

REVIEWS

Early medieval Munster: archaeology, history and society. Michael A. Monk and John Sheehan (ed.). Cork University Press, 1998. 220 pp. ISBN 1-85918-107-4

This volume, which consists of the proceedings of a conference held in Cork in 1995, attempts from the outset to address two issues: firstly, the paucity of regional and inter-disciplinary research in early medieval Irish studies and secondly (as a demonstration as to the direction which such studies might take), research topics relating to early medieval Munster. Whereas the polemical and theoretical sentiments which surface throughout the volume are often laudable, one gains an overall impression, apparent from the editors' opening paper 'Research and Early medieval Munster: agenda or vacuum?' onwards, of a manifest unevenness between the quality of the polemic, theory and data presented. Some of the ideas and material are well-founded and thorough, others are superficial and lack depth. A certain number of papers tell us little or nothing about Munster, a fact often acknowledged by authors and attributed to the lack of existing evidence relating to the region. Furthermore, while the volume purports to adopt an inter-disciplinary approach (archaeology, history and society), the latter two aspects are barely covered, thus leaving a large lacuna in any consideration of early medieval Munster.

Specific themes are discussed in the volume; among them are the introduction of literacy and Christianity into Munster, the nature of that Christianity, secular settlement including Viking Age towns, architectural traditions, environmental and related studies as well as historiographical and theoretical considerations. Charles Thomas seeks to link the three phenomena of literacy (particularly in Latin), *romanitas* and the adoption of Christianity together and argues that even as early as the middle of the fifth century Christian groups in Ireland, including all across Munster, rapidly increased numerically and spatially and became gradually more conversant in Latin. Thomas suggests that the ogham alphabet was invented possibly in Munster 'by *fili* ... before and beyond Christianity' as a substitute for Roman monumental *capitalis* (p. 15). This theory has been posited to some extent already by other scholars, although based on sounder linguistic evidence than that offered by Thomas (see, for example, A. Harvey, 'Early literacy in Ireland: the evidence from Ogam', *Cambridge Medieval Celtic Studies* 14 (1987) 1–15). Fionnbarr Moore advances

some important ideas regarding ogam in Munster in his paper 'Munster Ogham stones: siting, context and function'. Notably, he shows that the majority by far of Munster ogam stones come from ecclesiastical sites and souterrains. Also an adherent of the belief that the ogam alphabet originated in Munster, he points to the Lee catchment area, between Cork city and the Derrynasaggart mountains, as the most likely place of origin for the application of the script to stone. His evidence is archaeological — the ogam stones of this area are inscribed on large, rough, unadorned and presumably prehistoric standing stones: 'These may represent a local response to fashions apparent in the Roman world in the late fourth and early fifth centuries.' (p. 32). Unfortunately, Moore does not furnish specific examples to support this theory and a cursory glance at the ogam inscriptions of the region show a similar linguistic pattern evident elsewhere, namely, a considerable number of inscriptions which incorporate both pre-apocape and post-apocape features in one inscription. This characteristic of ogam inscriptions has been attributed to conservative spelling by McManus who correctly cautions that any relative chronology of ogam inscriptions must be subject to certain qualifications including consideration of the extent of a composer's literacy.¹

Evidence other than ogam inscriptions for the early adoption of Christianity in Munster is not forthcoming in this book. Dagmar Ó Riain-Raedel places the pre-Patrician claims of saints Ailbe of Emly, Déclán of Ardmore, Ciarán of Cape Clear and Ibar of Begerry Island in the context of the establishment of a diocesan structure in the twelfth century. She argues that these claims were first propagated in writing in the *Schottenklöster* of Germany in answer to conditions in Ireland, and in particular to counter the claims of Armagh. While the evidence regarding the date of composition of the lives of the four saints is convincing, Ó Riain-Raedel leaves open the possibility that Christianity first took hold in Ireland in Munster. The veracity of Munster's claim might be advanced somewhat by conducting an inter-disciplinary study of two churches associated with these saints, namely, Ardmore and Emly. The density of ogam inscriptions in the hinterland of Ardmore must be an indicator of early literacy among certain kindreds (note the existence of three NETA-SEGAMONAS inscriptions in the region, one at Ardmore itself). Early medieval sources suggest that Emly was the centre of Munster, *medón Mairtine*, the patrimony of the early Mairtine Mittine, while excavations at Chancellorsland near Emly have revealed activity from the Middle Bronze to the Early Christian period and beyond.² As noted throughout this volume, M. J. O'Kelly's excavations at Church Island and Tom Fanning's excavations at Reask contributed to the corpus of material regarding the nature of the

¹D. McManus, *A guide to ogam* (Maynooth 1991) 83.

²See M. Doody, 'The Ballyhoura Hills Project', *Discovery Programme Reports* 5 (1999) 97–100.

church in Munster, although, as noted by White Marshall and Walsh (p. 103), the excavation evidence from sites of this type is sketchy and their chronology remains problematic. The last-mentioned's own paper 'Illaunloughan, Co. Kerry: an island hermitage' is one of the highlights of the volume, not least as a result of the wealth of material found on this tiny island, including an earthen and drystone oratory, a *leacht* or shrine, burials, the remains of butchered animals, corn and bronze-working debris. The cumulative dating evidence suggests that there was activity on the island from the seventh to the fourteenth century. That the island was part of, and supplied by, the mainland community nearby is suggested by the environmental evidence, especially the amount of butchered animal bone. One wonders if the inhabitants of Illaunloughan were the *heremitae* or *anachoretæ* envisaged by the *Canones Hibernensis* as persons who combined an active and a contemplative life, not absolutely solitary, but perhaps an élite community supported by the wider society.³ The logical concept of placing a site within the context of its landscape rather than viewing it as an isolated monument and of acknowledging that this landscape is a highly complex phenomenon — as clearly witnessed by early Irish law — is to the fore of Michael Monk's description of Caherlehillan, Co. Kerry and Lisleagh, Co. Cork. The core of this long paper, which is somewhat overlaid with generalisations and polemic, lies in the landscape of Caherlehillan and Lisleagh as illustrated in Figs. 5.1–3 which offer models for the re-constitution of an early medieval landscape. Fig. 5.1, which illustrates the Lisleagh meso study area, is particularly informative from the historian's and topographer's perspective considering that it includes Glanworth, patrimony of Eóganacht Glendamnach, and is also part of the well-documented region known as *Caoinle*.

The paucity of environmental evidence and the difficulty of abstracting a regional perspective from scant data is clear from the environmental contributions to the volume, while a well-researched and informative essay such as Regina Sexton's 'Porridges, gruels and breads: the cereal foodstuffs of early medieval Ireland' has to take an all-island and source-oriented view to illustrate sufficiently its subject matter. While not at all as conversant with the sources as Sexton is, nevertheless Colin Rynne in his paper 'The craft of the millwright in early medieval Munster' complements our knowledge, mainly from the laws, of milling in Ireland by expert use of archaeological data. He emphasises the complexity of the millwright's skill, tries to identify regional millwrighting techniques and, most importantly, Romano-British influences on Irish mills such as the remarkable vertical-wheeled mill at Little Island, Co. Cork dated to c. 630 AD. If

³See C. Etchingham, *Church organisation in Ireland AD 650 to 1000* (Laign Publications 1999) 321.

one were to seek evidence other than ogam stones for contacts between Munster and the Romano-British world, perhaps answers may be found in data which has hitherto been assumed to be less obviously archaeological.

The section of the volume dealing with sculpture disappoints, not least because some of the theories suggested tend towards the simplistic. Etienne Rynne in his consideration of the chronological sequence of Ireland's monumental stone crosses acknowledges a belief in a linear development using a phrase coined by Roger Stalley as 'a Darwinian insistence that things must evolve in an orderly sequence' (p. 136). Rynne argues that this linear development started with the Ossory crosses and was followed by the Lorrha Crosses, the Cross of Patrick and Columba at Kells (also called the Tower Cross) and the South Cross at Clonmacnoise which he dates to c. 820 AD. However, this orderly sequence is too trite and does not acknowledge the preferences of patrons or, more significantly, the conservatism or innovation of craftsmen. Roger Stalley's arguments that the Cross of Patrick and Columba at Kells (and probably the crosses at Clonmacnoise and Monasterboice) are the products of the late ninth century, and in the case of the cross at Kells specifically of the abbacy of Máel Brigte mac Tornáin (891-927), seem altogether more convincing.⁴ The dangers inherent in jumping from the evidence of one discipline to another without guidance surfaces in Rhoda Cronin's essay on the 'Late High Crosses in Munster: tradition and novelty in twelfth-century Irish art'. She links a perceived cluster of these crosses in north Munster — a perception which is somewhat skewed insofar as some of the most impressive among them form a distinct cluster in Co. Clare and the Aran Islands — with the belief that 'much of the impetus for Church reform emanated from North Munster', the evidence for this being the locations of twelfth-century synods at Cashel and Rathbreasail. Historical evidence would suggest, however, that it was in the very areas from which these crosses are absent (e.g. Co. Limerick and Lismore) that the reform movement infiltrated into Munster. And one should caution against taking a sweeping view of art and reform in twelfth-century Ireland. Local kings and prelates used art for their own reasons and were often divided into pro- and anti-reform factions, as Marie Therese Flanagan has recently demonstrated in relation to Downpatrick and Bangor.⁵

If one were to wish for research objectives for historians of Irish art, two present themselves immediately — an increased number of detailed studies of specific monuments and a greater familiarity with the technical aspect of their topic. Such an approach might lift the

⁴R. Stalley, 'The Tower Cross at Kells' in C. E. Karkov, M. Ryan and R. T. Farrell (ed.), *The insular tradition* (New York 1997) 115–41.

⁵M. T. Flanagan, 'John de Courcy, the first Ulster plantation and Irish church men' in B. Smith (ed.), *Britain and Ireland 900–1300: insular responses to medieval European change* (Cambridge 1999) 154–78.

subject out of an incessant tendency among many art historians to contrast endless architectural or iconographic features and to conclude with general statements such as that regarding the oratory at Gallarus, Co. Kerry 'with its clear ancestry in the pre-Christian Iron Age' or the *leacht* 'an open-air altar-like construction of solid stone often associated with ancient pilgrimage rounds of demonstrable antiquity' (pp. 114, 116). While Tadhg O'Keefe's study of 'Architectural traditions of the early medieval church in Munster' (from which the above quotes derive) includes some interesting considerations of church architecture in Munster in the period leading to the mid-twelfth century *floruit* of Romanesque style, more detailed evidence (architectural and historic) concerning a smaller number of churches might have yielded more results. His depiction of Labbamolaga, Co. Cork, for example, as a simple *memoria* or *martyrium* building erected above the original burial of the saint without becoming the focus around which great churches later developed, ignores elementary material regarding this church and its saint. Firstly, if Pádraig Ó Riain is correct Molaga is a double for the deity Lug and hence there may have been no corporeal relics, although this was no obstacle to the erection of a shrine.⁶ Secondly, Labbamolaga was the focus of a considerable cult in mid-Munster whose 'saint' and his ecclesiastical officials were active in the dynastic politics of the region.⁷

The volume concludes with three polemical essays. Jerry O'Sullivan explores the question of 'Nationalists, archaeologists and the myth of the Golden Age' and laudably calls for 'a greater awareness of the historiography of archaeological writing on the Early Medieval period, across a range of themes' (p. 187). O'Sullivan acknowledges that a wealth of archival material needs attention to gain a deeper impression of the politics of twentieth-century Irish archaeology. Indeed his essay is disappointing because he does not quote any of this material and relies solely on published sources. Had these sources been consulted by Michael Tierney in preparing his essay on 'Theory and politics in early medieval Irish archaeology', I doubt if his claims regarding the empiricism and class interests of Irish archaeologists could have been sustained. Surely it is unfair and incorrect to state that 'under the guise of empiricist common sense, most archaeologists in Ireland and around the world police the past in the interests of dominant social groups' (p. 195). These sentiments incorporate echoes of tired Marxist theories and, whatever about the rest of the world, any knowledge of twentieth-century Irish archaeologists would recognise that on the whole they did not belong to or represent a dominant class and that their interest in archaeology primarily emanated from curiosity about their country's past. Nancy Edwards in her concluding essay 'Early medieval

⁶See Pádraig Ó Riain, 'Traces of Lug in early Irish hagiographical tradition', *Zeitschrift für celtische Philologie* 36 (1978) 138–56.

⁷See J. G. O'Keefe (ed.), 'Betha Molaga', *Irish Texts* iii (1931) 12–22.

Munster: summary and prospect' identifies methods and themes for future research: the development of inter-disciplinary studies; the need to continue to gather data while simultaneously refining theoretical approaches, to identify regional diversity, to deal with dating and context and to be familiar with the medieval technologies from wood to metal-working. If Edwards' advice were followed for the next ten or more years in regard to many regions of Ireland, perhaps more substantial volumes might ensue than can be offered on the basis of current knowledge. This volume on Munster is the first step in the right direction.

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Kelten en de Nederlanden van prehistorie tot heden. Laurant Toorians (ed.). *Orbis Linguarum* 1, Peeters, Leuven, Paris, 1998. xiv + 249 pp. 1100 BF / €28. ISBN 90-6831-981-7.

This volume contains eleven articles, with a preface, an introduction by the editor Laurant Toorians and an index. Furthermore, a brief biography of each author is provided. The book emerged from a joint Dutch-Belgian event (an exhibition, a symposium and a series of lectures) on Celts, Celtic Studies and the so-called Low Countries (Belgium and the Netherlands), which took place in the Flemish Cultural Centre in Amsterdam in 1997 (see the preface (pp. vii–viii) by Guido H. A. Vereecke).

The lectures, subsequently published in this volume, were organised by the A. G. van Hamel Foundation for Celtic Studies in the Netherlands. In his introduction (pp. ix–xiv), Laurant Toorians briefly alludes to A. G. van Hamel's importance as the first occupant of the Chair of Celtic Studies in the Netherlands (from 1923). While the Netherlands have been fortunate to have such a Chair, Belgian Celticists (with the *Société Belge d'Études Celtiques* as their organisation) have had to do without. One cannot help wondering whether Toorians had a premonition when he wrote 'the Chair still exists' (p. xii), because since early 2000 the Chair has come under the threat of abolition for financial reasons.

The book covers a broad time span: from the Iron Age to the 'New Age Movement' or, as Toorians puts it, from physical contacts in late prehistory between Celts and the Low Countries, which are almost beyond our reach, to more or less mental constructions of relationships between the Celts and 'us' in the present. The interdisciplinary efforts to throw light upon these contacts have been arranged in chronological order.

The first two articles deal with the Low Countries in the Iron Age: in the South from 750 to c. 50 BC (by Guy de Mulder, pp. 1–32) and in the North from 800 to 12 BC (by P. W. van den Broeke, pp. 33–60). The first article is a detailed survey of Iron Age funerary and dwelling

remains. The article gives rise to several questions which, as it happens, are answered by the second article; it is, therefore, advisable to read the second article first. For instance, in both articles mention is made of groups of inhabitants with more wealth and power than average. De Mulder maintains that their dwellings are sometimes mistakenly qualified as 'princely' or 'royal' but gives no explanation as to why this is a mistake, whereas Van den Broeke points out that these élites should be considered as chieftains, who assume power in times of war. Not only does De Mulder's presentation of data give rise to questions, but so too do his interpretations. An example of this is the discussion of the fact that the Scheldt was used as a place to deposit objects of value. Bronze objects from the late Bronze Age are interpreted as status symbols discarded by the owner into this river during feasts (p. 6). The sheathed, somewhat bent swords from the late Iron Age, also found in the Scheldt, are likely to have been sacrifices, according to the author (p. 27). One could do with an explanation of what this shift in interpretation from a social-ritual to a sacrificial-ritual context is based upon. A more clearly structured search for contacts with the Celts would have improved this otherwise interesting article.

In Van den Broeke's eloquent contribution, archaeological finds are compared with data supplied by classical authors. His article is a well-structured account of a quest for the Celts, and for contacts with them, in the area under discussion. He suggests language as the criterion for what is to be considered 'Celtic', but admits that there is only a small basis for such a study with regard to his subject. Instead, he searches for resemblances to cultural expressions from the La Tène and Hallstatt cultures.

J. Devleeschouwer (pp. 61–8) purports to reconstruct the succession of languages in the South of the Low Countries from the early Neolithic Age to the Roman conquest. He bases his ambitious reconstruction upon the names of water systems (hydronyms) pertaining to the Walloon Meuse basin and the Scheldt basin. He distinguishes not only Germanic and Celtic influences but also suggests a third strand, of a non-Indo-European, Uralic type. He concludes his discussion with a firm assertion that Celtic was spoken by the Indo-European population before they were conquered by the Germanic Belgians. The period after their invasion is somewhat confusingly called 'the Belgian Age' (p. 67); some indication of the dates of the consecutive stages in his reconstruction would have been appropriate.

Lauran Toorians (pp. 69–88) gives a survey of Flemish settlements (the medieval use of this name refers generally to all inhabitants of the Low Countries) in the Celtic countries. (The founder of this branch of research was the Dutch Celticist Theo Chotzen.) Toorians notes that the evidence in Scotland and Brittany is less abundant and conclusive than in Ireland and Wales. Toorians has found surprising traces: for instance, the presence of a Dutch-speaking community in Haverfordwest in Wales

in the sixteenth century. The Flemish community in Kilkenny, of which Toorians cites a literary witness of 1339, may have already been there to some extent in the thirteenth century, if one considers documents relating to the powerful Flemish merchants called (De) Kyteler in this Irish town.¹

In a captivating manner, Piet Avonds (pp. 89–100) describes the use of Arthurian symbolism by three dukes of Brabant (from the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries) and he points out the role the English king Edward III played in establishing contacts between this Dutch élite and Welsh culture.² The article concludes with the elegy for Llywelyn ap Gruffudd in a Dutch translation by Lauran Toorians (pp. 101–3).

Five poems by Dafydd ap Gwilym are also translated into Dutch by Lauran Toorians (pp. 105–122) in his article about this fourteenth-century Welsh poet. The poems are well introduced by biographical and literary-cultural contextual notes. Toorians concludes with remarks about his method in translating these artful expressions of love. One wonders why he did not give a bilingual edition, as he did in his bilingual anthology of this poet's work.³ Some discussion of the enigmatic Cuhelyn, mentioned in the first poem, would not have been amiss.

Pierre Swiggers (pp. 123–147) introduces the views of Adrianus Schrieckius⁴ (1560–1621) about the development of languages. According to Schrieckius, the oldest language of the world (after the mythical biblical event at the tower of Babel) is Scythian, with Celtic as the western form of Scythian and Flemish as the purest representative of the Celtic languages. Swiggers supplies several astonishing examples of this line of reasoning, which include curious etymologies and remarkable political views. For instance, 'Europe' (supposedly from 'over' and 'op') is a Belgian, and 'masculine', name, according to Schrieckius. The northern peoples who inhabited Europe are presented as superior; among them, the Celts are purported to be the most outstanding. It is interesting to note that this romantic view of Celts and Scythians is contemporaneous with their negative portrayal in political ideology. In *A View of the Present State of Ireland* (which first circulated in manuscript form and was printed in 1633), Edmund Spenser uses the supposed descent of the Irish from the Scythians to posit the inferiority and savagery of these two peoples.

¹See, for instance, A. Neary in *Proceedings of the Royal Irish Academy* 83 C (1983) 343; L. S. Davidson & J. O. Ward (ed.), *The sorcery trial of Alice Kyteler* (New York 1993) 8–9; B. Williams in C. Meek (ed.), *Women in Renaissance and Early Modern Europe* (Dublin 2000) 70–71.

²Avonds's book about 'King Arthur in Brabant' in the twelfth to the fourteenth centuries, given notice of in footnote 1, has now appeared in the series *Verhandelingen van de Koninklijke Vlaamse Academie van België voor Wetenschappen en Kunsten. Klasse der Letteren* 61 (1999) nr. 167.

³*Dafydd ap Gwilym (c. 1315–1350); bloemlezing uit het werk van de meest gevierde dichter van Wales* (Kruispunt 167, Brugge 1996).

⁴Also known as Adriaen van Schrieck.

An elaborate description of the life and work of Marcus Zuerius Boxhorn (1612–1653) is the subject of the article by Rijcklof Hofman (pp. 149–167). Hofman shows the progressive contribution of Boxhorn to views on the interrelationship between languages and supplies witty quotations from the writings of this Renaissance scholar. A strange contradiction exists between this article and the previous one: Hofman maintains that Boxhorn was the first to notice (in a work published in 1654) that the European languages stem from one original one (p. 165). This language was called ‘Scythian’ in the seventeenth century; nowadays it is characterised as Indo-European. Swiggers, however, refers to the view of Schrieckius (expressed in a work published in 1614) that ‘Scythian’ is the cradle of the European languages (p. 143). The methodology of Schrieckius is inferior to that of Boxhorn, but he was nevertheless earlier in publishing this point of view.

Pierre Swiggers (pp. 169–193) describes the history and importance of the *Coláiste San Antoine* in Louvain. The beginning of his article contains some controversial statements, among them, for instance, the opinion that the ‘bardic’ schools of pre-Christian origin remained uninfluenced by Christianity. After this first page, however, he moves to more solid ground when he deals with the scholarly publications (especially hagiography and grammars) produced in this Irish Franciscan college in Belgium.

Beautiful and impressive Breton poems in Dutch translation are supplied by the autodidact Jan Deloof (pp. 195–221). The first two are also given in Breton, the rest only in translation. Deloof deals with the development of the identity of the Breton language: having been stigmatized as retarded and boorish, it has now gained status and is being taught in schools. The actual number of Breton-speaking people has diminished dramatically, however (p. 216). Deloof offers a wide-ranging collection of poems and has arranged them well: see, for instance, the contrast in message and parallels in images between the poems of Añjela Duval and Per-Jakez Hélias (pp. 209–11).

Joep Leerssen (pp. 223–38) points out that it is the mysterious, occult image that makes the ‘Celts’ so attractive as a source of inspiration for the counter-cultural movement known as ‘New Age’. The article, which deals with the origin of this image, is well written and well structured. There is, however, a serious problem with Leerssen’s reconstruction. His argument begins with reference to the ‘barbaric’ past of the ‘real’ Celts and leaps to James Macpherson’s eighteenth-century falsifications and the Romantic movement. According to Leerssen, the concept of the Celts as a people with imagination, magic, symbols and spiritual wisdom is nonsense; the ‘real’ Celts were a tribal society based on warfare and the honour of warriors (p. 229). In order to demythologise this image of the wise, mystical Celts, he points out that the Celts were ‘barbarians’, as were, he claims, the Romans. In this case, Leerssen is perpetrating

an old 'myth', first propagated by classical authors and reiterated by (English) colonisers. Moreover, he creates an unacceptable opposition with Christian culture when he writes that 'for a long time, the Celts kept to their unhygienic and cruel pagan customs *even after their Christianization*' (p. 229; italics mine), thereby identifying Christianity with civilization and Celts with barbarism. It is significant that texts in the Celtic languages do not deal only with wars and warriors but also with ideas about and images of the supernatural. The descriptions of the so-called Otherworld, whether influenced by Christian and classical traditions or not, and the ample references to the use of magic, prophecy and mantic powers, are present in the sources, which had and still have an appeal to the human imagination. If Leerssen had not overlooked the importance of the Dutch author A. Roland Holst as a connection between Celtic- and Dutch-language literature (he mentions only the Belgian Hubert Lampo), he might not have suggested this leap from the early Celts to the Romantic Age. The literary production of Roland Holst was of course influenced by nineteenth-century scholarship, but his first acquaintance with early Irish literature was Kuno Meyer's translation of *Immram Brain* in *The Voyage of Bran Son of Febal to the Land of the Living*. In other words, some of his recreations of Irish sagas were based upon translations of early Irish sources.⁵ The point here is that the sources themselves can provide the inspiration for 'mystification'. The trend of romanticising the early Irish literary tradition did not start in the eighteenth century: there are already indications of this in the Middle Irish period.⁶ This trend intensifies in the Early Modern Irish versions of the tales and reaches a climax in the Romantic period.

As Leerssen so appropriately points out, we need the 'vinegar' of historical scholarship to preserve a balanced view and not a mouldy image of the past. The same is true of literary scholarship; we are only starting to grasp the intricate and subtle symbolism present in the literature written in the Celtic languages. This collection of essays is a welcome contribution to the search for, and study of, the legacy of the Celts and their descendants.

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Clavis Metrica. Háttatal, Háttalykill and the Irish Metrical Tracts. Stephen N. Tranter. Beiträge zur nordischen Philologie, 25. Band, Basel und Frankfurt am Main, 1997. x + 226 pp.

⁵See M. Draak, 'De gecompliceerde bronnen van Holst's Ierse prozaverhalen' in *Schimmen van het wester-eiland. Verkenningen in de Keltische traditie van het oude Ierland* (Amsterdam 1977) 139–59, 194–5.

⁶See, for example, J. Carey, 'The three things required of a poet', *Ériu* 48 (1997) 41–58.

Stephen Tranter's work is a comparative study of prescriptive metrics applied to stanzaic-syllabic verse in Early Irish and Old Norse. It was conceived and written as part of the Freiburg research project *Übergänge und Spannungsfelder zwischen Mündlichkeit und Schriftlichkeit* (1986–1996), which has become well-known to researchers on early Irish through the work of Prof. Tristram and others. It was completed by 1992.

The complexities and implications of its subject are first explored in microcosm and free of either medieval or modern theoretical prejudice by means of a comparison of two poems illustrating the actual working of different stanzaic metres, one from each poetic tradition. His Old Norse example is the important *Háttalykill* 'Key to Metres'¹, which contains an inventory of saga material as well as a genealogy of Norwegian kings. In the seventeenth century its title was translated as *Clavis Rhythmica* and it was identified with the *Háttalykill inn forni* 'the Old Háttalykill' mentioned in the Orkneyinga Saga where it was said to have been composed by the middle of the twelfth century as a joint venture on the part of the local earl and his visiting poet. The modern translation *Clavis Metrica* gives its name as a title to Stephen Tranter's book. From about the same time a similar, but much shorter, Irish *clavis* has been preserved in the Book of Leinster as well as in the eighteenth-century manuscript Trinity College H 1 15, where it was copied from a fourteenth-century exemplar that seems now to be lost.² Rudolf Thurneysen incorporated this poem in his *Mittelirische Verslehren* as *Verslehre IV*.³ In the Book of Leinster it was ascribed to a certain Cellach .h. Ruan, who is probably the same as Cellach hua Ruanada, the *ardollam Érenn* who died in 1079 according to the Annals of Ulster. Both poems would thus seem to belong to the same period and to reflect the fashion of their time although in a different social and linguistic milieu. This makes such a comparison very interesting indeed. Stephen Tranter tends to stress the differences rather than the similarities. This is, of course, inherent in his subject, which requires him to seek out specific features against a poetic background which has otherwise much in common. Thus, with respect to social setting, the similarities extend to purpose, patronage and value-judgements concerning the choice of metres. With respect to form they imply the *clavis* form, stanzaic structure, syllable count, alliteration, rhyme and cadence, although most of these are realised according to rules and fashions which are specific to both cultures.

The main body of Tranter's book then focusses on two treatises that give not only a framework for the study of stanzaic metres but also a wealth of actual examples. Snorri Sturluson's *Háttatal* 'Catalogue of

¹See J. Helgason and A. Holtsmark (ed.), *Háttalykill enn forni* (Copenhagen 1941).

²See P. de Bernardo Stempel and R. Ködderitzsch (ed.), *Rudolf Thurneysen: Gesammelte Schriften*, Band II (Tübingen 1991) 658–62.

³*Ibid.* 445.

Metres' is an encomiastic poem of one hundred and two stanzas, the first half of which contains variants of *dróttkvætt*, each of which illustrates different metrical properties, and is accompanied by an explanation of the metres involved. It was composed c. 1223 and forms the third (metrical) part of his *Edda*. It has recently been re-edited and commented on by Anthony Faulkes.⁴ As a point of comparison from the Irish side, Stephen Tranter takes the first of the three metrical treatises collected by Rudolf Thurneysen in 1891 in his *Mittelirische Verslehren*,⁵ namely the treatise entitled *Do córus bard cona bairdni*.⁶ This describes the metres to be used by the bardic class and is, in view of two stanzas praising Donnchadh Donn, son of Flann Sinna and king of Tara in the years 919–944, not earlier than the first part of the tenth century. It was recently dealt with in a study by Donncha Ó hAodha, based on a lecture of 1988, which gives an excellent introduction to the subject.⁷ It should be noted that, unlike the comparison of *Háttalykill* and Cellach's poem, the things compared here belong to a different time and follow different intentions. The differences detected between the texts are thus not entirely representative of differences between the two poetic cultures as a whole. Much closer to Snorri Sturluson's *Háttatal* would have been the third part of the *Verslehren*, entitled *Dona haistib*,⁸ which belongs to the first part of the eleventh century at the earliest. It no longer follows the older type of categorization which was based on grades of knowledge and social position, but groups the poems in modern fashion according to types of metre, as Snorri did.

In view of the far-reaching philological and historical implications of any attempt to provide a full-scale comparison between early Irish and early Scandinavian metrical traditions, which would include the study of rather forbidding and partly unexplored material such as early runic metrical inscriptions⁹ and early Irish rhymeless poetry,¹⁰ it was surely a good idea to concentrate on a small, but unambiguously definable and sociologically relevant corpus. This allowed the subject to be closely scrutinized and the loss in scope is made up by the explicitness of the argument. In the course of the book the texts in question are discussed thoroughly from all possible viewpoints: supposedly indigenous forerunners of stanzaic-syllabic metres (pp. 52 ff.); the sociological

⁴A. Faulkes (ed.), *Edda, Háttatal* (Oxford 1991).

⁵See P. de Bernardo Stempel and R. Ködderitzsch (ed.), *Rudolf Thurneysen: Gesammelte Schriften*, 340–516.

⁶*Ibid.* 344–68.

⁷D. Ó hAodha, 'The first Middle Irish metrical tract', in H. L. C. Tristram (ed.), *Metrik und Medienwechsel — metrics and media* (Tübingen 1991) 207–244.

⁸de Bernardo Stempel and Ködderitzsch, *Rudolf Thurneysen*, 406–444.

⁹See, for example, H.-P. Naumann, 'Runeninschriften als Quelle der Versgeschichte' in K. Düwel (ed.), *Runeninschriften als Quellen der interdisziplinären Forschung* (Berlin 1998) 694–714.

¹⁰See, for example, J. Corthals, 'The rhymeless 'Leinster Poems': diplomatic texts', in the present volume.

context of the artistic and cultural regulation of metrical art (pp. 77 ff.); questions of terminology and categorization (pp. 100 ff.); rhyme (pp. 119 ff.); alliteration and accent (pp. 136 ff.); syllabicity, cadence and word-boundary (pp. 156 ff.); and aspects of realization, namely cohesion, subject and diction (pp. 176 ff.). Occasionally, one can quibble about the text. Thus, the argument is not free from confusion between etymology and synchronic meaning (pp. 103–4), which often enough bedevilled studies on early Irish poetry; Kalyguine is a good example of this.¹¹ The oral-based character of the metrical precursors of both Irish and Scandinavian stanzaic poetry is taken for granted (e.g. p. 102: ‘indubitable oral-based precursor’), but an indigenous origin of these precursors is not beyond doubt, nor is orality exclusive of written culture. On the whole, however, the argumentation is thorough and well-balanced and should offer stimulating reading to anyone interested in these issues.

The general conclusion with regard to the texts under consideration (pp. 190–207) can be summarized under two points: (1) both traditions show many similarities in function and form; (2) the actual realization of their common features differs in such a way that a dependency of one tradition on the other is unlikely. The initial hypothesis of a penchant toward orality in Icelandic poetry as opposed to Irish poetry was, apart from some nuances, not borne out by the facts (pp. 202–3). Stephen Tranter’s conclusion is thus somewhat reminiscent of Turville-Petre’s opinion in the postscript to his article ‘Poetry of the Scalds and the Filid’.¹² It is a straightforward conclusion which, because of its careful underpinning, can serve as a basis for further inferences. Thus, I would deduce that, if Stephen Tranter’s conclusions are right, a third party should be involved. The only reasonable candidate would be Latin literary culture, not only as an additional ingredient of early Irish poetry (and, on a somewhat later level, of early Scandinavian poetry, as suggested by the tables on pp. 198 and 201) but as an all-pervading common background throughout the Middle Ages. Indeed, in its medieval stage it provides a common basis for all features shared by both poetic cultures. Thus, the riddle of the concurring similarities and incompatible differences in detail between Irish *rinnard* and Scandinavian *drótkvætt*, extensively discussed on pp. 203–6, may be resolved if we accept, as an alternative to a relation of dependency, a common underlying medieval metre (perhaps the *Ave maris stella* type summarily discussed by Norberg¹³ adapted to local peculiarities concerning the application of rhyme and alliteration.

¹¹ V. Kalyguine, *La langue de la poésie irlandaise archaïque* (Hamburg 1993).

¹² *Ériu* 22 (1971) 1–22.

¹³ Cf. D. Norberg, *Introduction à l’étude de la versification latine médiévale* (Upsala 1958) 150–1 (‘datant probablement de l’époque carolingienne et très souvent imitée au Moyen Âge’).

As Stephen Tranter admits (p. 207), a great deal of philological and historical work still has to be done in order to refine our understanding of both traditions as part of a general medieval culture. His work has given a good lead as to what kind of questions could be posed. That is, after all, what it was written for.

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Lexique étymologique de l'irlandais ancien de J. Vendryes. Lettre D. Par les soins de P.-Y. Lambert. The Dublin Institute for Advanced Studies, and CNRC Éditions, Paris, 1996. 230 pp. ISBN 2-271-05415-X.

Published by the Dublin Institute for Advanced Studies in conjunction with the *Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique* (Paris), this well-produced book is the latest volume of the etymological dictionary of early Irish by J. Vendryes. *Lettre A* was published in 1959 (repr. 1981), *Lettres M N O P* in 1960 (repr. 1983) and *Lettres R S* in 1974. The volumes covering early Irish *lexica* in T & U (1978), B (1981) and C (1987) were edited by E. Bachellery and P.-Y. Lambert. The present volume was edited solely by P.-Y. Lambert. Some of the entries are commented upon below.

d- 'initial'. For 'un ancien groupe *ghdh- (*gzh-, *dhgh-?)' that yielded *d-* see J. A. Álvarez-Pedroza Nuñez, 'Analysis of the vocabulary of roots containing the so-called Indo-European β ', *Indogermanische Forschungen* 98 (1993) 13–23.

-d-, *-da-* 'pronomes infixes'. See now P. Schrijver, *Studies in the history of Celtic pronouns and particles* (Maynooth Studies in Celtic Linguistics II, 1997) 131 ff.

dá 'deux'. W. Cowgill ('PIE *duwo 'two' in Germanic and Celtic, and the nom.-acc. dual of non-neuter *o*-stems', *Münchener Studien zur Sprachwissenschaft* 46 (1985) 20–22) reconstructs PCl. *duwo; see also D. Greene, 'Celtic', in J. Gvozdanović (ed.), *Indo-European numerals* (Berlin, New York 1992) 497–554, and cf. P. Schrijver, *Studies in British Celtic historical phonology* (Amsterdam, Atlanta 1995) 331.

dabach 'baquet, tonneau ouvert'. Add dat. sg. *dabaig*, for which see F. Kelly, *Early Irish farming* (Dublin 1997, repr. 1998) 203 fn. 152. The offered etymology may be queried.

dair et *daur* 'chêne'. Consider here also several early Irish personal names (e.g. *Dairbran*, *Dairchill*, *Daurthecht*) that contain this element. See further J. Uhlich, *Die Morphonologie der komponierten Personennamen des Altirischen* (Bonn 1993) 224–5. For a re-evaluation of the etymology of the underlying IE word see

- A. A. Kretov, 'O vtoričnosti značenija "derevo" v i.-e. prayazyke', *Etymologia* 1997–1999 (Moscow 2000) 70–76.
- dairid* 'il s'accouple'. This verb and the related Irish words have been etymologically connected with Welsh *enderig* 'bullock, steer, calf' (< **ando-darī-ko-*) and *anneir* 'heifer' < **an-dedrī* (lit. 'unbullied') by E. Hamp ('Intensives in British Celtic and Gaulish', *Studia Celtica* 12/13 (1977–8) 10). For *dairt* 'génisse d'un an' and *dartaid* 'jeune taureau' see F. Kelly, *Early Irish farming*, 60–61, and also my forthcoming article 'Towards the etymology of Ossetic *dalys* and *daerk*' (in *Peterburgskoje vostokovedenije*).
- dall* 'aveugle; obscur, sombre, sans lumière'. Note here that the compounds *dallsinche*, *dallsinechus* 'mastitis', which are not listed s.v. *dall*, have been discussed (as literally 'having blind (= blocked) paps') by N. McLeod in *Early Irish contract law* (Sydney 1992) 317.
- dam* 'bœf, cerf'. See also P. De Bernardo Stempel, *Die Vertretung der indogermanischen liquiden und nasalen Sonanten im Keltischen* (Innsbruck 1987) 103–4. On PBr. **damato-* that yielded W. *dafad* etc., cf. the discussions by L. Joseph ('The Treatment of *CṘH- and the Origin of CaRa- in Celtic', *Ériu* 33 (1982) 35–6) and P. Schrijver (*Studies in British Celtic historical phonology*, 77–8) with the additional bibliography.
- dánae* 'audacieux, hardi'. The reference here to 'Thes. ii 301' should read 'Thes. i 301'.
- de*, *-dae* 'suffixe d'adj.'. See a comprehensive study by D. Wodtko, *Sekundäradjektive in den altirischen Glossen* (Innsbruck 1995).
- dechmad* 'dixième'. Apart from the Gaulish forms quoted in this entry (on which see also T. Hirunuma, 'Gaulish Ordinals', *Studia Celtica Japonica* 1 (1988) 39 f.), consider here also Celtiberian *tekametam* (Botorrita). D. McManus, 'The Latin Loan-words in Irish' (PhD thesis, Trinity College, Dublin, 1982) p. 27, correctly notes that the pl. *dechmada* in the meaning 'tithes of the church' was influenced by Lat. *decimae*.
- deda* vb. 'il dépérit', il fond'. See also F. O. Lindeman, 'On the etymology of Germanic **daw-jana-* "to die"', in W. Smoczyński (ed.), *Kuryłowicz memorial volume* (Cracow 1995) 499 f.
- deibide* 'sorte de mètre poétique'. See a new etymology by G. Isaac (Varia I, 'Deibide', *Ériu* 49 (1998) 161–3).
- deichelt* 'manteau, robe'. In taking this form as the heading for the entry, *LEIA* apparently follows *DIL* s.v.
- deil* (4) 'mamelle, pis'. See also *den-* 'téter, sucer'. Further Irish *comparanda* may include OIr. *indile* 'property, possessions' < *eni-d^heh₁-li-o-*; see I. Balles, 'Griechisch ἄφ(ε)νος "Reichtum"', *Historische Sprachforschungen* 110 (1997) 225–6.

- den* 'bon, fort, solide'. See also V. Orel in *Studia Celtica* 31 (1997) 277–9 for possible further Celtic *comparanda*.
- der* 'fille'. See also E. Hamp, '*dhugHtēr in Irish', *Münchener Studien zur Sprachwissenschaft* 33 (1975) 39–40.
- desc* 'plat, patène'. See also Welsh *dysgl* (OW *discl*, MW *dyskyl*) < Lat. **disc'lus* (< *disculus*).
- dess* 'à droit; sud'. For the suffix *-uo-* (cf. Ir. *ard* 'high' < **arduo-*) see most recently P. Schrijver, *Studies in British Celtic historical phonology*, 330–331.
- dían* 'rapide, violent, frequent'. The word has long been identified with the ogham personal name element *dena-* (in DENAVEC[A]): see S. Ziegler, *Die Sprache der altirischen Ogam-Inschriften* (Göttingen 1994) 166.
- díberg* 'pillage, etc.'. See P. Schrijver, *Studies in British Celtic historical phonology*, 56, for several valuable semantic observations.
- díchéill* 'dépourvu de bon sens, fou'. Consider here the etymologically identical Welsh word *dibwyll* 'senseless, absurd' and Breton *diboell* 'insensé, fou'.
- díchetal* 'incantation, charme magique'. See J. F. Nagy, 'Liminality and Knowledge in Irish Tradition', *Studia Celtica* 16–17 (1981–82), 135–43, at 136–7.
- díchmaig* 'adj. ou subst. de sens incertain'. The form *dichmaid* quoted here is translated as 'tenths' by Elizabeth. A. Gray, *Cath Maige Tuired The second Battle of Mag Tuired* (Irish Texts Society LII, London 1982) 51.
- do-*, *du-* 'préfixe de valeur péjorative, ou négative'. For a collection of Welsh examples with the corresponding prefix, see now Stefan Zimmer, 'Indogermanisch **h₁su-* und **dus-* im Kymrischen', *Zeitschrift für celtische Philologie* 47 (1995) 176–200, as well as his *Studies in Welsh word-formation* (Dublin 2000) 250–270.
- do-airchain*, *do-aurchain* 'il prédit, prophétise'. See E. Hamp, 'Welsh *achan* and related words', *Norwegian Journal of Linguistics* 28 (1974) 1 f.
- do-bidci* 'il jette' etc. This is cross-referred to *bedg* 'saut, sursaut' (*LEIA* B-26); note that Pedersen's etymology has recently been supported by P. Schrijver (*Studies in British Celtic historical phonology*, 56) and S. Schumacher (*The historical morphology of the Welsh verbal noun* (Maynooth Studies in Celtic Linguistics IV, 2000) 58).
- do-boing* 'il brise' etc. Note that G. Isaac (*The Verb in the Book of Aneirin: Studies in Syntax, Morphology and Etymology* (Tübingen 1996) 322), among others, argues against an historical connection between *do-boing* and early Welsh *difyngaf*, *difwng*.
- dóe* (1) 'avant-bras', 'main'. X. Delamare, *Dictionnaire de la langue Gauloise* (Paris 2001) 124, suggests now that the corresponding etymologically related forms are attested in Gaulish personal noun *Dousarnus* etc. *LEIA* here refers to '*pazucha*', but this is

problematic due to the unexpected development **zd- > z*, for which see M. Vasmer, *Russisches etymologisches wörterbuch*, Band 2 (Heidelberg 1955) 302.

dóe (2) 'être humain'. *LEIA* D-133 states of this that it is 'origine inconnue'. A recent etymology by F. O. Lindeman (*Varia* V, 'On a possible Celto-Germanic etymological correspondence', *Ériu* 50 (1999) 179–181, at 180) derives this early Irish word from Celtic **dwos-yo* < IE **dhwos-yo-*.

do-etha 'il visite, aborde'. For the form *donetad* (Wb. 13d20) quoted here, see a different interpretation by F. O. Lindeman, 'Old Irish *donetad*: an etymological note', in K. Heller et. al., *Indogermanica Europaea: Festschrift für W. Meid* (Graz 1989) 133–9.

doilig, duilig 'difficile, pénible'. The form quoted as *doilgitiu* does not exist; the hapax is attested as *doilgitin* (dative), see Arch 3.12. § 16.

do-lega 'il abolit'. The reference to the verbal noun *dilgend* should be cross-referred to *dilgend*; cf. *LEIA* D-84, s.v.

draic 'dragon'. For the attribution of the stem see K. Stübner, *The historical morphology of n-stems in Celtic* (Maynooth Studies in Celtic Linguistics III, 1998) 190.

drécht 'part, portion, groupe de personnes' and 'poème'. Note that F. Kelly, *Early Irish farming*, 623, refers to the compounds *lethdrécht* 'half-day's labour' and *muirdrécht* 'day's sea-journey'.

dron 'ferme, solide, vigoureux'. A different view on the underlying IE stem has been suggested by Delamare, *Dictionnaire*, 126.

drong 'groupe, bande, un certain nombre de personnes'. The traditional reconstruction is to IE **dhreugh-*: see most recently Delamare, *Dictionnaire*, 126. The underlying IE motivation has been recently re-evaluated by V. Tsimburskij in *Colloquia classica et indo-evropeica* ii (St. Petersburg 2000) 112–127. Note that D. H. Green (*Language and history in the early Germanic world* (Cambridge 1998) 185) states that 'Germanic origin is also likely for *drungus*'; see also his discussion of Germanic **drûht-* (ibid. 110–111).

drúth (1) 'lascif, luxurieux'. See G. R. Isaac in *Studia Celtica* 31 (1997) 315.

dú 'f. (?), "terre, endroit, place"'. For an explanation of the paradigm see now S. Schumacher, *Historical morphology*, 32 fn. 13 with bibliography.

dúais (1) 'main'. For '*doe*' here, read '*dóe* (1)'.

dúal 'qualité naturelle, droit héréditaire; ce qui est convenable; bonne raison etc.' For IE **dheugh-* see now K. G. Krasukhin, 'The Indo-European Root **dheugh-*: Its Morphology, Meaning, Etymology (in Comparison with Similar Forms)', *Journal of Indo-European Studies* 28 (2000) 37 f. For Gaulish *dogiiontio*, which is quoted here, see Delamare, *Dictionnaire*, 129, who translates this verb as 'qui honorent' or 'qui façonnent' (with a query).

dub 'noir, terrible, triste'. For the use of *dub* in personal-name formation see J. Uhlich, *Morphonologie*, 231–4.

dúbla 'forreau'. The meaning 'table-cloth' is well attested for the Anglo-Norman counterpart of the quoted Old French word: see W. Rothwell et al., *Anglo-Norman dictionary* (London 1992) 198 s.v. *dubler*¹. The other Anglo-Norman forms relevant to the discussion might be *doblun*, *doublezun* 'shield-lining'.

dúblaid 'il double'. This may be a borrowing from Anglo-Norman. The verb meaning 'to double' is attested in various spellings, e.g. *dubler*, *do(u)bl-*, *dubbl-*, *dubpl-*, *dublier*. Note that the Welsh counterpart *dyblaf* : *dyblu* has been considered as a loan from (Middle) English: see *Geiriadur Prifysgol Cymru* (Caerdydd 1950–) 1113, and cf. p. 1104.

dubúar 'nom d'une maladie du bétail'. Of this, *LEIA* here notes, 'peut-être de *búar* "diarrhée" avec préf. péjor. *do-*'. N. McLeod in his *Early Irish contract law*, 323, explains this word as 'black plague', with *búar* = *bó-ár* 'cow-mortality'. F. Kelly (*Early Irish farming*, 200 and fn. 126), however, notes that 'there are no other attestations of *búar* in this meaning'; he suggests that this word in fact might be a compound of *dub* 'black' and *búar* 'diarrhoea, flux, score'. This seems to be a preferable explanation; for the latter part of this compound see *LEIA* B-111 (where the reference 'Stokes KZ XXXV 245' should read 'Stokes KZ IL 245').

dúil 'créature'. For the derivative *dúilem* 'créateur', see the discussion by K. Stübner, *Historical morphology*, 147.

duis "'corneille" ou "déesse de la guerre"'. See a very important study by R. Pinnon, 'D'un dieu gaulois un nair malmedien: etymologie et sémantique de *Dûhon*', *Ollodagos* 3 (1991–92) 237–306.

dul 'fait d'aller'. The Albanian *dal* (aor. *dola*) quoted here goes back to PALB **dala* etymologically related to Greek $\theta\acute{\alpha}\lambda\lambda\omega$ and therefore to IE **dhal-* 'blühen, grünen' (Pokorny, *IEW* i, 234); see most recently V. Orel, *Albanian etymological dictionary* (Leiden, Boston, Köln 1998), 54.

dún 'fort, fortress'. Also attested as a component of the Irish personal name *Dúnchath*; see J. Uhlich, *Morphonologie*, 235. For derivation from IE **dheuh₂-*, see C. Watkins, *Selected writings* ii (Innsbruck 1994) 751–3.

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Welsh woods and forests: a history. William Linnard. Gomer Press, Llandysul, Ceredigion, 2000. viii + 247 pp. £19.95 sterling. ISBN 1-85902-864-0.

This is an updated edition of *Welsh woods and forests: history and utilization* (National Museum of Wales, 1982) and contains a great deal of fresh material as well as many new illustrations.

William Linnard starts his story with the spread of trees to Wales after the last Ice Age, and Irish readers will note many similarities between the history of Welsh and Irish woodlands. As in the case of Ireland, incidence of the Scots pine (*Pinus sylvestris*) fell from abundance in the Boreal period to very low levels, and ultimately to extinction. Linnard points out (p. 11) that early literary references to pine-wood (*ffenitwydd*) in texts such as *Cad Goddau* and the *Mabinogion* cannot be taken as definite evidence for the existence of living pine in Wales at the period of their composition. The beech (*Fagus sylvatica*) is likewise absent as a native tree from Wales, except in the south-east. Its present occurrence elsewhere in Wales — as in Ireland — is due to planting during the last few centuries. The distribution of the beech is reflected in the thirteenth-century Welsh law-texts: there is no mention of it in north Wales versions, but in those from the south-east it is valued at sixty pence, half the value of an oak. The Welsh word for ‘beech’ is *ffawyddden* (from Latin *fagus*); Linnard notes in his Glossary of Special Terms that in north Wales it is used colloquially for ‘pine’ or ‘fir’.

The tree-lists in the Welsh law-texts do not provide as much detailed information on tree-species as their eighth-century Irish counterparts. Nonetheless, there are references to the oak, apple, hazel, blackthorn, yew, ash, willow and alder. It is noteworthy that the wild apple-tree (*afallen sur*) is valued at 30 pence, whereas cultivated varieties (*afallen ber*) are worth 60 pence. Before it has reached the fruiting stage, a wild apple-tree is worth only 4 pence.

In his second chapter, Linnard discusses the military significance of woodland during the Norman invasion. The Norman conquerors were vulnerable to sudden attack in wooded areas, and consequently set about a systematic clearance of strategic woods, using some of the felled trunks in the construction and maintenance of their castles. The scale of their operations was formidable. It is recorded, for example, that 1300 men were engaged in wood-clearance at one place in North Wales during Edward I’s campaign of 1282–83.

In chapters 3–5, Linnard examines various aspects of the economy of Medieval Welsh woodlands. Much woodland was designated as ‘forest’ by the lords of the Welsh marches, in imitation of the practice of the Norman kings of England. These areas were subject to ‘forest law’ and supervised by officials such as verderers (*viridarii*), foresters (*forestarii*), regarders (*regardatores*), woodwards (*woodwardii*), agisters (*agistatores*) and the justice in eyre (*justiciarius itinerans*). Offences were tried in ‘forest courts’ and fines were exacted for cutting trees and underwood. Rolls from the Court of Llanerch, dated 1295, refer to the offence of cutting branches for animal-fodder, and it is clear that foliage — particularly from oak and holly — was widely

valued for this purpose. Forests also supplied grazing and pannage, i.e. acorns and beechmast (where available) for pigs. Under the Welsh system, pannage dues were assessed at the end of each season, with a proportion of the pigs going to the lord of the forest. As in the Irish law-texts, mention is made in Welsh law of the offence of cutting out honey from forest trees, and Linnard reproduces on p. 48 the rather comical illustration of a swarm of bees from the thirteenth-century Welsh law-book *Peniarth 28*. On p. 41 he quotes a model plaint from a lawyer's precedent book of about 1400, which includes the offences of cutting two branching oaks, twelve white hazels, etc. The term 'white hazel' (*gwyngoll(en)*) is of particular interest as it is etymologically identical with the Old Irish tree-name *findcholl*, which has been identified with the whitebeam (*Sorbus aria*).¹ However, 'white hazel' in this Welsh text is likely to refer to a type of hazel rather than to any other tree, as it is assigned the value of fifteen pence, the normal value of a hazel in Welsh law. A very tentative suggestion — mine rather than Linnard's — is that Welsh *gwyngoll(en)* refers here to the cultivated filbert (*Corylus maxima*) rather than the wild hazel (*Corylus avellana*). The element *gwyn* 'white, fair' may refer to the whitish bark of the filbert.

Linnard makes it clear in chapter 6 that a decline in wood-management took place in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, caused by growing pressure of population, expanding arable and livestock husbandry and the development of wood-based industries. The dissolution of all forty-seven religious houses in Wales was carried out between 1536 and 1539, and their assets — including woodlands — were rapidly disposed of by the Crown. With the expansion of mining and smelting, the demand for charcoal grew considerably. It is recorded in 1531 that in the King's lead and iron mines at Llantrisant, the charcoal-burners outnumbered the actual miners. However, by the eighteenth century, the increasing use of coke from coal resulted in a marked decline in the production of charcoal, though it continued to be manufactured for industrial purposes down to the twentieth century. Timber for shipbuilding was another major product of Welsh woodlands, and in some cases ships were actually constructed in the woods, and then winched to the water on rollers. The woods of Wales also provided large quantities of oak-bark for use in tanning leather. This work had to be done quickly during the period of sap-flow in the spring and, consequently, large numbers were hired for bark-stripping. Linnard records that the characteristic all-pervading smell of the fresh sap was an abiding memory for all who participated in this harvest. The last oak-bark tannery in Wales closed in the 1950s.

¹Vittorio Bertoldi, 'Keltische Wortprobleme', *Zeitschrift für celtische Philologie* 17 (1928) 177–92; Fergus Kelly, 'The Old Irish tree-list', *Celtica* 11 (1976) 107–124, at 118.

Chapter 8 is entirely new to this edition of the book, and contains an interesting study of individual trees — mainly oaks — famed for their size or historical associations. These include the king tree (*brenhinenbren*), a giant oak which grew at Ganllwyd near Dolgellau, and Merlin's Oak at the entrance to Carmarthen. The fate of the latter tree was popularly linked to the fortunes of the town itself: 'when Merlin's oak shall tumble down, then shall fall Carmarthen town'. On the estate of Sir Robert Williams Vaughan — also near Dolgellau — stood the Goblin's Hollow Oak (*Derwen Ceubren yr Ellyll*). In its hollow trunk Owain Glyndwr hid the body of his treacherous cousin Howard Sele, whom he had killed during a fight on a hunting trip: the body lay there undiscovered for forty years. Another famous oak, which grew near the boundary between Glamorgan and Monmouthshire, was used to make the massive Cefnmabli table, employed — rather incongruously — for playing 'shove halfpenny'. This table is now on view at Tredegar House, Newport. A famed holy ash at St Donat's in the Vale of Glamorgan was badly damaged by a spring gale in 1559. Within the broken trunk, a perfect figure of a cross was found. Another remarkable tree in Welsh tradition seems to belong to legend rather than history. Among the wonders of the Island of Britain in the fourteenth-century Red Book of Hergest there is a description of a tree like a hazel with rosy-coloured leaves. On one side of the tree, there is growth of bark and leaves and fruit during the summer, which ceases in winter in the normal manner. On the other side of the tree, however, there is growth of bark and leaves and fruit during the winter, and it is bare in summer.

The concluding chapters 9–13 deal mainly with the development of modern forestry in Wales. Linnard gives an interesting account of the planting of conifers on the estates of the gentry from the eighteenth century onwards, as well as the associated establishment of commercial nurseries. He also provides statistics on the acreages planted in various parts of Wales, and devotes a whole chapter to the dilemma — familiar in Ireland — of 'mutton versus trees'.

In conclusion, I recommend this informative and readable book. The material is well-presented and the printing is of high quality. My only minor quibble is the repetition on p. 18 of two quotations from the tale *Culhwch and Olwen*, already cited earlier in the same chapter on p. 7.

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Yezhadur istorel ar Brezhoneg. Roparz Hémon (laket e Brezhoneg gant Alan Dipode). Hor Yezh, Rennes, 2000. 304 pp. FF 230, €35.06. ISBN 2-910699-36-6.

This book is a translation into Breton of Roparz Hémon's *Historical morphology and syntax of Breton*, published by the Dublin Institute for

Advanced Studies, in 1975. The title has been slightly altered to become 'A historical grammar of Breton', which is no betrayal.

This translation is to be welcomed, since our students usually shirk books written in English, however strongly we advise them to read and peruse them. At the very least, this means that Roparz's Hémon's book is now accessible to those who should read — or should have read — it. We used to complain that our grammars were made according to Latin, French or English patterns, and tended to be normative and to ignore the reality of the language as she was used and spoken. Hémon's work was a breath of fresh air, but it was in English and, unfortunately, has had little impact.

Clearly, a translation into Breton brings nothing new to scholarship. The original has been quite faithfully respected, and even if perhaps we could regret that it has not been updated, I do not know who would have dared to do it — the only person who had a right to do so is no longer among us. We could mention the lack of references to the *Atlas linguistique de la Bretagne*, or to *Le verbe Breton*, both by Pierre Le Roux, for instance, or the checking of examples (which is often a daunting task, if not an impossible one).¹ Nevertheless, it brings Hémon's work much closer to our new generation of Breton speakers who at least will have no excuse for ignoring the wealth of the(ir) language.² Normative grammars are for learners; descriptive grammars are for serious students. We had too many of the former.

The introduction anyway puts things right in that respect. A bibliography of Hémon's linguistic writings is quite welcome, even though some references will be hard for students to follow up, and even though most of these had already been incorporated in the grammar. Mentioning the bibliography leads me to remark that several sources used by Hémon have since been published, and that once rare texts are now available in modern editions.³ The bibliography (pp. viii–xv) has been translated as well and I regret that the opportunity was missed to bring it closer to our standards. I regret the use of *mister* beside *pezh-c'hoari*, and that the present location of these manuscripts, now the National Library of Wales, has not been mentioned.

¹The sole erroneous reference I have ever found, namely 'M2255' (§ 45), for which read 'M.2235', has been kept. Roparz Hémon actually used books which are quite rare and often missing in our libraries.

²Because what is listed in Hémon's grammar as historical forms, that is, apparently dead forms, are still in use in spoken Breton, even if it could be in some dialect only. The opposition between *stum* and *furm*, as described at p. xviii, is quite pertinent. The whole introduction anyway shows that the translation has been inspired by Hémon's principles.

³These editions have been published by SKOL. It can be noted that publishing the whole text led the editors to propose a different numbering of lines. See Gwenaël Le Duc, 'Aman ez dezrou an Resurrection', *Hor Yezh* 221 (2000) 5–42; Gwenaël le Duc, 'Resurrection 1728' (1), *Hor Yezh* 222 (2000) 9; Gwenaël le Duc, 'Resurrection 1728' (2), *Hor Yezh* 222 (2000); Gwenaël le Duc, 'Resurrection 1728' (3), *Hor Yezh* 224 (2000) 21–40; Gwenaël le Duc, 'Resurrection hor Salver diwar dornskrid Preglamus (1728)', *Hor Yezh* 221/5 and 222/9 (1999–2000).

In the list which follows, I supply some up-to-date references which are relevant to sources used by Hémon in his *Historical morphology and syntax*; for the abbreviations — C, CB, Dag., etc. — see *Historical morphology and syntax*, pp. vii–xv.

C.: see now *Le Catholicon de Jehan Lagadeuc, dictionnaire breton-latin-français du XV^{ème} siècle*, par Christian-J. Guyonvarc’h, reproduction de l’édition de Jehan Calvez (Tréguier 1499); *Ogam-Tradition Celtique*, tome 27, Rennes 1975. Another edition in ‘facsimile’, of the print by Jehan Calvez in 1499, by Abbot Feutren, Mayenne, Floch, 1975, can be safely ignored.

CB (MS): cf. Noel Hamilton, ‘A fragment of *La Création*’, *Celtica* 12 (1974) 50–74.

Dag.: see the new edition by Hervé Ar Bihan, *Hor Yezh* 212 (goañv 1997) 30–70.

DJ: see now my edition in *Hor Yezh* 222 (Hañv 2000) 9–44; *ibid.* 223 (diskar-amzer 2000) 17–45.

DL.: reprinted in *Britannia Christiana* 5/1 (printemps 1985), and index *ibid.* 5/2 (printemps 1985).

Dr.: Apart from the sixteenth-century edition by Guillotin de Corson, one could consult the magnificent facsimile now available.

GJ.: see Noel Hamilton (ed.), ‘Hiniveles ar Mabic Jesus’, *Zeitschrift für celtische Philologie* 35 (1976) 102–157.

HV: a new edition, from another manuscript, is envisaged by Miss Delia Comes.

N.: B. Tanguy, Yves Le Berre, Bernard Tanguy, Yves-Pascal Castel (ed.), *Buez Santex Nonn, Mystère breton, Vie de sainte Nonne* (Brest 1999).

Nl. G. Pennaod

Nom.: reprint by Gw. Le Menn (St-Brieuc 1999).

SC.: reprint by Gw. Le Menn (St-Brieuc 1999).

As for Dag., DJ., Mc., CB (MS), J., JV., FVR., it is handy to have ‘Roparz Hemon, Testennoù evit ar Studi’, published by *Hor Yezh* 200 (Gwengolo 1994–95). All texts are not accurate, but they are what Roparz Hémon used for his work.

We cannot expect a translation to bring anything new with it, and indeed the original version has been respected in its qualities, defects and shortcomings; what criticism applies to the original applies to the translation, which has scrupulously preserved the examples of the original (I checked what I could, but did not have the courage to check everything.) In the original, quoted examples were accompanied by translations into English, but these have not been reproduced in the work under review, and anyway they would have been useless in most cases. Hémon’s intention in his book was not to prescribe, but to describe, and the translation respects this principle, except perhaps at p. 132 n. 4, where ‘Trawalc’h

eo ober gant ...⁴ sounds like advice rather than description. Good advice it would be, anyway.

I am quite convinced that Roparz Hémon would have been delighted to see this book, which does him justice. He might even have liked to do it himself, even though, like many authors, he would have wanted to revise it all immediately after looking at the first freshly-printed copy.

I am also glad, at a time when his personality is being attacked in Brittany, that this publication helps to make him remembered as a devoted scholar, and as a courageous worker for my language.

When I worked with Roparz Hémon, he was an old, very sick but enlightening and very kind and obliging director of studies. I just hope his work will still be in use when, in the future, it will be possible to call him a 'hero of the language'. It will be, no doubt, because heroes are scarce nowadays.

GWENAËL LE DUC

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Adeffion Babel: agweddau ar syniadaeth ieithyddiaeth y ddeunawfed ganrif. Caryl Davies. Gwasg Prifysgol Cymru, Caerdydd, 2000. 350 pp. ISBN 0-7083-1570-4.

As its title indicates, this work deals with the evolution of scholarly ideas during the eighteenth century regarding the nature, origins and development of language. The frame of reference is essentially a Welsh one within which the author reviews and reassesses the preoccupation of a number of Welsh scholars with these topical aspects of language, and especially with current theories on the question of historical relationships and chronological precedence between the various known languages. While the focus is firmly on Wales, however, the discussion is anchored within the framework of contemporary European linguistic thinking, and though the title refers specifically to the eighteenth century it embraces the views of a range of scholars and commentators from the beginning of the seventeenth century onwards. The role of fabulous belief and speculation that both inspired and distorted linguistic enquiry is clearly documented: the replacement of humankind's single language by a multitude of different tongues as told in the story of the Tower of Babel, the quest for that primal language and the natural tendency of commentators to identify their own language with it or place it in more or less direct line of descent from it.

In the introduction to his *Dictionarium duplex*, the distinguished Welsh scholar John Davies of Mallwyd (c. 1567–1644), whose own major linguistic contributions were both learned and practical, ridiculed this linguistic chauvinism and dismissed the possibility that any

⁴Translating 'is sufficient in itself'. The translation is not wrong, but the result is slightly ambiguous. I am splitting hairs, admittedly.

language other than Hebrew existed before the profusion of languages created at the Tower of Babel. On the other hand he inclined to the view that Welsh, or British, was distinct from the other languages of Europe and could rightly claim to be one of the eastern mother languages or at least a direct descendant of one of them, nor indeed would he reject out of hand the belief held by some that it came into being at the time of Babel. As Dr Davies shows in considerable, but in no way tiresome detail, John Davies was one of a number of historians and linguists in western Europe who were grappling with the same concepts and problems in the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries and who sought out each other's publications for new ideas and new linguistic evidence. Continental scholars such as Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz and Georg von Eckhardt made use of Davies's *Dictionarium duplex* in their own work, as well as Thomas Jones's dictionary, *Y Gymraeg yn ei disgleirdeb*, published in London in 1688.

Among those who come under review are the Breton cleric Paul-Yves Pezron (1639–1706) who believed that Greek and Latin came 'from the *Celtique* or *Bas-breton*' and whose speculations had a profound influence on Welsh ideas about language and ethnic origins and were in large measure instrumental in creating the Celtomania characteristic of the eighteenth century. Also, his contemporary Edward Lhuyd (1660?–1709) whose more practical and scientific approach to the extant evidence (not least his researches on Irish and Scottish Gaelic) had a less dramatic impact in his own time but proved more influential in the longer term. There is a useful account of the contribution of Lhuyd's various co-workers, assistants and correspondents: David Parry, Moses Williams and others. One notes for example John Morgan's advice to Moses Williams on the importance of recording the spoken language of the common people as well as assessing the testimony of older documentary sources, counsel that would have found a ready response from Lhuyd himself. One of the many interesting personalities who feature in this company was the controversial deist (and native speaker of Irish) from Inishowen who had got to know Lhuyd in Oxford and claimed to have been the first to alert him to the relationship between Irish and Welsh.

A feature of the widespread concern with linguistic matters in Wales was the emphasis on the need to assemble the materials for linguistic research, notably through the collection of words, idioms and proverbs and of course the compilation of dictionaries. There is an excellent account of the various individuals involved in these projects and of their widely varying levels of linguistic competence and common sense: such as the three Morris brothers, Lewis, Richard and William, antiquarians, men of literature and authors of a voluminous correspondence; the poet-scholars Goronwy Owen, Evan Evans (Ieuan Fardd) and Walter Davies (Gwallter Mechain); Iolo Morganwg, that remarkable literary and historical forger of many talents; Rowland Jones whose writings on

language were coloured by hermetic ideas and the speculations of the Abbé Pezron, and who, to quote Stuart Piggott's phrase, created for himself 'a cosy world of lunatic linguistics'; and finally, in strictly linguistic terms perhaps the most esoteric of all, William Owen Pughe (1759-1835) who, for all his considerable knowledge of medieval and modern Welsh, was seduced by some of the more wayward ideas propagated by Pezron, Rowland Jones and others, in particular by the notion that the roots or words of the original mother language were preponderantly monosyllables and that one could best reveal its character by analysing the existing words of Welsh into their elementary monosyllabic components, a belief which led him into bizarre ventures in etymology and reform of traditional orthography. It says much for the broad good sense of his fellow-scholars in Wales that they overwhelmingly rejected and ridiculed his more extravagant inventions. It is a curious coincidence that Owain Pughe was actively preparing several of his works for publication, including his *Dictionary of the Welsh language*, when Sir Williams Jones — a half-Welshman by his own definition — departed Britain in 1783 for India where, three years later, he was to deliver his epoch-making lecture treating of the historical affinities between Sanskrit and a number of European languages, including Celtic.

The profound changes in comparative linguistics heralded for the nineteenth century by Williams Jones's observations are beyond the scope of Dr Davies's work. For the preceding period, however, she has produced a richly documented and highly readable account of a fascinating gallery of personalities and a wide and varied range of talent and idiosyncrasy between the early seventeenth and early nineteenth centuries, all dedicated to unravelling or inventing the origins and history of the Welsh language. By definition it is not the whole story of Welsh linguistic and literary scholarship throughout this period, but it is a not unimportant part of it.

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Mysteries and solutions in Irish legal history. D. S. Greer and N. M. Dawson (ed.). Four Courts Press in association with the Irish Legal History Society, Dublin, 2001. xvii + 252 pp. + 9 plates. ISBN 1-85182-576-2.

This is the tenth volume in a series issued by the Irish Legal History Society since its inauguration in 1988. It consists largely of the revised texts of seven addresses given at annual general meetings of the Society from 1996-99. These are rounded out by two detailed papers resulting from funded research projects.

The book sketches selected scenes from the historical landscape stretching from around AD 1300 to the present day. The editors

have enhanced the survey aspect of the book by arranging the papers chronologically according to the period each deals with. Within this arrangement there is a degree of linkage between adjacent papers, with themes touched on in one sometimes being taken up in the next. Working in the editors' favour here is the tendency for legal historians to share particular themes and perspectives. Non-lawyers might be struck by the extent to which legal historians are interested in the story of the legal profession itself, and in biographical details about lawyers. This book introduces us to a long line of lawyers, from Giolla na Naomh Mac Aodhagáin (who died in 1309) to Lord Chief Justice MacDermott (who died in 1979).

The book opens with the paper that is likely to be of most interest to readers of *Celtica*. This is Fergus Kelly's 1999 address on 'Giolla na Naomh Mac Aodhagáin: a thirteenth century legal innovator.' Professor Kelly focuses on Giolla na Naomh's Treatise on Irish law. Professor Gearóid Mac Niocaill drew attention to the importance of the Treatise in 1976. He discussed its contents at some length and referred to an 'edition and translation of the text at present in preparation'.¹ However, in a 1982 address Mac Niocaill himself could only deplore the fact that the edition was 'not yet in print'.² Unfortunately, it has never appeared. Now, at last, Professor Kelly has stepped into the breach and is preparing his own edition of Giolla na Naomh's Treatise. We still do not have the edition, but Professor Kelly's contribution to this volume is a fresh summary of the contents of the Treatise. His summary is more methodical than Mac Niocaill's, since he works through the Treatise from beginning to end, so that the reader comes away with a clearer understanding of the scope of the work. More importantly, Professor Kelly has brought the Treatise to the attention of the wider community of Irish legal historians. Irish lawyers often restrict themselves to the history of the English common law system, but now they have a clear and accessible account of an important medieval work on Gaelic law. Professor Kelly's address aroused considerable interest when he delivered it, and should do even more good now that it is in print.

The second paper in the volume is one of the two works of more formal research. Dr Jane Ohlmeyer analyses documents lodged with the Irish court of chancery in the years 1627–34. The documents in question are 415 surviving 'recognizances' (a type of bond) given by litigants before that court. These recognizances (housed in the British Library) list the litigants' names, addresses and occupations, and the amounts of the bonds required. Dr Ohlmeyer has collected these minute details in a database, and manipulates them to reveal something of the broader picture. Of the 1,135 litigants named in the recognizances, all

¹See 'Aspects of Irish Law in the Late Thirteenth Century', *Historical Studies* 10 (1976) 25–42, at 31 n. 2.

²See J. Lydon (ed.) *The English in Medieval Ireland* (1984) 106.

but 36 are male. (As Dr Ohlmeyer tells us at p. 16, recent research suggests that 13% of chancery litigants were female. Strangely, she does not comment on the potential discrepancy here.) Most of the litigants were from Dublin, but there are some from every county in Ireland, as well as others from as far afield as France. The amount of the bond was normally twice the amount at issue in the particular case. In 59% of the cases there is nothing to tell us why the recognizance was necessary. (One need not agree with Dr Ohlmeyer that 59% represents the 'vast majority' (p. 27).) That leaves 41%, and Dr Ohlmeyer reports that some of these contain a remarkable amount of detail about the cases themselves. This enables her to plot the likely distribution of business in cases requiring recognizances — showing 47% of such cases involved disputes about land, while a further 29.5% dealt with actions for debt. (Dr Ohlmeyer remarks in passing that 'a disproportionately large number of Catholic Gaels appear' (p. 31) as litigants — but she gives no figures. The reader is left to wonder whether their appearance is disproportionate to their representation in the population as a whole, or merely exceeds expectations.)

Many of the recognizances were also signed by lawyers. This enables Dr Ohlmeyer to draw some conclusions about the extent of legal representation in these cases. She has also compiled a partial list of lawyers who appeared in the court of chancery at the time.

Ohlmeyer's report of her database project begins at p. 25. However, she opens at p. 15 with a lengthy discussion of the potential use that could be made of a more thorough database. Dr Ohlmeyer has not successfully integrated this opening material with the report that follows. She uses a number of specialised legal terms that are only explained once we reach her report itself. And there is an oblique reference to developments in seventeenth-century English courts that makes little allowance for the book's potentially broad audience.

The third chapter contains the revised text of an address by Dr John McCafferty. This deals with the Irish parliament's impeachment of three notable Irishmen in 1641. Dr McCafferty has titled his paper 'To follow the late precedents of England'. This is because the Irish impeachments must be viewed against the backdrop of the English parliament's impeachment of Thomas Wentworth (by then the Earl of Strafford). Wentworth had been Lord Deputy of Ireland from 1632–39. Unfortunately, Dr McCafferty makes no allowance for those who might not be familiar with the details of the proceedings against Wentworth.

Wentworth had been a chief instrument in Charles I's policy of mothballing parliament in favour of personal rule. Wentworth's ruthless approach to governance in Ireland antagonised both the Old and New English settlers there. Recalled to England in 1639, he made fresh enemies, not least by advocating the use of an Irish army to subdue the Scots. When the Scots army humiliated Charles I, the king was forced to recall parliament, and Wentworth's enemies pounced. They

hauled Wentworth before parliament, impeaching him by a 'bill of attainder' which accused him of treasonous activities. Abandoned by the king, Wentworth was executed in London on 12 May 1641. Far from providing this background (other than the date of the execution), Dr McCafferty fails even to mention when the proceedings against Wentworth were launched. (The resolution to impeach was passed when the English parliament met in November 1640. The subsequent trial in the House of Lords was abandoned when the bill of attainder was passed for the third time on 21 April, and assented to by the king on 10 May 1641.) This is a matter of considerable relevance in assessing the degree of inter-relationship between the two sets of impeachment proceedings. The Irish proceedings were launched in February 1641. (Nor does Dr McCafferty mention the disbandment of Wentworth's 'Irish army' in May 1641. Nor does he tell us how those impeached had contributed to Wentworth's mission in Ireland or to the conditions that led to the Irish rebellion of 1641. All these destabilising events in Ireland contributed significantly to the outbreak of the English Civil War.)

Shorn of so many historical details, Dr McCafferty's account of the Irish impeachment proceedings fails to grip the reader. To compound matters, he does not relate events in chronological order. The reader is continually tossed backwards and forwards in time. The reason for all this seems to be that Dr McCafferty is not really interested in telling us the story of these particular Irish impeachments at all. Rather, as the book's dust-jacket perceptively points out, he is concerned with 'important constitutional and political issues'. These particular impeachments are no more than a vehicle for exploring the presumed power of the Irish parliament to impeach in the first place. The nature of that power depended on the constitutional position of the Irish parliament itself and on the nature of the king's sovereignty in Ireland. These are important issues, and were at the time the subject of considerable and ingenious legal analysis. No doubt Dr McCafferty intended his account of the impeachments of 1641 to illuminate the discussion of these deeper issues. However, for this reader, at least, they provided a frustrating distraction.

Some of these constitutional issues are taken up again in the book's fourth chapter, in which Professor J. H. Baker offers 'an English view of the Anglo-Hibernian constitution in 1670'. Professor Baker's account, which is entertaining, clear and carefully presented, focuses on the way the relationship between the English and Irish parliaments was viewed by seventeenth-century legal theorists. In what sense and to what extent was the Irish parliament subordinate to the English parliament? More interestingly still, could an act of the Irish parliament alter the application of the law in England? This last question arose in *Craw v Ramsay*, a case decided by the English courts in 1670. At issue was the manor house of the late John Ramsay, earl of Holderness. The question for

decision was whether Nicholas Ramsay could inherit his brother's property. Nicholas, like his brother John, was a Scotsman born before the Act of Union of 1603. Unlike John, Nicholas had not been naturalised by an act of the English Parliament. The catch was that an alien could not inherit in England. However, unbeknownst to Nicholas, in 1636 the Irish parliament had sought to encourage Scots settlers in Ulster by passing an act that naturalised all Scotsmen. The intriguing question was — could Nicholas rely on the naturalisation provided by the Irish parliament to extricate himself from the alien status that otherwise disbarred him for the purposes of English inheritance law? The range of answers available to that question reflect the range of theories propounded to describe the constitutional relationship between the king's dominions in Ireland and England. There are no surprises in the court's conclusion, but the tortuous route by which it is arrived at provides a fascinating tour of seventeenth-century constitutional theory.

In 'Edmund Burke and the law', Professor R. B. McDowell takes his historian's magnifying glass to the documentary evidence for Edmund Burke's views on the law. The result appears to be that Burke had a politician's respect for the law as one of God's gifts to good governance. Beyond that the pickings are pretty slim. Burke appears to make it into this collection because he was born and raised in Dublin and spent his first five years in London qualifying as a barrister. (Professor McDowell does not mention Burke's role in having Edward Lhuyd's Irish manuscripts presented to Trinity College Dublin in 1786. These included about two-thirds of the Brehon law materials in the *Corpus Iuris Hibernici*.) Despite Burke's somewhat tenuous connection with Irish legal history, this paper may be of interest to those specialising in Burke's political writings and career. It is written in an easy, accessible style. The brief discussion of Burke's role in impeachment proceedings provides an interesting postscript to Dr McCafferty's paper, and the well-rutted intersections between the paths of the politician and the lawyer are returned to again towards the end of the book.

Richard McMahon's 'Manor Courts in the west of Ireland before the famine' is the book's second piece of more formal scholarship, and at forty-six pages is by far the longest paper in the book. It is also one of the most impressive, providing a fascinating and thoroughly informative account of his subject. Most of the Irish courts of manorial jurisdiction were established by charter in the seventeenth century, in conjunction with land grants. While the landlord was nominally the presiding officer, he usually appointed a seneschal for the purpose. These seneschals were, therefore, not subject to direct governmental or central control. They appear to have run their courts to serve a variety of practical interests, but not necessarily those of impartial justice. It is a surprise for the modern reader to discover that these feudal throw-backs were still flourishing (if under threat) in the 1830s. (They were finally abolished in 1859.) In describing the way these courts operated, McMahon draws on

the evidence presented to a select committee of inquiry in 1837. Most courts were held in public houses, and many juries expected to be paid in whiskey by the party their verdict favoured. In these circumstances it was not necessarily a thirst for justice that attracted potential jurors. A number of seneschals also seem to have been intoxicated with more than their unbridled power. However, far from dwelling on these colourful facts for their own sake, McMahon is careful to note that the manorial courts appear to have been remarkably popular among the middle and lower classes. He is at pains to discover what the causes for this may have been.

The next two chapters provide profiles of selected Irish judges of the period 1872–1972. Daire Hogan gives a detailed account of R. R. Cherry, who was lord chief justice from 1914–16, but whose claim to fame is that he wrote an authoritative text on land law. Despite Hogan's best efforts, he does not quite manage to dispel the harsh verdict of an earlier author that Cherry had a mind that was 'slow and philosophical rather than practical' (p. 163). It is hard to resist the conclusion that he was ideally suited to the task of amassing and ordering the huge body of case-law in his book, and somewhat less suited for the nimble and decisive roles of politician or judge. Hogan's chapter is probably of most interest for its account of the way in which Irish candidates, such as Cherry, were fielded in constituencies in Liverpool in the mid-nineteenth century. Though Hogan does not dwell on them, there are disturbing similarities in the way such political roles, and senior judicial ones, appear to have been allocated.

The late Lord Lowry provides short profiles of seven Irish judges. For those readers not familiar with the judges involved, these biographies will not be particularly illuminating. Even in his assessment of the cases they decided, Lord Lowry assumes considerable familiarity with the decisions in question. His verdict on their correctness usually takes the form of a sage nod, rather than being supported by arguments of legal principle. There are plates providing rather splendid portraits of each of the seven. The frontispiece of the book consists of a similar portrait of Lord Lowry himself, and it may be that his paper reveals more about the man in that portrait than those in the other seven. His lordship's rather affectionate accounts of his brethren may ultimately be of most interest as psychological documents. They tell us rather more interesting things about the value systems of judges as biographers, than they do about the judges who are the subjects of the biographies.

The book concludes with W. N. Osborough's 'Mysteries and solutions: experiencing Irish legal history'. Professor Osborough surveys recent research across the whole field of Irish legal history with an ease and assurance readers have come to expect from him. Against the backdrop of the impressive work being done, Professor Osborough highlights an important area of legal history that remains in the realm of mystery. What were the origins of Irish legal doctrines? How and why

did those that are native to the Irish courts evolve? When exactly were those brought from England first transplanted here?

In raising these questions, Professor Osborough identifies a central aspect of legal history that this book leaves largely untouched. With the exception of Professor Kelly's paper, the book's predominant focus is on biographical, institutional and constitutional history, rather than the history of substantive law. Professor Osborough goes on to give some clues as to how a history of Irish legal doctrine might be approached. In doing so, he communicates his ability to see the immense historical value of sources that would strike the layperson as dull and marginal. This is, after all, the special gift of the historian. In reminding us of the treasures that patient historical research can unearth, Professor Osborough also underscores the incremental value of this particular collection of explorations in Irish legal history.

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In their own words: the Famine in north Connacht 1845–1849. Liam Swords. Columba Press, Dublin, 1999. 508 pp. IR£30.00. ISBN 1-85607-247-9.

This is one of the most unusual of the many books to emerge from the Irish Famine's sesquicentennial. Though its focus is regional, it is not a conventional regional history. Such a history might have been based on an analysis of the evidence presented here, but the author has chosen instead to produce a collection of documents, transcribed largely from the public record, ordered chronologically and thematically. The focus is on an area encompassing parts of counties Mayo, Roscommon and Sligo. The area chosen — a cluster of eight poor law unions — comfortably envelopes the Catholic diocese of Achonry, where the author is a priest, and the book is intended as a contribution to the history of Achonry.

In their own words is yet another reminder that, while backward economically, mid nineteenth century Ireland was quite developed in administrative terms. Through documents like those reproduced here, its bureaucracy succeeded in recording a catastrophe which its political leaders failed to control. Most of the book's thousand or so cameos describe a separate incident, a plea, or a description or assessment of conditions in some area or other. For readers with connections to north Connacht the Famine is made more tangible by the immediacy of the accounts, and the frequent reference by name to agents or victims. The addition of passenger lists of emigrant boats from Sligo, and the nominal lists of hundreds of signatories to memorials and petitions, compounds this effect.

Though they have their individuality, these documents also resonate with themes present in accounts from other badly-stricken areas. The

roles of distance and the weather in magnifying the crisis recur. The part played by the clergy, the Catholic clergy in particular, as local leaders is underlined; their intimate local knowledge and their decency suggests that they might have been given a greater role in distributing relief during the Famine. There is evidence here too of clientelism and cheating, or what today might be called welfare fraud (e.g. pp. 63, 78, 151, 280), though certainly not enough to sustain an argument that most relief money never reached those intended to receive it. The threat of violence is present in the early years: 'hunger will break thro' stone walls' (p. 56). There is support here too for the claim that the wages offered on the public works were insufficient to sustain life (pp. 79, 81, 90), and evidence of the long-drawn character of the crisis. As late as spring 1849, legislation against begging could not be enforced without expanding the prison capacity of the west of Ireland fourfold, and deaths from starvation were still common (pp. 370, 376). Fishing the wild Atlantic offered no substitute for the failure of the potato, but it is striking how an increase in poaching led to a reduction in fish stocks in the Moy (p. 382).

Beautifully produced and good value for money, Father Swords' book offers both a rich source for readers who like their history unprocessed, and an invaluable source book for future students of the Famine.

CORMAC Ó GRÁDA

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Glossae divinae historiae: The Biblical Glosses of John Scottus Eriugena (Millennio Medievale I: Testi I). John J. Contreni and Pádraig Ó Néill (ed.). Sismel, Edizioni del Galluzzo, Florence, 1997. xxx + 253 pp. 80,000 lire. ISBN 88-87027-04-8.

This is the *editio princeps* of a short set of glosses covering the books of the Old Testament that survives in just four manuscripts, none of which is complete. It is certainly of Irish origin for it contains glosses in Old Irish, and has been associated, on the basis of internal evidence, for more than a century with John Scottus Eriugena. Although many scholars have given Eriugena the credit for these glosses without question because the abbreviation .IOH. occurs within them, this was an issue that needed a proper investigation. So the *status questionis* against which we must locate this edition is that given in M. Lapidge and R. Sharpe, *A bibliography of Celtic Latin literature 400–1200* (Dublin 1985), item 710, where this work is placed among the works of Eriugena and labelled *Glossae biblicae .IOH.* The *Bibliography* then states that it has been examined by Stokes (see *Thesaurus Palaeohibernicus* i, pp. xiii and 1–2), Kenney (item 396) and John Contreni in an article from 1976, but then notes 'ED: unptd.'. Contreni and Ó Néill have now made that

last statement obsolete, and for this alone we are in their debt. Incidentally, neither Lapidge and Sharpe nor the new edition note that Mario Esposito commented upon Bern 258, which contains these glosses, in his study of Hiberno-Latin MSS in Swiss Libraries (*PRIA* 30 C (1912) 1–14, at 7).

The editors have approached their work with a splendid thoroughness. Their first problem was that a text would have to be a composite built up from the various sections present in the four manuscripts (see p. 11), and in doing this they have followed the order of the biblical books found in what must be considered their *codex optimus* (Paris, B.N. lat. 3088), which is that found in Theodulf's Bibles (see p. 84). The result is that we have a text which we have every reason to suppose is as close to the original as our evidence permits. This decision to present the evidence in the form of a work such that we might suppose any serious teacher to have produced will bring them criticism from many reviewers who would rather that they had simply printed MSS transcriptions, but I am not one of them. Reading the edition we can see patterns in the way the author worked, we can see recurring problems, and we can see a set range of books being quarried. In effect, we observe a Carolingian teacher at work.

However, apart from the interest these glosses will generate from those working on Old Irish and the history of Latin scriptural exegesis, they have an added interest if they are part of the corpus of the outstanding thinker of the ninth century, Eriugena. Here the introduction (pp. 1–85) is a work of scholarship and detection work that merits study by those working in the history of ideas or Eriugenian studies, even if the edition itself offers them little of direct interest. The editors' starting point is the question of whether these glosses are the work of one individual or of a group, and only after offering an answer to that question do they move on to the question of whether that individual can be identified with Eriugena (pp. 17–29). This open questioning, taking nothing for granted on the basis that earlier scholars had supported the case for Eriugena, gives the whole edition the crispness of a work that sets a new benchmark in scholarship. They set out the case for its Eriugenian authorship in detail by noting how all the circumstantial evidence as to an appropriate date and place of composition, the range of sources used, and the content of the glosses themselves, agrees with the supposition that the Iohannes referred to in the MSS is none other than Eriugena. This question settled beyond reasonable doubt, they then examine how this work can be located within his writing career, and suggest that we may need to re-examine the length of time within which we date his works. Also in the introduction they offer us a study of the sources and content of the glosses, along with specific studies of the Greek and Old Irish material, drawing together the snippets of information that they have supplied to elucidate individual glosses, and this starts the process

of integrating this newly available material within the whole panorama of Eriugenian studies (pp. 72–84).

Producing an edition of a set of glosses presents problems of its own. What this edition has done is to identify the item being glossed (either a word or phrase from the Old Testament or one of the prologues to the individual books in the Vulgate), then give the gloss with its variants, then note whether this helps identify a particular strand of the Vulgate text, and lastly offer a series of comments which point to sources or parallels for the gloss, or which help us to understand the world of the glossator. The attention given to the biblical text may prove useful for our understanding of the history of the Vulgate. I was relieved to see that they did not engage in that curious hobby of many who study Hiberno-Latin texts of seeking an ‘Irish Vulgate text’ in the hope that this could be an indicator to origin. When offering commentary on the glosses, the editors have deliberately sought out Irish materials whenever possible, and not just as background to the Old Irish glosses. This is legitimate given that the work is Eriugena’s, and it would be from his Irish background that the need to gloss particular words would, in part, have arisen. Moreover, it is clear from the outset that this bias in favour of Irish parallels is an expression of the editors’ desire to seek appropriate parallels — which should, all other things being equal, be Irish — rather than another example of finding ‘Irish parallels’ with the hope that these would lend support to a work’s claim to come from an Irish author. In supplying these comments the editors display an enormous range of erudition covering not only theology and the various languages concerned, but also archaeology, the history of clothing and cooking, and much more. My favourite example (p. 91) is the gloss devoted to *cementum*, as used in Gen 11.3, which Eriugena explained as *calx*; the editors, having given a parallel from Isidore’s *Etymologiae*, then add: ‘On the use of lime as mortar in early Ireland, see Harold G. Leask, *Irish Churches and Monastic Buildings*, vol. 1 (Dundalk, 1977), 22–3.’

This is a model edition which will be welcomed by many groups of scholars concerned with early Ireland. It will also be welcomed by those working on the history of exegesis and medieval ideas where the evidence of glossaries is all too often ignored due to its inaccessibility. Lastly, those who designed and printed this work are to be thanked for not only laying the text out generously on the page so that it is easy to use, but also for producing a beautiful book which makes reading it a pleasure.

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The port of medieval Dublin: archaeological excavations at the Civic Offices, Winetavern Street, Dublin, 1993. Andrew Halpin. Four Courts

Press, Dublin, 2000. 189 pp. £24.95, paperback, ISBN 1-85182-5843; £39.50, hardback, ISBN 1-85182-5851.

This highly detailed excavation report presents evidence, analysis and conclusions from a 1993 rescue operation which took place during a phase of construction of the Civic Offices. The excavation area was within the previously-identified thirteenth-century reclaimed land area, and was adjacent to other areas which had also previously been excavated.

The work is organized like many archaeological reports: there is an introduction, five chapters detailing the features and stratigraphy of the site (Part I), five chapters which describe and analyze the artefacts by type (Part II) and a separate section for general conclusions (Part III). The work further includes 84 figures, 21 illustrations and 8 plates, all used to great effect. There is a citation list given at the end of each chapter, and a bibliography for the entire work. Although Andrew Halpin was the director of the excavation, and thus author of the report, due credit is given to the various experts who helped to analyze the evidence from this site.

Part I: 'The site' begins with the 'Historical Background' for the development of the site in the thirteenth century; a very useful inclusion is an archaeological report, and one only recently becoming popular. Chapter three 'The stratigraphy of the site' provides a prime example of how effectively this work explains and illustrates, in a clear way, information that is often obscure to the non-archaeologist. The six phases detected on-site, dating from late twelfth century (pre-reclamation) to post-medieval period, are illustrated with many figures and illustrations, inserted within the text at exactly the right points, which make it easy to follow this highly technical section. The analysis of the wooden water-fronts in chapter four similarly includes useful figures and photographs, along with a detailed analysis of the technology, craftsmanship and even woodlands management necessary to have produced the revetments.

Scientific analysis is also provided within Part I. Chapter five, 'Dendrochronological analysis of oak wood samples', gives the very precise dating (plus or minus nine years) of certain samples and structures from the site. Chapter six provides an 'Analysis of sediment samples', but this five-page chapter is awkwardly interrupted by eight pages of colour plates.

Part II of the report details 'The finds' from this excavation as clearly as the features were described in Part I. 'The medieval pottery', 'Medieval boat and ship timbers', 'Building materials', 'The leather finds', and 'The small finds: stone, metal, wood, bone and antler' are each inventoried, illustrated and analyzed. The analysis of nearly 7,000 pottery sherds in chapter seven is particularly useful, since the pottery is dated and sequenced, the origins identified and detailed analysis given of the

changes in import patterns over time. The inclusion of drawings of every one of the boat and ship timbers in chapter eight is most impressive. There is a similarly detailed discussion of the leather finds, as well as ship and boat timbers, and the other artefactual finds are analyzed to the degree possible, given the sample provided by the excavation. Each artefact type is inventoried thoroughly.

Part III, 'Conclusions', points out that this rescue excavation demonstrates clearly that new information can always be gained even from within previously excavated areas. The reclamation area in this site, for example, can now be dated more precisely to *c.* 1200, or even a bit earlier. More has been discovered about the construction of the revetment, and the presence of managed oak woodlands very near Dublin has been demonstrated for the first time. It is argued that the revetment itself probably doubled as a dockside, which would indicate that Wood Quay was Dublin's port. The importance of medieval Winetavern Street and its links to the port can therefore now be analyzed. It is also suggested that the 'large stone building' found on the reclaimed site may represent Dublin's first guildhall, Tholsel, otherwise known only from documentary evidence.

Following in the footsteps of the Archaeology in Temple Bar reports, Halpin's work further demonstrates how much more than a list of artefacts an excavation report can be. Archaeologists and historians alike will find this work invaluable and, by extension, so will any scholar interested in medieval Dublin.

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The Annals of Tigernach: index of names. Diarmuid Ó Murchadha. Irish Texts Society, Subsidiary Series VI, London, 1997. ix + 222 pp. £22.20. ISBN 1-870166-85-X.

When the *Annals of Tigernach* were first published as three articles in *Revue Celtique* in 1895 and 1896, Whitley Stokes provided only an edition and translation, with very little commentary and no indices of any kind. This lack of indices, in addition to the awkward placement of text in brackets following translation, and the lack of accurate dating of entries, has caused much suffering among scholars of early Irish history for over a century. The two-volume Llanerch reprint in 1993 did nothing to alleviate these difficulties, although the convenience of having this important source available in paperback cannot be underestimated. The *Index of names* compiled by Diarmuid Ó Murchadha provides a much-needed aid to the use of this set of annals.

There are four separate indices included in this volume. The first two are indices to personal names and place and tribal names in Irish

sources. The third and fourth indices include names from other medieval sources, especially the Bible. The third index is to personal names from these sources, and the fourth to places and peoples. Entries are provided alphabetically within each index, according to modern orthographic conventions for Middle Irish. Since the spelling in Stokes's edition at times differs from these modern conventions, some small confusion may arise, but no one using the volume should experience any great difficulty locating entries in the *Index*.

Most entries in the *Index* reference the *Annals of Tigernach* by year(s). Since the original dates from Stokes's edition are rather difficult to use (for each set of entries from a single year, several years are provided by cross-referencing other sets of annals), this can be somewhat confusing. Ó Murchadha has used the first date in the list, usually from the *Annals of Ulster*, although he has opted for the last-placed *Annals of the Four Masters* during the *Annals of Ulster's lacunae* from 1132–54. However, while this makes it possible to locate the entries in the *Annals of Tigernach*, the years given do not always correspond to the modern editions of the other sets of annals, since they post-date Stokes's edition. There are also a few instances when the first date in the list is repeated under another year when two different sets of annals head the two lists. For example, AU 581 is followed by CS 580, which is followed by AU 581. The very early material (from Stokes's first and second fragments), have no years, so these entries are referenced by the Llanerch page number, followed by the original *Revue Celtique* volume and page number in parenthesis. Such difficulties were likely unavoidable, however, given the state of work being indexed, and any other manner of reference would probably have been even more confusing.

The *Index* confers a number of unexpected benefits. Modern place names are given whenever possible, and are more accurate than in Hogan's *Onomasticon*. The *Index* includes many excellent cross-references to other annals and to modern scholarship, all of which are of great benefit to the user. In just one example, under the personal name 'Ua Conchobair, Ruaidrí m. Áeda', an entry under the year 1059 is corrected to Áed Ua Conchobair, 'As in *AFM*'. Further, Ó Murchadha has at times improved on some of Stokes's more awkward translations. Under the place name 'Clad in Renna', for example, Ó Murchadha's 'circuit made from' explains the phrase *timchill coitchend* far more clearly than Stokes's uncertain 'surround the common(?)'.

Diarmadha Ó Murchadha's new *Annals of Tigernach: index of names* is an immensely useful work. It is unfortunate that this slim paperback volume is relatively expensive, costing more than one volume of the *Annals of Tigernach* themselves. Nevertheless, despite occasional confusion due to the dating issues discussed above, the work is very easy to use, and extremely accurate. Even without the many updates, corrections and cross-references, the *Index* would render the

Annals of Tigernach far more accessible to students and scholars alike. With the many aids provided by the compiler, however, the work is invaluable.

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