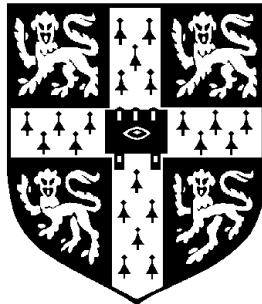


E. C. QUIGGIN MEMORIAL LECTURES 6

PADRAIG P. Ó NEILL

**Biblical Study and  
Mediaeval Gaelic History**



DEPARTMENT OF ANGLO-SAXON, NORSE, AND CELTIC

UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE

Edmund Crosby Quiggin (1875-1920) was the first teacher of Celtic in the University of Cambridge, as well as being a Germanist. His extraordinarily comprehensive vision of Celtic studies offered an integrated approach to the subject: his combination of philological, literary, and historical approaches paralleled those which his older contemporary, H.M. Chadwick, had already demonstrated in his studies of Anglo-Saxon England and which the Department of Anglo-Saxon, Norse, and Celtic continues to seek to emulate. The Department has wished to commemorate Dr Quiggin's contribution by establishing in his name, and with the support of his family, an annual lecture and a series of pamphlets. The focus initially was on the sources for Mediaeval Gaelic History. Since 2006 the Quiggin Memorial Lecture is on any aspect of Celtic and/or Germanic textual culture taught in the Department.

Biblical Study and Mediaeval Gaelic History

© Padraig P. Ó Neill

First published 2003 by the Department of Anglo-Saxon, Norse, and Celtic,  
University of Cambridge, 9 West Road, Cambridge, CB3 9DP.

ISBN 978-1-904708-00-1 / 0 904708 00 5

ISSN 1353-5722

**Set in Times New Roman by Ruth Johnson, University of Cambridge**

Printed by the Reprographics Centre, University of Cambridge

E. C. QUIGGIN MEMORIAL LECTURES 6

PADRAIG P. Ó NEILL

**Biblical Study and  
Mediaeval Gaelic History**

DEPARTMENT OF ANGLO-SAXON, NORSE, AND CELTIC

UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE

## **BIBLICAL STUDY AND MEDIAEVAL GAELIC HISTORY**

In the early mediaeval Gaelic Churches the study of the Bible was preeminent. That preeminence reflects the strongly monastic character of Gaelic ecclesiastical learning and, more importantly, the central role accorded to biblical studies. All branches of learning in the monastic curriculum were subservient to it, especially those of computistics and Latin grammar. Moreover, the study of the Bible encompassed a great variety of activities, from the most elementary reading of the Psalms (traditionally begun at the age of seven) to the supreme accomplishment of composing commentaries on the Bible, a level which could only be reached after many years of study in the Latin language and in the works of the Fathers.<sup>1</sup>

First, some clarifications are needed. Chronologically, the present survey will cover the period from the second half of the sixth to the mid-twelfth century, the earlier terminus marking the emergence (at least in the historical record) of the Gaelic Churches, the later terminus signalling the demise of their particularism in the face of ecclesiastical reforms. The reference in the title to ‘Gaelic’ rather than ‘Irish’ history recognises the fact that this christian culture of the early Middle Ages comprised not just Ireland but also the Gaelic overkingdom of Dál Riata in northwestern Scotland (which itself for a time controlled missions to England and Pictland) and in the central Middle Ages a yet larger part of Scotland. But by the same token this study does not cover the activities of the numerous Gaelic (and probably mostly Irish) colonies on the Continent except in so far as they concern biblical texts composed in the islands. Thus, for example, it takes into account glossed copies of the Gospels and Pauline Epistles

---

<sup>1</sup> And so, for example, when Ionas, the mid-seventh-century hagiographer of Columbanus, stated that his subject composed a commentary on the Psalms in his early twenties, he meant to signify that the saint had already reached at an extraordinarily precocious age the pinnacle of monastic learning. See *Ionae Vitae Sanctorum Columbani, Vedastis, Iohannis*, ed. Bruno Krusch (Hannover 1905), p. 158 (I.3).

originally written in the Gaelic world but now preserved on the Continent, while ignoring the biblical glosses on the Old Testament composed by Iohannes Scottus Eriugena, which are based on a Continental Bible-text produced by Theodulf of Orléans.

I. Since it is not possible to cover all aspects of biblical studies, and since in any case the focus of this pamphlet is not biblical studies themselves but rather their potential as historical evidence, the following activities will receive the most attention as potential sources:

- (A) copying and transmitting books of the Bible, with a strong awareness of textual variants;
- (B) glossing manuscripts of the Bible, in both Latin and the Gaelic vernacular;
- (C) acquiring Latin commentaries from other parts of the Western Church;
- (D) composing commentaries, primarily in Latin but also in the vernacular;
- (E) exploiting the contents of the Bible (especially the Old Testament) as a source and model for some aspects of Gaelic society.

(A) The most immediate historical source comprises manuscript-copies of the Bible produced in the Gaelic world. Physically, these consist of copies of individual books, notably the Psalms, or of books traditionally grouped together, for example the four Gospels and the fourteen Pauline Epistles. Also circulating as single volumes were probably the seven Catholic Epistles<sup>2</sup> and possibly

---

<sup>2</sup> Ascribed to James, Peter (2), John (3), and Jude. A ninth-century catalogue from the monastery of St Gallen lists among the manuscripts in Irish script *Epistolae canonicae in uolumine uno*. Also, the existence of a seventh-century Irish commentary on these epistles points to the same conclusion.

the Pentateuch, the first five books of the Old Testament.<sup>3</sup> On the other hand no evidence survives for pandects, copies of the whole Bible in one volume such as were produced at Monkwearmouth-Jarrow (Northumbria) in Abbot Ceolfrith's time (688/9-716),<sup>4</sup> although the notion of the Bible as a single work was familiar to Gaelic ecclesiastics as is evident from a Latin commentary on the whole Bible produced by a Gaelic scholar in the second half of the eighth century, the so-called 'Reference-Bible'.<sup>5</sup>

The distribution of surviving biblical books in Gaelic manuscripts is very uneven. For the Old Testament, with one notable exception, the number of witnesses is dismal: of its twenty-eight books, we have only some fragments of Ezechiel, Job, Daniel (in the Old-Latin version), and Amos.<sup>6</sup> The exception is the Psalms of which some fifteen complete copies or fragments have survived.<sup>7</sup> In the New Testament, as might be expected, the Gospels are the best represented work: twenty-six full copies or fragments.<sup>8</sup> For the remaining twenty-three books of the New Testament, however, the numbers again are small: three copies of the Pauline Epistles; two of the Catholic Epistles; one each of Acts and the Apocalypse (Revelation).<sup>9</sup>

What are we to make of these numbers? In the case of the biblical books not represented or poorly represented, it could be argued that they were casualties of Ireland's troubled history, from the viking-raids in the ninth century to the Elizabethan colonisation

---

<sup>3</sup> Certainly, Irish exegetes were well aware of the tradition of grouping these books together under the name 'Thorath' or 'Lex', following the suggestion of St Jerome, 'Hii sunt quinque libri Mosi, quos proprie Thorath, id est Legem, appellant; 'Prologus in Libro Regum' in *Biblia Sacra iuxta Vulgatam Versionem*, edd. Robert Weber *et al.* (2nd edn, 2 vols, Stuttgart 1975), I.364.

<sup>4</sup> E. A. Lowe, *English Uncial* (Oxford 1960)

<sup>5</sup> 'Das Bibelwerk', the term coined by Bernhard Bischoff, 'Wendepunkte in der Geschichte der lateinischen Exegese im Frühmittelalter', *Sacris Erudiri* 6 (1954) 191-281; revised edition in his *Mittelalterliche Studien. Ausgewählte Aufsätze zur Schriftkunde und Literaturgeschichte* (3 vols, Stuttgart 1966-81), I.205-73; translated as 'Turning-points in the history of Latin exegesis in the early Middle Ages', *Proceedings of the Irish Biblical Association* 1 (1976) 73-160.

<sup>6</sup> See 'Bibliography' A.I.(1), below.

<sup>7</sup> See 'Bibliography' A.I.(2), below.

<sup>8</sup> See 'Bibliography' A.I.(3), below.

<sup>9</sup> See 'Bibliography' A.I.(4), below.

in the sixteenth. But then how does one explain the survival of so many Psalters and gospelbooks? Admittedly, both of these had extrinsic advantages over the others: they were regarded as ‘the most valued and treasured possessions of a church’,<sup>10</sup> often associated with a particular saint or monastic founder and reputed to possess quasi-magical powers. For example, the earliest surviving Gaelic copy of the Psalms, the *Cathach* (or ‘Battler’), was believed to have been copied by St Columba; it was kept in a *cumtach* or protective metal box and served as a talisman for the O’Donnell family in battle, circumstances which favoured its preservation.<sup>11</sup> Gospelbooks were sometimes used to record land-transactions and often as relics on which people could swear sanctified oaths.<sup>12</sup> Since these gospelbooks and Psalters were often kept by *erenaghs* (*airchinnig*), the traditional keepers of a church’s treasures, they passed down from generation to generation as heirlooms to the end of the Middle Ages.<sup>13</sup>

Other evidence suggests that the numerical imbalance in favour of gospelbooks and Psalters has a more substantive basis. First, they are more elaborately decorated, and written in higher grades of script, than the other surviving biblical books; their finest witnesses are in Insular Half-uncial script as against the minuscule (admittedly high-grade) found in the Pauline Epistles and the Old-Testament fragments, indicating a hierarchy of textual status. Secondly, the numerical preponderance of Psalters and gospelbooks is matched by a corresponding dominance in the field of exegesis, notably in commentaries and glosses. For the Psalms at least four commentaries have survived as well as several bulky

<sup>10</sup> See P. McGurk, ‘The oldest manuscripts of the Latin Bible’, in *The Early Medieval Bible: Its Production, Decoration and Use*, ed. Richard Gameson (Cambridge 1994), pp. 1-23, at p. 3

<sup>11</sup> Douglas Chrétien, *The Battle Book of the O’Donnells* (Berkeley, CA 1935)

<sup>12</sup> For example, ‘The Book of Kells’ has a series of charters entered on various folios; likewise ‘The Book of Deer’. ‘The Book of Armagh’ records an agreement between King Brian Boru and the community of Armagh. See further David N. Dumville, *Liturgy and the Ecclesiastical History of Late Anglo-Saxon England: Four Studies* (Woodbridge 1992), pp. 119-27; Dauvit Broun, *The Charters of Gaelic Scotland and Ireland in the Early and Central Middle Ages*, Quiggin Pamphlet 2 (Cambridge 1995), pp. 29-47.

<sup>13</sup> James F. Kenney, *The Sources for the Early History of Ireland: Ecclesiastical. An Introduction and Guide* (New York 1929; rev. imp., by L. Bieler, 1966), pp. 20-1.

sets of glosses;<sup>14</sup> for the Gospels, over twenty commentaries and at least four significant sets of glosses.<sup>15</sup> Thirdly, and most importantly, both occupied a central place in ecclesiastical life: the Psalms as the base-text of the Divine Office, the Gospels as the canonical record of Christ's teachings. All of this suggests that these were the two parts of the Old and New Testaments, respectively, which most engaged Gaelic biblical scholars.

A related, though more problematic, source comprises biblical quotations. As might be expected, such quotations commonly occur in biblical commentaries where they served a variety of functions. They were used as illustration, as supporting evidence, and as parallels to other biblical quotations. Most importantly they served as the lemmata around which a commentary was constructed, in effect providing a running sequence of biblical text, as for example in a commentary on the Catholic Epistles and another on the Psalms.<sup>16</sup> But it would be mistaken to conclude that such quotations necessarily reflect the biblical text of the commentator and that they can therefore be used as evidence about his milieu. It can happen, for example, that the interpretation proposed in the commentary is at variance with the lemma, in which case one may suspect that the commentator was following another scriptural reading. Such readings may derive from an outside source, thereby giving a false impression of the commentator's own biblical text. For example, a study of the biblical quotations in Adomnán's *De locis sanctis* identified readings not only from the Vulgate, the text of the Latin Bible then current in the West, but also from the Old Latin, the pre-Vulgate Bible, and possibly even from the Septuagint, the Greek version of

---

<sup>14</sup> The commentaries are in Roma, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, MS. Pal. lat. 68; Sankt Gallen, Stiftsbibliothek, MS. 261; Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS. Rawlinson B.512 (another copy in London, British Library, MS. Harley 5280); München, Staatsbibliothek, Clm 14276 (another copy in Paris, Bibliothèque nationale, MS. latin 11561; in both manuscripts the commentary on the Psalms forms part of the *Bibelwerk*). Significant numbers of glosses are found in Cambridge, St John's College, MS. C.9 (51); Dublin, University College, MS. Franciscan A.1; Rouen, Bibliothèque municipale, MS. 24 (A.41).

<sup>15</sup> See Bischoff's list in 'Turning-points', pp. 108-37, nos 11-32.

<sup>16</sup> For the commentary on the Catholic Epistles, see n. 38; for the commentary on the Psalms, see n. 77.



the Old Testament. In reality these readings were probably taken by Adomnán verbatim from the Patristic sources which he cited, notably Augustine and Jerome.<sup>17</sup>

A surprising number of biblical quotations occurs in Gaelic non-biblical works, notably in ecclesiastical legislation – for example, in the probably Gaelic *Liber ex Lege Moysi*, which contains long passages from Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy, and in the certainly Gaelic *Collectio canonum hibernensis*. The latter's Old-Testament quotations are especially valuable, since so few textual witnesses to that part of the Bible have survived from the Gaelic world and since there is a strong presence of Old-Latin readings among them.<sup>18</sup> Even more remarkably, scriptural quotations occur in the vernacular law-tracts on secular subjects.<sup>19</sup>

(B) Some of the biblical manuscripts and commentaries also contain glosses, explanatory notes and comments entered on the margins or between the lines of the text. Most of these glosses are in Latin though with a considerable admixture in Irish. In a curious paradox of scholarship, the Irish-language glosses have been minutely examined by Celtic philologists for their linguistic evidence,<sup>20</sup> while the Latin glosses have been largely ignored, many still remaining unedited. Only recently have scholars begun to consider both kinds of glosses as evidence not only about the learning of Gaelic exegetes, especially the Patristic sources which they used, but also about the methods of the Gaelic biblical schools and the pedagogical strategies which their teachers employed in expounding the text immediately before them. The pioneer in this

---

<sup>17</sup> T. O'Loughlin, 'The Latin version of the Scriptures in Iona in the late seventh century: the evidence from Adomnán's *De locis sanctis*', *Peritia* 8 (1994) 18-26.

<sup>18</sup> L.M. Davies, 'The biblical text of the *Collectio Canonum Hibernensis*', in *Ireland and Europe in the Early Middle Ages: Learning and Literature*, edd. Próinséas Ní Chatháin & M. Richter (Stuttgart 1996), pp. 17-41, especially 34-5.

<sup>19</sup> D. Ó Corráin *et al.*, 'The laws of the Irish', *Peritia* 3 (1984) 382-438, *passim*.

<sup>20</sup> They are collected in volume I of the two-volume *Thesaurus Palaeohibernicus*, edd. & transll. Whitley Stokes & J. Strachan (2 vols, Cambridge 1901-3 and supplement, Halle a.S. 1910; 2nd edn in 2 vols, Dublin 1975)

field was the Dutch scholar Maartje Draak who showed how Gaelic glossators used systems of construe-marks entered above or below the relevant words to guide the reader through the syntax of the Latin text.<sup>21</sup> Although the discovery of these syntactical glosses was based on the study of a grammatical manuscript (containing Priscian's *Institutiones grammaticae*), they have relevance for biblical texts. Thus, the earliest gospelbook known from Ireland, the so-called *Codex Usserianus Primus*,<sup>22</sup> has some elementary syntactical glosses, while the Gaelic manuscript of the Pauline Epistles preserved at Würzburg has a large number of them.<sup>23</sup>

*Codex Usserianus Primus* also contains some 120 textual glosses, scratched into the manuscript with a metal stylus, including a few in archaic Old Irish.<sup>24</sup> Their script suggests that glossing was already being undertaken in Ireland by the second half of the seventh century. Additionally, their contents provide valuable information about the sources available to the glossator, including a work otherwise unattested in Ireland, Chromatius's commentary on Matthew's Gospel.<sup>25</sup> Among such early (pre-800) biblical manuscripts from the Gaelic world which contain glosses, the most prolific is the Würzburg manuscript of the Pauline Epistles, which in addition to its numerous syntactical glosses

---

<sup>21</sup> M. Draak, 'Construe marks in Hiberno-Latin manuscripts', *Mededelingen der Koninklijke Nederlandse Akademie van Wetenschappen, afd. Letterkunde*, new series, 20 (1967) 261-82.

<sup>22</sup> For recent discussion, suggesting very different perspectives on this manuscript, its date, and origin, see W. O'Sullivan, 'The paleographical background to the Book of Kells', in *The Book of Kells*, ed. Felicity O'Mahony (Aldershot 1994), pp. 175-82 and plates 67-71, at pp. 175-81 and 547-9 (plates 67-9); David N. Dumville, *A Palaeographer's Review: the Insular System of Scripts in the Early Middle Ages*, I (Osaka 1999), pp. 35-40.

<sup>23</sup> M. Korhammer, 'Mittelalterliche Konstruktionshilfen und altenglische Wortstellung', *Scriptorium* 34 (1980) 18-58, at p. 29.

<sup>24</sup> P. Ó Néill, 'The earliest dry-point glosses in Codex Usserianus Primus', in 'A Miracle of Learning': *Studies in Manuscripts and Irish Learning. Essays in Honour of William O'Sullivan*, ed. Toby Barnard et al. (Aldershot 1998), pp. 1-28. For an illustration of these glosses, see G. Charles-Edwards, 'The Springmount Bog wax tablets: their implications for Insular epigraphy and palaeography', *Studia Celtica* 36 (2002) 27-45, at pp. 32-3.

<sup>25</sup> For basic bibliography on Chromatius, bishop of Aquileia (†407), see Eligius Dekkers & E. Gaar, *Clavis Patrum Latinorum* (3rd edn, Steenbrugge 1995), pp. 75-7, and especially no. 218.

contains some 3,560 glosses in Old Irish and an even greater number in Latin.<sup>26</sup>

For the Old Testament, large numbers of glosses have survived on the Psalms, a considerable number on Ezechiel, and just a few on Proverbs and Amos; for the New Testament, we have glosses on the Gospels, Acts, Pauline Epistles, and Catholic Epistles. The importance of such glosses to the historian is that they show Gaelic scribes (or the scribes of previous exemplars) and readers reacting to a biblical text *in situ* rather than through the mediation of a commentary in which exposition is restricted by the amount of biblical text supplied as lemma.<sup>27</sup>

(C) A third source of historical evidence comprises imported biblical commentaries, for the most part the work of Latin Fathers of the Church, especially Jerome and Augustine. While none of these original exemplars has survived, their presence can be inferred. For example, a full copy of Pope Gregory the Great's *Moralia in Iob* must have been available to the Irishman Laidcenn who composed an abbreviated version of it before 665.<sup>28</sup> Less orthodox works were also widely available in the Gaelic world. For example, Pelagius's commentary on the Pauline Epistles must have circulated there, to judge from the numerous citations in the Würzburg manuscript mentioned above,<sup>29</sup> as well as from copies preserved on the Continent but based on Gaelic exemplars or copied by Gaelic scribes.<sup>30</sup> Even more remarkable was the popularity among Gaelic exegetes of the commentary on the

---

<sup>26</sup> Including some 1,530 glosses with attributions, mainly to Pelagius's commentary on the Pauline Epistles.

<sup>27</sup> For Gaelic exegetes the model for such lemmata seems to have been Pelagius's commentary on the Pauline Epistles (see n. 25).

<sup>28</sup> *Ecloga quam scripsit Lathcen filius Baith de Moralibus Iob quas Gregorius fecit*, ed. M. Adriaen (Turnhout 1969). On the predilection of Gaelic exegetes for abbreviating Patristic works, see A. Vaccari, 'Notulae Patristicae', *Gregorianum* 42 (1961) 725-8.

<sup>29</sup> See above, p. \$\$.

<sup>30</sup> *Pelagius's Expositions of Thirteen Epistles of St Paul*, ed. Alexander Souter (3 vols, Cambridge 1922-6), I.201-23 and 232-8.

Psalms by Theodore of Mopsuestia.<sup>31</sup> Theodore had been condemned by the Second Council of Constantinople (553) and his works destroyed. But his commentary on the Psalms, translated from Greek into Latin by a fifth-century Pelagian bishop, Julian of Eclanum, probably reached Ireland very early, perhaps even in the sixth century, to judge by the survival of archaic scribal contractions, consonant with that date, in ninth-century Irish copies of the work.<sup>32</sup> Theodorean exegesis permeates Gaelic commentaries and glosses on the psalms, including those preserved in a Psalter now at St John's College, Cambridge (MS. C.9 [51]).<sup>33</sup> This Psalter also contains fragments of an even more remarkable Psalter-commentary whose author, against the prevailing orthodoxy of allegorical interpretation, adopted a thoroughly historical approach, applying the psalms to David only and ignoring the traditional christological interpretation of Psalm 2.<sup>34</sup> Since the commentary was not composed in the Gaelic world and has no parallels in Western Psalter-exegesis, its use by Gaelic exegetes raises interesting (if unanswered) questions about the extent of Gaelic contacts with the outside world.

(D) Gaelic authors composed their own biblical commentaries, predominantly in what has been called Hiberno-Latin or Hibernian Latin, a distinctive type of Latin current in the ecclesiastical schools.<sup>35</sup> With a few notable exceptions these works are anonymous. They have been identified and catalogued by

---

<sup>31</sup> M. McNamara, 'Tradition and creativity in early Irish Psalter study', in *Ireland and Europe: The Early Church*, edd. Próinséas Ní Chatháin & M. Richter (Stuttgart 1984), pp. 328-89; for a reprint, see Martin McNamara, *The Psalms in the Early Irish Church* (Sheffield 2000), pp. 239-301.

<sup>32</sup> P. P. Ó Néill, 'Irish transmission of late Antique learning: the case of Theodore of Mopsuestia's commentary on the Psalms', in *Ireland and Europe: Texts and Transmission*, edd. Próinséas Ní Chatháin & M. Richter (Dublin 2000), pp. 68-77, at p. 71.

<sup>33</sup> P. P. Ó Néill, 'Some remarks on the edition of the Southampton Psalter Irish Glosses in *Thesaurus Palaeohibernicus*, with further addenda and corrigenda', *Ériu* 44 (1993) 99-103, at pp. 102-03.

<sup>34</sup> *Incerti auctoris expositio Psalmorum I:1-XVI:11A iuxta Litteram*, ed. Lucas De Coninck (2 vols, Kortrijk 1989).

<sup>35</sup> L. Bieler, 'Hibernian Latin', *Studies: An Irish Quarterly Review* 43 (1954) 92-5; cf. *The Irish Penitentials*, edd. & transll. Ludwig Bieler & D. A. Binchy (Dublin 1963), pp. 27-47, 292-264.

Bernhard Bischoff in a famous article<sup>36</sup> which for many contemporary Irish mediaevalists has become the *uade mecum* for their research. But not everyone has taken heed of the guarded title to Bischoff's catalogue of these works, which includes the qualifier, 'Irisch beeinflussten lateinischen exegetischen Literatur',<sup>37</sup> indicating that he was well aware of the need to distinguish between Latin works composed by Gaelic exegetes and those influenced by Gaelic exegesis. Not surprisingly, some of his identifications of individual commentaries as of Gaelic authorship have been questioned. Thus, the authors of *A Bibliography of Celtic-Latin Literature, 400-1200* have catalogued some of these commentaries as 'works of possible or arguable Celtic origin'.<sup>38</sup> A more fundamental challenge has been launched by Michael Gorman who has argued that Bischoff's method of identifying commentaries as Irish on the basis of particular methods and topoi ('symptoms') is fundamentally flawed and that the few biblical works which can be verifiably traced to the Gaelic world hardly merit the appellation of commentary.<sup>39</sup> The inevitable counterattacks show no sign of abating.<sup>40</sup> While Gorman's work relies on an excessively rigorous definition of 'commentary' and shows an insouciant lack of knowledge about Gaelic culture, it serves as a healthy reminder that the burden of proof rests on those who assert Gaelic origins for these anonymous Latin biblical commentaries.

---

<sup>36</sup> 'Turning-points', pp. 95-149. The ninth-century catalogue of manuscripts at Sankt Gallen mentions as written in Gaelic script an 'Expositio in cantica canticorum in quaternionibus II' and another commentary 'in Regum quaternio I', although it is unclear whether these represent Hiberno-Latin compositions or merely copies of Patristic commentaries.

<sup>37</sup> Translated in 'Turning-points', p. 95, as 'Latin exegetical literature ... showing Irish influence'.

<sup>38</sup> Michael Lapidge & R. Sharpe, *A Bibliography of Celtic-Latin Literature, 400-1200* (Dublin 1985), pp. 313-45, Section F, especially nos 1258-68.

<sup>39</sup> 'A critique of Bernhard Bischoff's theory of Irish exegesis: the commentary on Genesis in Munich Clm 6302 (Wendepunkte 2)', *Journal of Mediaeval Latin* 7 (1997) 178-233; and 'The myth of Hiberno-Latin exegesis', *Revue bénédictine* 110 (2000) 42-85.

<sup>40</sup> See especially G. Silagi, 'Notwendige Bemerkungen zu Gormans "Critique of Bischoff's theory of Irish exegesis"', *Peritia* 12 (1998) 87-94, and D. Ó Cróinín, 'Bischoff's Wendepunkte fifty years on', *Revue bénédictine* 110 (2000) 204-37.

Yet despite these assaults many Latin exegetical works are now generally accepted as of Gaelic origin. The most prominent of these is *De mirabilibus sacrae scripturae*, a discussion of selected miracles from the Old and New Testaments, composed in the south of Ireland in 655. The historical and cultural milieu in which the work was composed has been well explored.<sup>41</sup> Moreover, the influence of this work extended not only to other Hiberno-Latin works of the later ninth century<sup>42</sup> but even to Anglo-Latin writers, notably Aldhelm and Bede.<sup>43</sup> Other exegetical works of indubitable Gaelic origin are a commentary on the Catholic Epistles, composed in the south of Ireland, perhaps about 670,<sup>44</sup> and Adomnán's *De locis sanctis*, composed by the ninth abbot of Iona about 690. Although the latter is not in the strict sense a biblical commentary but a geography of the sacred places in Palestine, it directly addresses how such knowledge can assist in interpreting Scripture.<sup>45</sup>

The vernacular played a considerable role in biblical studies, although it was far less widely employed for that purpose than was Latin. Surviving fragments of commentaries in Old Irish indicate early and continued use of the vernacular for biblical exegesis. The seventh-century 'Cambrai Homily', while strictly speaking not a biblical commentary, elaborates a moral interpretation of a famous Gospel-passage, *Si quis uult post me uenire* (Matthew 16:24), in polished expository prose.<sup>46</sup> Probably dating from the eighth century is a bilingual prose commentary on Christ's Sermon on the Mount;<sup>47</sup> and from the first half of the ninth century comes

<sup>41</sup> P. Grosjean, 'Sur quelques exégètes irlandais du VIIe siècle', *Sacris Erudiri* 7 (1955) 67-98.

<sup>42</sup> A. Breen, 'Some seventh-century Hiberno-Latin texts and their relationships', *Peritia* 8 (1984) 204-14.

<sup>43</sup> See below, p. \$\$.

<sup>44</sup> Ed. Robert E. McNally, in *Scriptores Hiberniae Minores*, I (Turnhout 1973), pp. 1-50. Breen, 'Some seventh-century Hiberno-Latin texts', has suggested a date as early as the 650s.

<sup>45</sup> As argued by T. O'Loughlin, 'The exegetical purpose of Adomnán's *De locis sanctis*', *Cambridge Mediaeval Celtic Studies* 24 (1992) 37-53.

<sup>46</sup> P. P. Ó Néill, 'The background to the Cambrai Homily', *Ériu* 32 (1981) 137-47.

<sup>47</sup> The so-called 'Lambeth Commentary': edd. & transll. L. Bieler & J. Carney, 'The Lambeth Commentary', *Ériu* 23 (1972) 1-55.

the opening part of a prose commentary on the Psalms<sup>48</sup> which was itself versified in the late tenth century.<sup>49</sup> Exegesis in the vernacular was still thriving in the eleventh and twelfth centuries as is evident from Lives of the Saints and homilies written in this period and which incorporate exegetical expositions of biblical passages.<sup>50</sup>

(E) Finally, there is the evidence of a miscellaneous body of ecclesiastical and secular writings, in both Latin and Old Irish, which allude to, or imply use of, a biblical source or model. Ecclesiastical legislation comes to mind, especially the most influential collection of Gaelic ecclesiastical law, *Collectio canonum hibernensis*.<sup>51</sup> In addition to citing biblical passages in support of its judgments,<sup>52</sup> the *Hibernensis* frequently refers to Scriptural precedents. For example, the prostitute Rahab, who provided shelter for the Israelites sent by Joshua to spy on Jericho (see Joshua 2), was transformed by Gaelic canonists of an exegetical bent into a model of hospitality rewarded, as well as an illustration of the Gaelic legal rule that women could not receive the principal share of an inheritance (Rahab obtained only a share of Jericho).<sup>53</sup> Such recourse to biblical precedent also occurs in Gaelic secular law: for example, its most famous collection, the *Senchas mór*, also compiled in the early eighth century, has an elaborate, second, preface (added in the ninth century) which relates native law to the Mosaic law of the Pentateuch.<sup>54</sup> Indeed, some scholars of Old Irish are now entertaining the possibility of exegetical influence on Gaelic secular literature, arguing that it

<sup>48</sup> *Hibernica Minora, being a Fragment of an Old-Irish Treatise on the Psalter...*, ed. & transl. Kuno Meyer (Oxford 1894).

<sup>49</sup> By Airbertach mac Cosse: see P. P. Ó Néill, 'Airbertach mac Cosse's Poem on the Psalter', *Éigse* 17 (1977-9) 19-46.

<sup>50</sup> See, for example, F. Mac Donncha, 'Medieval Irish homilies', *Proceedings of the Irish Biblical Association* 1 (1976) 59-71, at p. 66.

<sup>51</sup> Kenney, *The Sources*, pp. 247-50 (no. 82); T. M. Charles-Edwards, *The Early Mediaeval Gaelic Lawyer*, Quiggin Pamphlet 4 (Cambridge 1999).

<sup>52</sup> Davies, 'The biblical text'

<sup>53</sup> Charles-Edwards, *The Early Mediaeval Gaelic Lawyer*, p. 20.

<sup>54</sup> See below, pp. \$\$-\$.

may have been intended for the kind of allegorical or moral reading normally reserved for the Scriptures.<sup>55</sup>

II. Before we turn to the question of what these sources can reveal about mediaeval Gaelic history, it is worth anticipating a potential objection, one which underlies the work of a whole generation of scholars who studied Old- and Middle-Irish literature, the so-called 'nativist' school. Their argument goes as follows: biblical study in the earlier mediaeval Gaelic world was strictly the domain of the Church (especially the monasteries); consequently, it can provide evidence only about these institutions and, indeed, about a limited part of their activities. In other words, the study of the Bible in earlier mediaeval Ireland was a matter for the cloister and had little to do with the 'real' world of its time.

In rejecting the relevance of the Bible the proponents of this argument ignored the fundamental historical reality that by the early seventh century the Church was a major player in Gaelic society, one whose influence was widespread and pervasive.<sup>56</sup> Indeed, as will become apparent, in the quest to expand its influence the Church used as one of its most effective weapons the text of Scripture itself. Another reality of the mediaeval Gaelic world ignored by the nativists – hardly surprisingly, given that their main tenet was the oral origins of mediaeval Irish literature – was the cultural primacy of the written word and the related fact that the ecclesiastical schools had a monopoly on its production. Much, if not all, of the surviving written literature, Latin and vernacular, ecclesiastical and secular (although it is not always possible to distinguish between the two), was copied in and transmitted by the ecclesiastical schools.

---

<sup>55</sup> See, for example, E. Poppe, 'Deception and self-deception in *Fingal Rónáin*', *Ériu* 47 (1996) 137-51.

<sup>56</sup> That case was first systematically made by Kathleen Hughes, *The Church in Early Irish Society* (London 1966).



In the midst of this multiplicity of literary activity one branch stood supreme – the study of the Bible. To it all other subjects and curricula were subordinate and in many instances ancillary. Thus, the intense study of Latin grammar (including rhetoric) which was conducted in the Gaelic ecclesiastical schools had as its ultimate goal a mastery of Latin in preparation for biblical studies. The cultivation of scripts and scribal skills found its most appropriate fulfilment in the copying of Holy Scripture. Such grand copies (especially of the Gospels) in their turn provided a model-layout for Gaelic jurists when they copied the vernacular law-tracts with their accompanying baggage of commentary and glosses. The eighth-century legal tract, *Auraicecht na ríar*, which codifies the rights of the secular learned classes, is heavily influenced by ecclesiastical models: it enjoins, for example, quasi-monastic periods of celibacy on married *filid*.<sup>57</sup> Indeed, even the *filid*, the dominant secular learned class, whom the nativists have portrayed as exclusive custodians of Gaelic literature, acknowledged the primacy of their ecclesiastical counterparts. As early as about 600 the *file* Dallán Forgaill composed a eulogy in honour of the foremost ecclesiastic of his day, Colum Cille (†597). While his poem is composed in the obscure language characteristic of his profession, its compliments are clear and decidedly monastic. Dallán portrays the saint as a biblical scholar grounded in the study of the Pentateuch, the Psalms, and the Sapiential Books (as well as the great monastic legislators, Basil and Cassian), thus indicating his own familiarity with such learning while also implicitly acknowledging its superiority over its native counterpart.

Let us return to the main question of what these biblical sources can reveal about Gaelic history.

(1) Most obviously, they provide information about the state of learning in the great ecclesiastical schools, and in some cases about specific schools. For example, from a close contextual study of *De*

---

<sup>57</sup> *Uraicecht na Ríar*, ed. & transl. Liam Breatnach (Dublin 1987).

*mirabilibus sacrae scripturae*, a treatise on the miracles of the Bible, the Bollandist Paul Grosjean was able to bring to light a circle of Irish biblical exegetes who were active in the Midlands and south of Ireland (at Rahan, Co. Offaly, and Lismore, Co. Waterford) during the central years of the seventh century.<sup>58</sup> One of them, Manchianus (probably Manchén of Mín Droichit, †652), whom the author identified as his *pater* and *doctor*, is also referred to as *doctor noster* in an anonymous commentary on the Catholic Epistles, thereby establishing a link between the two works.<sup>59</sup> The commentary on the Catholic Epistles, in turn, was heavily used by another Gaelic exegete, the so-called pseudo-Hilarius, who composed another commentary on these Epistles, probably in the period 670×690. Another Irish exegete, Laidcen mac Baíth Bannaig, mentioned twice in the anonymous commentary on the Catholic Epistles, is known as the author of other works. In addition to composing an abbreviated version of Pope Gregory the Great's *Moralia in Iob*, he seems to have composed the so-called *Lorica Gildae*, a litanic prayer designed to ward off dangers to the body, and he may also have been involved in compiling secular genealogies in the vernacular.<sup>60</sup> Yet another biblical scholar, Bannbannus, whose opinion is cited in the same anonymous commentary, may be the Banbán who drafted the Old-Irish legal tract *Cáin Fhuithirbe* in Munster about 680.<sup>61</sup> This nexus of Irish scholars centred on a flourishing school in the south of Ireland during the second half of the seventh century, which cultivated biblical and native learning and composed in both Latin and Irish. Interestingly, their activity coincided with the presence in Ireland

---

<sup>58</sup> For a dissenting view on the place of origin of *De mirabilibus sacrae scripturae*, see G. MacGinty, 'The Irish Augustine: De Mirabilibus Sacrae Scripturae', in *Ireland and Christendom*, edd. Próinséas Ní Chatháin & M. Richter (Stuttgart 1987), pp. 70-83, who has argued for a location on the Shannon-estuary.

<sup>59</sup> Breen, 'Some seventh-century Hiberno-Latin texts', has argued (p. 210) that McNally's date for the commentary of 'sometime before 675' could be narrowed to 'before 650'.

<sup>60</sup> D. Ó Corráin, 'Creating the past: the early Irish genealogical tradition', *Peritia* 12 (1998) 177-208, at pp. 199-201.

<sup>61</sup> L. Breatnach, 'The ecclesiastical element in the Old-Irish legal tract *Cáin Fhuithirbe*', *Peritia* 5 (1986) 36-52, at pp. 44-7.

of large numbers of Anglo-Saxon students, one of whose centres was probably *Rath Melsigi*, located in the same region.

Among the great ecclesiastical schools the metropolitan city of Armagh stands unrivalled for the wealth of its biblical texts and their potential as historical evidence. From here has survived a full text of the New Testament copied in the earlier ninth century (part of the composite codex known as ‘The Book of Armagh’). Also still extant are three copies of the Gospels: the MacDurnan Gospels (London, Lambeth Palace, MS. 1370) from the later ninth or early tenth century (which turned up at the court of Æthelstan, first king of England, 927-39);<sup>62</sup> and two other copies from the twelfth century (London, British Library, MSS. Harley 1802 and Harley 1023). All three are witnesses (perhaps the best) to the so-called ‘Irish’ family of the New Testament. The text of the Catholic Epistles in ‘The Book of Armagh’ is closely related textually to the biblical lemmata cited in a seventh-century Latin commentary on these Epistles, written in the south of Ireland, indicating that there must have been a text of the latter which circulated freely in both the north and the south of Ireland over a long period.<sup>63</sup> The other remarkable feature of the Gospel-manuscripts from Armagh is that, despite a chronological spread of over three centuries, they reveal a significant degree of agreement in variant readings (and even in script), suggesting aspects of conservatism in its library and scriptorium.

Iona, on the other hand, highlights a paradox of evidence which may have relevance to other monastic centres. No certainly localisable biblical manuscripts survive from there, yet other evidence indicates that it was a major centre of biblical learning in the seventh century. In his *Life of the founder, Colum Cille, Vita Sancti Columbae*, Adomnán portrayed the saint as frequently

---

<sup>62</sup> D. N. Dumville, ‘Mael Brigte mac Tornáin, pluralist coarb (†927); *The Journal of Celtic Studies* 4 (2003).

<sup>63</sup> M. McNamara, ‘The text of the Latin Bible in the early Irish Church: some data and desiderata’, in *Ireland and Christendom*, edd. Ní Chatháin and Richter, pp. 7-55, at p. 51.

engaged in copying the psalms and checking for copyists' errors.<sup>64</sup> It could of course be argued that, writing almost a century after the saint's time, Adomnán was re-creating an idealised Iona where biblical learning reigned supreme. Even if that were so, it would provide valuable information about what constituted his own scholarly ideals as abbot of Iona and coarb (successor, heir) of Colum Cille at the close of the seventh century. On the other hand, if we accept Máire Herbert's thesis that Adomnán's stories about Colum Cille are based on first-hand testimony committed to writing soon after the saint's death in 597,<sup>65</sup> then it appears that Iona's learning even then was centered on the Bible.

That conclusion also accords with statements in *Amrae Coluim Chille*, a eulogy composed soon after the saint's death, which identifies one of his favourite intellectual activities as interpreting the psalms, *Glinnsius salmu*.<sup>66</sup> If we suppose that the etymon of this verb is Old-Irish *glinn* ('sure', 'clear'), the meaning seems to be that 'he made certain the text of the psalms', although precisely how he achieved this is unclear. Perhaps it involved careful collation with the exemplar, as described by Adomnán; perhaps, as suggested by a later Irish glossator of the *Amrae*, it means that 'he separated the psalms under *obelus* and asterisk'. The latter process would have involved inserting critical signs in the text of the psalms, following a convention first used by Jerome when he produced the *Psalterium Gallicanum*, whereby he added asterisks and obeli to indicate, respectively, readings added to or subtracted from his source (Origen's Hexapla). Since Colum Cille presumably did not have a copy of the Hexapla, he may have been collating the *Gallicanum* (or Vulgate) Psalter with the *Hebraicum*,

<sup>64</sup> For example, I.23: *Adomnán's Life of Columba*, edd. & transl. Alan Orr Anderson & M.O. Anderson, (2nd edn, Oxford 1991), pp. 50-1; *Adomnán of Iona, Life of St Columba*, transl. Richard Sharpe (Harmondsworth 1995), pp. 129-30.

<sup>65</sup> Máire Herbert, *Iona, Kells, and Derry: The History and Hagiography of the Monastic Familia of Columba* (Oxford 1988), especially pp. 12-22.

<sup>66</sup> W. Stokes, 'The Bodleian *Amra Choluimb Chille*', *Revue celtique* 20 (1899) 31-55, 132-83, 248-89, 400-37, and 21 (1900) 133-6, at pp. 252-3 (§54), who offered the vague translation 'he ascertained the psalms'.

Jerome's other, more scholarly, version of the Psalms. Significantly, that very process underlies the critical obeli and asterisks found in the *Cathach*, a Psalter not later than the first half of the seventh century with close associations with Colum Cille's own people, Cenél Conaill, a branch of Uí Néill.

Another indirect source of information on Iona's biblical learning in the decades after Colum Cille's time is Cummianus's letter to Abbot Ségéne and the elders of Iona (about 633) on the Paschal controversy.<sup>67</sup> Though apologetic in purpose and technical (computistical) in content, the letter's rhetorical strategy is exegetical. Cummianus's ultimate recourse for his arguments is the truth of Scripture which he expounds as a biblical scholar. Moreover, the contents of his letter imply that the audience at Iona was thoroughly conversant with his biblical sources and exegetical strategy. Indeed, the reason why the Paschal question aroused such animus was precisely because the issues which it raised ultimately concerned the proper interpretation of the Scriptures.<sup>68</sup> Finally, there is Adomnán's *De locis sanctis* which, though geographical in content, is exegetical in purpose – indeed, a number of passages demonstrates his exegetical skills at work. This quasi-exegetical work reveals much about both the biblical texts and the library of Patristic commentaries available at Iona in the late seventh century.<sup>69</sup>

(2) Evidence from biblical commentaries and glosses also sheds light on the scholarly methods of the Gaelic schools. Bernhard Bischoff identified the most prominent of such features, for example the frequent recourse to comparisons introduced by Latin *more* (as in the phrase *more aurore consurgentis* to describe how the miracle of Zachary's restored speech spread: Luke 1:65), and

<sup>67</sup> *Cummian's Letter 'De Contouersia Paschali'*, edd. & transll. Maura Walsh & D. Ó Cróinín (Toronto 1988)

<sup>68</sup> As suggested by T.M. Charles-Edwards, *Early Christian Ireland* (Cambridge 2000), pp. 413-15.

<sup>69</sup> J.-M. Picard, 'The Bible used by Adomnán', in *Ireland and Christendom*, edd. Ní Chatháin & Richter, pp. 246-57.

the highlighting of a crucial word from Scripture in the *tres linguae sacrae*, Hebrew, Greek, and Latin (for example, ‘Psalmorum liber grece Psalterium, ebreice Nablum, latine Organum dicitur’).<sup>70</sup> But he was at pains to emphasise that, while many of these topoi are attested elsewhere in late Antique and Patristic writings, what made them characteristically ‘Irish’ was their frequent, almost obsessive, use by Gaelic authors. The fact that these features occur elsewhere in Hiberno-Latin texts, especially in grammatical and computistical works, strongly suggests that they were inculcated as essentials of the ecclesiastical curriculum. Some of these methods are attested not only in Hiberno-Latin commentaries but even in native Gaelic literature. For example, the Middle-Irish prefaces to *Féilire Oengusso* (‘The Martyrology of Oengus’) begin with the rhetorical topoi of *locus*, *tempus*, *persona*, and *causa scribendi*;<sup>71</sup> in the secular law-tract *Críth gablach*, the author arranged and enumerated its information based on some mystical numbers (notably seven);<sup>72</sup> and even the secular saga *Longes mac nUislenn* begins with the question-and-answer formula of the exegetical schools, *Cid dia-mboí* (‘why was?’) and *ní ansae* (‘not difficult’).<sup>73</sup>

A major formative influence on Gaelic methods of glossing was Pelagius’s commentary on the Pauline Epistles. From Pelagius (I should argue), the Gaels first learned the convention of offering various (usually contradictory) interpretations introduced by ‘the formula of doubt’, *aliter*. From him they copied the technique of the ‘negative method of exegesis’,<sup>74</sup> whereby the meaning of a biblical passage is elucidated by emphasising what it does not mean. For example, I Thessalonians 3:13, which refers to

<sup>70</sup> ‘Turning-points’, pp. 82-8.

<sup>71</sup> *Féilire Oengusso Céili Dé – The Martyrology of Oengus the Culdee*, ed. & transl. Whitley Stokes (London 1905), pp. 2-15.

<sup>72</sup> *Críth Gablach*, ed. D. A. Binchy (Dublin 1941).

<sup>73</sup> *Longes mac n-Uislenn. The Exile of the Sons of Uisliu*, ed. & transl. Vernam Hull (New York 1949), pp. 43, 60.

<sup>74</sup> *Pelagius’s Expositions of Thirteen Epistles of St Paul*, ed. Souter, I.66.

the coming of Christ CUM OMNIBUS SANCTIS EIUS, is glossed *niba úaithed dondriga* ('it will not be singly that he will come').<sup>75</sup>

Manuscripts of the Bible shed light on another vital area of Gaelic cultural history, the development of the so-called Insular system of scripts. As I have already noted,<sup>76</sup> since the Bible was the most venerated and widely used text of the Church, scribes would dedicate their finest calligraphical and decorating skills to copying it. It is probably no accident that the two earliest witnesses to the scripts current in Ireland at the beginning of our period are biblical: the Springmount Bog wax-tablets with their text of Psalms 30-32 and the copy of the Psalter known as the *Cathach*. In the later seventh century, when the full Insular system can be seen, Gaelic biblical manuscripts exhibit the whole range of scripts from the most formal Insular Half-uncial of the de-luxe Gospels to the humbler grades of Insular minuscule of the pocket-gospelbooks and the glosses. Moreover, the deployment of a hierarchy of scripts within the same Scriptural manuscript could indicate a corresponding hierarchy of importance for the matter which it contained. For example, in 'The Southampton Psalter' (written about 1000) the main text of the Psalms is in Insular Half-uncial, the traditional script for such a text; the biblical heading (*titulus*) before each Psalm appears in the newly emerging formal Gaelic minuscule (which ultimately became the 'national' hand); the *argumentum* (offering different lines of interpretation for each Psalm) entered on the margin beside the opening words of each Psalm is in a smaller version of the latter; while, at the lowest level, the interlinear glosses are in a less formal or more cursive version of the minuscule.

(3) Biblical texts and Hiberno-Latin commentaries bear witness to Gaelic contacts with the rest of Western Christendom – in the first instance by what the Gaelic Churches received. Source-

<sup>75</sup> *Thesaurus Palaeohibernicus*, edd. & transl. Stokes & Strachan, I.658 (Wb 25a38).

<sup>76</sup> See above, n. \$\$

studies of the commentaries indicate not only which external sources were available to Gaelic exegetes but also which ones they preferred. It seems that Jerome occupied first position, followed by Augustine and Gregory the Great. But the discovery or identification of less famous and anonymous commentaries can shed new light on old historical problems. Take, for example, a recently identified commentary on the Psalms, the so-called *Anonymus ad seniores*, composed in a Benedictine monastery in southern Gaul about the middle of the first half of the seventh century. Martin McNamara has shown that the christian *tituli* which precede each Psalm in the *Cathach* are closely related to this anonymous commentary.<sup>77</sup> Unfortunately it is not yet possible to determine whether one depends on the other or whether they derive from a common source. If dependence of the *Cathach* on the *Anonymus* could be demonstrated, it would provide a *terminus post quem* for the *Cathach*.

The possibilities of biblical texts as historical evidence for Gaelic contacts with the rest of the Western Churches are no less important. During the early Middle Ages, say from about 600 to about 800, three types of biblical text were circulating in the Gaelic areas: Old-Latin or pre-Jerome version(s), the Vulgate of St Jerome, and the 'mixed' text which is conventionally characterised as a Vulgate base-text with an admixture of Old-Latin readings, although one could argue that in the case of the Gaelic world the converse is also possible, that is, an Old-Latin base-text with an admixture of Vulgate readings. In the earliest period of Irish christianity, the fifth and probably the first half of the sixth century, before the appearance of Jerome's Vulgate in Ireland, the choice was probably limited. At most one could say that a particular author or church might favour a particular version of the Old Latin; a good example is St Patrick, who used a version of the

---

<sup>77</sup> M. McNamara, 'Some affiliations of the St Columba series of Psalm headings: a preliminary study', *Proceedings of the Irish Biblical Association* 21 (1998) 87-111 and 22 (1999); for a reprint, see McNamara, *The Psalms*, pp. 302-52.



Old-Latin Bible which was also current in the Gallican Church during the fifth century, but he used a Vulgate text of Acts.<sup>78</sup> Subsequently, with the arrival of the whole of Jerome's Vulgate in the Gaelic world, important churches in Ireland had choices. The version of the Bible used by a particular church is likely to be indicative of its relations with important christian communities in Britain or on the Continent which could supply such versions, perhaps concomitant with the introduction of new liturgical practices. One is reminded of Samuel Berger's rather hyperbolic claim: 'L'histoire de la "Vulgate" suit pas à pas le progrès de l'Église romaine en Irlande et en Grand-Bretagne ... c'est pas autre chose que l'histoire des relations de ces pays avec le continent, et particulièrement avec l'Église de Rome'.<sup>79</sup>

Speaking of Ireland specifically, Berger characterised the textual history of the Bible there as a gradual displacement of the Old-Latin version by the Vulgate, a process which he attributed to Ireland's closer relations with Rome in the seventh century. Certainly, the first part of his hypothesis harmonises with evidence from *Codex Usserianus Primus* whose Old-Latin text was glossed in the later seventh century in a number of places by the corresponding Vulgate reading.<sup>80</sup> But the process was neither as steady nor as inevitable as suggested by Berger. 'The Gospel of Mulling' (datable to the later eighth or the first half of the ninth century) shows a wide variety of text-types: Old Latin, mixed, and Vulgate.<sup>81</sup> On the other hand, the Vulgate Psalter (the *Gallicanum*) seems to have reached Ireland not later than the second half of the sixth century, as is suggested by the Psalm-quotations in the writings of Columbanus (543–615). In the words of James F. Kenney, the adoption of the Vulgate 'was very gradual both as

<sup>78</sup> See L. Bieler, 'Der Bibeltext des heiligen Patrick', *Biblica* 28 (1947) 31-58 and 236-63.

<sup>79</sup> Samuel Berger, *Histoire de la Vulgate pendant les premiers siècles du Moyen Age* (Paris 1893), part 1, chapter 3.

<sup>80</sup> See Ó Néill, 'The earliest dry-point glosses', p. 7.

<sup>81</sup> P. Doyle, 'The Latin Bible in Ireland: its origins and growth', *Proceedings of the Irish Biblical Association* 1 (1976) 30-45.

regards the several divisions of the Bible and as regards the different churches'.<sup>82</sup>

By the seventh century biblical texts and commentaries were being carried from the Gaelic areas to the Continent. The pattern of their diffusion corresponds very well with the routes and resting-places of Gaelic *peregrini* and missionaries. Indeed, the evidence of biblical manuscripts led Berger to assert that the characteristically mixed text of the Gospels found in the so-called 'Celtic' family (witnesses DELQR),<sup>83</sup> a Vulgate-text with some Old-Latin readings, was propagated by Gaelic *peregrini* throughout western Europe. However, Bonifatius Fischer has argued that all of these mixed texts, including the 'Celtic' family, probably derive from an Italian archetype of the sixth century. In any case, these Gaelic manuscripts bear witness to a strong exporting trend. A survey of the surviving Gaelic biblical manuscripts catalogued in *Codices Latini Antiquiores* (and therefore datable before approximately 800) gives a grand total of 35 copies, of which 25 ended up outside the Gaelic world: 13 in Germany, 6 in Italy, 4 in England, and 2 in France.<sup>84</sup> The same conclusion holds true for Hiberno-Latin commentaries: of those listed by Bischoff (and presumed to have been composed in Ireland) not a single manuscript copy has survived in Ireland or Scotland; they are found only in Continental copies which date mainly from the eighth and ninth centuries.

Although Fischer has listed four Gaelic biblical manuscripts that found their way to Anglo-Saxon England, none of them, surprisingly, belongs to the period of intense Gaelic missionary activity in Northumbria and the Midlands from 635 to 664. Only one such candidate has been suggested, the Gospel-fragments in

---

<sup>82</sup> *The Sources*, p. 627.

<sup>83</sup> See below, pp. \$\$-\$.

<sup>84</sup> Numbers from Bonifatius Fischer, *Lateinische Bibelhandschriften im frühen Mittelalter* (Freiburg im Breisgau 1985), p. 98. Contrast the corresponding figures for Anglo-Saxon England: a grand total of 47, of which 14 were imported and only 16 exported.

Durham, Cathedral Library, MS. C.iii.20 *et al.*.<sup>85</sup> Yet considerable indirect evidence survives to suggest that Gaelic copies of biblical texts and commentaries were circulating widely in Northumbria in the early eighth century. The showpiece of Northumbrian bibles, *Codex Amiatinus*, famous for its excellent text of the Vulgate (imported from Italy), has its own anomalies. Its copy of the Catholic Epistles reveals numerous readings of the ‘Celtic’ type;<sup>86</sup> and its text of the psalms is Jerome’s *Hebraicum* version but in an identifiably Gaelic recension.<sup>87</sup> Other Gaelic biblical texts were circulating in Northumbria as late as the eleventh and twelfth centuries as witnessed by two copies from that period of Bede’s commentary on the Apocalypse in which Bede’s biblical lemmata have been replaced by those from a text closely related to that in ‘The Book of Armagh’.<sup>88</sup>

Likewise, Gaelic biblical commentaries were being copied, read, and criticised in Northumbria during the eighth century. A notable example is a commentary on the Psalms which ends with a scribal colophon stating that ‘Edilberict filius Berictfridi scripsit hanc glosam’. Although Edilberict (Æðilberht) may not have been the author, there is little doubt that the commentary was composed by a Northumbrian scholar using Gaelic works on the Psalms.<sup>89</sup> Equally, the presence in it of some Old-English glosses of Northumbrian dialect and eighth-century date indicates that the commentary circulated during that period. Even more revealing is its comment on the lemma NON EXACERBAUIT SERMONES

<sup>85</sup> C. D. Verey, ‘The Gospel texts at Lindisfarne at the time of St Cuthbert’, in *St Cuthbert, his Cult and his Community to AD 1200*, edd. G. Bonner *et al.* (Woodbridge 1989), pp. 143-50, who has characterised it as ‘Northumbria[n] before Whitby’ (p. 145). For the manuscript, see E. A. Lowe, *Codices Latini Antiquiores* (11 vols & supplement, Oxford 1934-71), II, no. 147.

<sup>86</sup> As is evident from the textual apparatus in *Nouum Testamentum Domini Nostri Iesu Christi latine secundum Editionem Sancti Hieronymi*, edd. John Wordsworth & H. J. White (Oxford 1889-98), part III, fasc. 2. See further C. Charlier’s review in *Revue bénédictine* 61 (1951) 200-1.

<sup>87</sup> *Sancti Hieronymi Psalterium iuxta Hebraeos*, ed. H. de Sainte-Marie (Roma 1954), pp. xxii-xxiii.

<sup>88</sup> H. F. D. Sparks, ‘A Celtic text of the Latin Apocalypse preserved in two Durham manuscripts of Bede’s commentary on the Apocalypse’, *Journal of Theological Studies*, new series 5 (1954) 227-31; and *Bedaes Presbyteri Expositio Apocalypseos*, ed. Roger Gryson (Turnhout 2001), pp. 189-92.

<sup>89</sup> *Glossa in Psalmos: The Hiberno-Latin Gloss on the Psalms of Codex Palatinus Latinus 68 (Psalms 39:11–151:7)*, ed. Martin McNamara (Roma 1986), especially pp. 64-8 and 74-5.

(Psalm 104:28): ‘id est in noua enim translatione: non exacerbauerunt’.<sup>90</sup> These words, which were offered as an alternative to the *Gallicanum* reading of the lemma, represent the corresponding reading of the *Psalterium Romanum*. What did the commentator mean by identifying this reading as from *noua translatione*? In Northumbria from as early as the 650s the *Romanum* was the Psalter of the ‘Roman’ party, promoted by such notables as Benedict Biscop, Wilfrid, and Queen Eanflæd. For a Northumbrian exegete of the eighth century to describe it as *noua* (‘recent’) suggests the viewpoint of someone who still adhered to the *Gallicanum*, the version which had been bequeathed by the Gaelic mission of 635. Such a person is likely to have been attached to a Northumbrian church which maintained close ties with Iona. Recall that the Psalter-quotations in the Anonymous Life of St Cuthbert, written at Lindisfarne in the early years of the eighth century, also have a strong *Gallicanum* character.

Even Bede with his predilection for the traditional Latin Fathers reveals in his works considerable knowledge of Gaelic biblical commentaries. He certainly knew Adomnán’s *De locis sanctis* of which he prepared his own abbreviated version. And he cited *De mirabilibus sacrae scripturae*; *De ordine creaturarum*; Pseudo-Jerome, *Expositio quattuor euangeliorum*; the anonymous commentary on the Catholic Epistles; and Pseudo-Hilary’s commentary on the Catholic Epistles<sup>91</sup> – a list which may grow as critical editions of Bede’s biblical commentaries continue to be published. However, Bede was generally cautious in his use of such Gaelic commentaries; in his works they ‘filled in the details or provided an alternate interpretation after the patristic one had been given’.<sup>92</sup>

---

<sup>90</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 219.

<sup>91</sup> J. F. T. Kelly, ‘Irish influence in England after the Synod of Whitby: some new literary evidence’, *Éire-Ireland* 10 (1975) 35-47; and ‘The Venerable Bede and Hiberno-Latin exegesis’, in *Sources of Anglo-Saxon Culture*, edd. Paul Szarmach & V. D. Oggins (Kalamazoo, MI 1986), pp. 65-75.

<sup>92</sup> Kelly, ‘The Venerable Bede’, p. 71.

(4) From a historical perspective the most interesting manifestation of biblical influence on Gaelic society was the deliberate modelling of important aspects of its culture on the Old Testament, especially the Pentateuch. This dependence is well documented in Irish law, both secular and ecclesiastical.<sup>93</sup> In the words of Donnchadh Ó Corráin, ‘Careful comparison of Irish law with scripture shows that where the Pentateuch provided detailed rules of the law, these were very often adapted to the latter...’.<sup>94</sup> A few examples will suffice. The biblical title of ‘levite’ and its attendant privileges seem to have been extended in Gaelic society to all members of the learned classes, secular as well as religious. The biblical notions of the levitical city with its carefully measured environs and of the city of refuge where asylum was given to those who had committed involuntary manslaughter (Numbers 35:1-15) were applied to major Irish church-sites such as Armagh and Kildare. Offerings made to the Church could not be rescinded, in accordance with Leviticus 27:28. A problem of prohibited degrees of consanguinity in marriage was solved by reference to a story in Numbers. When Salphaad died without male issue, his five daughters begged Moses for ‘a possession among their father’s kindred’ (Numbers 27:6). Moses judged that the women could inherit their father’s property but only if they married within their tribe; at the same time the ban on marriage within the prohibited degrees was circumvented by having them marry ‘sons of their paternal uncle’ (Numbers 36:11). For Irish jurists this story provided a legal precedent to justify the Gaelic practice of parallel cousin marriage and with the same end in view – to avoid alienation of family-property.<sup>95</sup>

Gaelic jurists had recourse to biblical exegesis to construct a suitable ideology for native vis-à-vis ecclesiastical law. They

---

<sup>93</sup> R. Kottje, *Studien zum Einfluss des Alten Testaments auf Recht und Liturgie des frühen Mittelalters* (6.–8. Jahrhundert) (2nd edn, Bonn 1970).

<sup>94</sup> ‘The laws of the Irish’, p. 395.

<sup>95</sup> D. Ó Corráin, ‘Irish law and canon law’, in *Ireland and Europe*, edd. Ní Chatháin & Richter, pp. 157-66, at 157-61.

argued that, just as the law of the Old Testament (symbolised by Moses) had intrinsic merit as a precursor of the revealed law of Christ, so Gaelic secular law bore a similar relationship to christianity (symbolised by Patrick). Thus they made their case in the second (ninth-century) prologue to the *Senchas már*, the most ambitious collection of native law.<sup>96</sup> Coincidentally, the same prologue appeals to another Old-Testament precedent, this one stylistic. It relates that after the arrival of christianity the authority and language of the native learned classes became subject to those who possessed *bérlae bán*, literally ‘the white (or clear) language’.<sup>97</sup> Elsewhere this odd phrase is more precisely defined as ‘the white/clear language of the *Beati*’ (Psalm 118). Since Psalm 118 was regarded in the Gaelic Churches as the epitome of the whole Psalter, it seems likely that the Latin Psalms were being proposed as a stylistic model for Irish prose.

The New Testament was also mined for models and *exempla*. For example, while the idea of constructing lengthy genealogies of the ruling secular families was probably inspired by similar genealogies in the Old Testament,<sup>98</sup> the realisation of these genealogies in written form was based on the model of the Gospels. Recall that the Gospels of both Matthew (1:1-17) and Luke (3:23-38) give genealogies for Christ, but, whereas Matthew proceeds from Abraham – downwards as it were –, Luke begins with Christ and works backwards to Adam. Both types are found in the Irish genealogies, the latter described as *ab inferioribus ad superiora*, the former as *a superioribus ad inferiora*.<sup>99</sup> Illuminated copies of the Gospels, especially Matthew’s Gospel which assigns

<sup>96</sup> K. McCone, ‘Dubthach maccu Lugair and a matter of life and death in the Pseudo-Historical Prologue to the *Senchas már*’, *Peritia* 5 (1986) 1-35; and J. Carey, ‘An edition of the Pseudo-Historical Prologue to the *Senchas már*’, *Ériu* 45 (1994) 1-32.

<sup>97</sup> Carey, ‘An edition’, pp. 12 and 19.

<sup>98</sup> As argued by Ó Corráin, ‘Creating the past’.

<sup>99</sup> For example, a sub-section of the Leinster genealogies ends ‘in genelogia .iiii. istorum filiorum ordo ascensionis ab inferioribus ad superiora ascendens’: *Corpus Genealogiarum Hiberniae*, I, ed. M. A. O’Brien (Dublin 1962; 2nd edn, by J. V. Kelleher, 1976), p. 26.

artistic prominence to Christ's genealogy, may have provided the visual model for these secular genealogies.<sup>100</sup>

But why was there this intense interest in the legal minutiae of the Old Testament and why was its use normative in Gaelic law? The obvious answer seems to be that some aspects of Jewish culture and intellectual life struck a chord with Gaelic ecclesiastics – for example, notions of a privileged priestly caste and the need to keep hereditary property within the family. But while it is one thing to recognise parallels between the Gaelic christian and the Hebrew Old-Testament worlds, it is quite another matter to legislate on them – especially so when the orthodox approach to the Old Testament in the Western Church was to regard it at best as a precursor of the New Testament, which needed to be reconciled by allegory with the superior christian truths of the latter. I use 'allegory' here in the broad sense of any attempt to discover a hidden christian meaning in the Old-Testament text, whether it be moral, christological, or mystical, to mention the three most common approaches.

Indeed, in his Quiggin Pamphlet, Thomas Charles-Edwards has suggested that the use of the Old Testament by Gaelic jurists in the *Hibernensis* is 'founded upon exegesis – specifically of the moral sense'.<sup>101</sup> While one could hardly agree more with the general tenor of his statement, his privileging of the moral approach is debatable. On the face of it, the example which he has given – Gaelic jurists proposing the prostitute Rahab as a model of hospitality rewarded – seems to illustrate a moral application. But that is because Rahab serves here as an *exemplum*, a topos which of its nature selectively moralises. In biblical exegesis as practised by the Gaels, the moral sense in a fourfold scheme of interpretations refers 'to every holy person', in other words, contemporary christians, as explained by the Old-Irish 'Treatise on

<sup>100</sup> On the special treatment accorded to the Matthew genealogy, see P. McGurk, 'The Gospel book in Celtic lands', in *Ireland and Christendom*, edd. Ní Chatháin & Richter, pp. 165-89, at p. 168.

<sup>101</sup> *The Early Mediaeval Gaelic Lawyer*, p. 21.

the Psalter'.<sup>102</sup> It seems more likely that Gaelic jurists' treatment of the Old Testament is based on literal and historical interpretation and ultimately on a sense that the Old Testament should be taken seriously in its own right. This approach (I suggest) derives from the Antiochene school of exegesis, which, in contradistinction to the allegorical approach of the Alexandrian school, advocated the primacy of literal and historical interpretation. In the Gaelic world the Antiochene approach seems to have been known mainly from the commentary on the Psalms by Theodore of Mopsuestia (translated from Greek into Latin by Julian of Eclanum)<sup>103</sup> and from another, recently discovered, anonymous commentary in which the Psalms are interpreted exclusively with reference to David and Saul.<sup>104</sup> I do not mean to suggest that Gaelic exegetes were exclusively Antiochene. In this matter, as in liturgy, they were eclectic. Nor should this predilection for the Old Testament be seen as universal; future research may indicate that it was cultivated at only some schools in the Gaelic world, perhaps the same centres where such works as *Liber ex Lege Moysi* and *De decimis* were written.

III. As for future research, three areas call for special attention. The first is a study of the text of the Bible in the Gaelic areas. Here the focus is likely to remain on the Gospels and the Psalms, which are the books best represented in the surviving biblical manuscripts. Of the two, the Psalms have received closer attention, though hardly to the point where 'the Psalter text tradition has been thoroughly examined'.<sup>105</sup> A group of later *Gallicanum* Psalters from the Gaelic world, dating from the tenth to the twelfth century, has not been analysed to determine by collation where they stand in relation to each other and to the earlier copies of the Psalter. There is some preliminary evidence to

<sup>102</sup> *Morolus fri cech nóib* (which I translate as 'The moral interpretation applies to every holy person'): *Hibernica Minora*, ed. & transl. Meyer, p. 30.

<sup>103</sup> Dekkers & Gaar, *Clavis*, pp. 262-4, and especially no. 777a.

<sup>104</sup> McNamara, 'Tradition', pp. 342-6; and *Incerti Auctoris Expositio*, ed. De Coninck.

<sup>105</sup> McNamara, 'The text of the Latin Bible', p. 53.



suggest that, while preserving characteristic readings of the ‘Celtic’ family, they have also incorporated ‘new’ variants from carolingian Psalters.

As for the Gospels, the major desideratum is a collation and textual evaluation of the Gaelic witnesses, in all some twenty-five manuscripts or fragments as well as six others with strong Gaelic connexions. This task has not yet been undertaken, no doubt because of its daunting nature, but a more subtle impediment has been the traditional deference accorded to the so-called ‘Celtic’ family of witnesses (identified by the sigla DELQR)<sup>106</sup> as the benchmark for Gaelic Gospel-texts. The editors of the Vulgate New Testament, John Wordsworth and H. J. White, based their identification of this ‘Celtic’ family on readings which its representatives shared against other families in the western European textual tradition of the Gospels. In particular they identified a set of specific peculiarities common to this family: a good base-text of the Vulgate which appears to have been occasionally corrected against Greek manuscripts; a considerable number of Old-Latin readings (especially in the Gospel of Matthew); and many redundant readings and inversions of words.

However, the origins of the ‘Celtic’ family have not been satisfactorily determined. Kenney thought that ‘the great majority [of its distinctive readings] ... have but one object – rendering the text easy to follow by persons not perfectly familiar with the Latin language’, and that this process took place in the monastic churches of Ireland.<sup>107</sup> However, for Bonifatius Fischer this family (and other representatives of the so-called mixed text) is merely an offshoot of a text already formed in Italy by the early sixth century.<sup>108</sup> The historical issue here is whether Gaelic

<sup>106</sup> Dublin, Trinity College, MS. 52 (D); London, British Library, MS. Egerton 609 (E); Lichfield, Cathedral Library, MS. Lich. 1 (‘The Gospels of St Chad’ [L]); Dublin, Trinity College, MS. 58 (Q); Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS. Auct. D.ii.19 (S.C. 3946) (R). See above, n. 74.

<sup>107</sup> Kenney, *The Sources*, p. 626.

<sup>108</sup> Bonifatius Fischer, *Beiträge zur Geschichte der lateinischen Bibeltex-te* (Freiburg im Breisgau 1986) pp. 224-31.

ecclesiastical scholars developed their own text of the Gospels or whether they accepted one from outside with all its implications of close ties (including liturgical influences) to a foreign ecclesiastical centre.

Moreover, the fact that only two (possibly three) of the five manuscripts of the 'Celtic' family (DR and possibly Q) came from the Gaelic regions themselves hardly makes this family a suitable yardstick against which to measure the readings of other Gaelic copies of the Gospels: hence the need for a full collation of all the Gaelic Gospel-manuscripts.<sup>109</sup> Among other things such a study would reveal whether there is a distinctive 'Gaelic' as against 'Celtic' text, whether the characteristic mixed text (a Vulgate-base with some Old-Latin readings) of Gaelic gospelbooks arose in the Gaelic world or was imported from abroad, and what were the nature and origins of the Old-Latin readings which circulated in the Gaelic world. A start has been made by Martin McNamara: by analysing crucial passages from selected Gaelic gospelbooks he has shown that while the Old-Latin element is strong it is not evenly distributed; and that conclusion in turn suggests that the texts of these gospelbooks do not all 'descend from a common original'.<sup>110</sup> McNamara has also shown that four gospelbooks associated with Armagh share readings in common against texts DELQR.<sup>111</sup> This conclusion has historical implications not only for the importance of Armagh as an independent centre of biblical studies but also for the perdurance there of a distinctive text of the Gospels.

The second major area of research will be a full investigation of the mainly anonymous commentaries proposed by Bischoff as Hiberno-Latin, an enterprise best carried out by means of editions. Such editions are in progress, being published as a sub-series,

---

<sup>109</sup> Proposed by Martin McNamara, *Studies on Texts of Early Irish Latin Gospels (A.D. 600-1200)* (Steenbrugge 1990), pp. 8-11.

<sup>110</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 29.

<sup>111</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 110-11.

known as *Scriptores Celtigenae*,<sup>112</sup> of *Corpus Christianorum, Series Latina*. Those commentaries whose Gaelic origin can be established should provide valuable information about biblical readings current in the Gaelic world, complementing the findings from the Psalter-and-Gospel collation-project while also shedding light on those books of the Bible poorly attested in surviving manuscripts. More importantly, editions of these commentaries will identify the sources available in the early mediaeval Gaelic schools and the methods of exegesis which they employed. From such studies may also emerge new evidence of connexions between biblical commentaries, which in turn may lead to better knowledge about the centres where they were produced.<sup>113</sup>

The third area of research comprises the glosses which accompany many biblical texts and some commentaries. The Old-Irish glosses have been the exclusive preserve of Celtic philologists, with the result that much is known about their phonology and morphology but very little about their intellectual content and their functions in relation to the main text on which they offer comments. Even more neglected are the numerous glosses in Latin which often accompany the vernacular glosses and whose relationship to the latter is hardly ever considered. But what is first needed is a taxonomy of these glosses, a process for which models are readily available in other early mediaeval disciplines. For example, scholars of Old English have established criteria for identifying pedagogical glosses composed by Anglo-Saxon teachers for use in the classroom,<sup>114</sup> criteria which could have useful application to Old-Irish glosses.

These investigations should help to identify the major influences from abroad which shaped Gaelic texts of the Bible and

---

<sup>112</sup> Several have already been published: see 'Bibliography', A.II, below.

<sup>113</sup> See, for example, Breen, 'Some seventh-century Hiberno-Latin texts'.

<sup>114</sup> G. R. Wieland, 'The glossed manuscript: classbook or library book?', *Anglo-Saxon England* 14 (1985) 153-73.

Gaelic exegesis while also identifying the most prominent centres of biblical studies and their particular contributions.

IV. Finally, some caveats about using biblical materials as historical evidence deserve mention. The first concerns the limits of textual evidence. A common fallacy is to assume that because the biblical text of a particular manuscript has ‘Celtic’ or ‘Irish’ readings, it was necessarily produced in those regions. Manuscripts could be transmitted readily and quickly from one area to another. Thus, a biblical text with characteristically ‘Irish’ readings could have been copied in England; by the opposite process, readings from a Gospel-text of the Italian family could conceivably find their way – via Northumbria – into an Irish gospelbook.

Another problem is how to interpret textual evidence once it has been unearthed. For example, McNamara has recently discovered that ‘The Echternach Gospels’ (Paris, Bibliothèque nationale, MS. latin 9389) have over a hundred readings which agree neither with the Vulgate nor with the ‘Celtic’ family but instead with a gospelbook from Armagh, ‘The MacDurnan Gospels’ (London, Lambeth Palace, MS. 1370).<sup>115</sup> What does one make of this evidence about a famous gospelbook known to have been at Echternach, the principal monastery of Wilbrord’s mission to the Continental *Germani*, but whose origin is a matter of heated debate? Adherents of Julian Brown’s theory that the manuscript was copied at Lindisfarne and is thoroughly Northumbrian in its decoration and calligraphy<sup>116</sup> would probably wish to explain these anomalous readings by reference to Lindisfarne’s close connexions with the Gaelic world and its manuscripts. But those of an opposing camp, who think that ‘The Echternach Gospels’ were

---

<sup>115</sup> M. McNamara, ‘The Echternach and Mac Durnan Gospels: some common readings and their significance’, *Peritia* 6/7 (1987/8) 217-22, reprinted in his *Studies*, pp. 102-11. For the manuscript, see above, n. 55a.

<sup>116</sup> *The Durham Gospels*, facs. edd. C. D. Verey et al. (København 1980). Cf. Julian Brown, *A Palaeographer’s View* (London 1993)

copied in Ireland and brought thence to the Continent, may be tempted to see in these ‘Irish’ readings support for their case.<sup>117</sup> A third possibility is that ‘The Echternach Gospels’ were copied on the Continent – perhaps at Echternach itself – from an exemplar containing these ‘Irish’ readings.

Sometimes the textual evidence is correctly identified but improperly interpreted. Take, for example, G. S. M. Walker’s edition of Columbanus’s writings. Columbanus is frequently found quoting Scripture, and Walker did a good job of identifying these citations, among them 27 from the Psalms.<sup>118</sup> Of these latter he identified 16 as Vulgate, 3 as Old-Latin, 4 as of uncertain origin, and 4 others as ‘peculiar’. The impression conveyed is that Columbanus used a Vulgate (that is, *Gallicanum*) Psalter contaminated by the Old-Latin Psalter(s) and some idiosyncratic readings.<sup>119</sup> But a closer inspection leads to some serious culling. At least 6 readings occur in works once attributed to Columbanus but now regarded as dubious or spurious; two more are merely verbal echoes; and six more are ambiguous, that is, they could be either Old Latin or from the *Gallicanum*. That leaves 13 citations.<sup>120</sup> Most of these can be characterised as from the *Gallicanum* but with a distinctive element of Old-Latin. But what Walker missed was that the Old-Latin element is precisely that normally found in the ‘Irish’ family of the *Gallicanum*.<sup>121</sup> Thus, one could plausibly argue both that Columbanus was still using on the Continent the Psalter-text which he had memorised in Ireland as an oblate and, more significantly from a historical perspective,

<sup>117</sup> D. Ó Cróinín, ‘Rath Melsigi, Willibrord, and the earliest Echternach manuscripts’, *Peritia* 3 (1984) 17-49.

<sup>118</sup> *Sancti Columbani Opera*, ed. & transl. G.S.M. Walker (Dublin 1957), p. 216.

<sup>119</sup> *Ibid.*, p. lxix: ‘Columban’s biblical text ... has been largely assimilated to the Vulgate, but it preserves a proportion of readings from the Old Latin, and in some places represents a version peculiar to himself’.

<sup>120</sup> Psalms 17:29-30, 33:9, 35:10, 41:3, 45:7, 45:11, 49:3, 62:4, 69:2, 96:3, 118:10, 119:7, 146:11.

<sup>121</sup> Represented by the sigla ‘CI’ in the Benedictine edition of the Psalms, *Biblia sacra iuxta Latinam Vulgatam Versionem ad Codicum Fidem: Liber Psalmorum* (Roma 1953), vol. X. For example, at Psalm 17:29, Columbanus has the Old-Latin *illumina* (*Gallicanum illuminas*) with I (C is lacking); at Psalm 35:10, he has Old-Latin *est* (omitted from Ga.) with CI; at Psalm 45:11 he has Old-Latin *dominus* (Ga. *deus*) with CI; at Psalm 49:3 he has Old-Latin *ardebit* (Ga. *exardescit*) with CI.

that the ‘Irish’ text of the *Gallicanum* was well established in Ireland by the second half of the sixth century.

Another caveat concerns the tendency to make too much out of too little. The microanalysis of biblical quotations, especially the tendency to categorise a biblical text as Old-Latin or Vulgate on the evidence of a few readings or even a single reading is perilous. Take the well known scene in Adomnán’s *Vita Sancti Columbae*, where Adomnán recounted how the saint was occupied with copying a Psalter on the night before he died, and how he stopped when he came to the words of Psalm 33:11, ‘Inquirentes autem Dominum non deficient omni bono’.<sup>122</sup> Scholars, seizing on the single word *deficient* and noting that it is the Old-Latin reading (at the corresponding point the Vulgate has *minuentur*), have fretted about whether the saint used a Vulgate or an Old-Latin Psalter. But when the reading is viewed in the context of the full quotation it emerges that Columba’s verse matches verbatim that found in a Psalter from Lyon written in the early sixth century,<sup>123</sup> which has a *Gallicanum* text with a heavy admixture of local Gallican Old-Latin readings. While no conclusion about Columba’s Psalter can be drawn from this single agreement, it must be significant that readings found in the same Lyon Psalter are also present in the Psalm-text of the Springmount wax-tablets, the earliest surviving text of the Psalms from Ireland.<sup>124</sup>

A final caveat (with apologies to George Orwell) should be that ‘all books of the Bible are equal, but some books are more equal than others’. The surviving evidence suggests that Gaelic ecclesiastics of the earlier Middle Ages cherished their own hierarchy of the books of the Bible: first, the Gospels; second, the Psalms; probably in third place, the Pauline Epistles; thereafter

<sup>122</sup> III.23: *Adomnán’s Life*, edd. & transll. Anderson & Anderson, pp. 222/3.

<sup>123</sup> Lyon, Bibliothèque municipale, MS. 425 (+ Paris, Bibliothèque nationale, MS. nouv. acq. lat. 1585). See further Fischer, *Lateinische Bibelhandschriften*, p. 408.

<sup>124</sup> Dublin, National Museum of Ireland, S.A. 1914:2: ed. M. Sheehy, ‘Wax tablets from Springmount Bog’, *apud* McNamara, ‘Psalter text’, pp. 277-80, appendix 1; reprinted by McNamara, *The Psalms*, pp. 116-19.

perhaps the Pentateuch. These were the books which they most frequently copied and on which they most assiduously commented. They are also the books likely to have received the closest textual scrutiny. Accepting this favouritism as a fact of life may in itself be an important historical conclusion.

## Bibliography of suggested reading

### A. PRIMARY SOURCES

#### I. *Biblical manuscripts*

(1) Old Testament, excluding the Psalms

Gent, Universiteitsbibliotheek, MS. 254 [fragments of Job]

Karlsruhe, Badische Landesbibliothek, MS. Aug. perg. 132  
[palimpsest], folios 86, 91-2, 97-9, 101-4, 106-7 [fragments of  
Daniel]

Saint-Omer, Bibliothèque municipale, MS. 342b [fragments of Amos]

Zürich, Staatsarchiv, MS. A.G.19, Nr. XII [fragments of Ezechiel]

The ninth-century catalogue of manuscripts at Sankt Gallen mentions  
as written in ‘Gaelic script’ (*scottice scripti*) *Liber I Genesis in  
quaternionibus* and *Ezechiel propheta in uolumine uno*.

(2) Psalms

Arendal, Aust-Agder-Arkivet, MS. A.A. 190(c)

Cambridge, St John’s College, MS. C.9 (51) (‘Southampton  
Psalter’)

Dublin, National Museum of Ireland, S.A. 1914:2 (‘Springmount  
Bog wax-tablets’)

Dublin, Royal Irish Academy, MS. 12.R.33 (‘*Cathach* of St  
Columba’)

Dublin, Trinity College, MS. 1337 (H.iii.18), folios 1\*-3\*

Dublin, University College Archives, MS. Franciscan A.1 (‘Psalter  
of St Caimín’)

Edinburgh, University Library, MS. 56

Karlsruhe, Badische Landesbibliothek, MS. Aug. perg. 195, folios  
3, 5, 8 [palimpsest]

London, British Library, MS. Additional 36929 (‘Psalter of  
Cormac’)

” ” ” MS. Cotton Galba A.v



” ” ” MS. Cotton Vitellius F.xi  
 Paris, Bibliothèque nationale, MS. français 2452, folios 75-84  
 Roma, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, MS. Vat. Lat. 12910  
 ” ” ” ” ” MS. Vat. Pal. Lat. 65 (‘Coupar  
 Angus Psalter’)  
 Rouen, Bibliothèque municipale, MS. 24 (A.41)

(3) New Testament: Gospels

Cambridge, University Library, MS. Ii.vi.32 (1911) (‘Book of  
 Deer’)  
 Cambridge, MA, Harvard University, Houghton Library, MS. Typ.  
 620  
 Dublin, Trinity College Library, MS. 52 (‘Book of Armagh’),  
 folios 25-104  
 ” ” ” ” MS. 55 (‘Codex Usserianus Primus’)  
 ” ” ” ” MS. 56 (‘Codex Usserianus  
 Secundus’)  
 ” ” ” ” MS. 57 (‘Book of Durrow’)  
 ” ” ” ” MS. 58 (‘Book of Kells’)  
 ” ” ” ” MS. 59 (‘Book of Dimma’)  
 ” ” ” ” MS. 60 (‘Book of Mulling’)  
 ” ” ” ” MS. 60, folios 95-8 [fragments of  
 another gospelbook]  
 Dublin Royal Irish Academy, MS. 24.Q.23 (‘Domnach Airgid’)  
 ” ” ” ” MS. Stowe D.ii.3 (1230), folios 1-11  
 Fulda, Hessische Landesbibliothek, MS. Bonifatianus 3 (‘Cadmug  
 Gospels’)  
 London, British Library, MS. Additional 40618  
 ” ” ” MS. Harley 1023  
 ” ” ” MS. Harley 1802 (‘Gospels of Mael  
 Brigitte’)  
 London, Lambeth Palace, MS. 1370 (771) (‘MacDurnan Gospels’)  
 Milano, Biblioteca Ambrosiana, MS. I.61 sup.  
 Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS. Auct. D.ii.19 (S.C. 3946) (‘Mac  
 Regol Gospels’)  
 ” ” ” MS. Rawlinson G.167 (S.C. 14890)

Oxford, Corpus Christi College, MS. 122  
Sankt Gallen, Stiftsbibliothek, MS. 51  
" " " " MS. 60  
" " " " MS. 1394  
Torino, Biblioteca nazionale, MS. O.iv.20  
Würzburg, Universitätsbibliothek, MS. m.p.th.f. 61

The ninth-century catalogue of manuscripts at Sankt Gallen mentions as *scottice scripti* ('written in Gaelic script') *Euangelium secundum Iohannem in uolumine uno*.

#### (4) New Testament: Other Books

##### Pauline Epistles

Dublin, Trinity College, MS. 52 ('Book of Armagh'), folios 105-49  
Sankt Gallen, Stiftsbibliothek, MS. 1395  
Würzburg, Universitätsbibliothek, MS. m.p.th.f. 12

##### Catholic Epistles

Dublin, Trinity College, MS. 52 ('Book of Armagh'), folios 150-8 [in one manuscript with Apocalypse]  
Torino, Biblioteca nazionale, MS. F.iv.24 [palimpsest]

##### Acts of the Apostles

Dublin, Trinity College, MS. 52 ('Book of Armagh'), folios 171-90

##### Apocalypse

Dublin, Trinity College, MS. 52 ('Book of Armagh'), folios 159v-170r [in one manuscript with Catholic Epistles]

The ninth-century catalogue of manuscripts at Sankt Gallen mentions as *scottice scripti* ('written in Gaelic script') *Epistolae Pauli in uolumine uno*, *Epistolae canonicae VII in uolumine uno*, *Actus Apostolorum in uolumine uno*, *Actus apostolorum et apocalypsis in uolumine uno ueteri*, and two copies of *Apocalypsis in uolumine uno*.

## II. *Published biblical commentaries*

(1) Hiberno-Latin

General

*De mirabilibus sacrae scripturae*, ed. J.-P. Migne *Patrologiae [Latinæ] Cursus Completus* (221 vols, Paris 1844-64), XXXV.2149-200

*Old Testament*

Pentateuch

*Pauca problemsmata de enigmatibus ex tomis canonicis*, ed. G. MacGinty (Turnhout 2000)

Job

*Ecloga quam scripsit Lathcen filius Baith de Moralibus Iob quas Gregorius fecit*, ed. M. Adriaen (Turnhout 1969)

Psalms

- (i) *Glossa in Psalmos: The Hiberno-Latin Gloss on the Psalms of Codex Palatinus Latinus 68 (Psalms 39:11–151:7)*, ed. Martin McNamara (Roma 1986);
- (ii) *Eclogae tractatorum in Psalterium* [excerpts], ed. M.P. Sheehy *apud* M. McNamara, ‘Psalter text and Psalter study in the early Irish Church (A.D. 600-1200)’, *Proceedings of the Royal Irish Academy* 73C (1973) 201-98 (pp. 285-90, appendix III), reprinted by Martin McNamara, *The Psalms in the Early Irish Church* (Sheffield 2000), pp. 19-142;  
— [preface], ed. P. Verkest, ‘The *praefatio* of the Irish “*Eglogae tractatorum in psalterium*”’, *Sacris Erudiri* 40 (2001) 267-92
- (iii) *Pauca de Psalmis David* (excerpts from the Psalm-commentary in *Das Bibelwerk*), ed. M.P. Sheehy *apud* McNamara, ‘Psalter text’, pp. 291-8 (appendix IV), reprinted by McNamara, *The Psalms*, pp. 19-142

## *New Testament*

### Gospels

*Ailerani interpretatio mystica et moralis Domini Iesu Christi*, ed.

Aidan Breen (Dublin 1995)

*Kanon euangeliorum rhythmica*, ed. Donatien De Bruyne, *Préfaces de la Bible latine* (Namur 1920), p. 185

E. A. Lowe, 'An unedited fragment of Irish exegesis in Visigothic script', *Celtica* 5 (1960) 1-7 [commentary on Matthew]

Pseudo-Jerome, *Expositio Quattuor Euangeliorum*, ed. Migne, *Patrologia Latina*, XXX.531-608)

*Commentarium in Lucam*, ed. Joseph F. Kelly, *Scriptores Hiberniae Minores*, II (Turnhout 1974), pp. 1-101

*Expositio Euangelii secundum Marcum*, ed. Michael Cahill (Turnhout 1997)

*Commentarium in Iohannem*, ed. Kelly, *Scriptores Hiberniae Minores*, II.103-31

### Epistles

*Expositio Epistolae Pauli Apostoli ad Hebraeos*, ed. Heinrich Zimmer, *Pelagius in Irland* (Berlin 1901), pp. 420-48 (also in *Patrologia Latina, Supplementum*, ed. Adalbert Hamman [4 vols, Paris 1959-70], IV.1627-53)

*Commentarius in Epistolas Catholicas Scotti Anonymi*, ed. Robert E. McNally, *Scriptores Hiberniae minores*, I (Turnhout 1973), pp. 1-50

*Tractatus Hilarii in Septem Epistulas Canonicas*, ed. McNally, in *Scriptores Hiberniae minores*, I.51-124

## (2) Irish-language commentary

*Hibernica Minora, being a Fragment of an Old-Irish Treatise on the Psalter...*, ed. & transl. Kuno Meyer (Oxford 1894), pp. 1-37

'The Lambeth Commentary', edd. & transll. L. Bieler & J. Carney, *Ériu* 23 (1972) 1-55 [fragmentary commentary on Matthew 5:5-7, 20-22]

### III. *Published Glosses*

(1) Irish-language glosses

Psalms and commentary: edd. & transl. Whitley Stokes & J. Strachan, *Thesaurus Palaeohibernicus* (2 vols & supplement, Cambridge 1901-3 and Halle a. S. 1910; 2nd edn in 2 vols, Dublin 1975), I.3-6

Psalter-commentary: *ibid.*, I.7-483

Proverbs-commentary: *ibid.*, I.508 (Supplement)

Amos and commentary: ed. B. Bischoff, 'Turning-points in the history of Latin exegesis in the early Middle Ages', *Proceedings of the Irish Biblical Association* 1 (1976) 73-160, at p. 108 (no. 10)

Gospel of Matthew: *Thesaurus*, edd. & transl. Stokes & Strachan, I.484

Gospel of Matthew: Bischoff, 'Turning-points', pp. 125-6 (no. 22), and M. Cahill, 'The Würzburg Matthew: status quaestionis', *Peritia* 16 (2002) 1-25, at pp. 15-17

Gospels of Matthew and Luke, ed. P. P. Ó Néill, 'The earliest dry-point glosses in Codex Usserianus Primus', in 'A *Miracle of Learning*': *Studies in Manuscripts and Irish Learning, Essays in Honour of William O'Sullivan*, edd. Toby Barnard *et al.* (Aldershot 1999), pp. 1-28 [addenda and corrigenda in *Peritia* 14 (2000) 430-1]

Gospels of Matthew and Luke: *Thesaurus*, edd. & transl. Stokes & Strachan, I.494-5

Gospels-commentary, ed. & transl. W. Stokes, 'The Irish verses, notes and glosses in Harl. 1802', *Revue celtique* 8 (1887) 346-69 [additions by Bischoff, 'Turning-points', p. 146]

Matthew-commentary: Bischoff, 'Turning-points', p. 115 (no. 17.I)

Luke-commentary: Bischoff, 'Turning-points', p. 132 (no. 29)

Mark-commentary: *Thesaurus*, edd. & transl. Stokes & Strachan, I.484-94

Acts and commentary: *ibid.*, I.495-8

Pauline Epistles: *ibid.*, I.499-712

II Peter: *ibid.*, I.713-14

Pauline Epistles commentary: Bischoff, 'Turning-points', p. 138 (no. 33)

Catholic Epistles commentary: *Commentarius in Epistolas Catholicas Scotti Anonymi*, ed. McNally, pp. 15 (line 481) and 49 (line 67)

(2) Latin glosses

Gospel of Matthew: ed. Cahill, 'The Würzburg Matthew'

Gospels of Matthew and Luke: ed. Ó Néill, 'The earliest dry-point glosses'

## **B. SECONDARY SOURCES**

### **I. *The text of the Bible***

Berger, Samuel, *Histoire de la Vulgate pendant les premiers siècles du moyen âge* (Paris 1893)

Bieler, L., 'Der Bibeltext des heiligen Patrick', *Biblica* 28 (1947) 31-58 and 236-63

Cordoliani, A., 'Le texte de la Bible en Irlande du Ve au IXe siècle: étude sur les manuscrits', *Revue biblique* 57 (1950) 5-39

Davies, L.M., 'The biblical text of the Collectio Canonum Hibernensis', in *Ireland and Europe in the Early Middle Ages: Learning and Literature*, edd. Próinséas Ní Chatháin & M. Richter (Stuttgart 1996), pp. 17-41

Doyle, P., 'The text of St Luke's Gospel in the Book of Mulling', *Proceedings of the Royal Irish Academy* 73C (1973) 177-200

—, 'The Latin Bible in Ireland: its origins and growth', *Proceedings of the Irish Biblical Association* 1 (1976) 30-45

Fischer, Bonifatius, 'Bibelausgaben des frühen Mittelalters', *Settimane di studio del Centro italiano di studi sull'alto medioevo* 10 (1963) 519-600; reprinted in his *Lateinische Bibelhandschriften im frühen Mittelalter* (Freiburg im Breisgau 1985), pp. 35-100

- , ‘Zur Überlieferung altlateinischer Bibeltexte im Mittelalter’, *Nederlands Archief voor Kerkgeschiedenis* 56 (1975) 19-33; reprinted in his *Lateinische Bibelhandschriften*, pp. 404-21
- , *Beiträge zur Geschichte der lateinischen Bibeltexte* (Freiburg im Breisgau 1986), pp. 156-274
- Kenney, James F., *The Sources for the Early History of Ireland: Ecclesiastical. An Introduction and Guide* (New York 1929; 2nd edn, by L. Bieler, 1966)
- McGurk, P., ‘The Irish pocket Gospel book’, *Sacris Erudiri* 8 (1956) 249-70
- , ‘The Gospel book in Celtic lands before A.D. 850: contents and arrangement’, in *Ireland and Christendom: the Bible and the Missions*, edd. Próinséas Ní Chatháin & M. Richter (Stuttgart 1987), pp. 165-89
- McNamara, Martin, ‘Psalter text and Psalter study in the early Irish Church (A.D. 600-1200)’, *Proceedings of the Royal Irish Academy* 73C (1973) 201-98; reprinted in his book, *The Psalms in the Early Irish Church* (Sheffield 2000), pp. 19-142
- , ‘The text of the Latin Bible in the early Irish Church: some data and desiderata’, in *Ireland and Christendom*, edd. Ní Chatháin & Richter, pp. 7-55
- , *Studies on Texts of Early Irish Latin Gospels (A.D. 600-1200)* (Steenbrugge 1990)
- , ‘The biblical text of Sankt Gallen Stiftsbibliothek codex 51: with special reference to the fourth gospel’, in *Ogma: Essays in Celtic Studies in Honour of Próinséas Ní Chatháin*, edd. Michael Richter & J.-M. Picard (Dublin 2002), pp. 262-7
- O’Loughlin, T., ‘The Latin version of the Scriptures in Iona in the late seventh century: the evidence from Adomnán’s *De locis sanctis*’, *Peritia* 8 (1994) 18-26
- Picard, J.-M., ‘The Bible used by Adomnán’, in *Ireland and Christendom*, edd. Ní Chatháin & Richter, pp. 246-57
- Vetus Latina. Die Reste der altlateinischen Bibel nach Petrus Sabatier neu gesammelt und herausgegeben von der Erzabtei Beuron* (Freiburg im Breisgau 1949-)

## II. *Commentaries and Glosses*

- Breen, A., 'Some seventh-century Hiberno-Latin texts and their relationships', *Peritia* 3 (1984) 204-14
- , 'The Biblical text and sources of the Würzburg Pauline glosses (Romans 1-6)', in *Ireland and Europe in the Early Middle Ages*, edd. Ní Chatháin & Richter (1996), pp. 9-16
- Bischoff, Bernhard, 'Wendepunkte in der Geschichte der lateinischen Exegese im Frühmittelalter', *Sacris Erudiri* 6 (1954) 191-281; revised version in his *Mittelalterliche Studien. Ausgewählte Aufsätze zur Schriftkunde und Literaturgeschichte* (3 vols, Stuttgart 1966-81), I.205-73; translated into English as 'Turning-points in the history of Latin exegesis in the early Middle Ages', *Proceedings of the Irish Biblical Association* 1 (1976) 73-160
- Cahill, M., 'The Turin glosses on Mark: towards a cultural profile of the glossator', *Peritia* 13 (1999) 173-93
- , 'The Würzburg Matthew: status quaestionis', *Peritia* 16 (2002), 1-25
- Coccia, E., 'La cultura irlandese precarolingia: miracolo o mito?', *Studi Medievali*, 3rd series, 8 (1967) 257-420
- Ferrari, M. C., 'Die älteste kommentierte Bibelhandschrift und ihr Kontext: das irische Ezechiel-Fragment Zürich, Staatsarchiv W3.19.XII', in *Mittelalterliche volkssprachige Glossen*, edd. Rolf Bergmann *et al.* (Heidelberg 2001), pp. 47-76
- Gorman, M., 'An unedited fragment of an Irish epitome of Augustine's *De Genesi ad litteram*', *Revue des études augustiniennes* 28 (1982) 76-85
- , 'A critique of Bernhard Bischoff's theory of Irish exegesis: the commentary on Genesis in Munich Clm 6302 (Wendepunkte 2)', *Journal of Medieval Latin* 7 (1997) 178-233
- , 'The myth of Hiberno-Latin exegesis,' *Revue bénédictine* 110 (2000) 42-85
- Grosjean, P., 'Sur quelques exégètes irlandais du VIIe siècle', *Sacris Erudiri* 7 (1955) 67-98
- , 'The Hiberno-Latin study of the Gospel of Luke', *Proceedings of the Irish Biblical Association* 1 (1976) 10-29



- Kelly, J. F. T., 'Augustine in Hiberno-Latin literature', *Augustinian Studies* 8 (1977) 139-49
- , 'Pelagius, Pelagianism and the early christian Irish', *Mediaevalia* 2 (1978) 99-124
- , 'The Venerable Bede and Hiberno-Latin exegesis', in *Sources of Anglo-Saxon Culture*, edd. Paul E. Szarmach & V. D. Oggins (Kalalmazoo, MI 1986), pp. 65-75
- , 'Das Bibelwerk: organization and *Quellenanalyse* of the New Testament sections', in *Ireland and Christendom*, edd. Ní Chatháin & Richter (1987), pp. 113-23
- McNally, R. E., 'The *tres linguae sacrae* in early Irish Bible exegesis', *Theological Studies* 19 (1958) 395-403
- , 'The imagination and early Irish biblical exegesis', *Annuaire Mediaevale* 10 (1961) 5-27
- McNamara, Martin, 'Psalter text and Psalter study in the early Irish Church (A.D. 600-1200)', *Proceedings of the Royal Irish Academy* 73C (1973) 201-98; reprinted in his book, *The Psalms in the Early Irish Church*, (Sheffield 2000), pp. 19-142
- , 'Plan and source analysis of *Das Bibelwerk*, Old Testament', in *Ireland and Christendom*, edd. Ní Chatháin & Richter (1987), pp. 84-112
- , 'Tradition and creativity in early Irish Psalter study', in *Ireland and Europe: the Early Church*, edd. Próinseas Ní Chatháin & M. Richter (Stuttgart 1984), pp. 328-89; reprinted in his book, *The Psalms in the Early Irish Church*, pp. 239-301
- , 'Bischoff's Wendepunkte fifty years on', *Revue bénédictine* 110 (2000) 204-37
- Ó Cróinín, D., 'A new seventh-century Irish commentary on Genesis', *Sacris Erudiri* 40 (2001) 231-65
- O'Loughlin, Thomas (ed.), *The Scriptures in Ireland* (Steenbrugge 1999)
- Ó Néill, P. P., 'The Old-Irish Treatise on the Psalter and its Hiberno-Latin background', *Ériu* 30 (1979) 148-64
- , 'Irish transmission of late Antique learning: the case of Theodore of Mopsuestia's commentary on the Psalms', in *Ireland and Europe: Texts and Transmission*, edd. Próinséas Ní Chatháin & M. Richter (Dublin 2000), pp. 68-77

- , ‘The Latin and Old-Irish glosses in Würzburg M.p.th.f.12: unity in diversity’, in *Mittelalterliche volkssprachige Glossen*, edd. Rolf Bergmann *et al.* (Heidelberg 2001), pp. 33-46
- Rittmueller, J., ‘The Gospel commentary of Máel Brigte Ua Máeluanáig and its Hiberno-Latin background’, *Peritia* 2 (1983) 185-214
- Silagi, G., ‘Notwendige Bemerkungen zu Gormans “Critique of Bischoff’s theory of Irish exegesis”’, *Peritia* 12 (1998) 87-94
- Stancliffe, C., ‘Early “Irish” biblical exegesis’, *Texte und Untersuchungen zur Geschichte der altchristlichen Literatur* 115 [= *Studia Patristica* 12] (1975) 361-70
- Wright, C. D., ‘Hiberno-Latin and Irish-influenced biblical commentaries, florilegia, and homily collections’, in *Sources of Anglo-Saxon Literary Culture: a Trial Version*, edd. Frederick M. Biggs *et al.* (Binghamton, NY 1990), pp. 87-123
- , ‘Bischoff’s theory of Irish exegesis and the Genesis commentary in Munich Clm 6302: a critique of a critique’, *Journal of Medieval Latin* 10 (2000) 115-75

### **III. Biblical Glossing**

- Contreni, John J. & P. P. Ó Néill (edd.), *Glossae Divinae Historiae: The Biblical Glosses of John Scottus Eriugena* (Firenze 1997), pp. 47-72
- Draak, M., ‘Construe marks in Hiberno-Latin manuscripts’, *Mededelingen der koninklijke Nederlandse Akademie van Wetenschappen, Afd. Letterkunde*, new series, 20 (1957) 261-82
- Ó Cróinín, D., ‘The earliest Old Irish glosses’, in *Mittelalterliche volkssprachige Glossen*, edd. Bergmann *et al.*, pp. 7-31

### **IV. Other works containing biblical elements**

Ecclesiastical Law

- Davies, L.M., 'The biblical text of the *Collectio Canonum Hibernensis*', in *Ireland and Europe in the Early Middle Ages*, edd. Ní Chatháin & Richter, pp. 17-41
- Sheehy, M.P., 'The Bible and the *Collectio Canonum Hibernensis*', in *Ireland and Christendom*, edd. Ní Chatháin & Richter, pp. 277-83

#### Secular Law

- Bracken, D., 'Immortality and capital punishment: Patristic concepts in Irish law', *Peritia* 9 (1995) 167-86
- Ó Corráin, D., 'Irish vernacular law and the Old Testament', in *Ireland and Christendom*, edd. Ní Chatháin & Richter, pp. 284-307
- Ó Corráin, D., *et al.*, 'The laws of the Irish', *Peritia* 3 (1984) 382-438

#### V. *Bibliography*

- Brearley, Dennis (ed.), *Hiberno-Latin Newsletter* (Turnhout 1986-)
- Kelly, J. F. T., 'A catalogue of early medieval Hiberno-Latin biblical commentaries', *Traditio* 44 (1988) 537-71, and 45 (1989/90) 393-434
- Lapidge, Michael & R. Sharpe, *A Bibliography of Celtic-Latin Literature, 400-1200* (Dublin 1985)
- Stegmüller, Friedrich, *Repertorium biblicum medii aevi* (11 vols, Madrid 1950-80)

*The Department of Anglo-Saxon, Norse and Celtic offers programmes of study, at both undergraduate and graduate level, on the pre-Norman culture of Britain and Ireland in its various aspects: historical, literary, linguistic, palaeographical, archaeological. The Department also serves as a focal point for scholars visiting Cambridge from various parts of the world, who are attracted to Cambridge by the University Library (one of the largest in the world), the collections of Anglo-Saxon and Celtic manuscripts in the University and various college libraries, the collection of Anglo-Saxon, Celtic and Scandinavian coins in the Fitzwilliam Museum, or the rich collection of Anglo-Saxon artefacts in the Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology. It is possible for the Department to host a small number of Visiting Scholars each year.*

*Information on any aspect of the Department's activities can be obtained by writing to: The Head of Department, Department of Anglo-Saxon, Norse and Celtic, Faculty of English, 9 West Road, Cambridge, CB3 9DP or by e-mailing the Departmental Secretary: [asnc@hermes.cam.ac.uk](mailto:asnc@hermes.cam.ac.uk)*

*Further information on the Department, on the Anglo-Saxon, Norse and Celtic Tripos, and on opportunities for postgraduate study, is available on our website: [www.asnc.cam.ac.uk](http://www.asnc.cam.ac.uk).*

**Sources of Mediaeval Gaelic History**

- 1 John Carey, *The Irish National Origin-Legend: Synthetic Pseudohistory* (1994)  
ISBN 978-0-9517339-8-1
- 2 Dauvit Broun, *The Charters of Gaelic Scotland and Ireland in the Early and Central Middle Ages* (1995)  
ISBN 978-0-9517339-9-8
- 3 David N. Dumville, *Councils and Synods of the Gaelic Early and Central Middle Ages* (1997)  
ISBN 978-0-9532172-0-5
- 4 T. M. Charles-Edwards, *The Early Mediaeval Gaelic Lawyer* (1999)  
ISBN 978-0-9532172-1-2
- 5 John Hines, *Old-Norse Sources for Gaelic History* (2002)  
ISBN 978-0-9543186-3-5
- 6 Pádraig P. Ó Néill, *Biblical Study and Mediaeval Gaelic History* (2003)  
ISBN 978-1-904708-00-1
- 7 Tadhg O’Keeffe, *The Gaelic Peoples and their Archaeological Identities, A.D. 1000-1650* (2004)  
ISBN 978-1-904708-10-0
- 8 Dáibhí Ó Cróinín, *The Kings Depart: The Prosopography of the Anglo-Saxon Royal Exile in the Sixth and Seventh Centuries* (2005)  
ISBN 978-0-9554568-2-4

**Quiggin Memorial Lectures**

- 9 Erich Poppe, *Of Cycles and Other Critical Matters. Some Issues in Medieval Irish Literary history and Criticism* (2006)  
ISBN 978-0-9554568-5-5
- 10 Henrik Williams, *Rune-stone Inscriptions and Queer Theory* (2007)  
ISBN 978-0-9554568-7-9
- 11 Uáitéar Mac Gearailt, *On the Date of the Middle Irish Recension II Táin Bó Cúailnge* (2008)  
ISBN 978-0-9562353-2-9
- 12 Carole Hough, *Toponymicon and Lexicon in North-West Europe: ‘Ever-Changing Connection’* (2009)  
ISBN 978-0-9562353-3-6
- 13 Liam Breatnach, *On the Early Irish Law Text Senchas Már and the Question of its Date* (2010)  
ISBN 978-0-9562353-9-8

Copies of these lectures may be obtained from the Departmental Secretary, Department of Anglo-Saxon, Norse and Celtic, Faculty of English, 9 West Road, Cambridge, CB3 9DP; telephone 01223 335079; e-mail [asnc@hermes.cam.ac.uk](mailto:asnc@hermes.cam.ac.uk)

**For a complete list of all available publications, please see our website: [www.asnc.cam.ac.uk](http://www.asnc.cam.ac.uk)**