter*, Studia Medievalia Septentrionalia 14 (Vienna 2007)
JOHNSTON, Elva *Literacy and Identity in Early Medieval Ireland*, Studies in Celtic History 33 (Woodbridge 2013)
JONES, C.W. (ed.) *Beda venerabilis, opera didascalica, 2*, Corpus Christianorum Series Latina 123B (Turnhout 1977)
JONES, C.W. (ed.) *Beda venerabilis, opera didascalica, 3*, Corpus Christianorum Series Latina 123C (Turnhout 1980)
JONES, Gwyn (tr.) *The Oxford Book of Welsh Verse in English* (Oxford 1977)
JONES, Julian Ward 'The so-called Silvestris Commentary on the *Aeneid* and two other interpretations', *Speculum* 64 (1989), 835–48
JONES, Julian Ward, & E.F. JONES (ed.) *Commentum quod dicitur Bernardi Silvestris super sex libros Eneidos Virgilii: Commentary on the First Six Books of Virgil's Aeneid, Commonly Attributed to Bernardus Silvestrus* (Lincoln NE 1977)
JONES, Thomas (ed. & tr.) *Brenhinedd y Saesson or The Kings of the Saxons* (Cardiff 1971)
JONES, Thomas 'Historical writing in medieval Welsh', in *Proceedings*, ed. Nicolaisen, 15–27
KALINKE, Marianne E., *King Arthur North-by-Northwest: The* matière de Bretagne *in Old Norse-Icelandic Romances* (Copenhagen 1981)
KALLENDORF, Craig W. (ed.) *A Companion to the Classical Tradition* (Oxford 2007)
KASTER, Robert A. (ed. & tr.) *Macrobius: Saturnalia* (Cambridge MA 2011)
KELLEHER, Margaret, & Philip O'LEARY (ed.) *The Cambridge History of Irish Literature*, 2 vols (Cambridge 2006)
KELLER, Wolfram R. 'Authorizing Trojan England: mythological transgression and hybridity in Chaucer's *House of Fame*', in *Other Nations*, ed. Hoofnagle & Keller, 185–206
KELLER, Wolfram R. *Selves and Nations: The Troy Story from Sicily to England in the Middle Ages*, Britannica et Americana 3rd series 25 (Heidelberg 2008)
KENNEDY, Patrick *Legendary Fictions of the Irish Celts* (London 1891)
KIM, Lawrence *Homer Between History and Fiction in the Roman Empire* (Cambridge 2011)
KINSELLA, Thomas (tr.) *The Tain: from the Irish Epic* Táin Bó Cúailnge (Oxford 1970)
KNIGHT, W.F. JACKSON (tr.) *Virgil: The Aeneid* (Harmondsworth 1958)
KNOTT, Eleanor (ed.) *An Introduction to Irish Syllabic Poetry of the Period 1200–1600*, 2nd edn (Dublin 1974)
KNOTT, Eleanor (ed.) *Togail Bruidne Da Derga*, Mediaeval and Modern Irish Series 8 (Dublin 1936)
KNOTT, Eleanor, & Gerard MURPHY *Early Irish Literature*, 2nd edn, ed. James Carney (London 1966)
KOBUS, Isabel '*Imtheachta Aeniasa*: *Aneas*-Rezeption im irischen Mittelalter', *Zeitschrift für celtische Philologie* 47 (1995), 76–86
KOCH, John T., & John CAREY (ed. & tr.) *The Celtic Heroic Age*, 4th edn (Aberystwyth 2005)
KOVACS, David (ed. & tr.) *Euripides*, 8 vols (Cambridge MA 1994–2008)
KRAMARZ-BEIN, Susanne 'Der *Spesar Þáttr* der *Grettis saga*: Tristran-Spuren in der Isländersaga', in *Studien*, ed. Beck & Ebel, 152–81.
KRUEGER, Roberta L. (ed.) *The Cambridge Companion to Medieval Romance* (Cambridge 2000)
KRUEGER, Roberta L. 'Introduction', in *Cambridge Companion*, ed. Krueger, 1–9
KULCSÁR, Péter (ed.) *Mythographi Vaticani I et II*, Corpus Christianorum Series Latina 91c (Turnhout 1987)
LACY, Norris J. 'The evolution and legacy of French prose romance', in *Cambridge Companion*, ed. Krueger, 167–82

LAISTNER, M.L.W. 'Fulgentius in the Carolingian age' [1928], in *The Intellectual Heritage*, ed. Laistner, 202–15
LAISTNER, M.L.W. (ed.) *The Intellectual Heritage of the Early Middle Ages* (Ithaca NY 1957)
LAISTNER, M.L.W. 'Notes on Greek from the lectures of a ninth century monastery teacher', *Bulletin of the John Rylands Library of Manchester* 7 (1923) 421–56 and 9 (1925) 130–8
LAMBERT, Pierre-Yves 'Les gloses celtiques aux commentaires de Virgile', *Études celtiques* 23 (1986), 81–128
LAPIDGE, Michael *The Anglo-Saxon Library* (Oxford 2006)
LAPIDGE, Michael, & Richard SHARPE *A Bibliography of Celtic-Latin Literature 400–1200* (Dublin 1985)
LARRATT KEEFER, Sarah, & Rolf H. BREMMER (ed.) *Signs on the Edge: Space, Text and Margin in Medieval Manuscripts* (Leuven 2007)
LATTIMORE, Richmond (tr.) *The Odyssey of Homer* (New York 1965)
LAYZER, Varese *Signs of Weakness: Juxtaposing Irish Tales and the Bible* (Sheffield 2001)
LECOQ, Danielle 'La mappemonde du Liber Floridus ou la vision du monde de Lambert de Saint-Omer', *Imago Mundi* 39 (1987), 9–49
LEHMANN, Ruth (ed.) *Fled Dúin na nGéd*, Mediaeval and Modern Irish Series 21 (Dublin 1964)
LEISI, Ernst *Die tautologischen Wortpaare in Caxton's* Eneydos (New York 1947)
LENDINARA, P. 'On John Scottus's authorship of the biblical glosses', *Studi medievali* 33 (1992), 571–9
LINDSAY, W.M. (ed.) *Isidori Hispalensis Episcopi Etymologiarum sive Originum Libri XX*, 2 vols (Oxford 1911)
LORD, Albert B. *The Singer of Tales* (Cambridge MA 1960)
LOVE, Rosalind C. 'Latin commentaries on Boethius's *Consolation of Philosophy*', forthcoming in *Brill Companion*, ed. Discenza & Szarmach
LUFT, Diana 'Translation theory and medieval translation', in *Translations*, ed. Murray, 83–100
LÜTHI, Max *Das europäische Volksmärchen: Form und Wesen*, 11th ed. (Tübingen [1947] 2005)
MAC AIRT, S. (ed. & tr.) *The Annals of Inisfallen (M.S. Rawlinson B. 503)* (Dublin 1951)
MAC AIRT, Seán, & Gearóid MAC NIOCAILL (ed. & tr.) *The Annals of Ulster (to A.D. 1131), Part I: Text and Translation* (Dublin 1983)
MACALISTER, R.A.S. (ed. & tr.) *Lebor Gabála Érenn: The Book of the Taking of Ireland*, Irish Texts Society 34, 35, 39, 41 and 44, 5 vols (Dublin 1938–56)
MACBAIN, Alexander Review of Kuno Meyer (ed.), *Merugud Uilix maicc Leirtis*, *Celtic Magazine* (November 1886), 42–4
MAC CANA, Proinsias *Branwen Daughter of Llŷr: A Study of the Irish Affinities and of the Composition of the Second Branch of the Mabinogi* (Cardiff 1958)
MAC CANA, Proinsias 'Conservation and innovation in early Celtic literature', *Études celtiques* 13 (1972–3), 61–119
MAC CANA, Proinsias *The Cult of the Sacred Centre* (Dublin 2011)
MAC CANA, Proinsias *The Learned Tales of Medieval Ireland* (Dublin 1980)
MAC CANA, Proinsias 'The rise of the later schools of *filidheacht*', *Ériu* 25 (1974), 126–46
MAC CANA, Proinsias 'La traduction des épopées étrangères en irlandais', in *Traduction et traducteurs*, ed. Contamine, 77–84
MC CARTHY, Daniel 'Bede's primary source for the Vulgate chronology in his chronicles in *De temporibus and De temporum ratione*', in *Computus*, ed. Ó Cróinín & Warntjes, 159–89
MC CARTHY, Daniel *The Irish Annals: their Genesis, Evolution and History* (Dublin 2008)
MC CARTHY, Daniel 'The status of the pre-Patrician Irish annals', *Peritia* 12 (1998), 98–152
MC CAUGHEY, Terence 'James Patrick Carney', *Celtica* 23 (1999), 188–92
MC CONE, Kim *Pagan Past and Christian Present in Early Irish Literature* (Maynooth 1990)
MAC CONMARA, Máirtín (ed.) *An Léann Eaglasta in Éirinn 1000–1200* (Dublin 1982)

MAC EOIN, Gearóid 'Dán ar Chogadh na Traoi', *Studia Hibernica* 1 (1961), 19–55
MAC EOIN, Gearóid 'The date and authorship of *Saltair na Rann*', *Zeitschrift für celtische Philologie* 28 (1960), 51–67
MAC EOIN, Gearóid 'The *dating* of *Middle Irish* texts', *Proceedings of the British Academy* 68 (1982), 109–37
MAC EOIN, Gearóid 'The Greek background to *Stair Ercuil ocus a Bás*', in *Translations*, ed. Murray, 20–36
MAC EOIN, Gearóid 'Ein Text von *Togail Troí*', *Zeitschrift für celtische Philologie* 30 (1967), 42–70
MAC EOIN, Gearóid 'Das Verbalsystem von *Togail Troí* (H.2.17)', *Zeitschrift für celtische Philologie* 28 (1960–61), 73–136 and 149–223
MAC GEARAILT, Uáitéar 'Change and innovation in eleventh-century prose narrative in Irish', in *(Re)Oralisierung*, ed. Tristram, 443–96
MAC GEARAILT, Uáitéar 'The Edinburgh text of *Mesca Ulad*', Ériu 37 (1986), 133–79
MAC GEARAILT, Uáitéar 'Forbairt na stíle i litríocht phróis na Gaeilge moiche', *Léachtaí Cholm Cille* 26 (1996), 7–49
MAC GEARAILT, Uáitéar 'The language of some late Middle Irish texts in the Book of Leinster', *Studia Hibernica* 26 (1991–2), 167–205
MAC GEARAILT, Uáitéar 'Zur literarischen Sprache des 11. Jahrhunderts', in *Akten*, ed. Zimmer *et al*., 105–20
MAC GEARAILT, Uáitéar 'The making of *Fingal Ronáin*', *Studia Hibernica* 34 (2006/7), 63–84
MAC GEARAILT, Uáitéar 'On textual correspondences in early Irish heroic tales', in *Proceedings*, ed. MacLennan, 343–55
MAC GEARAILT, Uáitéar *On the Date of the Middle Irish Recension II Táin Bó Cúailnge, E. C. Quiggin Memorial Lectures 11* (Cambridge 2009)
MAC GEARAILT, Uáitéar '*Togail Troí*: an example of translating and editing in medieval Ireland', *Studia Hibernica* 31 (2000–1), 71–85
MAC GEARAILT, Uáitéar '*Togail Troí*: ein Vorbild für spätmittelirische *Catha*?', in *Übersetzung*, ed. Poppe & Tristram, 123–9
MCGREGOR, A.P. *The Manuscripts of Seneca's Tragedies* (Berlin 1985)
MCKENNA, L. (ed.) *Dioghluim* Dána (Dublin 1938)
MACKINNON, Donald 'The Glenmason manuscript', *Celtic Review* 1 (1904), 3–16, 104–30, 208–28, 296–314; *Celtic Review* 2 (1905), 20–32, 100–20, 202–22, 300–12; *Celtic Review* 3 (1906), 10–24, 114–36, 198–214, 294–316; *Celtic Review* 4 (1907), 10–26, 104–20, 202–18
MACLENNAN, Gordon W. (ed.) *Proceedings of the First North American Congress of Celtic Studies* (Ottawa 1988)
MACLEOD, Sharon Plaice '*Mater deorum Hibernensium*: identity and cross-correlation in early Irish mythology', *Proceedings of the Harvard Celtic Colloquium* 18/19 (1998–9), 340–84
MCLOUGHLIN, Eleanor 'Rhetorical description in the early Irish saga *Táin Bó Cúailnge*', unpublished PhD diss., Fordham University, 1969
MCMANUS, Damian 'Good-looking and irresistible: the hero from early Irish saga to classical poetry', *Ériu* 59 (2009), 57–109
MCNAMARA, Martin, & Maurice SHEEHY 'Psalter text and psalter study in the early Irish church (A.D. 600–1200)', *Proceedings of the Royal Irish Academy* 70 C (1973), 201–96
MACNEILL, Eoin, Gerard MURPHY, *et al*. (ed. & tr.) *Duanaire Finn: The Book of the Lays of Fionn*, 3 vols, Irish Texts Society 7, 28 and 43 (London 1908–53)
MACNEILL, John (= Eoin) 'An Irish historical tract dated AD 721', *Proceedings of the Royal Irish Academy* 28 C (1910), 123–48
MACNEILL, John 'Poems by Flann Mainistrech on the dynasties of Ailech, Mide and Brega', *Archivium Hibernicum* 2 (1913), 37–99

MCQUILLAN, Peter 'Finn, Fothad and Fian: some early associations', *Proceedings of the Harvard Celtic Colloquium* 8 (1988), 1–10
MCTURK, Rory (ed.) *A Companion to Old Norse-Icelandic Literature and Culture* (Oxford 2005)
MALLORY, J.P. (ed.) *Aspects of the Táin* (Belfast 1992)
MALLORY, J.P., & Gerard STOCKMAN (ed.) *Ulidia: Proceedings of the First International Conference on the Ulster Cycle of Tales* (Belfast 1994)
MANCA, M. (tr.) *Fulgenzio: l'età del mondo et dell' uomo* (Alessandria 2003)
MANITIUS, M. 'Zu den Prudentiusglossen', *Historische Vierteljahrschrift* 28 (1933) 142–53
MANNING, G. 'The verbal system of *Táin Bó Cúailnge* – Recension I', unpublished M.Litt. diss., Trinity College, Dublin, 1985
MARENBON, John *Boethius* (Oxford 2003)
MARKSCHIES, Christoph *Gibt es eine 'Theologie der gotischen Kathedrale'? Nochmals: Suger von Saint-Denis und Sankt Dionys vom Areopag*, Abhandlungen der Heidelberger Akademie der Wissenschaften Philosophisch-historische Klasse 1 (Heidelberg 1995)
MARSHALL, Peter (ed.) *Hygini Fabulae*, 2nd edn (Munich 2002)
MARTI, Suzanne 'Kingship, chivalry and religion in the Perceval matter: an analysis of the Old Norse and Middle English translations of *Le Conte du Graal*', unpublished PhD diss., University of Oslo, 2010
MARTIN, Jose Carlos (ed.) *Isidori Hispalensis Chronica*, Corpus Christianorum Series Latina 112 (Turnhout 2003)
MARTIN, R., 'Epic as genre', in *Companion*, ed. Foley, 9–19
MATTHEW, H.C.G., & Brian HARRISON (ed.) *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford 2004), online at http://www.oxforddnb.com [accessed 5 August 2013]
MAUND, K.L. 'Sources of the "World Chronicle" in the Cottonian Annals', *Peritia* 12 (1998), 153–76
MEISTER, Ferdinand (ed.) *Daretis Phrygii de Excidio Troiae Historia* (Leipzig 1873)
MERKLE, Stefan 'The truth and nothing but the truth: Dares and Dictys', in *The Novel*, ed. Schmeling, 563–80
MEULENGRACHT SØRENSEN, Preben 'Some methodological considerations in connection with the study of the sagas', in *From Sagas to Society*, ed. Gísli Pálsson, 27–41
MEWS, Constant J., Cary J. NEDERMAN & Rodney M. THOMSON (ed.) *Rhetoric and Renewal in the Latin West 1100–1540: Essays in Honour of John O. Ward* (Turnhout 2003)
MEYER, Kuno (ed. & tr.) *Aislinge Meic Conglinne, the Vision of Mac ConGlinne: A Middle Irish Wonder-tale* (London 1892)
MEYER, Kuno (ed. & tr.) *The Death-tales of the Ulster Heroes*, Royal Irish Academy Todd Lecture Series 14 (Dublin 1906)
MEYER, Kuno (ed. & tr.) *Fianaigecht*, Royal Irish Academy Todd Lecture Series 16 (Dublin 1910)
MEYER, Kuno (ed. & tr.), '*Fingal Rónáin*', *Revue celtique* 13 (1892), 368–97
MEYER, Kuno (ed.) 'Die Geschichte von Philipp und Alexander von Macedonien aus dem Lebar Brecc', in *Irische Texte*, ed. Stokes & Windisch, II part 2
MEYER, Kuno 'Der irische Totengott und die Toteninsel', *Sitzungsberichte der preussischen Akademie der Wissenschaften* 32 (1919), 537–46
MEYER, Kuno 'The Irish mirabilia in the Norse *Speculum regale*', *Ériu* 4 (1908–10), 1–16
MEYER, Kuno *Learning in Ireland in the Fifth Century and the Transmission of Letters* (Dublin 1913)
MEYER, Kuno (ed. & tr.) *Liadain and Curithir: an Irish Love-story of the Ninth Century* (London 1902)
MEYER, Kuno (ed. & tr.) *Merugud Uilix maicc Leirtis: The Irish* Odyssey (London 1886)
MEYER, Kuno 'Mitteilungen aus irischen Handschriften (Fortsetzung)', *Zeitschrift für celtische Philologie* 4 (1903), 30–47, 234–40, 467–9

MEYER, Kuno (ed.) '*Sanas Cormaic*: An Old-Irish Glossary', Anecdota from Irish Manuscripts 5 (Halle 1913)
MEYER, Kuno (ed.) 'Stories and songs from Irish manuscripts VII: "King Eochaid has horse's ears"', *Otia Merseiana* 3 (1903), 46–54
MEYER, Kuno, 'Über einige Quellenangaben der *Togail Troí*' *Zeitschrift für celtische Philologie* 10 (1915), 358–60
MEYER, Robert T. (ed.) *Merugud Uilix maic Leirtis*, Mediaeval and Modern Irish Series 17 (Dublin 1958)
MEYER, Robert T. 'The Middle Irish *Odyssey* and Celtic folktale', *Papers of the Michigan Academy of Science, Arts and Letters* 46 (1961), 258–60
MEYER, Robert T. 'The Middle-Irish version of the *Aeneid*', *Tennessee Studies in Literature* 11 (1966), 97–108
MEYER, Robert T. 'The Middle-Irish version of the *Pharsalia* of Lucan', *Papers of the Michigan Academy of Science, Arts and Letters* 44 (1959), 355–63
MEYER, Robert T. 'The Middle-Irish version of the story of Troy', *Études celtiques* 17 (1980), 205–18
MEYER, Robert T. 'The Middle-Irish version of the *Thebaid*', *Papers of the Michigan Academy of Science, Arts and Letters* 47 (1962), 687–99
MIGNE, Jacques-Paul (ed.) *Patrologia Latina cursus completus*, 221 vols (Paris 1844–65)
MILES, Brent *Heroic Saga and Classical Epic in Medieval Ireland*, Studies in Celtic History 30 (Cambridge 2011)
MILES, Brent 'Irish evidence for shared sources of classical mythology in Anglo-Saxon England and medieval Ireland', in *Insignis Sophiae Arcator*, ed. Wieland *et al.*, 124–48
MILES, Brent 'The Irish history of the "third Troy" and medieval writing of history', in *Gablánach in Scélaigecht*, ed. Sheehan *et al.*, 220–37
MILES, Brent 'The literary set piece and the *imitatio* of Latin epic in the *Cattle Raid of Cúailnge*', in *Ulidia 2*, ed. Ó hUiginn & Ó Catháin, 66–80
MILES, Brent 'Middle Irish saga and Irish neoclassicism', unpublished PhD diss., University of Toronto, 2005
MILES, Brent '*Riss in mundtuirc*: The tale of Harmonia's necklace and the study of the Theban Cycle in medieval Ireland', *Ériu* 57 (2007), 67–112
MILES, Brent '*Togail Troí*: the Irish *Destruction of Troy* on the cusp of the Renaissance', in *Fantasies of Troy*, ed. Shepard & Powell, 81–96
MILLER, Arthur W.K. (ed. & tr.) 'O'Clery's Irish glossary', *Revue celtique* 4 (1880), 349–48 and 5 (1881), 1–69
MILLER, F.J. (ed. & tr.) *Ovid: Metamorphoses*, 2 vols (Cambridge MA 1916)
MINNIS, Alastair J. 'Late-medieval discussions of *compilatio* and the rôle of the *compilator*', *Beiträge zur Geschichte der deutschen Sprache und Literatur* 101 (1979), 385–421
MINNIS, Alastair J., & Ian JOHNSON (ed.) *The Cambridge History of Literary Criticism, vol. 2: The Middle Ages* (Cambridge 2009)
MOMIGLIANO, Arnaldo *Essays in Ancient and Modern Historiography* (Oxford 1977)
MORA-LEBRUN, Francine *'Mettre en romanz': les romans d'antiquité du XII^e siècle et leur posterité (XIII^e–XIV^e siècle)* (Paris, 2008)
MORAN, Pádraic 'Greek in early medieval Ireland', in *Multilingualism*, ed. Mullen & James, 172–92
MORAN, Pádraic 'Hebrew in early Irish glossaries', *Cambrian Medieval Celtic Studies* 60 (2010), 1–21
MORGAN, Nigel, & Rodney M. THOMSON (ed.) *The Cambridge History of the Book in Britain Volume II: 1100–1400* (Cambridge 2008)
MORRIS, John 'The chronicle of Eusebius: Irish fragments', *Bulletin of the Institute of Classical Studies* 19 (1972), 80–93
MOSSHAMMER, Alden A. *The Chronicle of Eusebius and Greek Chronographic Tradition* (London 1979)

MULLEN, Alex, & Patrick JAMES (ed.) *Multilingualism in the Graeco-Roman Worlds* (Cambridge 2012)
MURPHY, Gerard (ed. & tr.) *Early Irish Lyrics* (Dublin 1956)
MURPHY, Gerard Review of James Carney's *Studies in Irish Literature and History*, *Éigse* 8 (1955–7), 152–64
MURPHY, Gerard 'Vergilian influence upon the vernacular literature of medieval Ireland', *Studi medievali* 5 (1932), 372–81
MURRAY, Augustus (ed. & tr.) *Homer: The Odyssey*, 2 vols (Cambridge MA 1919)
MURRAY, Kevin (ed.) 'The finding of the *Táin*', *Cambrian Medieval Celtic Studies* 41 (2001), 17–23
MURRAY, Kevin (ed.) *Translations from Classical Literature:* Imtheachta Æniasa *and* Stair Ercuil ocus a Bás, Irish Texts Society Subsidiary Series 17 (London 2006)
MYNORS, R.A.B. (ed.) *P. Vergili Maronis Opera*, 2nd edn (Oxford 1972)
MYRICK, Leslie Diane *From the* De Excidio Troiae Historia *to the* Togail Troí*: Literary-Cultural Synthesis in a Medieval Irish Adaptation of Dares' Troy Tale*, Anglistische Forschungen 223 (Heidelberg 1993)
NAGY, Joseph Falaky 'Close encounters of the traditional kind in medieval Irish literature', in *Celtic Folklore and Christianity*, ed. Ford, 129–49
NAUTA, Lodi (ed.) *William de Conches*, *Glossae super Boetium,* Corpus Christianorum Continuatio Mediaevalis 158 (Turnhout 1999)
NÍ CHATHÁIN, Próinséas, & Michael RICHTER (ed.) *Irland und Europa: Die Kirche im Frühmittelalter / Ireland and Europe: The Early Church* (Stuttgart 1984)
NÍ MHAONAIGH, Máire 'Bréifne bias in *Cogad Gáedel re Gallaib*', *Ériu* 43 (1992), 135–58
NÍ MHAONAIGH, Máire *Brian Boru: Ireland's Greatest King?* (Stroud 2007)
NÍ MHAONAIGH, Máire 'Classical compositions in medieval Ireland: the literary context', in *Translations*, ed. Murray, 1–19
NÍ MHAONAIGH, Máire '*Cogad* Gáedel re Gallaib: some dating considerations', *Peritia* 9 (1995), 354–77
NÍ MHAONAIGH, Máire 'The Hectors of Ireland and the western world', forthcoming in *Sacred Histories*, ed. Carey *et al.*
NÍ MHAONAIGH, Máire 'The literature of medieval Ireland, 800–1200: from the Vikings to the Normans', in *Cambridge History of Irish Literature*, ed. Kelleher & O'Leary, I, 32–73
NÍ MHAONAIGH, Máire 'Pagans and holy men: literary manifestations of twelfth-century reform' in *Ireland and Europe*, ed. Bracken & Ó Riain-Raedel, 143–61
NÍ SHEAGHDHA, Nessa 'Translations and adaptations into Irish', *Celtica* 16 (1984), 107–24
NICOLAISEN, W.F.H. (ed.) *Proceedings of the Third International Congress of Celtic Studies* (Edinburgh 1968)
NICOLSON, Alexander *Gaelic Proverbs* (Edinburgh 1882)
NORTH, Richard *The Origins of* Beowulf*: From Vergil to Wiglaf* (Oxford 2007)
Ó BAOILL, Colm, & Meg BATEMAN (ed.) *Gàir nan Clàrsach, The Harps' Cry: An Anthology of 17*th*-century Gaelic Poetry* (Edinburgh 1994)
Ó BRIAIN, L. 'The horse-eared kings of Irish tradition', in *Crossed Paths*, ed. Hudson & Ziegler, 83–113
Ó BUACHALLA, Breandán Review of Cecile O'Rahilly's *Táin Bó Cuailnge from the Book of Leinster*, *Comhar* 26.10 (October 1967), 15–18
Ó CATHASAIGH, Tomás 'The literature of medieval Ireland to *c.* 800: St Patrick to the Vikings', in *Cambridge History*, ed. Kelleher & O'Leary, 9–31
Ó CATHASAIGH, Tomás 'Pagan survivals: the evidence of early Irish narrative', in *Irland und Europa*, ed. Ní Chatháin & Richter, 291–307
Ó CATHASAIGH, Tomás, 'The rhetoric of *Fingal Rónáin*', *Celtica* 17 (1985), 117–38
Ó COILEÁIN, Seán 'Irish saga literature', in *Heroic Epic*, ed. Oinas, 172–92
Ó COILEÁIN, Seán 'The making of *Tromdám Guaire*', *Ériu* 28 (1977), 32–70
Ó COILEÁIN, Seán 'The structure of a literary cycle', *Ériu* 25 (1974), 88–125

Ó CONCHEANAINN, Tomás '*Aided Nath Í* and the scribes of Leabhar na hUidhre', *Éigse* 16 (1975–6), 146–62
Ó CONCHEANAINN, Tomás 'The three forms of *Dinnshenchas Érenn*', *Journal of Celtic Studies* 3 (1981), 88–101
O'CONNOR, Ralph '*Bárðar saga* between orality and literacy', forthcoming in *Folklore in Old Norse*, ed. Bek-Pedersen & Sävborg
O'CONNOR, Ralph 'Compilation as creative artistry: a reassessment of "narrative inconsistency" in *Togail Bruidne Da Derga*', *Cambrian Medieval Celtic Studies* 65 (2013), 1–48
O'CONNOR, Ralph *The Destruction of Da Derga's Hostel: Kingship and Narrative Artistry in a Mediaeval Irish Saga* (Oxford 2013)
O'CONNOR, Ralph 'History or fiction? Truth-claims and defensive narrators in Icelandic romance-sagas', *Mediaeval Scandinavia* 15 (2005), 101–69
O'CONNOR, Ralph, '"Stepmother sagas": an Irish analogue for *Hjálmþers saga ok Ölvérs*?', *Scandinavian Studies* 72 (2000), 1–48
Ó CORRÁIN, Donnchadh 'The Vikings in Scotland and Ireland in the ninth century', *Peritia* 12 (1998), 296–339
Ó CORRÁIN, Donnchadh 'What happened to Ireland's medieval manuscripts?', *Peritia* 22/3 (2011–12), 191–223
Ó CORRÁIN, Donnchadh, Liam BREATNACH & Aidan BREEN 'The laws of the Irish', *Peritia* 3 (1984), 382–438
Ó CORRÁIN, Donnchadh, Liam BREATNACH & Kim MCCONE (ed.) *Sages, Saints and Storytellers: Celtic Studies in Honour of Professor James Carney* (Maynooth 1989)
Ó CRÓINÍN, Dáibhí 'An Eriugenian miscellany in a Munich manuscript?', *Peritia* 16 (2002), 243–7
Ó CRÓINÍN, Dáibhí 'Hiberno-Latin literature to 1169', in *New History of Ireland I*, ed. Ó Cróinín, 371–404
Ó CRÓINÍN, Dáibhí 'The Irish provenance of Bede's Computus', *Peritia* 2 (1983), 238–42
Ó CRÓINÍN, Dáibhí (ed. & tr.) *The Irish* Sex Aetates Mundi (Dublin 1983)
Ó CRÓINÍN, Dáibhí 'Na mainistrecha agus an léann', in *An Léann Eaglasta*, ed. Mac Conmara, 19–30
Ó CRÓINÍN, Dáibhí (ed.) *A New History of Ireland I: Prehistoric and Early Ireland* (Oxford 2005)
Ó CRÓINÍN, Dáibhí 'A new Old Irish gloss in a Munich manuscript', *Éigse* 33 (2002), 75–6
Ó CRÓINÍN, Dáibhí, & Immo WARNTJES (ed.) *Computus and its Cultural Context in the Latin West AD 300–1200* (Turnhout 2010)
Ó CUÍV, Brian *Catalogue of Irish Language Manuscripts in the Bodleian Library at Oxford and Oxford College Libraries*, 2 vols (Dublin 2001–3)
Ó CUÍV, Brian 'Medieval Irish scholars and classical Latin literature', *Proceedings of the Royal Irish Academy* 81 C (1981), 239–48
Ó CUÍV, Brian 'Some items from Irish tradition', *Éigse* 11 (1964–6), 167–87
O DALY, Máirín (ed. & tr.) *Cath Maige Mucrama: The Battle of Mag Mucrama*, Irish Texts Society 50 (London 1975)
Ó DONNCHADHA, Tadhg (ed.) *An Leabhar Muimhneach maraon le suim aguisíní* (Dublin 1940)
O'DONOVAN, John (ed. & tr.) *The Banquet of Dun na nGedh and the Battle of Magh Rath* (Dublin, 1842)
OESTERLEY, Hermann (ed.) *Gesta Romanorum* (Berlin 1872)
Ó FLAITHEARTA, Michéal (ed.) *Proceedings of the Seventh Symposium of Societas Celtologica Nordica* (Uppsala 2007)
O'GRADY, S.H. (ed. & tr.) *Silva Gadelica: A Collection of Tales in Irish with Extracts Illustrating Persons and Places*, 2 vols (London 1892)
Ó hAODHA, D. (ed. & tr.) 'The Irish version of Statius' *Achilleid*', *Proceedings of the Royal Irish Academy* 79 C (1979), 83–138

Ó hAODHA, D. (ed. & tr.) 'The Lament of the Old Woman of Beare', in *Sages, Saints and Storytellers*, ed. Ó Corráin *et al.*, 308–32
Ó hUIGINN, Ruairí 'The background and development of *Táin Bó Cúailnge*', in *Aspects of the* Táin, ed. Mallory, 29–67
Ó hUIGINN, Ruairí, & Brian Ó CATHÁIN (ed.) *Ulidia 2: Proceedings of the Second International Conference on the Ulster Cycle of Tales* (Maynooth 2009)
OINAS, Felix J. (ed.) *Heroic Epic and Saga* (Bloomington IN 1978)
O'KEEFFE, J.G. (ed. & tr.) 'Mac Dá Cherda and Cummaine Foda', *Ériu* 5 (1911), 18–24
O'LOUGHLIN, Thomas 'The library of Iona in the late seventh century: the evidence from Adomnán's *De Locis Sanctis*', *Ériu* 45 (1994), 33–52
O'LOUGHLIN, Thomas 'The presence of the *Breuiarius de Hierosolyma* in Iona's library', *Ériu* 62 (2012), 185–8
OLSEN, B.M. *La Réception de la littérature classique au moyen-âge* (Copenhagen 1995)
O'MEARA, John J. (tr.) *St Augustine: City of God* (London 1972)
O'MEARA, John J., & Bernd NAUMANN (ed.) *Latin Script and Letters A.D. 400–900: Festschrift Presented to Ludwig Bieler* (Leiden 1976)
Ó NÉILL, Pádraig P. 'The ages of the world', *Peritia* 5 (1986), 437–45
Ó NÉILL, Pádraig P. 'Irish glosses in a twelfth-century copy of Boethius's *Consolatio Philosophiae*', *Ériu* 55 (2005), 1–17
Ó NÉILL, Pádraig P. 'An Irishman at Chartres in the twelfth century: the evidence of Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Auct. F. III. 15', *Ériu* 48 (1997), 1–35
Ó NÉILL, Pádraig P. 'The Latin colophon to the *Táin Bó Cúailnge* in the Book of Leinster: a critical view of Old Irish literature', *Celtica* 23 (1999), 269–75
Ó NÉILL, Pádraig P. 'The Old-Irish words in Eriugena's Biblical glosses', in *Jean Scot écrivain*, ed. Allard, 287–97
O'RAHILLY, Cecile (ed.) *The Stowe Version of Táin Bó Cuailnge* (Dublin 1961)
O'RAHILLY, Cecile (ed. & tr.) *Táin Bó Cúalnge from the Book of Leinster* (Dublin 1967)
O'RAHILLY, Cecile (ed. & tr.) *Táin Bó Cúailnge: Recension I* (Dublin 1976)
O'RAHILLY, Thomas F. *Early Irish History and Mythology* (Dublin 1946)
ORCHARD, Andy *A Critical Companion to* Beowulf (Cambridge 2001)
ORCHARD, Andy *The Poetic Art of Aldhelm* (Cambridge 1994)
OSKAMP, H.P.A. (ed. & tr.) *The Voyage of Máel Dúin: A Study in Early Irish Voyage Literature* (Groningen 1970)
O'SULLIVAN, W. 'Notes on the scripts and make-up of the Book of Leinster', *Celtica* 7 (1966), 1–32
OTTER, Monika *Inventiones: Fiction and Referentiality in Twelfth-Century English Historical Writing* (Chapel Hill 1996)
OWENS, B.G. 'Y fersiynau Cymraeg o Dares Phrygius (Ystorya Dared)', unpublished MA diss., University of Wales, Aberystwyth 1951
PAGE, Denys *Folktales in Homer's* Odyssey (Cambridge MA 1973)
PALMER, James 'Calculating time and the end of time in the Carolingian world, *c*. 740–820', *English Historical Review* 126 (2011), 1307–31
PALMER, James 'The ordering of time', in *Abendländische Apokalyptik*, ed. Wieser *et al.*, 605–18
PANOFSKY, Erwin *Gothic Architecture and Scholasticism: An Inquiry into the Analogy of the Arts, Philosophy and Religion in the Middle Ages* (New York 1957)
PARRY, Thomas (ed.) *The Oxford Book of Welsh Verse* (Oxford 1962)
PECERE, Oronzo, & Michael D. REEVE (ed.) *Formative Stages of Classical Traditions: Latin Texts from Antiquity to the Renaissance* (Spoleto 1995)
PETERS, Erik (ed.) 'Die irische Alexandersage', *Zeitschrift für celtische Philologie* 30 (1967), 71–264
PFAFF, Richard W. 'Some Anglo-Saxon sources for the "theological windows" at Canterbury Cathedral', *Mediaevalia* 10 (1984), 50–62

PHILP, R.H., 'The manuscript tradition of Seneca's tragedies', *Classical Quarterly* 18 (1968), 150–79
PICHETTE, Jean-Pierre *L'Observance des conseils du maître*, FF Communications 250 (Helsinki 1991)
PICKERING, F.P. *Literature and Art in the Middle Ages* (London 1970)
PINDER, M., & G. PARTHEY (ed.) *Ravennatis Anonymi Cosmographia* (Berlin 1860)
PIZARRO, Joaquin Martinez 'Ethnic and national history ca. 500–1000' in *Historiography in the Middle Ages*, ed. Deliyannis, 43–88
PLUMMER, Charles (ed. & tr.) *Bethada Náem nÉrenn: Lives of Irish Saints*, 2 vols (Oxford 1922)
POLI, Diego 'L'*Eneide* nella cultura irlandese antica', in *Letteratura comparate problemi e methodo: studi in honore di Ettore Paratore* (no ed.), 4 vols (Bologna 1981), III, 997–1012
POPPE, Erich 'Adaption und Akkulturation: Narrative Techniken in der mittelkymrischen *Ystorya Bown de Hamtwn*', in *Übersetzung*, ed. Poppe & Tristram, 305–17
POPPE, Erich 'Deception and self-deception in *Fingal Rónáin*', *Ériu* 47 (1996), 137–51
POPPE, Erich 'The Early Modern Irish version of Beves of Hamtoun', *Cambridge Medieval Celtic Studies* 23 (1992), 77–98
POPPE, Erich '*Imtheachta Aeniasa*: Virgil's *Aeneid* in medieval Ireland', *Classics Ireland* 11 (2004), 74–94, online text http://www.classicsireland.com/2004/poppe.html
POPPE, Erich 'Literature as history/history as literature: a view from medieval Ireland', in *Literature as History*, ed. Fielitz, 13–27
POPPE, Erich 'The matter of Troy and Insular versions of Dares's *De excidio Troiae historia*: an exercise in textual typology', *Beiträge zur Geschichte der Sprachwissenschaft* 19 (2009), 252–99
POPPE, Erich 'Mittelalterliche Übersetzungsliteratur im insular-keltischen Kulturraum', in *Übersetzen im skandinavischen Mittelalter*, ed. Johanterwage & Würth, 33–58
POPPE, Erich 'Narrative structure of medieval Irish adaptations: the case of *Guy* and *Beues*', in *Medieval Celtic Literature*, ed. Fulton, 205–29
POPPE, Erich *A New Introduction to* Imtheachta Aeniasa*: The Irish* Aeneid. *The Classical Epic from an Irish Perspective*, Irish Texts Society Subsidiary Series 3 (London 1995)
POPPE, Erich *Of Cycles and Other Critical Matters: Some Issues in Medieval Irish Literary History and Criticism*, E.C. Quiggin Memorial Lectures 9 (Cambridge 1999)
POPPE, Erich '*Stair Ercuil ocus a Bás*: rewriting Hercules in Ireland', in *Translations*, ed. Murray, 37–68
POPPE, Erich '*Stair Nuadat Find Femin*: eine irische Romanze?', *Zeitschrift für celtische Philologie* 49/50 (1997), 749–59
POPPE, Erich 'A Virgilian model for *lúirech thredúalach*?', *Ériu* 54 (2004), 171–7
POPPE, Erich, & Dagmar SCHLÜTER 'Greece, Ireland, Ulster, and Troy: of hybrid origins and heroes', in *Other Nations*, ed. Hoofnagle & Keller, 127–43
POPPE, Erich, & Hildegard L.C. TRISTRAM (ed.) *Übersetzung, Adaptation und Akkulturation im insularen Mittelalter* (Münster 1999)
PRESTON-MATTO, Lahney (tr.) *Aislinge Meic Conglinne: The Vision of Mac Conglinne* (Syracuse NY 2010)
PRYCE, Huw (ed.) *Literacy in Medieval Celtic Societies* (Cambridge 1998)
QUIN, E.G. (ed.) *Dictionary of the Irish Language Based Mainly on Old and Middle Irish Materials: Compact Edition* (Dublin 1983), online (and partially corrected) at http://edil.qub.ac.uk
QUIN, E.G. (ed. & tr.) *Stair Ercuil ocus a Bás: The Life and Death of Hercules*, Irish Texts Society 38 (London 1939)
RADNER, J.N. 'Writing history: early Irish historiography and the significance of form', *Celtica* 23 (1999), 312–25
RAMELLI, I. (ed. and tr.) *Scoto Eriugena, Remigio di Auxerre, Bernardo Silvestri e Anonimi: Tutti i Commenti a Marziano Capella* (Milan 2006)

REALE, Nancy M., & Ruth E. STERNGLANTZ (ed.) *Saturna: Studies in Medieval Literature in Honour of Robert R. Raymo* (Donington 2001)
REKDAL, Jan Erik, & Ailbhe Ó CORRÁIN (ed.) *Proceedings of the Eighth Symposium of Societas Celtologica Nordica* (Uppsala 2007)
REYNOLDS, L.D. (ed.) *Texts and Transmission: A Survey of the Latin Classics* (Oxford 1983)
REYNOLDS, L.D., & N.G. WILSON *Scribes and Scholars: A Guide to the Transmission of Greek & Latin Literature*, 3rd edn (Oxford, 1991)
REYNOLDS, Suzanne *Medieval Reading: Grammar and the Classical Text* (Cambridge 1996)
RHYS, John, & J. Gwenogvryn EVANS (ed.) *The Text of the Bruts from the Red Book of Hergest* (Oxford 1890)
RICHTER, Michael *Bobbio in the Early Middle Ages* (Dublin 2008)
RICHTER, Michael 'The European dimension to Irish history in the eleventh and twelfth centuries', *Peritia* 4 (1995), 328–45
ROBERTS, Brynley F. 'Geoffrey of Monmouth, *Historia Regum Britanniae* and *Brut y Brenhinedd*' in *The Arthur of the Welsh*, ed. Bromwich *et al.*, 97–116
ROBERTS, Michael J. 'Poetry and hymnography (1): Christian Latin poetry', in *Oxford Handbook*, ed. Harvey & Hunter, 601–38
RONAN, Patricia (ed.) *Ireland and Its Contacts / L'Irlande et ses contacts*, Cahiers de l'Institut de Linguistique et des Sciences du Langage 38 (Lausanne 2013)
RONCAGLIA, A. 'L'*Alexandre* d'Albéric et la séparation entre chanson de geste et roman', *Studia Romanica* 4 (1963), 37–60
ROSS, Bianca *Bildungsidol – Ritter – Held: Herkules bei William Caxton und Uilliam Mac an Lega*, Britannica et Americana 3rd series 10 (Heidelberg 1989)
ROSS, Bianca 'The transformation of non-Irish narratives into an Irish context: Uilliam Mac an Lega's Early Modern Irish adaptation of the story of Hercules', *Studia Hibernica* 29 (1995–7), 185–93
ROUSE, R.H., & A.C. DE LA MARE, 'New light on the circulation of the A-text of Seneca's tragedies', *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* 40 (1977), 283–90
RUSSELL, Paul '*Graece … Latine*: Graeco-Latin glossaries in early medieval Ireland', *Peritia* 14 (2000), 406–20
RUSSELL, Paul (ed. & tr.) *Vita Griffini Filii Conani: The Medieval Latin Life of Gruffudd ap Cynan* (Cardiff 2005)
RUTTEN, Stuart 'Displacement and replacement: *Comrac Fir Diad* within and without *Táin Bó Cúailnge*', in *Ulidia 2*, ed. Ó hUiginn & Ó Catháin, 313–25
SALTER, Elisabeth, & Helen WICKER (ed.) *Vernacularity in England and Wales, c. 1300–1550* (Turnhout 2011)
SÄVBORG, Daniel 'Den "efterklassiska" islänningasagan och dess ålder', *Journal of English and Germanic Philology*, 127 (2012), 19–57
SCHLÜTER, Dagmar *History or Fable? The Book of Leinster as a Document of Cultural Memory in Twelfth-century Ireland*, Studien und Texte zur Keltologie 9 (Münster 2010)
SCHMELING, Gareth (ed.) *The Novel in the Ancient World* (Leiden 1996)
SCHOENE, Alfred (ed.) *Eusebi Chronicorum Canonum quae supersunt* (Berlin 1877)
SCHREIBER, Earl G., & Thomas E. MARESCA (tr.) *Commentary on the First Six Books of Virgil's* Aeneid *by Bernardus Silvestrus* (London 1979)
SCOWCROFT, R. Mark '*Leabhar Gabhála* – part I: the growth of the text', *Ériu* 38 (1987), 79–140
SCOWCROFT, R. Mark '*Leabhar Gabhála* – part II: the growth of the tradition', *Ériu* 39 (1988), 1–66
SEARS, Elizabeth *The Ages of Man: Medieval Interpretations of the Life Cycle* (Princeton NJ 1968)
SHACKLETON BAILEY, D.R. (ed.) *Anthologia Latina I: carmina in codicibus scripta fasc. 1, Libri Salmasiani aliorumque carmina* (Stuttgart 1982)

SHACKLETON BAILEY, D.R. (ed. & tr.) *Statius: Thebaid and Achilleid*, 2 vols (Cambridge MA 2003)
SHARPE, Richard 'Books from Ireland, fifth to ninth centuries', *Peritia* 21 (2010), 1–55
SHEEHAN, Sarah, Joanne FINDON & Westley FOLLETT (ed.) *Gablánach in Scélaigecht: Celtic Studies in Honour of Ann Dooley* (Dublin 2013)
SHEPARD, Alan, & Stephen D. POWELL (ed.) *Fantasies of Troy: Classical Tales and the Social Imaginary in Medieval and Early Modern Europe* (Toronto 2004)
SHOWERMAN, Grant (ed. & tr.) *Ovid*: *Heroides and Amores* (Cambridge MA 1986)
SIF RIKHARDSDOTTIR, *Medieval Translations and Cultural Discourse: The Movement of Texts in England, France and Scandinavia* (Cambridge 2012)
SILVESTRE, Hubert 'Jean Scot Eriugène commentateur de Prudence', *Scriptorium* 10 (1956), 90–2
SIMMS, Katharine 'Literacy and the Irish bards', in *Literacy*, ed. Pryce, 238–58
SIMS-WILLIAMS, Patrick *Irish Influence on Medieval Welsh Literature* (Oxford 2011)
SIMS-WILLIAMS, Patrick '"Is it fog or smoke or warriors fighting?": Irish and Welsh parallels to the *Finnsburg* fragment', *Bulletin of the Board of Celtic Studies* 27 (1978), 505–14
SIMS-WILLIAMS, Patrick Review of Kim McCone's *Pagan Past and Christian Present in Early Irish Literature*, *Éigse* 29 (1996), 179–96
SIMS-WILLIAMS, Patrick 'Riddling treatment of the "watchman device" in *Branwen* and *Togail Bruidne Da Derga*', *Studia Celtica* 12/13 (1977–8), 83–117
SIMS-WILLIAMS, Patrick, & Erich POPPE 'Medieval Irish literary theory and criticism', in *Cambridge History*, ed. Minnis & Johnson, 291–309, 754–8
SIMS-WILLIAMS, Patrick, & Gruffydd Aled WILLIAMS (ed.), *Crossing Boundaries / Croesi Ffiniau: Proceedings of the XIIth International Congress of Celtic Studies*, *Cambrian Medieval Celtic Studies* 53/54 (2007)
SMITH, J. Beverley 'Historical writing in medieval Wales: the composition of *Brenhinedd y Saesson*', *Studia Celtica* 42 (2008), 55–86
SMITH, Peter J. (ed. & tr.) *Three Historical Poems Ascribed to Gilla Cóemáin*, Studien und Texte zur Keltologie 8 (Münster 2007)
SMITS, E.R. 'New evidence for the authorship of the commentary on the first six books of Virgil's *Aeneid* commonly attributed to Bernardus Silvestris', in *Non nova, sed nove*, ed. Gosman & van Os, 239–46
SMOLENAARS, J.J.L. *Statius Thebaid VII: A Commentary* (Leiden 1994)
SOMMERFELT, Alf 'Le système verbal dans *In Cath Catharda*', *Revue celtique* 36 (1915–16), 23–62, 295–357; *Revue celtique* 38 (1920–1), 25–47; and *Revue celtique* 40 (1923), 157–69
SOMMERSTEIN, Alan (ed. & tr.) *Aeschylus*, 3 vols (Cambridge MA 2008)
SOUTER, Alexander (ed.) *Pseudo-Augustini Quaestiones Veteris et Novi Testamenti*, Corpus Scriptorum Ecclesiasticorum Latinorum 50 (Vienna 1908)
SPENCE, Sarah '*Felix casus*: the Dares and Dictys legends of Aeneas', in *Companion*, ed. Farrell & Putnam, 133–46
STANFORD, W.B. *Ireland and the Classical Tradition* (Dublin 1976)
STANFORD, W.B. 'Monsters and Odyssean echoes in the early Hiberno-Latin and Irish hymns', in *Latin Script*, ed. O'Meara & Naumann, 113–20
STANFORD, W.B. 'Studies in the characterization of Ulysses: Ulysses in the post-classical tradition', *Hermathena* 77 (1951), 52–64
STANFORD, W.B. 'Towards a history of classical influences in Ireland', *Proceedings of the Royal Irish Academy* C 70 (1970), 13–91
STANFORD, W.B. *The Ulysses Theme: A Study in the Adaptability of a Traditional Hero* (Ann Arbor MI 1968)
STANFORD, W.B. *The Ulysses Theme: A Study in the Adaptability of a Traditional Hero*, 3rd edn (Dallas TX 1992)
STEVENSON, Jane 'The beginnings of literacy in Ireland', *Proceedings of the Royal Irish Academy* 89 C (1989), 137–65

STEVENSON, Jane 'Literacy and orality in early medieval Ireland', in *Cultural Identity and Cultural Integration*, ed. Edel, 11–22
STITT, J. Michael *Beowulf and The Bear's Son: Epic, Saga, and Fairytale in Northern Germanic Tradition* (New York 1992)
STOKES, Whitley (ed. & tr.) '*Acallamh na Senórach*', in *Irische Texte*, ed. Stokes & Windisch, IV part 1
STOKES, Whitley (ed. & tr.) *The Annals of Tigernach*, 2 vols (Llanerch 1993)
STOKES, Whitley (ed. & tr.) 'The Annals of Tigernach I: the fragment in Rawlinson B. 502', *Revue celtique* 16 (1895), 374–419
STOKES, Whitley (ed. & tr.) 'The Annals of Tigernach: second fragment A.D. 143–A.D. 361', *Revue celtique* 17 (1896), 6–33
STOKES, Whitley (ed.) 'The Bodleian *Amra Choluimb Chille*', *Revue celtique* 20 (1899), 30–55, 132–83, 248–89, 400–37; *Revue celtique* 21 (1900), 133–6
STOKES, Whitley (ed. & tr.) *In Cath Catharda: The Civil War of the Romans, an Irish Version of Lucan's* Pharsalia, in *Irische Texte*, ed. Stokes & Windisch, IV part 2
STOKES, Whitley (ed. & tr.) 'The destruction of Dá Derga's hostel', *Revue Celtique* 22 (1901), 9–61, 165–215, 282–329 and 390–435
STOKES, Whitley (ed. & tr.) 'The destruction of Troy, aus H.2.17', in *Irische Texte*, ed. Stokes & Windisch, II part 1, 1–142
STOKES, Whitley 'The Dublin fragment of Tigernach's annals', *Revue celtique* 38 (1897), 374–91
STOKES, Whitley (ed. & tr.) *Félire Óengusso Céli Dé: The Martyrology of Oengus the Culdee* (London 1905)
STOKES, Whitley 'Mythological notes', *Revue celtique* 2 (1873), 197–9
STOKES, Whitley (ed.) 'O'Mulconry's glossary', *Archiv für celtische Lexicographie* 1 (1900), 232–324 and 473–81
STOKES, Whitley (ed. & tr.) 'On the Calendar of Oengus', *Transactions of the Royal Irish Academy, Irish Manuscript Series*, 1 part 1 (1880)
STOKES, Whitley (ed. & tr.) 'Poems ascribed to St Moling', in *Anecdota*, ed. Bergin *et al*., 20–41
STOKES, Whitley (ed. & tr.) *Three Irish Glossaries* (London 1862)
STOKES, Whitley (ed. & tr.) *Togail Troí: The Destruction of Troy from the Facsimile of the Book of Leinster* (Calcutta 1881)
STOKES, Whitley (ed. & tr.), *The Tripartite Life of Patrick*, 2 vols (London 1887)
STOKES, Whitley, & John STRACHAN (ed.) *Thesaurus Palaeohibernicus*, 2 vols (Cambridge 1901–3)
STOKES, Whitley, & Ernst WINDISCH (ed. & tr.) *Irische Texte mit Übersetzungen und Wörterbuch*, 5 vols in 7 (Leipzig 1880–1909)
SWARENZKI, H. 'Comments on the figural illustrations', in *Liber Floridus Colloquium*, ed. Derolez, 21–30
SWARTZ, Dorothy Dilts 'The problem of Classical influence in the Book of Leinster *Táin Bó Cúailnge*: significant parallels with twelfth-century neo-classical rhetoric', *Proceedings of the Harvard Celtic Colloquium* 7 (1987), 96–125
SWARTZ, Dorothy Dilts 'Stylistic parallels between the Middle Irish epic *Táin Bó Cúalnge* in the Book of Leinster and in twelfth-century neo-classical rhetoric with an excursus upon the personality of the redactor', unpublished PhD diss., Harvard University, 1983
THANISCH, Eystein 'Perspectives on the use of frame-dialogue in medieval Gaelic literature', unpublished MSc (Research) diss., University of Edinburgh, 2010
THILO, Georg, & Hermann HAGEN (ed.) *Servii grammatici qui feruntur in Vergilii Carmina Commentarii*, 4 vols (Leipzig 1881–1902)
THOMPSON, Stith *The Folktale* (London 1946)
THOMSON, Derick S. (ed.) *Branwen Uerch Lyr*, Mediaeval and Modern Welsh Series 2 (Dublin 1961)
THOMSON, H.J. (ed. & tr.) *Prudentius*, 2 vols (Cambridge MA 1949–53)

THORLAKSSON, Birger (ed. & tr.) *De Hakone Vicensi* (Copenhagen 1823)
THURNEYSEN, Rudolf 'Flann Manistrech's Gedicht "Rédig dam, a Dé do nim, co hémig a n-innisin"', *Zeitschrift für celtische Philologie* 10 (1915), 269–73
THURNEYSEN, Rudolf (ed.) 'Die Flöte von Mac Dīchoeme', *Zeitschrift für celtische Philologie* 19 (1933), 117–24
THURNEYSEN, Rudolf (ed.) 'Das Gedicht der vierzig Fragen von Eochaid ua Cérín', *Zeitschrift für celtische Philologie* 13 (1921), 132–6
THURNEYSEN, Rudolf *Die irische Helden- und Königsage bis zum siebzehnten Jahrhundert* (Halle a. S. 1921)
THURNEYSEN, Rudolf (ed.) 'Mittelirische Verslehren', in *Irische Texte*, ed. Stokes & Windisch, III part 1, 1–182
TODD, James Henthorn (ed. & tr.) *Cogadh Gaedhel re Gallaibh: the War of the Gaedhil with the Gaill, or the Invasions of Ireland by the Danes and Other Norsemen*, Rolls Series 48 (London 1867)
TODD, James Henthorn (ed. & tr.) *The Irish Version of the Historia Britonum of Nennius* (Dublin 1848)
TONER, Gregory 'Authority, verse and the transmission of *senchas*', *Ériu* 55 (2005), 59–84
TONER, Gregory 'The Ulster Cycle: historiography or fiction?', *Cambrian Medieval Celtic Studies* 40 (2000), 1–20
TRISTRAM, Hildegard L.C. 'The "Cattle-Raid of Cúailnge" in tension and transition: between the oral and the written, classical subtexts and narrative heritage', in *Cultural Identity and Cultural Integration*, ed. Edel, 61–81
TRISTRAM, Hildegard L.C. 'Der insulare Alexander', in *Kontinuität und Transformation*, ed. Erzgräber, 129–55
TRISTRAM, Hildegard L.C. (ed.) *Deutsche, Kelten und Iren: 150 Jahre deutsche Keltologie* (Hamburg 1990)
TRISTRAM, Hildegard L.C. *Early Insular Preaching: Verbal Artistry and Method of Composition*, Österreichische Akademie der Wissenschaften, Philosophisch-Historische Klasse, Sitzungsberichte 623 (Vienna 1995)
TRISTRAM, Hildegard L.C. 'Latin and Latin learning in the *Táin Bó Cúailnge*', *Zeitschrift für celtische Philologie* 49–50 (1997), 847–77
TRISTRAM, Hildegard L.C. 'Narratology and salvation: aspects of "narrated time" and the "time of narrating" in *Táin Bó Cúailnge*', in *Ulidia 2*, ed. Ó hUiginn & Ó Catháin, 31–45
TRISTRAM, Hildegard L.C. (ed.) *(Re)Oralisierung* (Tübingen 1996)
TRISTRAM, Hildegard L.C. *Sex aetates mundi: die Weltzeitalter bei den Angelsachsen und den Iren. Untersuchungen und Texte* (Heidelberg 1985)
TRISTRAM, Hildegard L.C. 'Warum Cenn Faelad sein "Gehirn des Vergessens" verlor – Wort und Schrift in der älteren irischen Literatur', in *Deutsche, Kelten und Iren*, ed. Tristram, 207–48
UTHER, Hans-Jörg *The Types of International Folktales: A Classification and Bibliography*, 3 vols, FF Communications 133–6 (Helsinki 2004)
VAN HAMEL, A.G. (ed.) *Compert Con Culainn and Other Stories*, Mediaeval and Modern Irish Series 3 (Dublin 1978)
VENDRYES, Joseph (ed.) *Airne Fingein*, Mediaeval and Modern Irish Series 15 (Dublin 1953)
VERBIST, P. *Duelling with the Past: Medieval Authors and the Problem of the Christian Era (c. 990–1135)*, Studies in the Early Middle Ages 21 (Turnhout 2010)
VERNET, A. *Recherches sur l'auteur et l'oevre, suivies d'une edition critique de la Cosmographia* (Paris 1938)
VINAVER, Eugène *The Rise of Romance* (Oxford 1971)
WALLIS, F. (tr.) *Bede: The Reckoning of Time*, Translated Texts for Historians 29 (Liverpool 1988)
WALSH, Maura, & Dáibhí Ó CRÓINÍN (ed.) *Cummian's Letter* De Controversia Paschali *and the* De Ratione Conputandi (Toronto 1988)

WARREN, Rosanna (ed.) *The Art of Translation: Voices from the Field* (Boston 1988)
WATSON, J. Carmichael (ed.) *Mesca Ulad*, Mediaeval and Modern Irish Series 13 (Dublin 1941)
WATSON, J. Carmichael '*Mesca Ulad*: the redactor's contribution to the later version', *Ériu* 13 (1942), 95–112
WEST, Máire (ed. & tr.) 'An edition of *Togail Bruidne Da Derga*', unpublished PhD diss., National University of Ireland, 1986
WEST, Máire 'The genesis of *Togail Bruidne Da Derga*: a reappraisal of the "two-source" theory', *Celtica* 23 (1999), 413–35
WEST, M.L. (ed.) *Homeri Ilias*, 2 vols, Bibliotheca Scriptorum Graecorum et Romanorum Teubneriana (Munich 2000)
WETHERBEE, W. *Platonism and Poetry in the Twelfth Century: The Literary Influence of the School of Chartres* (Princeton NJ 1972)
WHALEY, Diana *Heimskringla: An Introduction* (London 1991)
WHITE, Hayden 'The discourse of history', in *The Fiction of Narrative*, ed. Doran, 187–202
WIELAND, Gernot R., Carin RUFF & Ross G. ARTHUR (ed.) *Insignis Sophiae Arcator: Medieval Latin Studies in Honor of Michael Herren on His 65th Birthday* (Turnhout 2006)
WIESER, V. *et al.* (ed.) *Abendländische Apokalyptik: Kompendium zur Genealogie der Endzeit*, Kulturgeschichte der Apokalypse 1 (Berlin 2013)
WILLIAMS, J. Caerwyn, & Patrick K. FORD *The Irish Literary Tradition* (Cardiff 1992)
WISEMAN, T.P. *Historiography and Imagination: Eight Essays on Roman Culture* (Exeter 1994)
WOLF, Kordula *Troja – Metamorphosen eines Mythos* (Berlin 2008)
WOLFF, Étienne, & Philippe DAIN (tr.) *Fulgence, Mythologies: edition bilingue français-latin* (Villeneuve d'Ascq 2013)
WONG, Donna 'Christianity and the Ulster Cycle in *Cath Maige Rath*', *Proceedings of the Harvard Celtic Colloquium* 14 (1994), 14–23
WRIGHT, Charles D. *The Irish Tradition in Old English Literature* (Cambridge 1993)
WRIGHT, Neil 'Bede and Vergil', *Romanobarbarica* 6 (1981–2), 361–79
WRIGHT, Neil 'The *Hisperica Famina* and Caelius Sedulius', *Cambridge Medieval Celtic Studies* 4 (1982), 61–76
WÜRTH, Stefanie *Der 'Antikenroman' in der isländischen Literatur des Mittelalters: eine Untersuchung zur Übersetzung und Rezeption lateinischer Literatur im Norden* (Basel 1998)
YOHANNAN, John D. (ed.) *Joseph and Potiphar's Wife in World Literature: An Anthology of the Story of the Chaste Youth and the Lustful Stepmother* (New York 1968)
ZEEMAN, Nicolette 'The schools give a license to poets', in *Criticism and Dissent*, ed. Copeland, 151–80
ZIMMER, Stefan, Rolf KÖDDERITZSCH & Arndt WIGGER (ed.) *Akten des zweiten deutschen Keltologen-Symposiums* (Tübingen 1999)
ZIOLKOWSKI, Jan M. 'Middle Ages', in *Companion to the Classical Tradition*, ed. Kallendorf, 17–29
ZIOLKOWSKI, Jan M., & Michael C.J. PUTNAM, (ed.) *The Virgilian Tradition: The First Fifteen Hundred Years* (Newhaven CT 2008)

INDEX

Aarne-Thompson 910B *see* Master's Good Counsels, The
Abraham 47, 50, 144, 153
Acallam na Senórach (The Colloquy of the Ancients) 138 n.89, 147–8, 193
Achilleid see Statius
Achilles 15, 42, 51, 54–6, 127, 146, 159–60, 180, 197
Adam 47, 126, 153
adaptations *see* sagas, Irish > Classical; translational strategies
Aegisthus 68 n. 31, 69, 71
aemulatio of Classical texts 11–13, 25–39, 66–8, 76–80, 101, 103, 133, 155, 165–6, 172–81, 189–90, 197–8, 207
Aeneas 12, 31, 35–7, 42, 48, 55–6, 89, 152, 185 n.90
Aeneid see Virgil > *Aeneid*; *Imtheachta Aeniasa*
Aeolus 74–5, 77–81, 87, 90–1
Aerope / Eoraip 62–3, 68, 70
Aeschylus
  Oresteia 69–70 n.34
  Seven Against Thebes 191
Aeson 53
Agamemnon 51, 69–72, 75, 80–1, 87, 143 n.31
Aided Mael Fhatharlaig maic Ronain (The Death of Mael Fatharlach son of Rónán) 134, *see also Fingal Rónáin*
Aided Maic Samáin (The Death of Mac Samáin) 150
Aided Nath Í (The Death of Nath Í) 204
Ailech II 203–4
Ailill mac Máta 174, 176, 179
Ailill Ólomm 137 n. 76, 147
Aislinge Meic Con Glinne (The Vision of Mac Con Glinne) 148–50
Aithanarit 126
Aithbe dam-sa bés mara ('Ebb-tide to me as to the sea') 150
Albéric de Pisançon 10
Alcinous 78
Alcuin 105
Aldhelm of Malmesbury 2, 69 n. 33
Alexander (Paris) of Troy 12, 42, 55–6
Alexander the Great 5 n. 22, *see also Scéla Alaxandair*
Allecto 28, 33, 102–3, 106, 108 n. 47, 112–14, 118–19, see also Badb; Furies; Morrígan; Nemain
alliterating 'runs' *see* ornamentation; sagas, Irish > heightened style
allusion, Classical 3, 22, 184–5, 192–4
  as an allegorical device 92, 95–6, 151–2, invoking the name of Virgil 198–205
  as a means of cross-cultural parallelism 102–6, 113–21, 124, 136–9, 153–61, 185, 190, 192, 203–5
  as a signal of *imitatio* 22, 69–70, 79, 97, 103, 132, 160–1, 184–6, 190, 192–4
  and the Six Ages scheme 142–55
  as a technique of amplification 142–4, 156–8, 185, 186–7, 190
  See also aemulatio; Graeco-Roman antiquity as parallel for Irish antiquity; *imitatio*; translational strategies > of mapping between languages
allusion, Irish 22, 114–16, 143, 145–51, 155, 157–8; *see also imitatio* > of Irish texts
Ambrose 92
Ambrosiaster 102 n.13
amplificatio 26–7, 29, 33–4, 37–9, 44, 48, 62–4, 128, 141–4, 156–8, 160, 167–95, 198, *see also* sagas, Irish > large-scale
Amra Choluimb Chille (The Eulogy of Colm Cille) 113–14, 121, 129, 137
Ana 138
Andromache 159
Anglo-Norman literature 4–5, 10, 16–17, 29 n.22, 38–9, 41, 48 n.46, 54, 153–4, 168, 195
Anglo-Norman lords 17
Anglo-Saxon Chronicle 154
Anglo-Saxon literature 2, 3, 5 n.22, 46, 47, 144, 145, 154, 177, 182, 188–9, 193
Anglo-Saxon scholarship 1–2, 5, 69 n.33, 121 n.116, 124, 152 n.112, 153 n.118, *see also* Bede
annals *see* chronicles

Annálad anall uile ('All the annal-writing heretofore') 147 n.64, 151 n. 106, *see also* Gilla Cóemáin
Annals of Tigernach 103, 146
Antenor 42, 48
anthologies *see florilegia*
Antigone 191
Antilochus 55–6
apocalypticism 55, 174, 178–9, 184, 194
Apollo 130–1, 152
Apollodorus 62 n.17
Arbuthnot, Sharon 129 n.36
Argonauts 31, 126, *see also* Jason; *Luid Iasón*
Argos 16, 19, 66–7, 70, 87, 91
Arpuae *see* Harpies
Art mac Cuinn 147
Asconius Pedianus 200
Astyanax 15
Athene 78
Atreus 15, 19, 59–64, 66, 68, 70–1
Atridae *see Fingal Chlainne Tanntail*; Tantalids
Augustine, St 48, 92, 125, 144, 151 n.105, 154, 201
Augustus Caesar 153, 154
Axal 114

Babylon 108
Badb 105–7, 114–17, *see also* demons; Morrígan; Némain
Balor 146
Barthes, Roland 46 n.36
Bear's Son, The 193
Bede, the Venerable 2, 46, 47, 144, 145, 154
Bellona 106, 116
Bellum Civile see Lucan
Bendigeidfran 53
Benoît de Saint-Maure 41, 54
Beowulf 189, 193
Bern scholia 108, 112
Bernard of Chartres 152
Bernardus Silvestris 152
Bernhardt-House, Phillip A. 103 n.15, 104 n.22
Betha Beraigh (Life of Berach) 136 n.71
Bibelwerk, Das 201
Bible
  and apocrypha 126, 168 n.17
  books: Exodus 124; Isaiah 28, 108–9, 134; Joel 28; Lamentations 108; Psalms 168 n.17, 201; 1 Samuel 169 n.24
  commentary on 104, 108, 109, 111, 201
  as focus of learning 1–2, 123, 165
  as literary model 28, 104, 168–9, 192, 205
  mined by vernacular authors 156, 161
  narrative retellings of 6, 49, 51, 85, 104, 153, 168
  See also chronicles; history
Bieler, Ludwig 109 n.51
bilingualism and linguistic parallelism 44–5, 101–22, 123–5, 136–9, 202–3
Birds
  of ill omen 56, 102–3, 105–9, 115–117
  of mud 176
  of valour 117, 158
Bobbio 124, 135
Boethius 47–8, 120–1, 123, 125
Book of Ballymote *see* manuscripts > Dublin, Royal Irish Academy, MS 23 P 12
Book of Invasions *see Lebor Gabála Érenn*
Book of Leinster *see* manuscripts > Dublin, Trinity College MS 1339
Book of the Dun Cow *see* manuscripts > Dublin, Royal Irish Academy, MS 23 E 25
Borsje, Jacqueline 105 n.31, 108 n.50, 109, 117, 129 n.34
Boyle, Elizabeth 155 n.141
Branwen Uerch Lyr (Branwen, Daughter of Llŷr) 53, 182, 188–9
Breithem na Fírinne (The Judge of Truth) 74, 76–82, 90, 93, 97
Brenhinedd y Saesson (Kings of the Saxons) 52–5
Bres 157, *see also Cath Maige Tuired*
Breslech Mór Maige Murthemne (The Great Rout on the Plain of Murthemne) 30–1, 35, 184, 185, 189 n.108, *see also Táin Bó Cúailnge*
Brían Bórama 13, 142, 154, 160–1
Bruford, Alan 94
Brut y Brenhinedd (History of the Kings) 52–4, 56
Brut y Tywysogyon (History of the Princes) 52–4
Buile Shuibhne (The Frenzy of Suibhne) 109
Burnyeat, Abigail 10, 22, 25, 155

Caelius Sedulius 104–5
Caillech Bérre 149–50
Caílte mac Rónáin 147
Cáin Adomnáin (The Law of Adomnán) 150 n. 98

Calcidius 82 n. 74, 111 n.70, 125
Calder, George 28, 62 n.15
Calypso 75, 81, 87
Canterbury Cathedral 153
Carey, John 44, 49 n.52, 147, 169
Carney, James 165, 167, 172–3, 181 n.71, 182–3, 188, 192–3
Carolingian renaissance 1–2, 104–13, 122, 130, 134–8
Cassian 125
cath-tales 10, 101, 194
Cath Catharda *see In Cath Catharda*
Cath Maige Mucrama (The Battle of Mag Mucrama) 137 n.76, 147
Cath Maige Rath (The Battle of Mag Rath) 22, 105 n.32, 117–22
Cath Maige Tuired (The Battle of Mag Tuired) 51, 103 n.19, 146–7, 157, 166
Cath Ruis na Ríg (The Battle of Ross na Ríg) 141, 161, 186
Cathcharpat Serda (The Sickled Chariot) 30; see also *Breslech Mór Maige Murthemne*
Catullus 2, 135 n.68
Caxton, William
  Eneydos 29 n.22
  Recuyell of the Historyes of Troye 16, 17
Cerberus 110–11
Ceres 72 n.45
Cham (son of Noah) 126
chanson de geste 10, 48 n.46
Chanson de Roland 48 n.46
Charlemagne 2, 125 n.12
Charles-Edwards, Thomas 45 n.29
Chartres 82 n.74, 125, 152–4
Charybdis 79, 87, 89
Chaucer, Geoffrey 41
Christ, images of 151, 153
chronicles and annalistic texts 6, 7, 13 n.57, 20–1, 41 n.5, 47–50, 52–7, 103, 138, 144–7, 148, 154, 158, 168–9
chronology *see* history > chronologies
Cicero 2, 125
Ciconians 74, 87
Cicropecda *see* Cyclops
Circe 75, 79, 81, 87, 89
Clancy, Thomas Owen 149–51
Clann Ollaman Uaisle Emna (The Children of Ollam are the Nobles of Emain) 11–12, 42, 141, 190
Clarke, Michael 10, 13, 20, 80 n.71, 81, 166 n.4, 192
  on Ireland-Greece parallels 3, 11, 20, 42, 44–5, 141, 166 n.4, 187, 190
  on the textual history of *Togail Troí* and the *Táin* 14 n.62, 15 n.68, 169, 170 n.29, 177 n.53, 187, 188 n.101
Classical adaptations *see romans d'antiquité*; *Rómverja saga*; sagas, Irish > Classical; *Ystorya Daret*
Classical studies in Ireland, identifying sources for 1–3, 5, 10, 67–8, 80–2, 83–4, 87–93, 95–7, 124–36, 151–5, 158–61, 173, 192–3, 202–3, 205, *see also* commentaries; encyclopaedic texts; epic; *florilegia*; glosses; mythography; sagas, Irish > Classical; *individual Classical authors*
Clontarf 142, 156–7, 161
Clover, Carol 167
Clytemnestra 68 n.31, 69–70, 72, 80
Cóemán Brecc, St 148
Cogadh Gáedhel re Gallaibh (The War of the Irish against Vikings) 13, 22, 102, 140–61
Colm Cille 114, 124
Columbanus 124
Comestor, Peter 53 n.69
commentaries 2, 3, 11, 15, 18–20, 45, 68 n.30, 82 n.74, 89, 102, 106–14, 120–2, 123–4, 128–9, 137–8, 151–2, 192, 198–207, *see also* glosses and glossaries; Servius
compilatio 7, 9, 17, 21, 25, 52–4, 56, 85, 94, 111 n.70, 126, 132, 155, 166, 168–71, 189, 196–8, 200, 202–7
  Virgilian resonances of 10, 22, 25, 196–207
  See also chronicles; mythography; sagas, Irish > large-scale
computus 124, 144
Conall Cernach 12, 141, 143, 145–7, 150–1, 155, 161, 190
Conchobor mac Nessa 12, 42, 146, 176, 184, 146
Congal Cáech 117–18
Contreni, John J. 110 n.64, 111 n.65
Cormac mac Airt 151
Cormac's Glossary *see Sanas Cormaic*
Cornelius Nepos 42 n.9
Corthals, Johan 103
Cottonian Annals 146
Craiftine 129
Crampton, Robert 9, 11, 19, 21, 22, 84, 87 n.22, 88–92, 96–7
Critán *see* Mac Rustaing

Cú Chulainn 12, 35, 42–3, 102, 107, 146–7, 185 n.90, 189, 190, 194, 197
Cummian 125
Cummíne Fota, St 148–50
Cúscraid Mend Macha 146
Cybele 138
Cyclops / Cicropecda 66 n.25, 73, 74, 76–7, 80, 87, 89

Dá Chích nAnand (Two Breasts of Ana) 138
Daedalus 15
Dál Cais 142
Dares Phrygius *see De excidio Troiae historia*
David (king of Israel) 144, 153, 169
Davis, Dick 191 n.117
De aetatibus mundi et hominis (The Ages of the World and Man) 151–2
de Bernardo Stempel, Patrizia 132–3
de Blácam, Aodh 197
De excidio Troiae historia (History of the Destruction of Troy) 4, 8, 14, 16, 18, 20, 25–6, 37, 40–57, 126, 128, 140, 156, 179–81
  composition of 41–2
  Helen in 70
  Icelandic adaptations of 40
  Irish adaptations of *see Togail Troí*
  'Portrait Catalogue' in 180–1, 185
  style and structure of 18, 29, 169, 173
  Welsh adaptations of *see Ystorya Dared*
De poetis (Lives of the Poets) 200
De ratione conputandi (On the System of Computus) 124
De rectoribus christianis (On Christian Rulers) 136
Deleuze, Gilles 46 n.36
Demal 114
demons 102, 114
  and fabulous beasts 108–13
  and supernatural women 13, 28, 33, 102–21
Derdriu 72 n.45
description *see* ekphrasis; simile, epic
Dictys Cretensis 41–2, 48
dindshenchas 6, 21 n.109, 194, 203, 204, 206
dinosaurs 6
Diodorus Siculus 66 n.26
Disticha Catonis 136 n.74
Do fhallsigud Tána Bó Cúailnge (Of the Revelation of *Táin Bó Cúailnge*) 170
Doherty, Charles 131
Domnall mac Áedo 117–18
Don Tres Troí (On the Third Troy) 15, 21, 85 n. 15, *see also Togail Troí* > Recension 3
Donatus, Aelius 200, 202
Donatus, Tiberius Claudius 202
Donn, House of 120
Donn Fhíach 149–50
Druim Cett 114
Duan na Cethrachat Cest (Poem of the Forty Questions) 204
Dub Dá Thuath 149
Dub Ruis 105
Duncan, Elizabeth 125
Dungal 124, 125 n.12
Dúnlaing ua hArtacáin 159
Dunn, Joseph 196–7
Duodecim partes poeticae (Twelve Parts of Poetry) 206

Ebric 159–60
Echaid Oenáu (Echaid One-ear) 137 n.76
Ectoir, *see* Hector
Edel, Doris 183 n.82, 194 n.127
Edictum Rothari 109 n.51
Edom 108, 110
Edward I 54
Eitnir Gothach 126
ekphrasis 26–38, 44, 117–18, 127–8, 142–3, 158–9, 173–83, 186–7, 189–90, 191, 194–5
Electo *see* Allecto
Elysium 116
Emain Macha 11, 12, 42, 124, 190
encennach ('bird-covering') 30–1
encyclopaedic texts 2, 126, 152–4, 198, *see also* commentaries; mythography
English literature and learning, late medieval 16–17, 54–5, 134, s*ee also* Anglo-Norman literature; Anglo-Saxon literature; Anglo-Saxon Scholarship
Eochaid (king of Uí Failghe) 129–32, 137
Eochaid Eolach ua Céirín (poet) 203–5
Eochaid Oenáu *see* Echaid Oenáu
Eoraip *see* Aerope
Ephemeris belli Troiani (A Journal of the Trojan War) 41
epic 2, 5, 16, 123
  historia and 19–20, 25, 48, 123, 169, 207
  medieval Latin 94, 104
  Irish emulation of 10, 17–19, 25–39, 44–5, 165–6, 172–81, 189–90, 196–7
  national 10, 25, 101, 103, 196–8, 205–6

epic (*cont.*)
oral 167–8, 193 n.123, 194 n.127
primary 101, 196–7
See also aemulatio; *Beowulf*; heroic age; Homer; *imitatio* > of Classical texts; *Mwindo Epic*; simile, epic; Statius; *Táin Bó Cúailnge*; *Togail Troí*; Virgil
Erc mac Coirpre 146
Erinys *see* Furies
Eriugena, Johannes Scottus 2, 111, 121, 124, 125
commentaries and glosses by 107–8 n.42, 108–10, 111, 114
Ernmas 103 n.19, *see also* Morrígan
Euripides
Hippolytus 132
Orestes 72 n.44
Eusebius of Caesarea 47–50, 138, 144, 145, *see also* Jerome
Eteocles 16
Evander 30

Falstaff 143 n.31
Fand 107
Fates 112–14, *see also* Furies
fauns 109
feathers 31, 109
Fer Diad 185 n.91, 197
Fergus mac Róich 12, 42, 147 n.66, 170, 174, 176, 185, 190
Feiritéar, Cáit 'Bab' 93
Félire Óengusso (The Calendar of Óengus) 113 n.77, 129 n.36, 148–9
Ferdowsi *see Shahnameh*
filid (poets) 8, 203–4
Fingal Chlainne Tanntail (The Kin-Slaying of the Family of Tantalus) 15, 19, 21–2, 58–64, 66–73, 80–2, 84, 85 nn.13 and 15, 189
Fingal Rónáin (The Kin-Slaying of Rónán) 10, 18, 22, 43, 72, 81, 132–6
Finn mac Cumaill 143, 147–8, 150–1
Finnesburg Fragment 182, 188
Firdausi *see Shahnameh*
'First Synod of St Patrick, The' 108–9 n.51
First Vatican Mythographer, *see* Vatican Mythographers
Flann Mainistrech 15, 203–6
Fled Bricrenn (Bricriu's Feast) 166, 173, 183
Fled Dúin na nGéd (The Feast of the Fort of the Geese) 117, *see also Cath Maige Rath*
Flood, the 50, 144
florilegia 18, 81, 135–6, 192, 198
folktales 7, 8, 9, 19, 78–9, 83–4, 86, 87, 93–7, 128–9, 193
see also Bear's Son, The; Master's Good Counsels, The; oral-traditional practices; Potiphar's Wife
Fomoiri 146, 157
Foras Feasa ar Éirinn see Keating, Geoffrey
Fothad Canainne 119–20
Four Branches *see Mabinogi*; *Branwen*
French literature 4–5, 10, 16–17, 38–9, 41, 48 n.46, 54, 94, 134, 153 n.118, 195 *see also* Anglo-Norman literature; romance
Fulgentius 13, 110–12, 119–22
De aetatibus mundi et hominis (The Ages of the World and Man) 151–2
Explanatio sermonum antiquorum (Explanation of Ancient Words) 111 n.70
Expositio Vergilii continentiae (The Exposition of the Content of Virgil) 152
Mitologiae 92, 110, 119, 121, 137, 152
See also Ratio fabularum
Fulton, Helen 11, 20, 22
Furies / Erinys 13, 28, 33, 102–3, 106–10, 112–14, 116–21, *see also* Allecto; Badb; demons; Mórrígan; Nemain

Gaelic, Scottish *see* Scotland
Gaelicization *see* allusion, Irish; translational strategies > of acculturation
Garb Daire *see* Mac Samáin
Geinemain Aichil (The Birth of Achilles) *see* Statius > *Achilleid*; *Togail Troí* > Recension 3
Geloni 108
gelt 109
genre
medieval discussions of 25, 206–7
modern discussions of 6–7, 10, 13 n.57, 20, 46, 48, 49, 101, 123–4, 168–9, 196–7, 206
Geoffrey of Monmouth 41, 46, 48, 52–3
Gesta Romanorum (The Deeds of the Romans) 94
Gildas 46
Gilla Cóemáin 51, 147, 151 n.106
Gilla in Chomded úa Cormaic 51, 86 n.18
Glennon, William F. X. 34
Glossemata on Prudentius 107–8, *see also* Prudentius

glosses and glossaries 14, 43, 69, 103–13, 115–18, 123–5, 134–8, 150
  concerning supernatural beings 103, 105–13, 115–16, 121–2, 135–8, 152
  importance for literary production 20, 43, 80, 81, 89, 111, 120–2, 123–5, 138, 152–4, 202, 207
  See also commentaries; translational strategies > of mapping between languages
Godfrey of Bouillon 154
Goffart, Walter 47 n.41
Gorgons 112–4
Graeco-Roman antiquity as parallel for Irish antiquity 11–13, 16, 45–6, 50–1, 103–4, 106–10, 113–22, 123–4, 137, 141–7, 151–8, 161, 190, 196–8
grammatica 1, 25, 43, 192, 198–207, *see also* Classical studies, sources for; commentaries; *florilegia*; glosses; history; *imitatio*
Greek, Irish knowledge of 2, 66, 68, 69–70, 80, 82, 84, 91, 109, 110–11, 119, 121–2, 132
Greek literature *see individual authors*
Gregory of Tours 47
Gregory the Great 108
Gruffudd ab yr Ynad Coch 55
Guattari, Félix 46 n.36
Guido delle Colonne 41

Hades 75, 87, 103, 114
Hákonar þáttr Hárekssonar (The Tale of Hákon Hárekssson) 94
Hamartigenia *see* Prudentius
Harpies 112–3
Harris, John 11, 37 nn.69 and 72
Haymo of Halberstadt 108
Hays, Gregory 110 n.62
Heaven, Classical parallels to 104, 112, 113, 116
Hector 52, 56, 158, 180
  death of 54, 146, 159–60
  Irish parallels to 12, 13, 42, 141, 142–56, 158–61, 190, 197
  as pinnacle of heroism 143–6, 151
Heimskringla (History of the Kings of Norway) 7
Helen of Troy 70–2, 146
Helenus 56
Helios 79, 87–8
Hell, Classical parallels to 104, 106 n.37, 110, 111, 112–17, 119–20, *see also* demons; Furies; Hades
Henry II of England 51
Herbert, Máire 170
Hercules 16, 50, 147 n.66, 156–8, 161, 197
  club of 199–203
  labours of 16, 20, 30, 45, 156
Hermione 69, 72 n.45
heroic age
  in medieval chronology 143–8, 151–4
  in modern scholarship 3, 101, 123, 196–7
Herren, Michael 2, 110 n.64, 124
Hesione 70
Hesperides, Garden of the 16, 66 n.26
Hillers, Barbara 9, 11, 19, 22, 58 n.2, 59, 65, 73, 76, 78, 177 n.57, 191 n.117, 194 n.132
Hippodamia / Taithis 70
Hippolytus 132–6
Historia adversum paganos (History against the Pagans) *see* Orosius
Historia Brittonum (History of the Britons) 49–50, 53, 56, 154
Historia ecclesiastica gentis Anglorum (Ecclesiastical History of the English People) *see* Bede
Historia Gruffudd ap Cynan 53
Historia Regum Britanniae (History of the Kings of Britain) *see* Geoffrey of Monmouth
historical writing
  Classical adaptations as 17, 19–22, 25, 39, 40, 42–57, 85, 101–2, 123–4, 145
  different forms of 6–7, 19–22, 40–2, 44–51, 53–7, 101–2, 207
  epic's relation to 19–20, 25, 48, 123, 169, 205, 207
  as literature 19–22, 45–6
  pagan supernatural content in 49, 102, 138
  sagas as 6–7, 19–22, 45–6, 49, 101–2, 123, 125, 155, 158–61, 207
  See also chronicles; sagas
history
  chronologies of 47–8, 50–2, 85, 143, 144–55
  Insular aligned with world 13, 46, 49–56, 126, 158, 190, *see also* Graeco-Roman antiquity as parallel for Irish antiquity
  medieval philosophies of 42–52, 53, 56–7, 110–12, 122, 144–5, 151–4
  See also Bede; chronicles; *De excidio Troiae historia*; Dictys; Eusebius; Geoffrey of Monmouth; heroic age; *Lebor Gabála*; saga > as *historia*; sagas, Irish > as *historia*

Hofman, Rijcklof 202
Homer 2, 3, 18, 19, 41–2, 80, 81, 84, 181, 191, 196–7, 199–201, 203, 206
  as historian 41–2, 47
  Iliad 19, 41–2, 83, 84, 127, 173, 180, 191, 197
  Odyssey 42, 58–9, 60 n.9, 64–7, 70–1, 73–82, 83–4, 87–93, 197, *see also* *Merugud Uilixis*; Ulysses
  stylistic features of 34, 44 n.27, 127, 173, 191, 196–7
Horace 2, 43
Howlett, David 68 n.29
Hull, Eleanor 197
Hyde, Douglas 197
Hydra 156
Hyginus
  Fabulae attributed to 61, 65
Hyperion 79

Icarus 15
Iceland *see* sagas, Icelandic
Iechonius 153
Iliad *see* Homer
imitatio
  of biblical texts 28, 192
  of Classical texts 11–13, 22, 25–39, 44 n.24, 66–8, 76–80, 88, 89, 101, 103, 133, 136, 155–6, 165–6, 168, 172, 178–83, 187–95, 206
  of Irish texts and techniques 44–5, 53, 155–6, 172, 177, 183, 187–8, 203
Immram Brain 44 n.27
Immram Curaig Máele Dúin (The Voyage of Máel Dúin) 166
Imtheachta Aeniasa (The Adventures of Aeneas) 14, 16, 25, 86
  date of 5, 14 n.63, 29–30, 39, 43, 169
  as historiography 25, 42, 85
  as source for other authors 19, 59, 73, 89, 91
  stylistic procedures of 18, 26–39, 102
  See also Aeneas; Virgil > *Aeneid*
In Carpat Serda ocus Breslech Mór Maige Murthemne, *see Breslech Mór Maige Murthemne*
In Cath Catharda (The Civil War) 4, 5, 14, 16, 39, 85 n.13, 86, 101, 115, 128, *see also* Lucan
In Tenga Bithnua 116 n.94
Inní dia tá cuslinn Brighde (The Origin of Brigid's Pipe) 22, 129
'Insular symptoms' 1, 124 n.11
intamlugud intliuchta 151, 155–6
interpretatio Romana 104 n.22, 138
Ioca Monachorum (The Jokes of Monks) 205
Ionan mac Samain 150 n.98
Iphicles 56
Iphigenia 71–2, 81
Iriel Glúnmar 146
Irsan Glossary 105–6, 107
Isidore of Seville 47, 111, 112, 125–6, 144, 154
  Etymologiae 101, 108, 138, 144, 170, 200, 202
  on *historia* 48 n.44, 101
Ithaca 59 n.9, 87, 89, 90

Jackson, Kenneth 148, 149 n.88, 150
Jason 14, 44, 126 n.20, *see also* Argonauts
Jerome 47, 49 n.53, 50, 56, 92, 125, 138, 144
  on *compilatio* 198–200
  cross-linguistic comparisons by 109
Johannes Scottus *see* Eriugena
Joseph (son of Jacob) 135
Josephus Scottus 109
Judge of Truth *see* Breithem na Fírinne
Julius Caesar 2, 16
Juno 27–8
Jupiter 104–5, 199

Kalinke, Marianne 29 n.22
Keating, Geoffrey 21, 128–9 n.31, 129, 137 n.77
Kennedy, Patrick 128–9 n.31

Labraid Loingsech 128–31, 137
Lactantius Placidus 128, 130 n.42
Laimedon 80
Lambert of Saint-Omer 153–4
Lambert, Pierre-Yves 202
Lamia 104 n.22, 108–9
Lavinia 37
Layzer, Varese 192 n.119
Le Saint Graal (The Holy Grail) 94
Lebor Brecc *see* manuscripts > Dublin, Royal Irish Academy, MS 23 P 16
Lebor Gabála Érenn (The Book of the Taking of Ireland)
  earlier versions of 49 n.52, 51 n.60, 147 n.61, 169
  mythography in 120 n.111, 146–7
  sacred and secular history in 13, 49–53, 56
  structure 7, 22, 49–53, 168–9, 204, 206–7

Lebor na hUidre *see* manuscripts > Dublin, Royal Irish Academy, MS 23 E 25
Liber Floridus (The Book of Flowers) *see* Lambert of Saint-Omer
Liber Hymnorum 125 n.17
Lilith 109
linguistic mapping *see* bilingualism; translational strategies > of mapping between languages
Llywelyn ap Gruffudd 54–5
Lochlainn 157, 160
Lotus-Eaters / Lotophagi 65, 87–8
Love, Rosalind 121 nn. 116–17, 152 n.112
Lucan
  Bellum civile (The Civil War) 4, 5, 14, 16, 39, 85 n.13, 86, 115, 128, 184
  See also In Cath Catharda; *Rómverja saga*
Lucina 112
Lucretius 125 n.12
Lug Lága / Lugaid Lága 143, 145, 147, 151, 155
Lug Lámfhata mac Ethlenn 143, 145–7, 151, 155, 157–8
Lugaid Mac Con 146
Lugaid mac Con Roí 146–7
Luid Iasón ina luing lóir ('Jason went in his spacious ship') 14
lúirech threbraid thredúalach ('thrice-woven plaited corslet') 30
Lupus of Ferrières 125

Mabinogi, Four Branches of the 53, 182, 188–9
Mc Carthy, Daniel 146 n.48
Mac Cécht 146, 183
Mac Con Glinne 148–50
McCone, Kim 192
Mac Dá Cherda (Comgán) 148–50
Mac Díchoime 129 n.36, 130–1, 137
Mac Eoin, Gearóid 45 n.1, 45 n.30, 170
Mac Gearailt, Uáitéar 37 n.74, 43 n.20, 183, 190 n.110, 193, 194 n.128
  on *Fingal Rónáin* 132–3, 134 n.59
  on *Togail Troí* 11, 13 n.58, 22, 37, 44, 48 n.45, 141, 172, 177 n.53, 183, 188 n.101
  on *Táin Bó Cúailnge* 177 n.53, 184–7
Mac Lonan 107
Mac Roth 174–6, 179, 186 n.96
Mac Rustaing 148–50
Mac Samáin 143, 145, 148–51, 155
Mac Steléne / Mac Teléne 149–50
Macalister, R. A. S. 49–50, 51 n.60
Macha 105–6, 108, *see also* Badb; demons; Furies; Morrígan; Nemain
Macrobius 29, 80, 132, 134
  Saturnalia 124, 199
macro-text *see amplificatio*; Bible; chronicle; *compilatio*; epic; *Lebor Gabála*; sagas, Irish > large-scale; *Táin Bó Cúailnge*; *Togail Troí*
Mael Fothartaig 133–6, *see also Fingal Rónáin*
Máel Múad mac Brain 142 n.22
Mag Tuired (Moytura) *see Cath Maige Tuired*
Mahabharata 197
Manannán Mac Lir 138
MANUSCRIPTS
  Bern, Burgerbibliothek 363 112–13, 130 n.42
  Brussels, Bibliothèque Royale, MS 4641 135 n.70
  Cambridge, University Library, MS Kk.3.21 152 n.112
  Dublin, King's Inns Library, MS 12 58 n.1, 83 n.2, 86 n.19, 126 n.21
  Dublin, King's Inns Library, MS 13 85 n.15
  Dublin, National Library of Ireland, MS G50 129 nn.33–5
  Dublin, Royal Irish Academy, MS 23 P 16 (*Lebor Brecc*, The Speckled Book) 120, 148–9
  Dublin, Royal Irish Academy, MS 23 E 25 (*Lebor na hUidre*, The Book of the Dun Cow) 9, 102 n.10, 106–7, 125, 204
  Dublin, Royal Irish Academy, MS 23 P 12 (The Book of Ballymote) 17, 21, 83, 85, 86 n. 19
  Dublin, Royal Irish Academy, MS D iv 2 ('Stowe manuscript') 58 n.1, 83 n.2, 85, 129–30 nn.36–7, 180
  Dublin, Trinity College, MS 1318 (The Yellow Book of Lecan) 105 n.35, 117, 119 n.104, 129 nn.33–5, 149
  Dublin, Trinity College MS 1319 (formerly H.2.17) 40 n.1, 142 n.22, 173, 180
  Dublin, Trinity College, MS 1337 (formerly H.3.18) 148 n.76
  Dublin, Trinity College MS 1339 (formerly H.2.18) (The Book of Leinster) 51, 86 n. 18, 125, 133–5, 142, 150

manuscripts (*cont*.)
Dublin, Trinity College MS 1339 (formerly H.2.18) (The Book of Leinster) (*cont*.)
text of the *Táin* in 49 n. 50, 102, 103 n. 19, 125, 155, 180, 185–7, 189 n. 108
text of *Togail Troí* in 11, 37, 40 n. 1, 45, 51, 140–1, 156, 159–60
Dublin, University College, Franciscan MS A2 (*Liber Hymnorum*) 125 n.17
Dublin, University College, Franciscan MS A11 126 n.21
Edinburgh, National Library of Scotland, Advocates' MSS 72.i.8 and 72.i.15 126 n.21
Florence, MS Laurentianus Pluteus 78.19 125
Laon, Bibliothèque Municipale MS 444 111 n.65, 122
Laon, Bibliothèque Municipale MS 468 92, 105 n.30, 110–11, 112–13, 202
London, British Library, MS Egerton 1782 205
Milan, Biblioteca Ambrosiana, MS G.82 135
Munich, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, clm 14429 111, 116
Oxford, Bodleian Library Auct. F.III.15 125, 152
Oxford, Bodleian Library, Rawlinson B 502 114, 129 n.33, 135 n.70, 146
Oxford, New College, MS 21 134
Paris, Bibliotheque Nationale, MS Lat. 13953 107 n.42
Paris, Bibliotheque Nationale, MS Lat. 8071 (Thuaneus) 135
St Gall, Stiftsbibliothek 136 107
St Paul im Lavanttal (Carinthia, Austria), Archiv des Benediktinerstifts, Cod. 86 b/1 (*Codex Sancti Pauli*) 109
Vatican, MS Palatinus Latinus 235 107 n.42
Marbán 150
Mars 116, 138, 178
Master's Good Counsels, The 78 n.65, 93–6
Martianus Capella 2, 110 n.64 114, 123
Martinus Hiberniensis / Martin of Laon 92, 110 n.64, 111, 122, 124, 202
Medb of Connacht 72 n.45, 174
Medea 44, 126 n.20
Megara 106, 112, 118–19, 121
Meißner, Kilian 143 n.31
Menelaus 71
Mercury 30–1
Merugud Uilixis Meic Leirtis (The Wandering of Ulysses son of Laertes) 9, 15, 18–9, 22, 58–60, 64–7, 70, 73–82, 83–97, 189, *see also* Homer > *Odyssey*; Ulysses
Mesca Ulad (The Drunkenness of the Ulstermen) 166, 173, 182–3, 187
Messapus 35–6
Meyer, Kuno 1 n.1, 58–9, 73, 83, 85 n.16, 86, 88, 90, 119, 126, 129 n.36, 132, 149
Meyer, Robert T. 44 n.26, 86, 88
Midas 130–1, 137
Míl 49, 51
Miles, Brent 5 n.23, 15 n.69, 17, 41 n.9, 58 n.2, 191, 197
on Classical scholarship in Ireland 3 n.10, 11, 21, 96–7, 121 n.116, 126 n.20
on classical *imitatio* in Classical sagas 11, 22, 25–7, 29–35, 37–9, 44–5, 101 n.4, 172, 178–81
on classical *imitatio* in other Irish sagas 10, 25–6, 29 n.23, 35, 39, 121, 127, 141, 158–9, 172–4, 178–94
Minotaur *see Sgél in Mínaduir*
Moesia (wife of Tantalus) 68, 70, 72
Monasterboice 204
monsters *see* demons; Hydra
Moran, Pádraic 106
Morrígan 102–3, 105–8, 114, 117–20, *see also* Badb; demons; Furies; Nemain
Muirchertach Ua Briain 142, 155 n.131
Murchad mac Bríain 13, 102, 141–8, 151, 154–61, *see also Cogadh Gáedel re Gallaibh*
Murdoch, Brian 168 n.17
Murphy, Gerard 113
Murray, Kevin 171
Mwindo Epic 167
Mycenae *see Fingal Chlainne Tanntail*; Tantalids
Myrick, Leslie Diane 5 n.20, 11, 44 n.26, 172, 177, 188
mythography, classical 9, 13, 15, 18, 21 n.109, 61–2, 64–5, 68 n.30, 69, 81, 92, 106, 110–13, 114, 119–22, 128, 130–2, 135, 137–8, 151–2, 161, 205
allegorical approaches to 106–21, 136–8, 151–2
See also commentary; demons; glosses and glossaries

narrative forms *see* chronicle; epic; historical writing > different forms of; mythography; saga

Nausicaa 75
Nédiu and Caier 135 n.71
Nemain / Bé Néit 105–8, 116, *see also* Badb; demons; Furies; Mórrígan
Nemed mac Agnomain 50
Nennius *see Historia Brittonum*
neoclassicism, modern 193–4
Neoptolemus / Pyrrhus 69
Ní Mhaonaigh, Máire 5 n.22, 12 n.55, 13, 20, 22, 168–71, 188
Noah 126, 153
Noísiu 12, 42
Northumbrian renaissance 2
Núadu Argetlám 72 n.45

Ó Buachalla, Breandán 198 n.7
Ó Cléirigh, Míchéal 119, 142, 156
O'Clery's Glossary 106 n.37
Ó Coileáin, Seán 9 n.41
O'Connor, Ralph 18, 29 n.23, 31 n.35, 132
Ó Cróinín, Dáibhí 111, 124
Ó Cuív, Brían 43, 129 n.33
O'Meara, John J. 48 n.47
O'Mulconry's Glossary 105, 108, 125
Ó Néill, Pádraig 49 n.50, 102 n.13, 125, 152–5
O'Rahilly, Cecile 108 n.47, 176 n.51, 184 n.83, 187, 198 n.7
O'Rahilly, Thomas F. 145 n.48
Octavian *see* Augustus Caesar
Odyssey *see* Homer
Odysseus *see* Homer > *Odyssey*; *Merugud Uilixis*; Ulysses
Olympus 104, *see also* Heaven
oral-traditional practices
  among the learned 7–8, 11, 21, 95–7, 166, 170–1, 192, 193
  reflected in saga-writing 7–9, 10, 11, 19, 78–9, 95–6, 83–4, 86, 87, 93–7, 128–9, 165–8, 170–1, 177–8, 182–5, 188–95, 197
  among storytellers 7–8, 93–5, 128–9, 167–8, 170–1, 177–8, 182, 188–9, 193
  See also folktales
Orcus 113–14, *see also* Hades; Hell
Orestes 69, 71–2
ornamentation, stylistic
  in Irish prose *see* sagas, Irish > heightened style
  in Norse and Welsh prose 29 n.22
Orosius 14, 16, 49, 56, 134
Outis (Nobody) 76, 80
Ovid 2, 19, 42 n.9, 45 n.30
  Heroides 45 n.30, 75
  Metamorphoses 15, 19, 104, 129–31

Palamedes 51
Pallas 37
Pan 130
Panic (Pavor) 29 n.23, 178–81, 184, 188, 191 n.116, *see also* Statius > *Thebaid*
parallelism, syntactic *see* ornamentation; sagas, Irish > heightened style
Parcae *see* Fates
Paris *see* Alexander
Partholón 50
Paschasius Radbertus 108
Pasiphae 15
Patrick, St 114, 124, 145
Patroclus 127
Paulinus 92
Pelopia / Telepia 62
Pelops 68–71, 72 n.45
Penelope 59, 73, 74 n.52, 75, 76–8, 79, 81, 82 n.74, 87, 91, *see also* Homer; *Merugud Uilixis*
Persephone *see* Proserpina
Perseus 112
Peters, Erik 170
Phaedra 43, 72, 133
Phorbas 191
Pichette, Jean-Pierre 94–5
Pickering, F.P. 48
placenames *see dindshenchas*; *Senchas na Relec*
Plato and Platonism 48 n.47, 73–4 n.49, 79 n.66, 82, 110 n.64, 155 n.141
  Timaeus 82 n.74, 125, 152
poetry
  Classical Greek *see* Aeschylus; Euripides; Homer
  Classical Latin *see* Catullus; Horace; Lucan; Lucretius; Ovid; Statius; Terence; Virgil
  French *see chanson de geste*; romance
  Irish / Gaelic 86, 106–7, 109, 138 n.89, 142–3, 147–51, 169, 197, 203–4, 206, *see also Aithbe dam-sa bés mara*; *Amra Choluimb Chille*; *Clann Ollaman Uaisle Emna*; Eochaid Eolach; Flann Mainistrech; Gilla Cóemáin; Gilla in Chomded; *Luid Iasón*; *Reicne Fothad Canainne*; *Robo maith Aichil mac Péil*; *Saltair na Rann*; 'A story about Hercules'

poetry (*cont.*)
late-antique and medieval Latin 103–5, *see also* Alcuin; Aldhelm; Caelius Sedulius; Prudentius; *Ruotlieb*; Sedulius Scottus
Middle English *see* Chaucer
Old English 2, 177, 182, 188–9, 193
oral *see* oral-traditional practices
Welsh *see* Gruffudd ab yr Ynad Coch
Polyneices 16
Polyphemus *see* Cyclops
Polyxena 42, 55
Pompey 16
Poppe, Erich 3, 6 n.27, 11, 18, 22, 40, 42 n.12, 45, 48 n.44, 53, 85, 141, 166, 207
Potiphar's Wife (tale-type) 132, 135
Poseidon 76
Priam 12, 42, 173, 177, 180–1
Priscian 43, 124–5
prose *see* chronicles; commentaries; encyclopaedic texts; historical writing; mythography; sagas
Proserpina 112
Prudentius 104, 106
Apotheosis 108
commentaries on 107–8
Hamartigenia (The Origin of Sin) 104, 106–8, *107*
Psychomachia 107 n.25
pseudo-history *see* chronicles; historical writing; sagas
Pyrrhus *see* Neoptolemus

Radner, J.N. 7 n.30
Ranna an Aeir (The Constellations of the Sky) 21 n.109
Ratio fabularum (The Explanation of Myths) 111–13, 114
Ravenna Cosmography 126
Reference Bible *see Bibelwerk, Das*
Reicne Fothaid Canainne (The Recitation of Fothad Canainne) 119–20
remediation *see* translational strategies
Remigius of Auxerre 107–8 n.42, 121
Renaissance *see* Carolingian renaissance; Northumbrian renaissance; twelfth-century renaissance
Richard of Fournival 134
riddarasögur (sagas of knights) 29 n.22, 168
Riss in Mundtuirc (The Tale of the Necklace) 15, 19
Robo maith Aichil mac Péil (Good was Achilles son of Peleus) 15
Roman d'Alexandre (Romance of Alexander) 10
Roman d'Énéas (Romance of Aeneas) 5
Roman de Thèbes (Romance of Thebes) 5, 10
Roman de Troie (Romance of Troy) 41, 54
Roman Empire 153–4
cultural reach of 1, 6, 104 n.22
and national histories 47–8, 53, 56–7
See also interpretatio Romana
Roman literature 2, 46 n.34, *see also individual authors*
romance 4–5, 10, 16–17, 20, 41, 94, 168
romans d'antiquité 5, 10, 41, 54, 195
Rome, Matter of 16, 42, 52, 56, 85, 104, *see also* Lucan; Virgil
Rómverja saga (The Saga of the Romans) 5
Ross, Bianca 157 n.152
Ruotlieb 94

saga (as genre) 3, 6–9, 21–2
compared to chronicle 6–7, 13 n.57, 20, 57, 169
as *historia* 6–7, 19–22
sagas, Icelandic 6–7, 10 n.48, 94, 132 n.53, 167, 168, 170 n.34, 177, 193
adapting foreign texts 3, 4, 5, 29 n.22, 38–9, 40, 168
sagas, Irish
artistry of 7–11, 17–19, 21–2, 26–39, 44–6, 58–84, 87, 92, 96–7, 118–19, 133, 136, 138–9, 145, 158–61, 165–95
compared to chronicles 13 n.57
Classical 3–5, 9–22, 169–70, *see also Don Tres Troí*; *Fingal Chlainne Tanntail*; *Imtheachta Aeniasa*; *In Cath Catharda*; *Luid Iasón*; *Merugud Uilixis*; *Riss in Mundtuirc*; *Robo maith Aichil mac Péil*; *Scéla Alaxandair*; *Sgél in Mínaduir*; *Stair Ercuil*; *Togail na Tebe*; *Togail Troí*
Classical texts as models for 'native' 3, 128–36, 138–9, 165–95
dating of 5, 13–17, 169–71, 183–6
heightened style in 29, 33–4, 35–8, 44, 48, 101, 115–18, 127–8, 142–3, 158–9, *see also* ekphrasis; simile, epic

as *historia* 6–7, 19–22, 45–6, 49, 101–2, 123, 125, 155, 158–61, 207, *see also* historical writing > Classical adaptations
large-scale 6–9, 10, 16, 18–19, 21–2, 25–6, 42–3, 128–36, 138–9, 165–71, 182–95
as moral exempla 68–82, 95–6, 136–7
oral background of 7–9, 10, 11, 19, 78–9, 93–6, 83–4, 86, 87, 93–7, 128–9, 165–8, 170–1, 177–8, 182–5, 188–95, 197
Ulster 46, 101, *see also Cath Ruis na Ríg*; *Fled Bricrenn*; *Mesca Ulad*; *Serglige Con Culainn*; *Táin Bó Cúailnge*; *Táin Bó Flidais*
sagas, Norwegian 6
Sage (legend) 6, 7
Saint-Bertin 153
Saint-Omer 153–4
Sallust 42 n.9
Saltair na Rann (The Psalter of the Quatrains) 116, 168–9
Samson 156, 158
Sanas Cormaic (Cormac's Glossary) 106, 116, 122, 129 n.36, 135 n.71, 138, 150, 202
Scandinavia 1, 157–60, *see also* Vikings
literary culture in 4, 6–8, 158, *see also* sagas, Icelandic
Scél in Mundtuirc (The Tale of the Necklace) see *Riss in Mundtuirc*
Scéla Alaxandair (The Alexander Saga) 4, 8, 14, 43, 85 n.13, 86, 140, 141, 169–70
Schlüter, Dagmar 141
Scotland
folktales in 93, 150–1
Gaelic of 151
manuscripts from 9, 124
modern world invented in 1
in sagas 146 n.58, 157
Scylla and Charybdis 79, 87, 89
Scythians 50, 108
Second Vatican Mythographer *see* Vatican Mythographers
Sedulius Scottus 136
Seege or Batayle of Troye 54–5
Senchán Torpéist 171
senchas (learned knowledge) 126, 182
Senchas na Relec (The History of Burial-Places) 204
Seneca 2, 18, 64, 69, 134–5
Phaedra 43, 132–6
Thyestes 62–4, 72 n.44
Trojan Women 134
Serglige Con Culainn (The Wasting Sickness of Cú Chulainn) 44, 107
Servius 15, 20, 29, 41, 45 n.30, 68 n.30, 80, 108 n.43, 111 n.67, 112–13, 123, 127, 132, 134, 138, 202, 207
Servius Auctus / Servius Danielis 134, 202
Sex aetates mundi (The Six Ages of the World) 144, 147
Sgél in Mínaduir (The Story of the Minotaur) 15, 20, 21, 85 n.13
Shahnameh 191
Shakespeare, William
Henry IV, Part 2 143 n.31
Shrewsbury 54
Sif Rikhardsdottir 38–9
simile, epic 18, 26, 34–7, 127–8, 158–9
Sims-Williams, Patrick 173, 177, 183 n.78, 184, 188–9
Sirens 79 n.67, 87
Sitric mac Amlaíb 158
Six Ages scheme 145–55
Snorri Sturluson 7
Socrates 82 n.74
Speckled Book *see Lebor Brecc*
Stair Bibuis (The History of Bevis [of Hampton]) 20
Stair Ercuil ocus a Bás (The History of Hercules and his Death) 16–17, 20
Stanford, W.B. 4–5, 44 n.26, 58, 59 nn.7–8, 83–4, 88
Statius 16, 18, 41, 86, 128
Achilleid 4, 15, 169,
as 'poet of the Franks' 126
Thebaid 2, 4–5, 14–15, 18–20, 29 n.23, 39, 86, 114–16, 126–8, 173, 178–81, 184–9, 191, 194
Sterope 70
Stokes, Whitley 49 n.49, 129 n.33, 148 n.82
'A story about Hercules' (Irish poem) 16
Strata Florida 54
Suetonius 200
Suibhne Geilt 109
Swartz, Dorothy Dilts 190 n.110

Táin Bó Cúailnge (The Cattle-Raid of Cooley) 8, 102, 161 n.190
Breslech Mór Maige Murthemne (The Great Rout on the Plain of Murthemne) 30–1, 35, 184, 185, 189 n.108
bilingualism in 44

Táin Bó Cúailnge (The Cattle-Raid of Cooley) (*cont.*)
Classical allusions and parallels in 22, 45–6, 102–3, 105–6, 108 n.47, 113–15, 122–3, 137, 196–7
Classical *imitatio* in 10, 22, 25–6, 29 n.23, 30–1, 39, 43–4, 103, 121, 127, 165–95, 197–8, 205, 207
compilatio in 10, 155, 166–9, 194–5, 197–8, 202, 205–6
lost early versions of 167, 169–71, 172, 178, 182–7
fantastic images in 102–3, 105–6, 109, 113–15, 122, 173–89, 194–5
as *historia* 22, 45–6, 49, 102, 123, 125, 155, 161, 207
Lucanian imagery in 184 n.84
as national epic 10, 25, 101, 103, 196–8, 205–6
native Irish contexts for 102, 105, 166, 170–1, 182, 187–95
oral-traditional background to 8, 177, 182–3, 188–9, 193, 194 n.127
other texts engaging with 12, 16–17, 170–1, 183, 187, 189
Recension 1 22, 80 n.71, 102–3, 170, 172, 174–8, 184–7, 190
Recension 2 45–6, 172, 174–8, 181, 184–7, 189 n.108, 190 n.110
Recension 2, colophon of 49 n.50, 102, 109, 155
Recension 2, lost original version of 179, 184–7
Recension 2b ('Stowe version') 186
Recension 3 186 n.97
relationship with *Togail Troí* 42–3, 45–6, 49, 51, 103–4, 123–4, 137, 167, 169–70, 172–90, 192, 198
Statian imagery in 29 n.23, 178–87, 191 n.116, 194
structure as a whole 46, 49, 166–9, 185 n.91, 193–5, 197–8, 205–6, 207
Toichim na mBuiden (The March of the Companies) 171–88, 190, 192
Táin Bó Flidais 147 n.66
Taithis *see* Hippodamia
tale-lists, Irish 5 n.20, 8–9, 11, 134, 206
Tantalids 15, 58, 61–4, 68–73, 81
Tantalus 61, 69–71
Tartara 104, 111
teichoskopia see 'watchman device'
Telemachus 71, 74, 75, 76, 78, 79, 82 n.74, 87
Terence 199
Teucer 70, 71 n.42
Thebes 13, 16, 19, 115, *see also* Aeschylus > *Seven Against Thebes*; *Riss in mundtuirc*; Statius > *Thebaid*; *Togail na Tebe*
Theseus 132, 136
Thierry of Chartres 82 n.74
Thompson, Stith 93, 94
Thuaneus 135
Thurneysen, Rudolf 6 n.25, 103, 170–2, 183–4, 197–8
Thyestes / Teist 60–3, 66, 68–70
Tiberius 146
Tisiphone 106, 112–15, 117–19
Tochmarc Étaíne (The Wooing of Étaín) 8, 166
Togail Bruidne Da Derga (The Destruction of Da Derga's Hostel) 8, 22, 31 n.35, 166–7, 169–73, 182–3, 187, 190–2, 193–4
Togail Larisa (The Destruction of Larissa) 5 n.20
Togail na Tebe (The Destruction of Thebes) 14, 15, 16, 85 n.13, 86
date 5, 13
Irish allusions in 22, 114–16
as a source for other texts 126, 127–8
sources of 19, 58 n.1, 86, 101, 127–8
translational strategies of 19, 29 n.23, 39, 61–2, 101, 115–16, 127, 191 n.116
Togail Troí (The Destruction of Troy) 13–19, 40–1, 86, 140
Classical *imitatio* in 18, 22, 25–6, 29–33, 37 nn.74–5, 39, 43–4, 51, 126, 172, 178–81, 187–8, 189–90, 192
Cogadh Gáedhel re Gallaibh drawing on 157, 158–60
compared with *Imtheachta Aeniasa* 26–33, 37–9
compared with *Lebor Gabála* 49–51
compared with *Ystorya Dared* 40–2, 53, 56–7
compilatio in 22, 45, 128
descriptive techniques in 26–33, 42, 43–4, 48, 116–17, 127–8, 141, 158–60, 173–4, 177–82, 187–8, 192
as epic 19, 21–2, 26, 29–30, 39, 44, 173
Gaelicizing narrative devices in 44–5, 53, 128, 172, 177, 180, 187–8
as historiography 22, 40, 45–52, 53, 85, 101–2, 123–4, 145
in Irish tale-list B 8, 43 n.16
lost early versions of 4–5, 13, 14, 40, 140, 169–70, 179–81, 186, 187–8

other texts engaging with 16–17, 85, 141, 157, 158–60, 169, *see also Togail Troí* > *Cogadh Gáedhel re Gallaibh* drawing on; *Togail Troí* > relationship with the *Táin*
popularity of 4, 16, 140–1
and the 'Portrait Catalogue' 179–81, 185
Recension 1 14, 17, 48, 52, 116–17, 127–8, 141, 160, 172, 173–4, 180
Recension 2 15, 18–19, 37, 48, 70 n.35, 140, 141, 156, 159, 160, 170 n.29, 174 n.49, 177, 180, 187, 190
Recension 3 15, 18–19, 86 n.17, 126, 130 n.37, 180, 190
relationship with the *Táin* 42–3, 45–6, 49, 51, 103–4, 123–4, 137, 167, 169–70, 172–90, 192, 198
sources of (other than Dares) 18, 45, 121–2, 126, 127–8, 130 n.43, 156, 179, 181
textual history of 4, 14 n.62, 15 n.68, 40 n.1, 128, 140, 170, 177 n.53, 179–81, 187
See also De excidio Troiae historia; Dictys Cretensis
Toichim na mBuiden see Táin Bó Cúailnge
Toner, Gregory 22, 207
tragedy, Classical 64, 70, 80–1, 132, 134–6, 166, 191
translation movements 4–5, 17, 42–3, 84–5, 140, 167–8, 188, 189, 198
translational strategies 3, 4, 17–21, 25–6, 89
of acculturation and Gaelicization 44–5, 51–2, 53–4, 56, 72, 86, 128, 134, 155–6, 172, 177, 187–8
attributed to Virgil 199–201
of characterization 58–82
classicizing *see imitatio* > of Classical texts
of genre or medium 17–19, 22, 41, 44–9, 83, 86
of mapping between languages 101–22, 123–4, 136–9
of ideology 42, 49–52, 54–7, 68–80, 95–6, 97
of narrative structure 20–1, 25, 42, 51, 53, 173, 180, 187, 191–2
of supernatural content 73–80, 102–21
stylistic 18–19, 22, 25–39, 41 n.5, 44–5, 48, 101–2, 115–16, 173–4, 180, 187, 191 n.116
variations in 29–30, 38–9, 56–7
See also aemulatio; *amplificatio*; *imitatio*
Tristram, Hildegard L. C. 44, 144 n.36, 166 n.5, 167–72, 182, 190, 192, 197 n.6, 198
Troilus 12, 42–3, 116–17, 190
Trójumanna saga 40
Tromdám Guaire (Guaire's Oppressive Band of Poets) 150
Troy and the Trojan War 4, 12, 16, 17, 26, 40–57, 70, 74, 85–7, 140–5, 156–61, 173–4, 190, *see also De excidio Troiae historia*; Homer; *Togail Troí*; *Ystorya Dared*
Túaim Inbhir 109
Túatha Dé Danánn 103 n.19, 146, 151, *see also* Ernmas; Lug; Morrígan
Turnus 28, 30, 33–6
twelfth-century renaissance 83, 195

Ulaid *see* Ulster
Ulster warriors 12, 35, 42–3, 45, 49, 102, 107, 141, 143, 145–7, 150–1, 155, 161, 170, 174, 176, 185, 189, 190, 194, 197, *see also Táin Bó Cúailnge*
Ulster sagas *see Cath Ruis na Ríg*; *Fled Bricrenn*; *Mesca Ulad*; sagas, Irish; *Serglige Con Culainn*; *Táin Bó Cúailnge*; *Táin Bó Flidais*
Ultan 113 n.77
Ulysses / Uilixis / Odysseus 15, 59–60, 64–7, 71, 73–93, 96–7
in ecclesiastical learning 92–3, 111

Valle Crucis (abbey) 54
vampires 108–9 n.51, *see also* demons
Vatican Mythographers
First 61, 64, 130 n.43, 132
Second 68 n.30, 130, 130–1 n.43, 132
Vikings 124, 142, 157–60, *see also* Scandinavia
Virgil 2, 16, 18–9, 22, 41–2, 103, 113, 125–7, 205–6
Aeneid 2, 4–5, 10, 14–5, 18, 20, 22, 25–39, 42–3, 45 n. 30, 59, 73, 86, 89, 91–2, 97, 103–6, 123, 128, 152, 166, 169, 189, 194, 196–203
Bucolics / Eclogues 2, 202, 205
as compiler 10, 22, 196–203, 205, 206–7
Georgics 68 n.30, 202, 205
poetic techniques imitated 25–39, 44, 103, 127, 187, 197–8
quoted in *Immram Curaig Máele Dúin* 166

Virgil (*cont.*)
works as sources of information (or not) 20, 25, 41–2, 43, 73, 89, 92, 108, 111, 123, 125–6, 152, 205–7
See also Caxton > *Eneydos*; *Imtheachta Aeniasa*; Servius
Vita Adae et Evae (The Life of Adam and Eve) 168 n.17
Vita Donatiana (Life of Virgil by Aelius Donatus) 200
Vita Philargyriana (Life of Virgil by Philargyrius) 200

Wales, literature in 29 n.22, 40, 52–7, 182, 188–9, *see also Brut*; Geoffrey of Monmouth; *Gruffudd ab yr Ynad Coch*; *Historia Gruffudd ap Cynan*; Mabinogi; *Ystorya Dared*
war-goddess *see* Badb; demons; Macha; Morrígan; Nemain
'watchman device' 42–3, 173–95
Watson, J. Carmichael 183, 187
West, Máire 170–1, 183
William of Conches 120–1, 152
Glosae super Boetium (Glosses on Boethius) 120–1
See also Chartres
William of Malmesbury 48, 125 n.13
Wiseman, T.P. 46 n.34
Witch of Endor 102 n.13
Wright, Charles 34–5 n.59

Y Bibyl Ynghymraec (*Promptuarium Bibliae*) 53 n.69
Yew of Ross (*Eo Rossa*) 143
Ystorya Bown o Hamtwn (The Hitory of Bevis of Hampton) 29 n.22
Ystorya Dared (The History of Dares) 40–1, 52–4, 56

Zeus 104, *see also* Jupiter
Ziolkowski, Jan 4