Apocalyptic and Eschatological Heritage

The Middle East and Celtic Realms

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Preface

Martin McNamara

In the context of the conference, the papers of which are being published in this volume, it is in order to recall that in the modern era of the study of apocalyptic and Old Testament Pseudepigrapha Ireland has been involved from the very beginning, in particular (as Professor Collins pointed out at the Conference itself) in the persons of Richard Laurence and R. H. Charles. In 1773 James Bruce returned from his travels in Abyssinia to discover the sources of the Nile, carrying with him a number of Ethiopic manuscripts, including three of the Book of Enoch.[1] One of these three he presented to Louis XV of France (now in Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale, Ethiopic MS 32; Enoch only; 18th century; a specially prepared copy of the present manuscript Bodleian 5). The bulk of Bruce's precious Ethiopic manuscripts was purchased by the Bodleian Library. This now has twenty-five of these volumes (including the two manuscripts of the Book of Enoch – Bodleian 4 and 5), which constitute a representative sample of Ethiopian literature.

It remained for Richard Laurence to bring some of the riches of this Ethiopian apocryphal literature to the attention of the public. Laurence was born in Bath, England in 1760. He studied oriental languages and was made professor of Hebrew and canon of Christ Church, Oxford, in 1814. In 1819 he edited the Ethiopian text the apocryphal *Ascension of Isaiah* from a Bodleian manuscript (present number Bodleian, Ms. Aeth. d. 13), together with a Latin and English translation.[2] In 1820 he edited the Ethiopic version of the first book of Esdras (1[3] Esdras).[3] In 1821 Laurence published an English translation of Enoch based on the present Bodleian 4,[4] one of the manuscripts of the Book of Enoch, brought from Abyssinia by James Bruce in 1733. In 1822 Laurence was made archbishop of the diocese of Cashel in Ireland, a diocese that was united with the dioceses of Waterford and Lismore in 1833. In 1838 he published the first edition ever of the Ethiopic text of the Book of Enoch. It consisted of a

1 On Bruce see E. Ullendorff, *The Ethiopians*, 3rd ed. (London: Oxford University Press, 1973), 11–13. 2 R. Laurence, '*Ergata 'isâyyâs nabiy. Ascensio Isaiae vatis, opusculum pseudepigraphum, multis abhinc seculis, ut videtur, deperditum, nunc autem apud Aethiopas compertum, et cum versione Latina Anglicanaque publici juris factum* (Oxford, 1819). 3 *Primi Ezrae libri, qui apud Vulgatam appelatur quartus, versio Æthiopica*; nunc primo in medium prolata, et Latine Angliceque reddita a R. Laurence (Oxford, 1820). 4 R. Laurence, *The book of Enoch the Prophet, an apocryphal production, now first translated from an Ethiopic MS.*

transcript of one of the manuscripts brought by Bruce to England, namely present-day Bodleian 4 of which Laurence had published the English translation in 1821.[5] The year of this first publication of the Ethiopic text of Enoch also marked that of Laurence's death. He died in Dublin in 1838 and is buried in Christ Church cathedral, Dublin.[6]

Robert Henry Charles, whose name is synonymous with apocrypha and pseudepigrapha, was born in Cookstown, Co. Tyrone, Ireland, in 1855. His education was begun at a private school near his home, but he was later transferred to Belfast Academy. He entered Queen's University, Belfast, where he took a B.A. (1877) and an M.A. (1880). He served in curacies in England from 1883 to1889. He was professor of biblical Greek in Trinity College, Dublin 1898–1906, and was later lecturer in Oxford (1905–1914). In 1913 he was made canon of Westminster. He died at his home in Little Cloisters in 1931.[7]

Charles's publication in the area that concerns us has been astounding, and equally influential: *Book of Enoch* (1893; 2nd edition 1912); *The Book of Jubilees* (1895); *A Critical History of the Doctrine of a Future Life in Israel and in Judaism* (1899; 2nd revised and enlarged ed., 1913); *Enoch* (1906); *The Testament of the Twelve Patriarchs* (1908); *The Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha of the Old Testament* (2 vols., 1913); *Religious Development between the Old and New Testaments* (1914); *Apocalypse of John* (2 vols., 1920).

It is great to see that the work initiated by Richard Laurence, and brought to such a high level of perfection by R. H. Charles, has in our own day become a thriving branch of learning, and a field in which some of the leading scholars are from this island. Long may this continue.

Appended note: The papers here printed were delivered in June 2000. Since then some studies have been published to which attention could not be paid in these essays.

in the Bodleian Library (Oxford: J. H. Parker, 1821; 2nd ed. 1832 (1833); 3rd ed. 1838). 5 R. Laurence, *Libri Enoch Versio Aethiopica* (Oxford, 1838). Laurence's was not a critical edition. The first critical edition of the work, by A. Dillmann, would be published a little later (in 1851), from the two Bodleian and three other manuscripts: A. Dillmann, *Liber Henoch Aethiopice* (Leipzig, 1851). 6 See the entry (by G. G.), 'Laurence, Richard,' in *The Dictionary of National Biography*, vol. 11 (Oxford, 1911), 647–48. 7 See entry 'Charles, Robert Henry' by T. W. Manson, in *Dictionary of National Biography 1931–1940* (London: Oxford University Press, 1949), pp. 169–170; F. C. Burkitt, 'Robert Henry Charles, 1855–1931', in *Proceedings of the British Academy* 17 (1931), 437–45.

Introduction

Martin McNamara

With the advent of the third millennium of the Christian era the Committee on Biblical and Near Eastern Studies of the Royal Irish Academy decided that a fitting manner to celebrate it would be an international conference on apocalyptic and eschatological themes in Oriental and Celtic tradition. Both themes were prominent in each of these traditions, and are currently the subject of active research by Irish and international scholars. The conference would be an occasion of bringing some of these scholars together for an exchange of views and information.

Ireland has a rich corpus of what can be considered apocalyptic and eschatological literature. Much of this belongs to what can loosely be regarded as biblical apocrypha. Irish New Testament apocryphal literature is currently being prepared for publication in conjunction with AELAC (Association pour l'Étude de la Littérature Apocryphe Chrétienne), to appear in the series Corpus Christianorum Series Apocryphorum (Brepols Publishers, Turnhout), in a new sub-series *Apocrypha Hiberniae*. The first volume of this new sub-series, with Irish Infancy Gospels, has already been published. Research on this topic against the larger background of the related Latin and Greek tradition, over more than a decade, has clearly shown that the rich vernacular Irish tradition, even though preserved mainly in twelfth- to fourteenth-century Irish translations, represents an early pre-800 Latin text. Various scholars have noted that some of the Irish apocryphal texts in the field of apocalyptic and eschatology are not elsewhere represented in Latin or the Western tradition and may well be witnesses to early, possibly Eastern, documents which have not been preserved elsewhere in the West. It is hoped that the research now beginning in this area will clarify issues in this regard.

The organising committee of the 2000 Conference was happy to have among the international team of speakers two outstanding Irish scholars in the field of apocalyptic and Jewish studies, in the persons of Professor Philip S. Alexander, Manchester University (from Belfast) and Professor John J. Collins, Yale (from Co. Tipperary).

The papers read at the Millennium conference and published in this volume examine aspects of apocalyptic and eschatology in the Eastern and Celtic (mainly Irish) traditions. The best known body of apocalyptic literature is that associated with the person of the biblical figure Enoch. The opening paper by Professor Philip S. Alexander gives us 'a counter-cultural biography' of the

apocalyptic hero. He tells us how Enoch became a 'cult figure' associated with knowledge and ideas seen as in some sense suspect. Enoch is the patron and purveyor of esoteric wisdom, and his originality is reflected in his uneasy relationship with regnant cultural icons. The earliest of the Enochic writings is probably the 'Book of the Heavenly Luminaries' of *1 Enoch* (chapters 72–82), which may go back to the Persian period, and its core element (1 Enoch 72–79) may be as early as *c.*400 BCE. While these writings appear to depend solely on the figure of Enoch as known from the Bible (Genesis 5:18–25), we may also speak of a pre-history of Enoch, which may be partly recoverable through analysis of the Babylonian primeval king lists (older than 2000 BCE). The influence of this Enochic tradition is traced by Professor Alexander through the Qumran writings, later Judaism, early Christianity and Islam. It is probable that the Books of Enoch were known in the Syriac Church, and from there brought to Ethiopia and translated into Ethiopic where they were preserved. In the Balkans full-blooded, apocalyptic Enoch manifestly flourished: we have the Slavonic version of *2 Enoch*, and Enochic teachings seem to have interested the Bogomils.

John J. Collins writes on journeys to the world beyond in ancient Judaism. At the outset he gives a timely reminder that the idea that a human being could journey to the world beyond and return was no innovation of ancient Judaism. The oldest stories of such journeys are found already in the Sumerian literature from the third millennium BCE, and they are developed in the Akkadian literature of the subsequent millennia. The best known and most influential of these is the epic journey of Gilgamesh to the land of the living, in search of an antidote to death. He is ferried to the land of the living to meet Utnapishtim, the hero of the flood, who had been taken away to live with the gods. Consideration of the biblical evidence naturally begins with Enoch, who walked with the elohim (angels or divine beings), and was not, for the elohim took him (Gen 5:21–24). Presumably, Collins comments, he was taken to live with the elohim either in heaven or at the ends of the earth, like Utnapishtim. We are taken through Enoch's ascent to heaven as described in *1 Enoch* 12–36, and also in other early Enoch traditions. In the pre-Christian (Aramaic) Levi Apocryphon from Qumran (4Q213a) Levi ascended through more than one heaven, but not yet through a numbered series that we find in later apocalypses. One of the later Greek recensions of this Levi apocryphon speaks of three heavens, the other of seven. The idea of three heavens has old precedents in Mesopotamia, as indeed had the seven heavens. The idea of three heavens had some currency in Judaism about the turn of the era. In the late first and early second century CE, however, we see the emergence of a new form of heavenly journey, where the visionary ascends through a numbered sequence of heavens, usually seven. In the ancient Near East there were old, if limited, traditions of ascent to heaven which had as their focus the authority of the visionary rather than immortality, and some of the early Jewish ascents are still of this type. In the Books of Enoch, however, and in the ascent apocalypses of the first century CE and later, there is a pervasive interest in life after death. All the

major cultures with which the Jews came in contact in the Second Temple period, Persian, Greek and Roman, had stories of ascending visionaries and of heavenly immortality. The relevance of the Greek and Roman material for an understanding of this Jewish tradition cannot be denied.

The influence of Iranian religious ideas on the development of some key concepts in the Hebrew Bible was one of the most contentious issues among scholars in the first part of the twentieth century. The question is still highly debated after the discovery of the Qumran texts. In the Dublin Millennium conference, dedicated to exploring (among other matters) the influence of Oriental ideas on Celtic thought within a millennial perspective, Florentino García Martínez considers it fitting to look again at this issue from the specific perspective of the texts of Qumran, and to ask whether the influence of Iranian religion on some of the key apocalyptic ideas of the Qumran community is the most reasonable explanation for the appearance of these ideas in this typically Jewish context. If this were the case, and if it is reasonable to accept that these millennial ideas have travelled from the Persian Empire to the shores of the Dead Sea, their travel farther West to distant Ireland would be less of a surprise. In any such study, he notes the prior requirement of a certain methodology. In order to show that certain ideas from one religion could have influenced another, two basic presuppositions are crucial: an earlier attestation of these ideas in one of the two systems, and the possibility of cultural contacts through which these ideas have been canalised. Without these two presuppositions there can be no possibility of influence. He refines these principles and examines in detail examples such as the bridge over which the deceased must pass in Persian and Jewish thought, as well as the dualism of the 'Tractate of the Two Spirits' and the final battle in the War Scroll – both from Qumran. He concludes, as he began, noting that we cannot attain certainty in the matter of the Iranian origins of some key apocalyptic ideas in Qumran. He believes, however, that it is reasonable to assume that the growth of theological ideas which have no roots in biblical tradition is the result of cross-fertilisation. The seed planted by the elusive prophet Zoroaster has flourished unexpectedly in a secluded community on the shores of the Dead Sea. And if this travel was indeed possible, a further travelling of Oriental ideas to Irish shores and their taking root in Celtic thought is less of a mystery.

Central to chiliastic or millennial speculations is the thousand-years reign of the just with Christ in chapter 20 of the canonical Revelation of John. A question which has exercised the minds of Christian scholars through the centuries is whether this reign is to be understood literally or spiritually, whether there is question here of an earthly or a spiritual kingdom. In her paper, Adela Yarbro Collins reviews the history of interpretation and argues in favour of the combined earthly and heavenly understanding of the text, with a 'vertical' and 'horizontal' eschatology. As the distance between heaven and earth is collapsed, the indirect relationship of humanity to God is replaced by an immediate one.

With the *Apocalypse of Paul* (the *Visio Pauli*) we move towards the Greek and Latin worlds. It was composed in Greek and was soon translated into Latin. It became extremely popular both in the West and in the East. In the West alone, together with the longer text no fewer than eleven medieval Latin redactions have been identified. In his paper Anthony Hilhorst gives us a detailed examination of the work, in each of its fifty-one chapters (arranged in seven parts). The presence or influence of numerous Jewish traditions can be identified in the writing, many of which are not represented in the Hebrew Bible or the Septuagint. As models the author may have used *1 Enoch* 1–36 ('The Book of the Watchers'), *3 Baruch* and the *Apocalypse of Zephaniah*. From the New Testament and early Christianity there is influence from the Book of Revelation and (the apocryphal) *Apocalypse of Peter*, this latter (possibly from the second century) being a vision to the Apostles, and to Peter in particular, showing the rewards of their brethren in the next world, either in Paradise or Hell. A noticeable difference between the *Apocalypse of Paul* and the biblical Revelation of John is the absence in the *Apocalypse of Paul* of an awareness of the end of time, whereas Revelation's first sentence tells us that it concerns 'what must happen soon'. To use the categories of later theology, for the Revelation of John the judgement is the General Judgement at the end of time (thought to be quite near), but for the *Apocalypse of Paul* the judgement is the judgement on each individual soul immediately on its separation from the body. This gradual process of reorientation from the focus on the general judgement to the particular judgement at one's death apparently found its classic expression in the *Apocalypse of Paul*. This, it would appear, explains its twelve centuries of success in the Christian world. In the words of J. K. Elliott, cited by Dr Hilhorst, *The Apocalypse of Paul* 'more than any other of the apocryphal apocalypses was responsible for the spread of many of the popular ideas of Heaven and Hell throughout Christianity and especially in the Western church of the Middle Ages'.

Ireland has a rich literature of apocalyptic and eschatological texts which merit examination in their own right. The Oriental connections of this body of literature is also worthy of consideration. Martin McNamara attempts to do this in his paper. While a Latin translation of the *Book of Jubilees* (or portions of it) was preserved in the monastery of Bobbio, and may have been known in Ireland, it does not appear that any Latin translation of the *Book of Enoch* was known in the West. The only early apocryphal apocalyptic text of which there is clear evidence of its use in Ireland is the *Visio Pauli*. There is an Irish translation of Redaction IV and Redactions VI and XI seem to have Irish connections and may even have originated in Ireland. We also have a peculiar Irish text of the *Visio Pauli*, presumably originating in a Latin original. There is a distinct possibility that the quest for the Land of Promise, so much a feature of the *Navigatio Brendani* and other Irish Voyage Literature writings, may have originated in the description of Paul's visit to Paradise in the *Visio Pauli*. Other Irish texts on the Bringing forth of the Soul, and a Dialogue between the Soul and the Body, may also have been influenced by the *Visio*, ultimately at least. Irish texts have transmitted a peculiar

form of the Antichrist legend, the exact origins of which have still to be determined. Whether it is connected with some apocryphal *Apocalypse of John* remains to be ascertained. In any event, we have one Irish apocalyptic text with reference to Antichrist, presented as a revelation made to the Beloved Disciple. As of yet, it has not proved possible to connect it with any of the known apocrypha. Some form of the *Apocalypse of Thomas* has clearly influenced one of the many Irish texts on the signs before Doomsday. It remains to be determined whether the well-known Irish tradition of the Fifteen Signs before Doomsday can be directly linked with any known form of the *Apocalypse of Thomas* or with any other known early apocryphal writing.

It has proved impossible in this conference to do justice to the broader 'Celtic' tradition, represented by Scottish Gaelic, Manx, Welsh, Breton and Cornish as well as Irish. Pierre-Yves Lambert treats of aspects of the eschatology of the Welsh and Breton traditions in his paper on a Welsh prophetic poem on Doomsday and on the Last Judgement in Breton literature.

As Professor Lambert has noted at the beginning of his paper, the genre called 'vision' is among the original compositions of Irish literature. The *Fís Adomnáin*, or 'The Vision of Adomnán' is probably the best known writing of this vision genre, and arguably the richest and most vivid of Irish eschatological texts. One section of this writing is a description of the soul's ascent through seven heavens. It is a composition paralleled in other Irish texts, in an Old English sermon and in a Latin text, all of which must derive from a lost source which can be referred to as the 'Insular Seven Heavens Apocalypse'. The origins of this Insular work has been a matter of debate in the past two decades, one view positing an origin in Egypt, the other giving preference to the Latin text. In his paper John Carey examines in detail the manuscript evidence for this apocryphon, and weighs up the arguments regarding its place of origin. In his concluding summary he says that the distinctive features of the 'Insular Seven Heavens Apocalypse' can be paralleled most closely in Egyptian apocalyptic writings, specifically those of the Gnostics. Particularly significant correspondences are to be found in the treatise *Pistis Sophia*, and in the teachings of the Ophites. In both cases, the Gnostic doctrines in question appear to draw upon native Egyptian belief; the roots of *Fís Adomnáin*'s account of the seven heavens lie in one of the most ancient civilisations whose writings have come down to us.

Another genre of Irish literature that may surely be classed as eschatological, if not quite apocalyptic, is that known as the *echtrae* 'adventure' or 'voyage'. As Donncha Ó hAodha explains in his paper, the *echtrae* 'outing', adventure' is the journey of the hero to the Otherworld, whether across the sea or otherwise, and whether or not he returns home again, while the *immram* 'voyage' (which is the younger type) is the story of the sea-journey to fabulous islands beyond the world inhabited by mortals. Ó hAodha concentrates his attention on one of the most interesting and oldest of these, 'The Voyage of Bran', although there is uncertainty as to which of the categories 'adventure' or 'voyage' it belongs. The

work is clearly rather heavily influenced by Christian teachings, and the question arises as to whether it is entirely a Christian composition. In Ó hAodha's view it rather equiparates the Otherworld of Irish secular tradition with an earthly paradise, such as was thought to exist and which was in turn identified with the Garden of Eden of Genesis.

The papers thus far described have all been about apocalyptic and eschatological themes in literary works. In a paper in a recent work on *Apocalypse Theory and the Ends of the World* Bernard McGinn notes how the regaining of the Cross (carried away from Jerusalem by the Persians in 614) by the Emperor Heraclius in 629 helps to explain the growing role of the cross as eschatological sign in early medieval art. He goes on to remark that some scholars have argued that the famous high crosses of medieval Ireland can be interpreted in this same light, a theme that McGinn himself develops later in his paper.[1] The theme of the visions of the end and Irish high crosses is developed at length by Kees Veelenturf in his paper. Building on previous research, which produced the notion that the Irish high cross basically is an eschatological monument, he seeks to explain the ring which is a characteristic feature of many of these sculptures. Apart from the eschatological aspect of the Irish high cross, there may be apocalyptic elements in its iconograhy, and this subject is tentatively explored in the paper too.

The evidence and reflections presented in these papers invite us to examine the relevance of the Oriental tradition for the study of Irish apocalyptic and eschatological texts. The biblical, later Jewish and early Christian evidence alone indicate the depth and ramifications of cultural and literary dependence. In the biblical Flood narratives we have clear dependence on the Akkadian Epic of Gilgamesh, which in turn was dependent on the Sumerian Ziusudra text. The recorded influences of one tradition on another are manifold, and it has to be borne in mind that there must have been much more that is unrecorded.

Together with this awareness of the possibility of Oriental backgrounds to given Irish texts, one must also be aware of the parallelomania deplored by scholars in the quest to find Jewish parallels for New Testament texts and traditions. The building of what appear to be parallels, or likely background texts, is not sufficient. Some of these may be fanciful, existing only in the mind of the researcher.

This takes us to a final point, adverted to by Florentino García Martínez: the requirement of a proper methodology in such studies, with regard to the attestation of the ideas or traditions in question and the cultural contacts through which ideas and traditions may have been transmitted to finally reach and influence Ireland. It will be for future research to develop along these lines. This will most profitably be done along with the critical edition of each of the Irish texts in question.

1 Bernard McGinn, 'The End of the World and the Beginning of Christendom', in *Apocalypse Theory and the Ends of the World*, M. Bull (ed.) (Oxford, UK and Cambridge USA: Blackwell, 1995), 59–89, at 73–75 (with further literature).

Enoch in millennial perspective. On the counter-cultural biography of an apocalyptic hero[1]

Philip S. Alexander

'MEN OF THE MILLENNIUM'

In the closing months of 1999 I drove almost daily past a Church poster which proclaimed in large letters 'Jesus – The Man of the Millennium'. My first reaction was to treat this as no more than a piece of opportunist religious propaganda cashing in on the mild attack of millennial fever which was gripping the world at that time, but I found myself having in the end to admit that in a sense it was obviously true. Jesus *can* be seen in a meaningful way as a 'millennial' figure: he is a major cultural icon – perhaps *the* major cultural icon of western civilization for at least the past one thousand years, ubiquitous in its art and literature, the bearer of some its most deeply held values. This symbolic Jesus, to be sure, has only the most tenuous of links with the Jesus of history, and, indeed, could still, arguably, have fulfilled his cultural destiny even if he had never actually existed. The Galilean Hasid has attained mythic status and been transformed into the hero of a cosmic drama of deep significance for the culture which has acknowledged his authority, and it is this mythic Jesus who is culturally important, not the historical Jew from Nazareth.

He is not the only figure with this millennial quality. Pious Muslims and Jews would doubtless make similar claims for Muhammad and Moses. However, it is a lesser known 'millennial man' whose cultural biography I want to explore in this paper – the biblical patriarch Enoch. Enoch in his own way, I shall argue, has also been for a very long time a cultural icon: within certain communities he has been recognized as a great teacher and associated with particular kinds of knowledge. He might have become a *universal* religious teacher, if the dice of history had fallen differently, but as things turned out he has played a counter-

1 This essay is based on a public lecture I gave at the Royal Irish Academy. I am grateful to the President for the invitation to speak, and for the hospitality he offered. I have kept close to the spoken word, but taken the opportunity to make some revisions in the light of comments by John Collins, John Carey, Martin McNamara, Michael Ryan and others who were present on that occasion. Colleagues in Manchester and Lund who heard a later version of the paper provided further useful criticism.

cultural role. He has become a 'cult figure' associated with knowledge and ideas seen as in some sense suspect.[2] He is the patron and purveyor of esoteric wisdom, and his marginality is reflected in his uneasy relationship with the regnant cultural icons. I shall try to sketch the history of Enoch from the earliest down to modern times, stressing the continuities, seeking out the recurrent patterns, exploring his function within cultures that were dominated by other figures. The approach will, of necessity, be 'broad brush' and grand narrative. Much of my account will be based on detailed analyses of literary sources which cannot be presented fully here (the evidence should be fairly apparent to those who know the texts).[3] One of the main themes of our deliberations over the next few days will be the persistence of apocalyptic. Enoch is a towering figure of the apocalyptic movement and *his* persistence one of its unifying threads. If apocalyptic has a patron saint, then surely it is Enoch. An overview of the Enoch traditions is, therefore, an appropriate curtain-raiser for our present conference.

THE BEGINNINGS OF ENOCH THE TEACHER

For the earliest stages of the Enochic tradition we are largely reliant on the so-called First book of Enoch, a work which survives more or less in its entirety only in Ge'ez (the liturgical language of the Ethiopic Church), but which goes

2 I have refrained from theorizing my use in this essay of the term 'counter-cultural'. I am aware that it does not conform all that closely to standard sociological usage, but it will serve my purpose. On 'counter-culture' in sociology see, e.g., J. Milton Yinger, 'Contraculture and Subculture', *American Sociological Review* 25 (1960), 625–35; Yinger, *Counter-Cultures: The Promise and the Peril of a World Turned Upside Down* (Free Press: New York, 1982); Keith A. Roberts, 'Towards a Generic Concept of Counter-Culture', *Sociological Focus* 11 (1987) 111–26. I toyed with 'counter-historical' as an alternative, but that is usually taken to designate 'a type of revisionist historiography' (David Biale, *Gershom Scholem: Kabbalah and Counter-History* [2nd ed.; Harvard University Press: Cambridge, Mass., 1982], pp. 6–8). Though my terminology may be somewhat confusing, I hope the cultural and historical phenomenon which I am describing is clear enough. One way of relating my analysis to standard theory might be to say that I am trying to demonstrate the recurrent attractivenesss of the traditional figure of Enoch to a succession of counter-cultures which have arisen within Judaism, Christianity, Islam and modern Western Culture. 3 I am here synthesizing, but also extending, a number of detailed studies, which have been or will be published elsewhere. I refer the reader to these for fuller analysis and documentation: 'From Son of Adam to Second God: Transformations of the Biblical Enoch', in: Michael E. Stone and Theodore A. Bergren (eds.), *Biblical Figures outside the Bible* (Trinity Press International: Harrisville, Pennsylvania, 1998), 87–122; 'Jewish Tradition in Early Islamic Sources: The Case of Enoch/Idris', in: G.R. Hawting, J.A. Mojaddedi and A. Samely (eds.), *Studies in Islamic and Middle Eastern Texts and Traditions in Memory of Norman Calder* (Oxford University Press: Oxford, 2000), 11–30; 'The Enochic Literature and the Bible: Intertextuality and Its Implications', in: Edward D. Herbert (ed.), *The Bible as Book: The Hebrew Bible and the Judaean Desert Discoveries* (British Library: London, 2002), 1–12; 'Enoch and the Beginnings of

back, whether directly or indirectly is a matter of dispute, to an Aramaic original, extensive fragments of which have been preserved among the Dead Sea Scrolls. *1 Enoch*, which appears to represent a canonization of the Enochic writings in the late Second Temple period, has long been recognized as a composite work. It seems to consist of five major books, which are in themselves far from unitary: (1) the Book of the Watchers (*1 Enoch* 1–36); (2) the Similitudes of Enoch (*1 Enoch* 37–71); (3) the Book of the Heavenly Luminaries (*1 Enoch* 72–82); (4) the Book of Dreams (*1 Enoch* 83–90); and (5) the Epistle of Enoch (*1 Enoch* 91–108). Fragments of all of these works are attested among the Scrolls, except for the Similitudes, instead of which we find remnants of another text, the Book of Giants. A version of this had actually survived unrecognized for what it was in the Manichean Book of Giants and in the strange little mediaeval Jewish text known as *Midrash Shemhazai ve-Aza'el*.[4]

Close investigation of the literary interrelationships of these writings, aided by palaeography and analysis of their content, suggests that the earliest of them is the Book of the Heavenly Luminaries. This probably goes back to the Persian period, and its core element (*1 Enoch* 72–79) may be as early as *c.*400 BCE. The content is astronomical and meteorological – a sober, scientific account of the motion of the sun and moon in the heavens, and of the winds. It is the first truly scientific treatise that we know of within the Jewish tradition. The science is probably Babylonian in origin, as Otto Neugebauer and others have suggested,[5] but interestingly it seems to have been transmitted to the Jewish scholars who embraced it through the medium of Aramaic. Aramaic, the diplomatic and chancery language of the Persian Empire, appears to have been exploited for cultural purposes as well, and played a part in disseminating 'Babylonian Wissenschaft'.[6] An example of such cultural exchange, the Enochic Book of the

Jewish Interest in Natural Science', forthcoming in a volume on the Wisdom literature from Qumran, ed. Armin Lange. On Enoch see also the informative monographs of James VanderKam, *Enoch and the Growth of an Apocalyptic Tradition* (Catholic Biblical Association Monographs 16; Catholic Biblical Association: Washington DC, 1984); *Enoch: A Man for all Generations* (University of South Carolina Press: Columbia, 1995). 4 Loren T. Stuckenbruck, *The Book of Giants from Qumran* (Mohr Siebeck: Tübingen, 1997). 5 Otto Neugebauer, 'The "Astronomical" Chapters of the Ethiopic Book of Enoch (72 to 82)', Appendix A in Matthew Black, *The Book of Enoch or I Enoch: A New English Edition* (Brill: Leiden, 1985), 386–419; M. Albani, *Astronomie und Schöpfungsglaube: Untersuchungen zum astronomischen Henochbuch* (Wissenschaftliche Monographien zum Alten und Neuen Testament 68; Neukirchener: Neukirchen-Vluyn, 1994); U. Glessmer, 'Horizontal Measuring in the Babylonian Astronomical Compendium MUL.APIN and in the Astronomical Book of 1En,' *Henoch* 18 (1996), 259–82. 6 See M.J. Geller, 'The Survival of Babylonian Wissenschaft in Later Tradition'. in: Sanna Aro and R. M. Whiting (eds.), *Melammu Symposia* I (Helsinki, 2000), 1–6. The Hebrew fragments from Qumran, 1Q19 and 1Q19bis, which correspond respectively to *1 Enoch* 8:4–9:4 and 106:2, probably do not represent a complete *Hebrew* version of *1 Enoch*, but fragments of a Hebrew Book of Noah which was one of the sources of *1 Enoch*. See D. Barthélemy and J.T. Milik, *Qumran Cave 1*

Heavenly Luminaries was a revolutionary text when it was first published. Nothing quite like it had ever been seen before in Israel. Jewish Wisdom writings of the fifth century BCE reflect a lively debate about the physical world: attitudes ranged from the Book of Job's denial that physical nature is knowable (see chaps 38–41) to Proverbs 8's claim that there is a Wisdom – a *Hokhmah* – which underlies all things and is accessible to the human mind. The Book of the Heavenly Luminaries firmly takes the Proverbs line and gives it concrete expression by setting out the laws which govern the movements of the two great heavenly bodies. It is not accidental, I would suggest, that at roughly the same time a similar intellectual revolution was taking place at the other end of the Persian Empire in Greek-speaking Ionia. There, too, under the influence, as Martin West and Walter Burkert have argued,[7] of ideas emanating from the east, thinkers such as Heraclitus were beginning to search for the Logos of the physical world.

The Book of the Heavenly Luminaries was revolutionary not only in its attitude towards nature, but also in the ideas which it contained. It advocated a solar calendar, which challenged the luni-solar calendar prevailing then in Judaism.[8] This new knowledge, this alien wisdom entering Israel from outside, needed to be validated in some way. This was done by presenting it as revelation and associating it with the figure of Enoch. Enoch was chosen as the patron of the new science. The choice is interesting. Clearly he must have been reasonably well known, otherwise the mechanism of validation will not work. But how was he known? In Genesis 5:18–25 he comes seventh in the ten-member Sethite genealogy which links Adam to Noah. The references to him are brief but suggestive: 'And Jared lived a hundred and sixty-two years, and begat Enoch: and Jared lived after he begat Enoch eight hundred years, and begat sons and daughters: and all the days of Jared were nine hundred and sixty-two years: and he died. And Enoch lived sixty-five years, and begat Methuselah: and Enoch walked with God after he begat Methuselah three hundred years, and begat sons and daughters: and all the days of Enoch were three hundred and sixty-five years: and Enoch walked with God: and he was not; for God took him (*vayyithallekh Hanokh et ha-elohim ve-einennu ki laqah oto elohim*).'

(Discoveries in the Judaean Desert 1; Clarendon Press: Oxford, 1955), 84 and 152. 7 Martin L. West, *Early Greek Philosophy and the Orient* (Clarendon Press: Oxford, 1971); Walter Burkert, *The Orientalizing Revolution: Near Eastern Influences on Greek Culture in the Early Archaic Age* (Harvard University Press: Cambridge, Mass., 1992). 8 There is much debate about the nature of the calendar in late biblical Judaism. I take the view that the dominant calendar was luni-solar and that the Enochic calendar was intended to challenge and reform it. However, other views are also held. Sacha Stern (*Calendar and Community: A History of the Jewish Calendar Second Century BCE – Tenth Century CE* [Oxford University Press: Oxford, 2001], esp. 5–9) argues that the Jewish calendar evolved from diversity in Second Temple times, when a variety of solar and lunar calendars were in use, to unity with the imposition by the Rabbis of the current normative luni-solar calendar. The thesis is attractive: that there were regional variations is plausible, but I find it hard to believe that the

The relationship of the Enochic literature to this text is crucial and much debated. After careful consideration my own view is that the Enochic writers knew this text in the form in which we now have it, and that we do not need to assume they knew anything more.[9] In other words they did not have access to the Enochic traditions to which this text probably alludes. These belong to the pre-history of Enoch, which may be partly recoverable through analysis of the Babylonian primeval king lists. They exegeted the text: in particular they took the repeated phrase *vayyithallekh Hanokh et ha-elohim* as meaning that Enoch had consorted with the angels (a possible meaning of *elohim*, as the Psalms show), and learned from them the mysteries of nature. Enoch as a patron saint and culture-bringer served their purposes well. He belonged to hoary antiquity, from the period before the Flood disrupted human knowledge. The implication was clear; the new teachings which were being published were actually not new. They were old doctrine, alluded to in the venerable traditions of Israel. They had been passed down from before the Flood from Enoch to Methuselah, from Methuselah to Noah and so on, as an esoteric tradition, which could now at last be brought to light.

This new doctrine was probably promoted by priests in Jerusalem associated with the Jerusalem Temple. These Enochic circles manifestly survived for a long time and went on studying and elaborating the Enochic traditions. There is a strong continuity within the Enochic corpus: later layers are clearly commenting upon earlier. The doctrine did not stand still. A major development, attested in the Book of the Watchers, took place a hundred or so years after the publication of the Book of the Heavenly Luminaries. Enoch the Scientific Sage became Enoch the Preacher of Righteousness. Exegesis of the biblical text may again have played a part. The crucial *vayyithallekh Hanokh et ha-elohim* was secondarily interpreted to stress Enoch's righteousness: 'he walked with God', that is to say he was a pious, god-fearing man. In the context of the biblical narrative this was seen as significant. It must have meant that he stood out in the godless generations who preceded and provoked the Flood. So he became a Preacher of Righteousness who warned his contemporaries of impending

Jerusalem priesthood at any given time was not following one system and attempting to impose it on the Jewish community. The air of *advocacy* in *Jubilees* should be recalled: it is surely *promoting* the Enochic solar calendar. Milik and others have suggested that the Enochic calendar is ideal, and was never meant to be applied. However, I think a close reading of the Book of the Heavenly Luminaries *as a whole* suggests that attempts were made to follow it, and that a crisis arose when it was discovered that it did not work. The failure to work was attributed to the effect of human sin on the natural order, and seen as a measure of the parlous state of the world. More on this below. The Qumran evidence on the calendar is summarized by James C. VanderKam, *Calendars in the Dead Sea Scrolls* (Routledge: London, 1998), and Uwe Glessmer, 'Calendars in the Qumran Scrolls', in: Peter W. Flint and James C. VanderKam (eds.), *The Dead Sea Scrolls after Fifty Years*, vol. 1 (Brill: Leiden, 1999), 213–78. 9 See my essay, 'The Enochic Literature and the Bible' (footnote 3).

divine judgement. This was to become the dominant image of Enoch, which was superimposed upon his earlier image as a Scientific Sage. The dominant theme of *1 Enoch* as we now have it is imminent judgement.

The reasons for this radical reworking of Enoch's image are not entirely clear. Yet again exegesis may have taken a hand. Genesis 5:18–25 was more firmly rooted in its biblical context, and in particular linked to the strange story of the Sons of God and the daughters of men in Genesis 6:1–8. The Sons of God there were identified as angels who had descended to earth and coupled, contrary to nature, with human women, producing monstrous offspring, Giants, who behaved in a lawless fashion and who had, in the end, to be killed. They contributed mightily to the sorry state of the world which brought the divine punishment of the Flood. The link with Genesis 5 was twofold; first, the name of Enoch's father, Jared (which could be construed as a Hebrew noun meaning 'descent'), was taken as alluding to the descent of the angels from heaven; and second, the terms *benei elohim* in Genesis 6 and *elohim* in Genesis 5 were equated. Enoch's walking with the angels was interpreted specifically as his consorting with the *benei elohim* of Genesis 6, and this consorting was now linked, not with revelation of the mysteries of nature, but with the process of divine judgement on the angels' rebellion. The element of revisionism in the Book of the Watchers is striking. It is seen most clearly in its ambivalent attitude towards knowledge and technological advance. New knowledge is suspect in the Book of the Watchers in a way that would be unthinkable in the Book of the Heavenly Luminaries. The Book of the Watchers is technophobic. For the author of this book as we now have it, the knowledge brought by the Watchers was corrupting, the primary cause of the moral state of the world which called forth the Flood. But the Book of Jubilees, which knew the Enochic literature well and regarded it as authoritative, has the story of the Watchers in a rather different form. The Watchers had descended from heaven as culture-bringers, and it may have been on earth that Enoch consorted with them and learned their lore. It was only later that they fell and had forbidden intercourse with human women (see *Jubilees* 4:15–22).

We can only speculate about the causes of this revisionism. There may have been something of a failure of nerve – an affliction which can affect radical intellectual movements. A crisis may have occurred when the realisation dawned that the science did not work. The Book of the Heavenly Luminaries promulgates a calendar based on the 364–day solar year. This produces a wonderfully symmetrical year – the very symmetry being a strong advocate of its authenticity in the minds of its proponents. The solar year, of course, is not 364 days, but approximately 365 and a quarter. The Enochic calendar loses one and a quarter days every year and it would not take long before it would become obvious that

10 R. H. Charles, *The Book of Enoch* (2nd ed.; Clarendon Press: Oxford, 1912), ix.

it was out of phase with the sun. When this was noticed, two responses could have been made: either it could have been admitted that a mistake had been made and the science could have been revised (to the detriment of the symmetry), or the discrepancy could have been explained in some other way. It seems the latter course was adopted. It was proposed that the Enochic calendar represented the ideal order imposed at creation, but that this order had been disturbed by human sin. The deviation of nature from the ideal was an objective measure of the sorry moral state of the world. The conditions that prevailed at the time of the Flood were being replicated, and they would provoke the same cataclysmic divine response. This reinterpretation is found already in the Book of the Heavenly Luminaries. The core of that work in *1 Enoch* 72–79 stresses the symmetry and regularity of nature. The later appendix in chapters 80–82, however, implies that human sin has disturbed the natural order.

Another cause of the revisionism found in the later books of Enoch may have been the increasing marginalization within Judaism of the Enochic circles. This point merits careful investigation since it is germane to our present story. It is clear that the Enochic solar calendar, despite its advocacy by the *Book of Jubilees* and its possible adoption by the Qumran covenanters, did not prevail in Second Temple Judaism. But the challenge of the Enochic circles went far beyond calendrical matters. They proposed an alternative paradigm of Judaism. As R.H. Charles noted long ago, the *Books of Enoch* are ambitious writings.[10] They claim to be divine revelation. One of their authors confidently looked forward to the day when the Enochic writings would be translated into various languages, and become to the righteous 'a cause of joy and uprightness and much wisdom' (*1 Enoch* 104:11–12). This claim to inspiration was accepted by the author of *Jubilees*, by the Dead Sea Community, by the *Apocalypse of Baruch*, by *4 Ezra*, by some New Testament writers, and by some early fathers and apologists. But there was another paradigm of Judaism which emerged in the Second Temple period – one based not on science but on law, one associated with Moses not Enoch, one which regarded the revelation of Torah on Sinai as the primal event, and the Book of Deuteronomy as the fundamental statement of Judaism. This paradigm had been promulgated by the reforms of Ezra, who arrived from Persia, with the backing of the Persian court, to reform the Jewish community in Judah and to ground its polity in the Torah of Moses.[11] The so-called reforms of Ezra were instituted only a short time before the Enochic circles emerged with their revolutionary scientific paradigm of Judaism.

At first the conflict between these two paradigms would only have been latent, but as the Mosaic paradigm increasingly prevailed, the Enochic paradigm would

11 I accept the basic historicity of the biblical account of the mission of Ezra. For a survey of the problems see Lester L. Grabbe, *Judaism from Cyrus to Hadrian* (SCM Press: London, 1992), 94–98.

have been increasingly marginalized. There is abundant literary evidence, which I cannot elaborate here, of the tension between these two traditions and of attempts to reconcile them. One of the most striking cases is the *Book of Jubilees*, which tries to integrate the Enochic traditions into a thoroughgoing Mosaic and Deuteronomistic view of Judaism. Interestingly there it is Enoch who is subordinated to Moses. A somewhat similar development may have taken place at Qumran.[12] The tension between Moses, the dominant cultural icon, and Enoch, the counter-cultural icon, runs through Judaism. The challenge which Enoch posed to the supremacy of Moses was countered in a number of ways. Enoch's clothes were borrowed and Moses dressed up in them. Enoch is the primal apocalyptic hero. He is the first of whom it is said that he ascended into heaven, communicated with the angels and received mysteries which he passed on in writing to posterity. Moses too was said to have ascended into heaven, communicated with the angels and received the Torah. He had precisely the same experience as Enoch. His revelation was as authentic as Enoch's. It is interesting to note how the later Rabbis, whose instincts were acute in these matters, sense the rivalry between Enoch and Moses. As a result they disparage Enoch. *Genesis Rabba* 25:1 very cleverly undercuts the exegetical bases of the Enochic traditions in the Bible. Thus the argument, central to the Enochic claims, that the words 'for God took him' indicate that Enoch, like Elijah, was transported to heaven without dying, is countered by quoting Ezekiel 24:16, where the same verb 'take' is used in connection with removal *in death*. The text bluntly declares: 'Enoch was not inscribed in the scroll of the righteous but in the scroll of the wicked. He was a hypocrite acting sometimes as a righteous, sometimes as a wicked man. Therefore the Holy One, blessed be he, said: "While he is righteous I will remove him [in death]".' Because of their growing marginalization the Enochic circles may have felt increasingly beleaguered and taken an altogether more sombre view of the world.

The Enochic circles, however, survived and there was a flowering of interest in Enochic lore in the late Second Temple period. This led to the canonisation of the Enochic Pentateuch which underlies our current *1 Enoch*, to the composition of the Similitudes of Enoch, possibly to replace the deeply mythological and syncretistic Book of Giants, and to the composition of the so-called *Second Book of Enoch*. *2 Enoch* survives only in Old Church Slavonic, but it descends from a Greek Enoch Book dating from the end of the first century CE. The late Second Temple period Enoch books focus on Enoch's ascent to heaven. In the older Enochic literature, such as the Book of the Watchers, it is not implied that Enoch *physically* ascended to heaven. Such a proposition was problematic. There is a strong sense of the duality of heaven and earth in the older Enochic writings. Heaven and earth are treated as two utterly different worlds and

12 For a discussion of the issues see Gabriele Boccaccini, *Beyond the Essene Hypothesis: The Parting of the Ways between Qumran and Enochic Judaism* (Eerdmans: Grand Rapids, 1998).

physical communion between them is essentially unthinkable and theologically dangerous. The primal fall, the fall of the Watchers, involved their descent from their proper sphere, their incarnation and their trespass upon earth. An ascent of a human to heaven would have represented the same trespass in reverse. Besides, the heavenly world was environmentally extremely hostile to flesh and blood: it was a region of fire and ice which the human body could not endure. So Enoch's ascent in the Book of the Watchers takes place only in spirit, in a dream. And when he is finally removed from earth it was not to heaven, but to paradise, a region separated indeed from the *oikoumene*, but located on the same terrestrial plane and sharing, so to speak, the same atmosphere. In late Second Temple times, however, the idea was embraced that Enoch made a *bodily* ascent to heaven. The corollary of this was also boldly accepted, namely that this could only have happened if Enoch had been physically transformed.

This view had potentially explosive theological implications. It meant nothing less than the angelification of Enoch. He becomes a heavenly being. The reasons for this profoundly important theological development cannot detain us here. I think it has something to do with a growing interest in the fate of the righteous after death. Enoch is the forerunner: the fate of the righteous is to follow in his footsteps and to become angels worshipping God in the celestial sanctuary. These developments can be seen in *1 Enoch* 70–71, the latest section of the Similitudes of Enoch, where Enoch's transformation into the heavenly Son of Man is intimated. They are even clearer in *2 Enoch*: 'Go', says God to the archangel Michael when Enoch arrives in the seventh heaven, 'and extract Enoch from his earthly clothing, and anoint him with my delightful oil, and put him into the clothes of my glory. And Michael did so, just as the Lord had said to him. And the appearance of that oil is greater than the greatest light, and its ointment is like sweet dew, and its fragrance myrrh, and it is like the rays of the glittering sun.' Enoch, thus transformed, looks at himself and observes that he has 'become as one of the Lord's glorious ones and there was no observable difference' (*2 Enoch* 22:8–10).

ENOCH IN LATE ANTIQUE JUDAISM

In the Talmudic period Enoch effectively disappears from view in the literature of Judaism, and such references as there are to him, as we have already noted, are far from complimentary. This is hardly surprising, given the Mosaic orientation of Rabbinic Judaism. However, he surfaces within this milieu in the seventh and eighth centuries during what I have called the apocalyptic revival in Judaism, when the tradition begins to rediscover Second Temple period apocalyptic.[13] This

13 See my essays 'Late Hebrew Apocalyptic: A preliminary Survey', in: P. Geoltrain, Jean-Claude Picard and A. Desreumaux (eds.), *La fable apocryphe I* (Brepols: Turnhout, 1990),

apocalyptic revival is evidenced in the *Midreshei Ge'ullah*, such as the Book of Zerubbavel and the Prayer of Rabbi Shimᶜon bar Yohai, in Pirqei deRabbi Eliᶜezer, in Targum Pseudo-Jonathan, in Targum Shir ha-Shirim, as well as in later writings such as Bere'shit Rabbati. It was part and parcel of a general *fin de siècle* mood which gripped Christianity, Zoroastrianism and Islam, and which was powerfully stimulated by the emergence of Islam (though it began somewhat earlier in Judaism). Within Judaism the most indicative work for our present inquiry is *Sefer Heikhalot*, the so-called *Third Book of Enoch*. Uncannily this takes up the story almost precisely where it was left off in the *Second Book of Enoch* at the end of the first century CE. In *3 Enoch* we find the angelification, indeed the apotheosis, of Enoch stated in uncompromising terms. There is an elaborate description of his physical transformation: he becomes the archangel Metatron, who bears the name 'the Lesser Lord' (*Ha-Shem ha-Qaton*). God, now called 'the Greater Lord' (*Ha-Shem ha-Gadol*), invests Enoch as the ruler of the cosmos and then retreats to the impenetrable upper heavens, leaving Enoch/Metatron to govern the world as his vice-regent.

There is a strong hint that Enoch is the forerunner of all the righteous. His mysterious angelic name of Metatron probably means something like 'forerunner'. It is ultimately derived from the Latin *metator*, the name for the officer who went ahead of the Roman legionaries on the march to find a suitable campsite and to prepare the camp for their arrival. This role was attributed, fittingly, in the Midrash to the angel of the Lord who led the Israelites through the wilderness when they escaped from Egypt. The word then passed over easily into the metaphorical sense of 'trail-blazer', 'forerunner'. Enoch's role as the forerunner of all the righteous is pointedly hinted at in the way in which his ascent to heaven is echoed in that of Rabbi Ishmael. The relationship between Enoch and Moses is also subtly and polemically clarified in *3 Enoch*. Enoch/Metatron is identified with the Sar Torah, the angelic Prince of the Torah, to whom the original heavenly Torah had been entrusted. It was Metatron/Enoch who disclosed this Torah to Moses when he ascended to heaven (*3 Enoch* 11:1–3; 15B:1–5; 48C:12; 48D:2–4). The relationship between Enoch and Moses is here adjusted: it is Moses who is subordinated to Enoch, not the other way round. Indeed there is antinomian potential here, since within the Heikhalot circles which produced *3 Enoch* and the cognate literature, it was held that the adepts could directly invoke the Sar Torah and conjure him down to earth to reveal secrets. Why bother with Moses, when access was open to Moses' teacher? The adept stands in the same relationship to the Sar Torah as did Moses. It is hardly surprising that central literature shows strong reservations about the Heikhalot traditions. They are treated with extreme suspicion in the comentaries on

197–217; 'The King Messiah in Judaism', in: John Day (ed.), *King and Messiah in Israel and the Ancient Near East* (Sheffield Academic Press: Sheffield, 1998), 456–73.

Mishnah Hagigah 2:1 in the two Talmuds (Yerushalmi Hagigah II, 77a-c; Bavli Hagigah 11b, 14b-15a),[14] and the teachings about Metatron are condemned as heretical for implying that there are two powers in heaven (so implicitly Bavli Sanhedrin 38b).

The equation of Enoch with the archangel Metatron launched Enoch on a new, and even more dazzling phase of his career. There is much speculation in the mediaeval Qabbalah on the figure of Metatron, though it is hard to say in every case whether this implies the Enoch = Metatron equation. For example, Metatron is mentioned frequently in the Zohar, which also quotes Books of Enoch as authorities, though the identity of these books remains something of a mystery. The Enoch/Metatron traditions in the Qabbalah have been investigated at length by others and need not detain us here.[15] Suffice to note the continuing connection of Enoch with esoteric ideas and with marginal groups – groups with profoundly antinomian tendencies. The Qabbalah, of course, in the sixteenth century, due largely to some effective self-publicity by members of the Safed school, emerged from the closet and entered the mainstream of Jewish theological thought, but it was confined in the Middle Ages to small intellectual coteries whose activities were viewed by the religious establishment with understandable suspicion.

It should also be noted that alternative views of Enoch are to be found in mediaeval Jewish sources. Some writers continued the sceptical Midrashic evaluation. Others, such as the author of the *Life of Enoch (Hayyei Hanokh)* acknowledge that Enoch was indeed a righteous man and that he ascended to heaven, but counsel against speculating about his heavenly existence. And Enoch curiously re-emerges as a scientific sage. In the astrological and astronomical writings of Abraham ibn Ezra he is invoked and references made to his writings such as the *Sefer Sodot*, though, as with the Enochic references in the Zohar, the precise texts meant are somewhat unclear.[16] The re-appearance of Enoch in a scientific context may be due to the influence of the Hermetic tradition,

14 Further David J. Halperin, *The Merkabah in Literature* (American Oriental Series 62; American Oriental Society: New Haven, Conn., 1980). 15 See, e.g., Hugo Odeberg, *3 Enoch, or the Hebrew Book of Enoch* (Cambridge University Press: Cambridge, 1928; repr. Ktav: New York, 1973); I. Tishby, *The Wisdom of the Zohar*, 3 vols. (Littman Library of Jewish Civilization; Oxford University Press: Oxford, 1989), vol. 2, 625–32, 643–45; Moshe Idel, 'Enoch is Metatron', in: *Proceedings of the First International Conference on the History of Jewish Mysticism: Early Jewish Mysticism* (Jerusalem Studies in Jewish Thought 6.1–2; Hebrew University of Jerusalem: Jerusalem, 1987), 151–70 [Hebrew]; Daniel Abrams, 'The Boundaries of Divine Ontology: The Inclusion and Exclusion of Metatron from the Godhead', *Harvard Theological Review* 87 (1994), 291–321. 16 Abraham ibn Ezra quotes not only *Hanokh*, but also *Hanokh ha-qadmon, Hanokh ha-Mitzri* and *Hanokh ha-rishon*. I am grateful to my research student Renate Smithuis, who is doing a doctorate on Abraham ibn Ezra's astrological writings, for collecting the references and discussing them with me. See further Shlomo Sela, *Astrological and Biblical Exegesis in Abraham ibn Ezra's Thought* (Bar Ilan University Press: Ramat Gan, 1999), 338–48 [Hebrew].

mediated possibly through Islamic sources (a development to which I shall return briefly in a moment). It is indicative of the amazing continuities of the tradition that Enoch should reprise in the Middle Ages a role as a great authority on astronomy which he had first played in the Persian period some sixteen hundred years ago.

There is much more that could be said on the Jewish traditions about Enoch, but I have said enough to illustrate, if not prove, my basic hypothesis. Enoch and Moses are offered in the Persian period as potential cultural icons for Judaism. Each is associated with a distinctive vision of the world, the one focused on science and nature, the other focused on law. Moses became the dominant icon; the Mosaic vision of the world prevailed. But Enoch did not disappear. Instead he became a counter-cultural hero associated with knowledge which did not sit easily with the Mosaic vision of the world, and with groups who were ambivalent about the authority of Moses, at least as that authority was defined by the religious establishment. I want now more briefly to try and demonstrate that this pattern appears to be replicated to some degree in both Christianity and Islam, both of which adopted the figure of Enoch from the Jewish apocalyptic tradition. In the case of Christianity, Enoch became a counter-cultural icon to Jesus, and in the case of Islam to Muhammad. The doctrines associated with him were regarded in both these religious traditions as dangerous and were, in consequence, marginalized, but despite this marginalization, interest in Enoch persisted, right down to modern times.

ENOCH IN CHRISTIANITY AND ISLAM

First, then, Christianity. There can be no doubt that the early Christians knew some Enochic texts. *1 Enoch* is one of the few books outside the synagogue canon to be cited as Scripture in the New Testament (Jude 14–15 = *1 Enoch* 1:9),[17] and, as we have already noted, early patristic writers quote or allude to Enochic literature from time to time.[18] Enochic lore could have influenced Christianity in a number of ways. It was a major component of the apocalyptic tradition and may have contributed both specific motifs and general ideas to

17 Note also the allusions to the fall of the Watchers in Jude 1:6 and 2 Peter 2:4. Hebrews 11:5 cites Enoch as an exemplar of faith and righteousness, and states that 'he was taken so that he did not experience death'. For a useful overview of Enoch in early Christian literature see Klaus Berger, 'Henoch', in T. Klausner et al. (eds.), *Reallexikon für Antike und Christentum* (A. Hiersemann: Stuttgart, 1950–), vol. 14, cols. 473–545; James C. VanderKam, '1 Enoch, Enochic Motifs and Enoch in Early Christian Literature', in: James C. VanderKam and W. Adler (eds.), *The Jewish Apocalyptic Heritage in Early Christianity* (Compendia Rerum Iudaicarum ad Novum Testamentum III 4; Van Gorcum: Assen; Fortress: Minneapolis, 1995), 33–101. 18 E.g., Enoch is quoted as Scripture in *Epistle of Barnabas* 16:5 (cf. *1 Enoch* 89:56–66). See also *Epistle of Barnabas* 4:3.

early Christian apocalyptic. There is, however, one important area where the debt may be more specific, viz., Christology. It is possible that the ascension of Enoch, his transformation into the heavenly Son of Man and his prophesied return at the end of history to play a central role in the eschatological judgement served as a model for early Christian views of Jesus. The parallelism is obvious and striking, but its significance is hotly disputed and some would argue that the borrowing went the other way.[19] Certainly christological influence on the developed figure of Enoch/Metatron in *3 Enoch* should not be ruled out,[20] but I see no reason to postulate this in the case of the short recension of *2 Enoch* or of Similitudes 70–71. Though dating to the first century CE these Jewish texts are surely too early to be influenced by Christian ideas. Their Enochs can easily be explained as a natural outgrowth of the preceding evolution of Enoch; external factors need not be invoked. I am not suggesting that the Gospel references to the 'son of man' allude directly to Enoch. I am prepared to concede that in the earliest layers of the Gospels this phrase is used in its original Aramaic sense as a circumlocution of the first person pronoun. However, the occurrence of this phrase in the sayings of Jesus opened up the possibility of secondarily linking it with the reference to the Son of Man in Daniel 7:13–14 and the reinterpretation of this in the Similitudes of Enoch (*1 Enoch* 71).[21] The striking similarities between the Enoch of the late Second Temple period Enochic writings and the Christ of early Christian literature surely in themselves provide a compelling argument that something like this must actually have happened.

But having built up Christ, so to speak, on the template of Enoch it then became necessary to demote Enoch. No theological system could cater for two such powerful figures. Enoch continues to be mentioned by later Christian writers. The favourable reference to him in Hebrews 11:5, coupled with the widespread belief that he and Elijah are the two unnamed witnesses in Revelation 11:1–14,[22]

19 In general on Enoch and Christology see Barnabas Lindars, 'Enoch and Christology', *Expository Times* 92 (1980–81), 295–99; Larry W. Hurtado, *One God, One Lord: Early Christian Devotion and Ancient Jewish Monotheism* (Fortress Press: Philadelphia, 1988), esp. pp. 51–56; Margaret Barker, *The Lost Prophet: The Book of Enoch and its Influence on Christianity* (SPCK: London, 1988); Loren T. Stuckenbruck, *Angel Veneration and Christology* (Mohr Siebeck: Tübingen, 1995). 20 See A. Murtonen, 'The Figure of Metatron', *Vetus Testamentum* 3 (1953), pp. 409–11; and further my essay, 'Jewish Christianity in Early Rabbinic Literature (2nd to 5th Centuries CE)', in: Oskar Skarsaune (ed.), *Jewish Believers in Jesus: A History from Antiquity to the Present*, vol. 1, §3.3.3 (forthcoming). 21 The literature on this subject is vast: see John J. Collins, *The Apocalyptic Vision of Daniel* (Scholars Press: Missoula, Montana, 1977); Maurice Casey, *Son of Man: The Interpretation and Influence of Daniel 7* (SPCK: London, 1979); Barnabas Lindars, *Jesus Son of Man* (SPCK: London, 1983); C. Caragounis, *The Son of Man – Vision and Interpretation* (Mohr Siebeck: Tübingen, 1986); Delbert Burkett, *The Son of Man Debate: A History and Evaluation* (Cambridge University Press: Cambridge, 1999). 22 The exegetical basis of this identification is transparent. Enoch and Elijah are the only two people mentioned in the Bible as having been removed by God from earth without dying (both were 'taken'). God's purpose

kept him in the Christian eye. But it is noticeable that from the fourth century onwards allusions to the Enochic literature, and especially to Enoch the great teacher who ascended to heaven and was transformed into an angel, fade in mainstream Christian authors. Clearly these Enochic ideas survived in some shape or form. Sizeable portions of *1 Enoch* (both in quotation and paraphrase) are embedded in the *Chronographia* of the Byzantine scholar George the Syncellus (*floruit* 800),[23] but there appears to have been, if not a concerted marginalizing of Enoch, at least a studied neglect. His writings were cherished only among groups on the fringes of the Christian world – the Gnostics in Egypt, the Church in Ethiopia (where he remained the patron of science, such as it was), the Syriac Church and the Churches of the Balkans.[24] These last two merit a few words. The question of Enoch in Syriac Christian writings is highly complex. He is mentioned frequently in major writers such as Ephraem Syrus in the fourth century, but none of these references seems to demand a knowledge specifically of *1 Enoch* or of apocalyptic Enoch.[25] However, there are grounds for thinking that key Enochic texts did circulate in the Syriac Church. During the apocalyptic revival of the sixth and seventh centuries some Syriac writers seem to betray a knowledge of *1 Enoch* or of major traditions which it contains.[26] Central to the argument is the sixth/seventh century Syriac encyclopaedia of biblical lore, the *Cave of Treasures*. This has long been recognized as containing substantial allusions to *1 Enoch*, though in a somewhat polemical form designed to rebut the more extreme claims made for Enoch in the earlier work (more on this below). The Cave of Treasures offers to my mind persuasive, if oblique, evidence that *1 Enoch was* known in Syria, either in Greek or Aramaic or both, and although a Syriac version of *1 Enoch* has not survived (in fragments let alone in its entirety), there is a real possibility that it was Syriac missionaries who carried the work to Ethiopia, possibly in the fifth or sixth

in this was to bring them back as witnesses against evil at the end of history, when they would finally experience death like other mortals. See W. Bousset, *The Antichrist Legend: A Chapter in Jewish and Christian Folklore* (Hutchinson: London, 1896), 203–17. Further: Paul J. Alexander, *The Byzantine Apocalyptic Tradition* (University of California Press: Berkeley/Los Angeles/London, 1985); Richard Kenneth Emmerson, *Antichrist in the Middle Ages: A Study of Medieval Apocalypticism, Art and Literature* (Manchester University Press: Manchester, 1981). **23** They are excerpted in Matthew Black, *Apocalypsis Henochi Graece* (Brill: Leiden, 1970). On George the Syncellus see G. L. Huxley, 'On the Erudition of George the Synkellos', *Proceedings of the Royal Irish Academy*, Section C, 81 (1981), 207–17. **24** Professor John Carey has drawn my attention to some fascinating references to Enoch in Irish literature, which suggest that the subject of Enoch in Ireland deserves an essay in its own right. Interest in Enoch in Ireland would fit very well with Ireland's marginal status within Christian culture. **25** For a summary see Berger, 'Henoch', *RAC*, vol. 14, cols 540f. **26** We should also bear in mind that the eastern Manicheans managed to get hold of at least the Enochic Book of Giants. The Syrian sect of the Elchasaites may also have been influenced by Enochic traditions (see Gerard P. Luttikhuizen, *The Revelation of Elchasai* (Mohr Siebeck: Tübingen, 1985). All this suggests that Enochic literature was circulating

centuries CE.[27] The situation in Syria may be confused, but in the Balkans full-blooded, apocalyptic Enoch manifestly flourished. Here the key text was the Slavonic version of *2 Enoch*. Enochic teachings seem to have interested the Bogomils, and the suggestion that there is Bogomil influence in the long recension of *2 Enoch* is altogether plausible. Certainly, as Yuri Stoyanov has indicated,[28] a number of texts are extant in Old Slavonic, some unpublished or barely studied, in which apocalyptic Enoch plays a role. The pattern, then, in Christianity is broadly the same as in Judaism: having started out as a Christ-like figure, Enoch ends up as the hero of marginal and counter-cultural groups within the Christian world, the patron of strange and dangerous learning.

A somewhat similar pattern can be traced also in Islam. Enoch was introduced into Islam through the *Tafsir* tradition, which identified him with the mysterious figure of Idris in Qur'an Suras 19:56–58 and 21:85–86. I have argued elsewhere at length that there are reasons for thinking that this equation was not, in fact, invented by Muslim scholars but by the so-called Sabians of Harran.[29] *They* made this identification as a way of putting their own traditions on the Qur'anic map, and of claiming that they too had a prophet recognized by the Qur'an and so qualified for the status in Islamic law of a prophetic religion (*ahl al-kitab*), with all the benefits that this bestowed. The equation involved not only the identification of Idris with Enoch, but also, co-incidentally, with Hermes Trismegistus, whom Harranian intellectuals claimed as their supreme religious teacher. This link between Hermes and Enoch brought Enoch back in touch with science. The Harranians may not have been the first to suggest that Hermes and Enoch were one and the same. The identification may already have been made in Egyptian Hermeticism, and there are possibly hints of it in the Aramaic incantation bowls from Sasanian Iraq.[30] Whatever its origin, the early Muslim commentators gratefully accepted the suggestion that Idris was the Enoch mentioned in the Torah of the Jews.

within the homelands of the Syriac Church. **27** Edward Ullendorff has authoritatively argued that Ethiopic Enoch was translated from Aramaic and not from Greek ('An Aramaic Vorlage of the Ethiopic Text of Enoch?' in: Ullendorff, *Is Biblical Hebrew a Language? Studies in Semitic Languages and Civilizations* [Otto Harrassowitz: Wiesbaden, 1977], 172–80; first published in 1960; see also more briefly his *Ethiopia and the Bible* [The Schweich Lectures of the British Academy for 1967; Oxford University Press: Oxford, 1968], 61f and *passim*). If this was the case, then the most obvious explanation would be that *1 Enoch* was brought to Ethiopia in Aramaic by Aramaic-speaking Syriac Christian scholars. It is less likely to have become such an influential text in Ethiopia if it had been introduced by Jews in the pre-Christian era, though it should be noted that the Jewish presence in the country, and on the opposite shore of the Red Sea, was by no means negligible at that time. The hypothesis of a Syriac Christian origin for the *Vorlage* of Ethiopic Enoch strongly reinforces the suspicion that *1 Enoch* was once known within Syriac Christianity. **28** I have benefited from several enlightening discussions on this matter over the years with Dr Stoyanov. See his *The Hidden Tradition in Europe* (Arkana: London, 1994), esp. 212. **29** See my 'Jewish Tradition in early Islamic sources: The Case of Enoch/Idris'. **30** See J.T. Milik, *The Books of Enoch* (Clarendon Press: Oxford, 1976), 132–35.

The identification of Enoch with Idris opened the door for Jewish and Christian speculation about Enoch to enter Islam. The Muslim establishment, however, seems to have moved early to head off any challenge that Enoch may have posed to the supremacy of Muhammad. There is a marked tension within Islamic theology between a stress on Muhammad's ordinariness and common humanity on the one hand, and a desire to present him as a much more supernatural being on the other. The doctrine of the *miʿraj* developed early in Islam – the idea that Muhammad had made a miraculous journey by night to Jerusalem and from there ascended to heaven.[31] The intention is obvious – Jerusalem was seen as the ancient seat of prophecy, and the ancient prophets had ascended to heaven to receive their revelations from God; Muhammad too, if he were a true prophet, had to be associated with Jerusalem and go up to heaven. It is impossible now to decide whether or not the *miʿraj* was modelled specifically on Enoch's ascent. By the time the doctrine was propounded Muslim scholars could have known a plethora of Jewish and Christian prophets who had allegedly made the ascent. However, the *miʿraj* established a clear parallelism between apocalyptic Enoch and Muhammad. Already in Tabari (839–923) we find a rich collection of traditions about Enoch and his generation (see his *History*, Book I 166–79), but what is striking is how sober these are. Here is no extreme exaltation of Enoch. Particularly noteworthy is the omission of any reference to the Fall of the Watchers, and its replacement by a story, derived ultimately, in all probability, from the Syriac *Cave of Treasures* tradition, which identifies the Sons of God in Genesis 6 with the righteous offspring of Seth who, descending from the mountain where they lived, cohabited with the wicked daughters of Cain living immorally on the plain below. As I have argued elsewhere, there are tell-tale signs that this story may have been constructed precisely to avoid the theological problems engendered by the myth of the Fallen Watchers.[32] The other Enoch traditions in Tabari are of a piece with it – remarkably sober and unexceptional.

However, apocalyptic Enoch also seems to have been known in Islam, but again largely on the fringes. Idris was taken up in Islamic folklore and became the subject of many folktales, and in some branches of the Shia and of Sufism he undergoes a dramatic transformation which echoes the transformation of Enoch in apocalyptic and mystical Judaism. He plays a suggestive role in the writings of the controversial Sufi thinker Ibn Arabi (1165–1240). Ibn Arabi in his *Risalat al-Anwar* uses the old Jewish apocalyptic motif of the ascent through the heavens to the throne of God to set out symbolically the stages through

31 It was attached to Qur'an 17:1, 'Glory be to Him who transported His Servant by night from the Masjid al-Haram to the Masjid al-Aksa, which we have surrounded with blessing, in order to show him one of our signs.' See B. Schrieke, J. Horovitz et al., 'Miʿradj', in: C. E. Bosworth et al. (eds.), *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, vol. 6 (new ed.; Brill: Leiden, 1993), 97–105.

32 See my 'Jewish Tradition in Early Islamic sources: The Case of Enoch/Idris', 18f.

which the Sufi must pass on his journey to sainthood. When he reaches the fourth heaven, the heart of the planetary spheres, he encounters Idris, who imparts to him certain esoteric knowledge. Ibn Arabi designates Idris 'the Pole' (*al-Qutb*), that is to say, he regards him as the heavenly exemplar of the perfect man. All this bears more than a passing resemblance to the Heikhalot and Qabbalistic traditions about Enoch/Metatron and raises the intriguing possibility that there was cross-fertilization between the Jewish and Muslim traditions. Enoch/Idris also plays an interesting role in Ibn Arabi's *Al-Futuhat al-Makkiyyah* (chap. 367), and in his *Fusus al-Hikam* (chaps 4 and 22). There are also tantalising references to him in Nusairi writings and in the Druze canon.

ENOCH'S CAREER SINCE THE RENAISSANCE

Enoch's name is mentioned from time to time by Renaissance hermeticists and natural philosophers such as Guillaume Postel and Paracelsus. The most interesting references, however, are to be found in the writings of the eccentric English savant Dr John Dee, who lived at the end of the sixteenth century. In his day Dee was one of the most famous and controversial natural philosophers in Europe. He was, in many ways, the embodiment of counter culture: he was steeped in the Christian Cabala, in Alchemy and in the other arcane sciences, and he went from time to time in fear for his life because of opposition from the Church authorities. Frustrated by his inability to understand the natural world through scientific experiment he turned in desperation to revelation. Dee records in his angelic diaries the conversations he held through mediums with angels who revealed to him, among other things, the teachings of Enoch. Dee looked to Enoch for enlightenment as to how ideally nature was supposed to work, how the created order had been disturbed by human sin and how it could be restored to perfection.[33] Here we have an astonishing reprise of themes adumbrated some nineteen hundred years earlier in the Book of the Heavenly Luminaries. One wonders whether Dee in his endless rummaging through arcane literature could have come across this work in some shape or form. Dee himself played in his own day a counter-cultural Enochic role, and it comes as no surprise that he felt drawn to Enoch as a mentor and guide. This was a time of great intellectual ferment in Europe: radical new ideas were being propounded in a heady mix of Cabala, Hermeticism, Alchemy and Science. The Church was gripped by panic and all too ready to condemn the new learning, as

33 See Deborah E. Harkness, *John Dee's Conversation with Angels: Cabala, Alchemy, and the End of Nature* (Cambridge University Press: Cambridge, 1999), 146–47; 192–94. The notion that human sin had an effect on physical nature is as old as the story of the Fall in Genesis. It is, as we saw, implied in the *1 Enoch*, and is a major theme of the Qabbalah, which is also interested in how the broken state of nature may be mended (*tiqqun ʿolam*).

the cases of Copernicus and Galileo show. Once again Enoch slipped easily into counter-cultural mode and became one of the patrons of the new science.

That he could adopt this role was all the more impressive because so little of the rich Enochic traditions were actually known. Fragments of *1 Enoch* in Greek were available in the west in manuscripts and editions of the *Chronography* of George the Syncellus, but no Book of Enoch had survived intact.[34] This was, however, about to change. A tradition where Enoch's name was revered was Freemasonry. A version of the foundational legend of Royal Arch Masonry, which was first worked in Dublin in 1735, invokes the name of Enoch.[35] The origins of the legend are obscure but the setting is eminently fitting, for Freemasonry is surely a classic modern example of a counter-cultural movement. And Masonry may have played a role in the rediscovery of *1 Enoch*. The eighteenth century Scottish traveller James Bruce was an ardent Mason and he may have been inspired to go to Ethiopia not just to find the source of the Nile, but also to search for the Book of Enoch which, as rumour had it, was preserved there.[36] He went to find it, and find it he did, returning with a number of copies. One of these came into the hands of the Oxford scholar Richard Laurence, who edited it and produced the first translation into any European language.[37] The

34 What was known about apocalyptic Enoch prior to James Bruce's return from Ethiopia can be readily deduced from J. A. Fabricius, *Codex Pseudepigraphus Veteris Testamenti*, 2 vols (Hamburg and Leipzig, 1713–33); see especially vol. 1, 160–223. Fabricius, who gives a bibliography of works on Enoch which he consulted (pp. 222f), states that Joseph Scaliger was the first scholar to make the George the Syncellus fragments available in print. In addition to Fabricius, the following should be noted: J. Drusius, *Henoch: sive de patriarcha Henoch, ejusque raptu et libro e quo Judas Apostolus testimonium profert*, Franekerae 1615; A. Pfeiffer, *Exercitatio de Henocho*, Witembergae 1670; G. Vockerodt, *Historia societatum et rei literariae ante diluvium ... Accesit fragmentum ex libris Henochi de Egregoris cum versione nova*, Jenae 1687; F.J. Firnhaber, *Selectae de Henocho quaestiones*, Witembergae, 1716; *Aristeas: The History of the Seventy two Interpreters ... To which is added: the History of the Angels and their gallantry with the daughters of men. Written by Enoch the Patriarch (... taken from the first book of Enock[sic], concerning the Watchmen). Made English by Mr. Lewis*, London, 1715. 35 Dr Michael Ryan of the Chester Beatty Library, an authority on these matters, informed me after the lecture that the first working of Royal Arch Masonry had actually taken place in the Academy building in which I had lectured. On Royal Arch Masonry see Douglas Knoop and C. P. Jones, *The Genesis of Freemasonry* (Manchester University Press: Manchester, 1947), 274–93; Bernard E. Jones, *Freemasons' Book of the Royal Arch* (Harrap: London, 1957), esp. 130. 36 Ethiopia, though remote, was not entirely cut off from the West. European Christianity had some knowledge of the Ethiopian Church, e.g., through contact with the Ethiopian community in Jerusalem and with the few Ethiopian monks (such as Petrus Aethiops [Pietro Indiano]) who made their way to Rome. Note the pioneering work of H. Ludolf on Ethiopic language and history (e.g., his *Historia Aethiopica*, Frankfort, 1681), and specifically on rumours that the *Book of Enoch* had been preserved in Ethiopia see Fabricius, *Codex Pseudepigraphus*, vol. 1, 209–15. Further Miles Bredin, *The Pale Abyssinian: A Life of James Bruce, African Explorer and Adventurer* (HarperCollins: London, 2000), *passim*. 37 John Collins reminded me that Richard Laurence (1760–1838) was bishop of Cashel from

importance of the work for the history of Judaism was quickly recognized. Interest grew and has continued unabated to the present day.

An ironic observation and I have done. I am sure that as scholars we would like to think that this revival of interest in Enoch is purely academic, but of course it is not. The academy is not isolated from society: it influences and is influenced by the surrounding culture. Scholars actually have a soft-spot for counter-culture, for viewing hegemonic traditions from the margins. They have invested heavily in the last two hundred years in the study of Enoch. They have rescued the Enochic literature from oblivion and made it readily accessible. But by doing so they have, at the same time, made a significant contribution to counter-culture. I find it deeply ironic when I see contemporary new age movements appealing to Enoch, and in doing so drawing on works of impeccable academic scholarship.[38] If we get involved with iconic figures then we should resign ourselves to the fact that, in perpetuating their memory, we will, whether we like it or not, become part-players in the on-going drama of their cultural biography, and, depending on the figure, we may find ourselves contributing not only to sober academic research but to the wilder fringes of counter-culture as well.

1822 till his death, and is buried in the vaults of Christ Church cathedral, Dublin. From 1814–22 he was Regius professor of Hebrew at Oxford. His *The Book of Enoch the Prophet ... now first translated from an Ethiopic MS., in the Bodleian Library*, Oxford, 1821 (reprinted 1832, 1838, 1878, 1883 and 1909), was translated from the copy of 1 Enoch deposited by James Bruce in the Bodleian. See Leslie Stephen and Sidney Lee (eds.), *Dictionary of National Biography*, vol. 11 (Oxford University Press: London, 1949–50), 647–48. 38 I was able to purchase from Hodges Figgis, the Dublin bookseller, on my visit to the city to give the Academy lecture, a copy of R. H. Charles' great commentary on *1 Enoch* of 1912 (footnote 10 above) reprinted by Kessinger Publishing Company, Montana, U.S.A., which specializes in 'rare esoteric books', including 'Alchemy ... Freemasonry ... Occult ... Pyramids, Qabalah ... Rosicrucian ... Tarot, Theosophy, *and many more*'. Laurence's translation of 1 Enoch has been reprinted, in whole or in part, a number of times by exponents of the esoteric and occult. An early example is Clara Smith, *Ireland's Great Future in the pages of Revelation ... Including the first part of the Book of Enoch, a genuine survival from the flood (The Book of Enoch ... By R. Laurence)* (Sealy, Bryers & Co.: Dublin, 1912).

Journeys to the world beyond in ancient Judaism

John J. Collins

'Who has ascended to heaven and come down?' asks the weary sage Agur in Prov. 30:4. Much of the biblical tradition, as edited by priestly writers and Deuteronomists, would answer 'no one.' Nonetheless, the motif of ascent to heaven became relatively popular in post-biblical Judaism, and a subgenre of apocalypses was devoted to describing such alleged experiences. In part, this development reflects a widespread interest in the world beyond in late antiquity, throughout the Hellenistic world. In part, it responded to concerns and experiences that were specifically Jewish. In this paper I will focus on the earliest Jewish ascent apocalypses.[1] I will examine the ostensible purposes of the heavenly travels, and reflect on the functions that may be attributed to the texts describing them.

ANCIENT NEAR EASTERN PRECEDENTS

The idea that a human being could journey to the world beyond and return was no innovation of ancient Judaism. The oldest near eastern stories of such journeys are found already in the Sumerian literature from the third millennium BCE, and they are developed in the Akkadian literature of the subsequent millennia.[2] Best known and most influential of these is the epic journey of

1 For reviews of this material see I. Gruenwald, *Apocalyptic and Merkavah Mysticism* (Leiden: Brill, 1980), 29–72; A. F. Segal, 'Heavenly Ascent in Hellenistic Judaism, Early Christianity and their Environment', *Aufstieg und Niedergang der römischen Welt*, H. Temporini and W. Haase (eds.), II.23.2 (Berlin: De Gruyter, 1980), 1352–1368; M. Dean-Otting, *Heavenly Journeys: A Study of the Motif in Hellenistic Jewish Literature* (Frankfurt: Lang, 1984); J. D. Tabor, *Things Unutterable. Paul's Ascent to Paradise in its Greco-Roman, Judaic, and Early Christian Contexts* (Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 1986); idem, 'Heaven, Ascent to', *The Anchor Bible Dictionary*, D. N. Freedman et al. (eds.) (New York: Doubleday, 1992), 3. 91–94; M. Himmelfarb, *Ascent to Heaven in Jewish and Christian Apocalypses* (New York: Oxford, 1993); J. J. Collins, *The Apocalyptic Imagination* (2nd ed.; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1998), 43–84; 177–93; 241–55; J. E. Wright, *The Early History of Heaven* (New York: Oxford, 2000). 2 G. Widengren, *The Ascension of the Apostle and the Heavenly Book* (Uppsala: Lundequist, 1950); Wright, *The Early History*, 26–51.

Gilgamesh to the land of the living, in search of an antidote to death.[3] Gilgamesh travels through the mountain where the sun sets in the west and comes eventually to the shore of the sea that encircles the earth. He is ferried by a boatman to the land of the living to meet with Utnapishtim, the flood hero, who had been taken away to live with the gods. Utnapishtim gives him a twig from the tree of life. Despite the apparent success of his mission, Gilgamesh ultimately fails when he loses the precious twig. Access to the land of the living may not be utterly impossible, but it is clearly beyond the reach of most mortals and even Gilgamesh, who is two-thirds divine, cannot secure it in a lasting way. Other Mesopotamian stories about journeys to the beyond are also somewhat pessimistic. Etana, the first king after the Flood according to the Sumerian King List, is called 'the shepherd who ascended to heaven.'[4] Etana's quest is for 'the plant of birth' so that he might have an heir. He is carried aloft by an eagle, which he had saved from certain death. After they have ascended three leagues, Etana apparently loses his nerve, and asks to be brought back to earth. One fragment of the myth, however, reports that they pass through the gate of the gods, and it is unclear whether the ascent ultimately succeeds.[5] In either case, access to the realm of the gods is deemed to be not entirely impossible but virtually so for most humans. The story of Adapa, who ascends to heaven and is offered the bread and water of life only to refuse them, on the advice of the god Ea, confirms this impression.[6] Descent to the Netherworld is even more hazardous, as can be seen from the story of the Sumerian goddess Inanna and her Akkadian counterpart Ishtar, who descend to the Netherworld and are trapped there, and only rescued with great difficulty by the gods.[7] Enkidu, the companion of Gilgamesh, is also trapped in the Netherworld in the fragmentary Sumerian myth, 'Gilgamesh, Enkidu and the Netherworld.'[8] Gilgamesh pleads for him, but all the gods can do is open a vent to allow Enkidu's ghost to come up to speak to him. Nonetheless we have some cases where people are said to negotiate the round-trip successfully. Enmeduranki, the ante-diluvian king of Sippar and ancestor of the *bārû* guild of diviners, was taken up to the divine assembly and shown the arts of divination and the heavenly tablets.[9] (Geo Widengren argued that 'this divine

3 E. A. Speiser, 'The Epic of Gilgamesh', *Ancient Near Eastern Texts relating to the Old Testament*, J. B. Pritchard (ed.) (3rd ed.; Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1969), 72–99; A. K. Grayson, 'The Epic of Gilgamesh – Notes and Additions', ibid., 503–7; S. Dalley, *Myths from Mesopotamia* (New York: Oxford, 1989), 39–153. 4 J. V. Kinnier-Wilson, *The Legend of Etana* (Warminster, UK: Aris & Phillips, 1985); Dalley, *Myths*, 189–202. 5 Dalley, *Myths*, 200, concludes her translation with this passage. 6 E. A. Speiser, 'Adapa', *Ancient Near Eastern Texts*, 101–3; Dalley, *Myths*, 182–88. 7 S. N. Kramer, 'Inanna's Descent to the Nether World', *Ancient Near Eastern Texts*, 52–57; E. A. Speiser, 'The Descent of Ishtar to the Nether World', ibid., 106–9; Dalley, Myths, 154–62. 8 See T. Jacobsen, *The Treasures of Darkness. A History of Mesopotamian Religion* (New Haven: Yale, 1976), 212. 9 W. G. Lambert, 'Enmeduranki and Related Matters', *Journal of Cuneiform Studies* 21 (1967), 126–38. Another ante-diluvian sage, Utuabzu, was also believed to have ascended to heaven.

wisdom, imparted to the ruler at the occasion of his enthronement, is not any exclusive right only belonging to mythical Enmeduranki. On the contrary! It is a distinctive trait of the Mesopotamian royal ideology that the ruler is endowed by the gods with surpassing knowledge and heavenly wisdom.'[10] Whether the endowment with wisdom always entailed a heavenly ascent, however, is not so clear.) We also find a case of a human being who descends to the Netherworld and returns, if only in a dream. An Assyrian prince, Kumma, is said to have had this experience at his own request, in a tablet from Asshur, from the seventh century BCE. He awakes in terror, a chastened man.[11] There is also some evidence of Akkadian rituals for ascent to heaven and descent to the Netherworld.[12]

This rather scattered evidence from ancient Mesopotamia gives some impression of the reasons why some people in antiquity wanted to transcend the limitations of earthly existence. I would suggest that there are three fundamental themes in these stories. Ascent to heaven, or the claim to have ascended to heaven, is a way to establish authority of a revealer or of a king, such as Enmeduranki. Related to this is the desire for knowledge and revelation, curiosity about things beyond the range of human knowledge. A distinct theme, no less fundamental is the desire for eternal life, which figures prominently in the stories of Gilgamesh and Adapa, and indirectly in that of Etana, who sought immortality in his progeny. In these stories, however, that desire is frustrated.

ANCIENT ISRAEL

The culture of ancient Israel was part of the wider culture of the Semitic world. Here too the basic understanding was that heaven was the Lord's while the earth was the proper domain of human beings. After death, people would descend to Sheol, where the dead could not even praise the Lord. Again, some exceptions were possible, but their exceptional nature was emphasized. In the cryptic phrase of Genesis, Enoch walked with the elohim, and was not, for the elohim took him.[13] Presumably he was taken to live with the elohim (angels or divine beings) either in heaven or at the ends of the earth, like Utnapishtim.

See R. Borger, 'Die Beschwörungsserie *bīt mēseri* und die Himmelfahrt Henochs', *Journal of Near Eastern Studies* 33 (1974), 183–96. 10 Widengren, *The Ascent of the Apostle*, 12. 11 E. A. Speiser, 'A Vision of the Nether World', *Ancient Near Eastern Texts* 109–110. See H. S. Kvanvig, *Roots of Apocalyptic. The Mesopotamian Background of the Enoch Figure and of the Son of Man* (Wissenschaftliche Monographien zum Alten und Neuen Testament 61; Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener Verlag, 1988), 389–441. 12 T. Abusch, 'Ascent to the Stars in a Mesopotamian Ritual: Social Metaphor and Religious Experience', in J. J. Collins and M. Fishbane (eds.), *Death, Ecstasy and Otherworldly Journeys* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1995), 15–39. 13 Gen 5:21–24. See J. C. VanderKam, *Enoch and the Growth of an Apocalyptic Tradition* (Catholic Biblical Quarterly Monograph Series 16; Washington, D.C.: Catholic University of America, 1984), 30–31.

Elijah, more spectacularly, was taken up to heaven in a whirlwind.[14] While Moses was explicitly said to have died, the fact that no one knew his burial place allowed for later speculation about his 'disappearance' and possible apotheosis.[15] While Enoch and Elijah had gone up to heaven, however, they were not said to have come down, even if Elijah was expected to make a cameo appearance before the eschaton.

The idea of a round-trip to heaven for purposes of revelation was probably implied in the claim of prophets to have stood in the council of the Lord. According to Jeremiah, the lack of such an experience disqualified a prophet as inauthentic: 'For who has stood in the council of the Lord so as to see and to hear his word?' (Jer 23:18). We have several descriptions of such experiences, in the case of Micaiah ben Imlah in 1 Kgs 22, in Isaiah and Ezekiel, although it is sometimes unclear whether the prophet is in heaven or in the temple on earth. What is remarkable about these scenes, however, is their focus on the divine audience. The description of the surroundings is minimal and there is no description at all of an ascent.[16] Nonetheless, the prophets are given temporary admission to the divine council, and this would seem to imply that they have ascended to heaven. This alleged experience established their authority and reliability.

It is possible that similar access was granted to the king, in the pre-exilic period. In Psalm 110 he is invited to sit at the Lord's right hand, although here again it is possible that the reference is to a temple ritual.[17] The line between temple and heaven is often blurred in any case. Similar access to the divine council is promised to the High Priest Joshua in Zechariah 3, after his trial, which also took place in heaven: 'If you will walk in my ways and keep my requirements ... I will give you the right of access among those standing here.'[18]

Ancient Israel, like ancient Mesopotamia, then, held a rather restrictive view of access to the world beyond. Ascent to heaven was not altogether impossible, but it was severely limited, and little curiosity is expressed about it. Of course this restraint may be due in part to the editors of the biblical corpus. Deuteronomy famously asserted that the word of the Lord was not in heaven that one should ask, who will ascend to heaven and bring it down.[19] Even where

14 2 Kgs 2:11. 15 Deut 34:5–6. On the later speculation see J. D. Tabor, '"Returning to the Divinity": Josephus's Portrayal of the Disappearances of Enoch, Elijah and Moses', *Journal of Biblical Literature* 108 (1989), 225–38; C. Begg, 'Josephus's Portrayal of the Disappearances of Enoch, Elijah and Moses: Some Observations', *Journal of Biblical Literature* 109 (1990), 691–93. 16 Ezekiel's great vision of the new Jerusalem is a journey in the spirit (as also his vision of the abominations of the old Jerusalem) but it is not a journey to heaven. 17 H.-J. Kraus, *Psalms 60–150* (Augsburg: Minneapolis, 1989), 346–7. On the later interpretation of this passage see M. Hengel, 'Setze dich zu meiner Rechten!' Die Inthronisation Christi zur Rechten Gottes und Psalm 110,1', in M. Philonenko (ed.), *Le Trône de Dieu* (Tübingen: Mohr, 1993), 108–94. 18 Zech 3:7. See C. L. Meyers and E. M. Meyers, *Haggai, Zechariah 1–8* (Anchor Bible 25B; New York: Doubleday, 1987), 195. 19 Deut 30:12.

ascent seems to be implied, as in the case of the prophets, it is not described. Moreover, ascent to heaven is invoked more than once in taunt songs, to deride the hybris of Gentile kings. So the king of Babylon is compared to Helal ben Shachar, Day Star son of Dawn: 'You said in your heart, "I will ascend to heaven; I will raise my throne above the stars of God. I will sit on the mount of assembly on the heights of Zaphon; I will ascend to the tops of the clouds, I will make myself like the Most High".'[20] Ezekiel taunts the king of Tyre: 'Because your heart is proud and you have said, "I am a god; I sit in the seat of the gods in the heart of the seas;" yet you are but a mortal, and no god.'[21] A similar taunt is directed against Nabonidus by the clergy of Babylon: '(It was) he (who) stood up in the assembly to praise hi[mself]: "I am wise, I know, I have seen (what is) hid[den]. (Even) if I do not know how to write (with the stylus), yet I have seen se[cret things]."'[22] These taunts lend some support to the view of Widengren that the claim of ascent to heaven was part of Near Eastern royal ideology, although they fall well short of establishing it as a constant element.[23] They also show that such claims sometimes met with considerable skepticism in the ancient world. Such skepticism was more prominent in the Greek world, where it found expression in the satires of Menippus of Gadara in the third century BCE and those of Lucian of Samosata, who wrote his Nekyiamanteia and Icaromenippus in the second century CE. In the older biblical and Near Eastern sources, the skepticism was not philosophical but arose from political dissent.

THE BOOK OF THE WATCHERS

The earliest Jewish account of an otherworldly journey, in which the journey itself is a focus of interest, is found in the *Book of the Watchers* in *1 Enoch* 1–36. While this book can be classified as an apocalypse in terms of its macro-genre,[24] it is clearly a composite work and experimental in its literary genre. George Nickelsburg distinguishes five main sections:

1 an introduction, in chapters 1–5;
2 the rebellion of the angels, in chapters 6–11;
3 Enoch's vision of heaven, chapters 12–16;
4 Enoch's journey to the West, chapters 17–19;
5 Additional journey traditions:
a list of accompanying angels, in chapter 20;
journey back from the west in 21–27;

20 Isa 14:12–14. 21 Ezek 28:2. 22 The Verse Account of Nabonidus: A. L. Oppenheim, 'Nabonidus and the Clergy of Babylon', *Ancient Near Eastern Texts*, 314. 23 Widengren, *The Ascension of the Apostle*, 7–21. 24 J. J. Collins, 'The Jewish Apocalypses', *Semeia* 14 (1979), 21–49.

journey to the east, in 28–33 and
journeys to the four corners of the earth, in 34–36.[25]

It seems likely that this text grew incrementally, but the actual history of composition is obscure.

The ascent proper is found in the third of these sections, chapters 12–16. Since Enoch is not mentioned at all in chapters 1–11, it is reasonable to assume that this is an addition to the story of the Watchers, but that story provides the occasion for Enoch's ascent. He is given a message to deliver to the fallen Watchers, informing them that they will have neither mercy nor peace. But they then prevail on him 'to write out for them the record of a petition that they might receive forgiveness, and to take the record of their petition up to the Lord in heaven' (*1 Enoch* 13:4).[26] The purpose of his ascent, then, is intercession. This is usually taken to be a task of priests.[27] He takes the petition up to the heavenly temple. There are manifold connections between priests and angels, as can be seen explicitly in the *Songs of the Sabbath Sacrifice* from Qumran.[28] The depiction of the fallen Watchers, who are told that 'you ought to intercede for men, not men for you', has been taken as a critique of the Jerusalem priesthood in the Hellenistic period.[29] Moreover, in the *Book of Jubilees* Enoch is said to have burned the incense of the sanctuary (*Jub* 4:25), certainly a priestly function. Yet he is not called a priest in the *Book of the Watchers*, but a scribe. No doubt, many priests were scribes, and scribes priests. The two roles are certainly not incompatible. But it is Enoch's scribal role that is emphasized here – specifically, his ability to write out a petition. Nickelsburg claims that 'Enoch's call to preach to the rebel angels has been shaped according to the form of biblical prophetic commissionings' especially Ezekiel 1–2.[30] Again, there are clear analogies in the message of judgment that he is told to convey. But no prophet was asked to write out a petition for the accused. The role of the intercessor here has been modified in light of the legal practice of the literate Hellenistic age. In view of the implicit critique of the priesthood that many scholars have detected in the story of the fallen angels, we may wonder whether there is not a contrast here between the angel-priests, who have failed in their role of intercession, and the human scribe who assumes that role in their place;

25 G. W. E. Nickelsburg, *Jewish Literature between the Bible and the Mishnah* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1981), 48. 26 Translations of 1 Enoch are taken from that of M. A. Knibb, '1 Enoch', in H. F. D. Sparks (ed.), *The Apocryphal Old Testament* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1984), 169–319. 27 So, e.g. M. Himmelfarb, *Ascent to Heaven in Jewish and Christian Apocalypses* (New York: Oxford, 1993), 20. 28 C. A. Newsom, '"He has Established for Himself Priests": Human and Angelic Priesthood in the Qumran Sabbath Shirot', in L. H. Schiffman (ed.), *Archaeology and History in the Dead Sea Scrolls* (Sheffield: Journal for the Study of the Old Testament, 1990), 101–20. 29 D. W. Suter, 'Fallen Angel, Fallen Priest: The Problem of Family Purity in *1 Enoch* 6–16', *Hebrew Union College Annual* 50 (1979), 115–35. 30 Nickelsburg, *Jewish Literature*, 53.

in short, whether Enoch is not substituting a new kind of intercession for that of the priesthood. The efficacy of this kind of intercession requires ecstatic experience on the part of the visionary scribe. In this respect there is indeed an analogy with the commissioning of a prophet.

Enoch's experience, however, is more complicated than that of the typical prophet. The late Ioan Culianu distinguished three main types of apocalypses according to the manner of the revelation: those whose hero is called from above, those whose hero is a victim of accident or illness (such as Er, in the myth of Er), and those whose hero strives to obtain a revelation. The last category he dubbed 'Quest Apocalypses'.[31] Enoch, however, combines the Call and the Quest. The Quest aspect appears in his incubation by the waters of Dan, where he reads out the petition until he falls asleep. Dan, of course, was an old sacred site in Israelite tradition, and was also close to the Hellenistic shrine of Pan.[32] It is possible that some form of incubation ritual was associated with the site. Other apocalyptic visionaries of the Hellenistic and Roman periods also take measures to initiate their experiences. (Daniel fasts in Daniel 10, and Ezra eats the flower that is in the field, in *2 Esdras* 9:26.) These measures distinguish the apocalyptic visionaries from the classical biblical prophets. Unlike some other visionaries (such as Isaiah), Enoch is not formally invested or commissioned in heaven, but the authorization of his message and role must be reckoned nonetheless among the functions of his ascent.

The actual account of the ascent describes in some detail the progression of Enoch through the heavenly temple until he comes to the throne of God. The description of the throne, again, is indebted to Ezekiel, and is rightly recognized as an important document in the development of Jewish mysticism.[33] Herewith we come to another function of the ascent texts which would come to the fore in later Jewish mysticism: the contemplation of the divine throne. The experience here is not one of union, but of heightened presence, as is often the case in Jewish and Christian mysticism.[34] The written account of Enoch's experience enables the reader to share in it. This contemplation of the heavenly world also seems to be a major function of the Songs of the Sabbath Sacrifice from Qumran.[35]

Like the visions of Isaiah or Ezekiel, that of Enoch does not dwell on the throne vision as its final purpose. Enoch is again given a message of judgment to convey to the Watchers. Central to this message is the diagnosis of their

31 I. P. Culianu, *Psychanodia* I (Leiden: Brill, 1983), 6. 32 G. W. Nickelsburg, 'Enoch, Levi, and Peter. Recipients of Revelation in Upper Galilee', *Journal of Biblical Literature* 100 (1981), 575–600. 33 Gruenwald, *Apocalyptic and Merkavah Mysticism*, 32–37. 34 B. McGinn, 'Love, Knowledge,and Mystical Union in Western Christianity: Twelfth to Sixteenth Centuries', *Church History* 56 (1987), 7; *The Foundations of Mysticism* (New York: Crossroad, 1991), xvii. 35 C. A. Newsom, *Songs of the Sabbath Sacrifice. A Critical Edition* (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1985), 59, describes the Songs as 'a quasi-mystical liturgy designed to evoke

error: 'Why have you left the high, holy, and eternal heaven, and lain with the women and become unclean with the daughters of men, and taken wives for yourselves? ... And you were spiritual, holy, living an eternal life, but you became unclean upon the women' (15:3). More is at issue in the ascent of Enoch than the reporting of judgment. There is also a contrast between two levels of existence, the immortal life of the angels and the corruptible life of human beings on earth. The *Book of the Watchers* claims that one can pass from one kind of existence to the other: the fallen angels presumably lose their immortality while the human Enoch ascends to the level of the immortal, although he does not immediately remain there. This issue of access to eternal life figures more directly in several other Jewish ascent apocalypses.

The ascent of Enoch in *1 Enoch* 12–16, then, touches on all three of our fundamental themes: it establishes the authority of Enoch, provides information about the heavenly temple and divine throne, and touches on the question of eternal life. The remainder of the *Book of the Watchers* expands the revelation, and provides more specific information about life after death. After Enoch has received his message for the Watchers, he is taken on a tour to the ends of the earth, which is extended in several units through chapters 17–36. This material is different in kind and in interest from the ascent to the divine throne for the purpose of intercession. It is not an ascent to heaven, but a tour of places that are not normally accessible. Much of what Enoch sees can only be attributed to cosmological curiosity – the storehouses of the wind, the foundations of the earth, and so forth.[36] It has been noted that the model of the earth implied in these journeys was already antiquated in the Hellenistic age: it is 'conceived as a flat surface upon which one can travel to a certain point where it ends and drops off into a vast chasm – the classic ancient Near Eastern model of the earth.'[37] At the end of heaven and earth is the fiery prison for the stars of heaven and the host of heaven (18:14–15). This provides a link with the story of the Watchers, who are said in 10:13 to be shut up in a prison of fire for all eternity, after they have been confined for seventy generations under the hills of the earth. The theme of judgment runs through much of Enoch's travel, and a major purpose of the account is to lend an aura of realism to the judgment by associating it with specific places, even if these are places that no one but Enoch has seen.

The eschatological focus of Enoch's tour can be seen most clearly in chap. 22 and chapters 24–27. In chapter 22, Enoch sees 'in the west a large and high mountain, and a hard rock and four beautiful places, and inside it was deep and wide and very smooth' (22:1–2). He is told that these places are intended for 'the spirits of the souls of the dead', until the day of judgment. The spirits are divided into various categories: righteous, sinners, victims of murder and a

a sense of being present in the heavenly temple.' 36 See M. E. Stone, 'Lists of Revealed Things in Apocalyptic Literature', in F. M. Cross et al. (ed.), *Magnalia Dei. The Mighty Acts of God* (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1976), 414–52. 37 Wright, *The Early History*, 121.

second category of sinners.[38] The location, inside a mountain in the west, recalls the journey of Gilgamesh through the mountain where the sun sets, but there is no Mesopotamian precedent for the separation of souls on the basis of their conduct in life.[39] Orphic influence has been detected in the chamber of the righteous, which has a spring of water and light.[40] This passage is unique among the Jewish apocalypses in failing to locate the abode of the righteous in heaven, and it probably reflects an early tradition. What is typical of the apocalypses, however, is the curiosity about the fate of the souls or spirits of people after death.

Equally typical is the interest in the final judgment. Enoch sees 'a high mountain, whose summit is like the throne of the Lord', where God will sit 'when he comes down to visit the earth for good' (25:3). Near it is a beautiful fragrant tree, the tree of life, from whose fruit life will be given to the righteous. It is planted 'in a holy place, by the house of the Lord' (25:5). Later (chap. 32) he encounters another tree, over the mountains to the east, which is identified as the tree of wisdom from which Adam and Eve ate. Two distinct trees are implied in Genesis, but the way they are separated here probably reflects different stages of composition. Adam and Eve only appear in chapter 32. The earlier story of the fall of the Watchers ignores the myth of Adam and seems to imply a quite different explanation of the origin of sin. The tree of life here is not found in the Garden of Righteousness, but near the mountain of the Lord. This recalls Ezekiel 28, where the king of Tyre is taunted that he was 'in Eden, the garden of God', (vs. 13) and on 'the holy mountain of God' (vs. 14), with the implication that the two locations are one. Both Ezekiel and Enoch are probably reflecting a different tradition from what we find in Genesis 2–3. The judgment of the damned is located in an 'accursed valley', presumably Gehenna. Some of Enoch's vision, then, concerns not the ends of the earth but the center of it, in the environs of Jerusalem. Nonetheless, as J. E. Wright has observed, they concern the mythical places of the earth.[41] The places of punishment are located at the ends of the earth, on the edge of the abyss. The waiting places of the dead are inside the mountain in the west, but the place of reward of the righteous is in the center of the earth, around the throne of God. The Book of the Watchers, then, provides an exceptional and rather archaic view of the mythical world where the afterlife of humanity is located. One function of the narrative is surely to affirm that view of the world, which must have been put in question by the spread of Hellenistic cosmology. The narrative, however, is not a disinterested account of cosmology. Much of it has to do with the theme

38 The text is corrupt. In 22:9 we are told that there are three divisions rather than four. 39 See M.-T. Wacker, *Weltordnung und Gericht. Studien zu 1 Henoch 22* (Würzburg: Echter, 1982), 173–77; G. W. E. Nickelsburg, *Resurrection, Immortality and Eternal Life in Intertestamental Judaism* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1972), 134–7. 40 T. F. Glasson, *Greek Influence on Jewish Eschatology* (London: SPCK, 1961), 19. 41 Wright, *The*

of judgment, of the stars as well as of humanity. This interest is by no means exceptional in the Hellenistic era. All the Jewish apocalypses have a major interest in the fate of the dead.[42]

OTHER EARLY ENOCH TRADITIONS

The validation of Enoch's authority is only implicit in the *Book of the Watchers*. Elsewhere in the corpus it is addressed explicitly: Enoch imparts instruction to his children 'according to that which appeared to me in the heavenly vision, and which I know from the words of the holy angels and understand from the tablets of heaven' (93:2). None of the narratives of Enoch's ascent describe his consultation of the tablets. It has been suggested plausibly that he is given this privilege by analogy with the ancient Sumerian king, Enmeduranki.[43] In accordance with the associations of the tablets of destiny, the range of Enoch's revelation is extended to include history as well as cosmology. The cosmology undergoes gradual development. We hear no more of chambers for the souls of the dead, or of a cosmic mountain in the middle of the earth. Rather, the abode of the righteous is transferred to heaven. We find this already in the *Epistle of Enoch* which may be older than the Book of Daniel.[44] There the righteous are promised that the gate of heaven will be opened to them and that they will be companions to the stars of heaven (*1 Enoch* 104:2–6). The wicked, in contrast, will be wretched in Sheol.

This is also the case in the latest component of *1 Enoch*, the *Similitudes*, which were probably written around the time of Christ.[45] There, as in the *Book of the Watchers*, Enoch ascends to heaven on a storm-cloud (39:3). In this case, however, he has no mission of intercession for the Watchers. He is there simply to discover the mysteries of heaven. Immediately, we are told, 'I saw another vision, the dwelling of the righteous and the resting-places of the holy. There my eyes saw their dwelling with the angels and their resting-places with the holy ones, and they were petitioning and supplicating and praying on behalf of the sons of men' (39:4–5). Later we are told that the wicked go down 'into the flames of torment of Sheol' (63:10). Enoch is given no tour in the *Similitudes*, but he does learn various astronomical and cosmological secrets. The primary emphasis of the book, however, is on the judgement, and the role therein of the figure called 'that Son of Man' who is subject to God but nonetheless sits on a throne of glory.[46]

Early History, 123. 42 See J. J. Collins, 'Apocalyptic Eschatology as the Transcendence of Death', *Catholic Biblical Quarterly* 36 (1974), 21–43 (= idem, *Seers, Sibyls and Sages in Hellenistic-Roman Judaism* [Leiden: Brill, 1997]), 75–98. 43 VanderKam, *Enoch and the Growth of an Apocalyptic Tradition*, 43–45; idem, *Enoch. A Man for all Generations* (Columbia S.C: University of South Carolina Press, 1995), 6–8. 44 VanderKam, *Enoch. A Man for all Generations*, 89–101. 45 See Collins, *The Apocalyptic Imagination*, 177–8. 46 J. J. Collins,

The most controversial part of the *Similitudes* is undoubtedly the epilogue to the visions found in 1 Enoch 70–71. There are really two epilogues here, and it is unlikely that they come from the same author. First, we are told that 'it came to pass after this that, while he was living, his name was lifted from those who dwell upon the dry ground to the presence of that Son of Man and to the presence of the Lord of Spirits. And he was lifted on the chariots of the spirit and his name vanished among them. And from that day I was not counted among them, [i.e. human beings] and he placed me between two winds between the north and the west, where the angels took the cords to measure for me the place for the chosen and the righteous. And there I saw the first fathers and the righteous who from the beginning of the world dwelt in that place' (70:1–4).

This passage provides a fitting conclusion to the *Similitudes*. The ascent on the chariots of the spirit recalls that of Elijah, and parallels Enoch's ascent at the beginning of the *Similitudes* in chapter 39. There is a clear homology between his ascent as a visionary and his final ascent to the abode of the righteous. This passage also makes a clear distinction between Enoch and 'that Son of Man', a distinction that seemed to be presumed throughout his visions.[47]

This epilogue, however, is complemented by another one in chapter 71. In this case we are told that 'my spirit was carried off, and it went up into the heavens' (*1 Enoch* 71:1). There he is met by the archangel Michael, who shows him all the secrets of the end of heaven and all the storehouses of the stars and the lights. Then he is again transported 'to the highest heaven' (71:5). From this it appears that there are at least two heavens, more probably three.[48] This detail is significant, as the rest of 1 Enoch only envisions one heaven. The multiple heavens in chapter 71 are a strong indication that this chapter is a secondary addition. In the highest heaven, Enoch sees the heavenly temple. Most remarkably, Enoch is greeted, 'You are the Son of Man who was born to righteousness' (71:14). I am not sure that Enoch is necessarily identified with 'that Son of Man' whom he had seen in his visions. Throughout the *Similitudes*, there is a close parallelism between the righteous on earth and their counterparts in heaven. The heavenly Son of Man is the Righteous One *par excellence*. It may be that Enoch is being greeted in language that emphasizes his similarity to the heavenly figure.[49] Other righteous people will likewise be assimilated to Enoch

The Scepter and the Star (New York: Doubleday, 1995), 177–82. 47 J. J. Collins, 'The Son of Man in First Century Judaism', *New Testament Studies* 38 (1992), 448–66 (see 453–4), contra M. Casey, 'The Use of the Term "Son of Man" in the Similitudes of Enoch', *Journal for the Study of Judaism* 7 (1976), 25–26; idem, *Son of Man. The Interpretation and Influence of Daniel* 7 (London: SPCK, 1979), 105. Casey's argument is based on one manuscript, Abbadianus 55, which has a different reading in 70:1, but the difference is due to the omission of one word and is most probably accidental. 48 H. Bietenhard, *Die himmlische Welt im Urchristentum und Spätjudentum* (*Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen zum Neien Testament* 2; Tübingen: Mohr, 1951), 11; Wright, *The Early History*, 141. 49 Collins, 'The Son of Man in First Century Judaism', 456–7.

and will walk in his way. It is true, however, that the later Enoch tradition emphasizes his heavenly transformation.[50] In *2 Enoch* he is stripped of his earthly garments, anointed with oil and clothed in glorious garments (*2 Enoch* 9:17–18) so that he becomes 'like one of the glorious ones, and there was no apparent difference.'[51] In the much later *3 Enoch*, or Sepher Hekalot, he becomes Metatron, enlarged to the size of the world and enthroned on a throne of glory.[52] His assimilation to the Son of Man in *1 Enoch* 71 is certainly a step in this development. It may well have been intended to counter the Christian identification of Jesus as the Danielic Son of Man. Enoch too becomes a paradigm of divinization, or angelification. He is presented as a man taken up and transformed in heaven, with a clear implication that those who walk in his ways may hope for a similar fate.

MOSES AND LEVI

Thus far we have focused on the Enoch tradition, which is the main locus of heavenly ascent in pre-Christian Judaism. Leaving aside a problematic text in the Dead Sea Scrolls,[53] we have only two non-Enochic Jewish stories of ascent that can be dated to the pre-Christian period. One is the dream of Moses in Ezekiel the Tragedian, and the other is the dream of Levi in the Aramaic *Apocryphon of Levi*.

In Moses dream, he sees a man enthroned on the summit of Mount Sinai.[54] This 'man', presumably God, vacates the throne and bids Moses sit on it, wearing a crown and holding a scepter. The dream is interpreted as a symbolic expression of Moses' leadership and knowledge, but it surely implies a tradition of the apotheosis of Moses. (The ultimate inspiration of this tradition is found in Exod 7:1: 'I have made you a god to Pharaoh.' The divinity of Moses was linked with the ascent of Mt. Sinai by Philo, who was probably drawing on

50 This point is made by J. R. Davila, 'Of Methodology, Monotheism and Metatron', in C. C. Newman, J. R. Davila and G. S. Lewis, *The Jewish Roots of Christological Monotheism* (Leiden: Brill, 1999), 11–12. 51 See Himmelfarb, *Ascent to Heaven*, 40, who argues for the priestly character of Enoch's investiture. 52 *3 Enoch* 4:1. P. Alexander, '3 (Hebrew Apocalypse of), Enoch', *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha*, J. H. Charlesworth (ed.), vol. 1 (London: Darton, Longman & Todd, 1983), 258. 53 See M. Smith, 'Ascent to the Heavens and Deification in 4QM[a]', in Schiffman (ed.), *Archaeology and History in the Dead Sea Scrolls*, 181–88; J. J. Collins, 'A Throne in the Heavens: Apotheosis in Pre-Christian Judaism', in Collins and Fishbane, ed., *Death, Ecstasy, and Otherworldly Journeys*, 43–58; idem, *Apocalypticism in the Dead Sea Scrolls* (London: Routledge, 1997), 143–47. A new, controversial, interpretation of this text is now proposed by I. Knohl, *The Messiah before Jesus* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2000). 54 For the text, see Eusebius, Praeparatio Evangelica 9.29.4–5; C. R. Holladay, *Fragments from Hellenistic Jewish Authors. II: Poets* (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1989), 363–65. See also P. W. van der Horst, 'Moses' Throne Vision in Ezekiel the Dramatist', *Journal of Jewish Studies* 34 (1983), 21–29.

older tradition.)[55] The enthronement of Moses clearly establishes his authority. It is not clear whether his exaltation was assumed to be permanent.

The other pre-Christian Jewish ascent is that of Levi in the Levi Apocryphon from Qumran, which is later adapted in the Greek *Testament of Levi*. The Apocryphon is very fragmentary. The relevant passage is found in 4Q213a:

> 'Then I was shown visions [
> in the vision of visions and I saw the heaven[s
> beneath me, high until it reached to the heaven[s
> to me the gates of heaven, and an angel['[56]

Fragmentary though it is, it is of interest, as it shows that Levi ascended through more than one heaven, but not yet through the numbered series that we find in later apocalypses. The corresponding passage in the Greek *Testament of Levi* is preserved in two recensions.[57] In one of these, Levi ascends through three heavens. In the third, 'you will stand near the Lord, and you will be a minister to him, and you will announce his mysteries to men' (*T. Levi* 2:6–10). In the other recension, there are seven heavens, but Levi is only said to ascend through the first three. Then he is told: 'Do not marvel at these; for you will see four other heavens more brilliant and incomparable.'[58] The description of the seven heavens in the following chapter proceeds at first from the bottom, through the first three, and then changes direction and proceeds downward from the highest heaven. There can be little doubt then that the vision of three heavens is original, and is expanded secondarily.[59]

Levi's vision in the Testament reaches its climax in *T. Levi* 5: 'And the angel opened to me the gates of heaven, and I saw the holy temple and the Most High upon a throne of glory. And he said to me: Levi, I have given to you the blessings of the priesthood until I come and sojourn in the midst of Israel. Then the angel brought me down to the earth and he gave me a shield and a sword and said: Execute vengeance on Shechem because of Dinah.' The goal of the ascent, then, is the authorization of Levi's priesthood, and the legitimation

55 Philo, De Vita Mosis 1.155–58. See W. Meeks, 'Moses as God and King', in J. Neusner (ed.), *Religions in Antiquity: Essays in Memory of Erwin Ramsdell Goodenough* (Leiden: Brill, 1968), 354–71. 56 M. E. Stone and J. C. Greenfield, 'Aramaic Levi Document', in G. Brooke et al., *Qumran Cave 4. XVII. Parabiblical Texts, Part 3* (Discoveries in the Judaean Desert XXII; Oxford: Clarendon, 1996), 31. In the text cited, open square brackets mean that this is the edge of the fragment, and that some words are missing at the end of the line. 57 See R. H. Charles, 'The Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs', *The Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha of the Old Testament*, R. H. Charles (ed.) (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1913 [reprint 1963]), 2. 304–6. 58 T. Levi 2:9. Trans. M. de Jonge and H. Hollander, *The Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs. A Commentary* (Leiden: Brill, 1985), 132. 59 Contra Wright, *The Early History*, 147–8, who relies on the text-critical judgment of H. J. de Jonge, 'Die Textüberlieferung der Testamente der zwölf Patriarchen', in M. de Jonge (ed.), *Studies*

of his violent action against Shechem. The vision is unusual among the apocalyptic ascent narratives insofar as it is not at all concerned with the theme of eternal life. It is closer to the older ascents of the prophets or to a figure like Enmeduranki than to the later apocalypses.

THE PLURALITY OF HEAVENS

The idea of three heavens had old precedents in Mesopotamia, as indeed did the seven heavens.[60] It may have been implied in the biblical phrase שמי שמים, but that phrase has also been taken as a hyperbolic reference to the height and expanse of heaven.[61] The three heavens had some currency in Judaism around the turn of the era, as we can see from the Levi Apocryphon, *1 Enoch* 71 and St. Paul's famous reference to a man who was caught up to the third heaven, whether in the body or out of the body, in 2 Corinthians 12:2.[62] It is unlikely that all references to three heavens can be attributed to Christian scribes taking the ascent of Paul as normative.[63]

In the late first and early second century CE, however, we see the emergence of a new form of heavenly journey, where the visionary ascends through a numbered sequence of heavens, usually seven – the number found in the second recension of the *Testament of Levi*, the Greek *Apocalypse of Moses*, *2 Enoch*, the *Apocalypse of Abraham* and the (Christian) *Ascension of Isaiah*.[64] 3 Baruch deviates from this number, and only describes 5 heavens. Some scholars have argued that the climactic chapters of the book have been lost, but this does not appear to be the case. It may well be, however, that 3 Baruch presupposes a schema of seven heavens and changes it for its purpose, to make the point that the visionary does not ascend all the way to the presence of God.[65] The seven heavens are associated with the seven planets in Hermetic texts, Mithraic monuments and Celsus' discussion of the Mithraic mysteries, but not in Jewish or early Christian texts.[66] Nonetheless, it is difficult to avoid the impression that the late emergence of the seven-heaven cosmology in Jewish and Christian texts was prompted by the Hellenistic cosmology of seven spheres and planets

on the Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs: Text and Interpretation (Leiden: Brill, 1975), 45–62. 60 See A. Yarbro Collins, 'The Seven Heavens in Jewish and Christian Apocalypses', in Collins and Fishbane (eds), *Death, Ecstasy, and Otherworldly Journeys*', 64–65 (= eadem, *Cosmology and Eschatology in Jewish and Christian Apocalypticism* [Leiden: Brill, 1996] 27–28), following F. Rochberg-Halton, 'Mesopotamian Cosmology', in N. S. Hetherington (ed.), *Encyclopedia of Cosmology: Historical, Philosophical, and Scientific Foundations of Modern Cosmology* (New York: Garland, 1993), 398–407, especially 401. 61 Wright, *The Early History*, 55. 62 On 2 Corinthians 12, see Tabor, *Things Unutterable*. 63 *Pace* Wright, *The Early History*, 148. 64 Yarbro Collins, 'The Seven Heavens'. 65 D. C. Harlow, *The Greek Apocalypse of Baruch (3 Baruch) in Hellenistic Judaism and Early Christianity* (Leiden: Brill, 1996), 34–76. 66 Yarbro Collins, 'The Seven Heavens', 86.

surrounding the earth.[67] Admittedly, the apocalypses do not reproduce this cosmology accurately. They typically put the planets, sun, moon and stars in one or two heavens.[68] But the rather sudden popularity of the seven storey heavens may nonetheless reflect the influence of Hellenistic cosmology, however garbled. The triumph of the seven-heaven cosmology, however, was by no means complete. Other, simpler, cosmologies persist into the Christian period, as can be seen from such works as the Latin *Life of Adam and Eve* and the *Testament of Abraham*. Conversely, some apocalypses count a larger number of heavens. The J recension of *2 Enoch* has ten.[69]

The apocalypses, of course, are mythological rather than scientific documents. They typically include a variety of cosmological mysteries, but all pay considerable attention to the punishment of the damned, which is located in a heaven rather than in Sheol in the later apocalypses,[70] and to the abode of the blessed. This attention is related to their predominant interest in moral formation, by impressing on their readers the ultimate consequences of righteous or impious actions.

CONCLUSION

In his classic study of the ascent of the soul, Wilhelm Bousset, argued that the ecstatic ascent of the visionary was nothing other than an anticipation of the heavenly journey of the soul after death.[71] From the texts we have reviewed, it is clear that this is an over-generalization. There were old, if limited, traditions of ascent to heaven in the ancient Near East, which had as their focus the authority of the visionary rather than immortality, and some of the early Jewish ascents, such as those of Levi and Moses, are still of this type. In the Books of Enoch, however, and in the ascent apocalypses of the first century CE and later, there is a pervasive interest in life after death. The increased availability of this hope marks the main difference between the ascent literature of the Hellenistic and Roman periods and the older traditions of the ancient Near East.

Various factors contributed to the hope for a heavenly afterlife in Hellenistic Judaism, including questions of theodicy and the desire for retribution in times of persecution. But this hope was too widespread in the Hellenistic world to be explained by inner-Jewish factors alone.[72] All the major cultures with which the

67 On Hellenistic cosmology see M. R. Wright, *Cosmology in Antiquity* (London: Routledge, 1995). 68 Wright, *The Early History*, 183. 69 Ibid., 179. 70 In *3 Baruch*, there are punishments in the first three heavens. In 2 Enoch there are places of punishment in the second and third heavens. The idea that spirits are tortured in a place above the earth but close to it is found already in Cicero's *Somnium Scipionis* (*Republic* 6.29). Cf. Plutarch, *De facie in orbe lunae* 27–29; *De genio Socratis* 590B. 71 W. Bousset, 'Die Himmelsreise der Seele', *Archiv für Religionswissenschaft* 4 (1901), 136. 72 Major surveys of the belief in immortality and resurrection in ancient Judaism have been written by Nickelsburg,

Jews came in contact in the Second Temple period, Persian, Greek, and Roman, had stories of ascending visionaries and of heavenly immortality. Scholars like Bousset and Richard Reitzenstein looked to Persia as the source of the phenomenon. More recent scholarship has been skeptical of this theory because of the difficulty of dating Persian traditions that are preserved in sources from the Byzantine period or the Middle Ages.[73] The relevance of the Greek and Roman material cannot be denied. From the sixth century BCE on, the belief in the immortality of the soul was spread by Pythagoreans and Orphics, and it was given great prominence in the philosophy of Plato. Increasingly the abode of the blessed was transferred to the heavens. A memorial commemorating the Athenians who died in the battle of Potidaia in 432 BCE states 'the ether has received their souls, the earth their bodies.'[74] Around the same time, Aristophanes joked about 'what people say, that when we die we straightaway turn to stars.'[75] The popularity of astral immortality in the Hellenistic period is attested in epitaphs.[76] It can be no coincidence that the first clear reference to individual resurrection in the Hebrew Bible, in Daniel 12, says that 'the wise will shine like the splendor of the firmament, and those who lead the common people to righteousness like the stars forever and ever.'[77] This hope is essentially similar to the belief of Cicero in the Somnium Scipionis that 'all those who have preserved, aided, or enlarged their fatherland have a special place prepared for them in the heavens, where they may enjoy an eternal life of happiness.'[78]

This is not to suggest that belief in immortality can be viewed as a cultural borrowing. In fact, Hellenistic influence is more pronounced in the later apocalypses; the cosmology of the Book of the Watchers is largely informed by older Near Eastern traditions.

The accounts of ascents in such authors as Cicero (primarily in the *Somnium Scipionis*) and Plutarch[79] are colored by Platonic philosophy, which regarded the spirit or soul as the true seat of the personality and the upper heavens as the realm of purest spirit. Among Jewish authors, only Philo of Alexandria fully appropriated this philosophy.[80] But even in such an unphilosophical work as the

Resurrection, Immortality and Eternal Life, and E. Puech, *La Croyance des Esséniens en la Vie Future: Immortalité, Résurrection, Vie Éternelle?* (Paris: Gabalda, 1993). Neither pays much attention to the broader, international, context in which this belief developed. 73 See especially Culianu, *Psychanodia*. Also Segal, 'Heavenly Ascent', 1342–3. For a recent discussion of Persian apocalypticism and the problems of dating see A. Hultgård, 'Persian Apocalypticism', in J. J. Collins (ed.), *The Encyclopedia of Apocalypticism. 1. The Origins of Apocalypticism in Judaism and Christianity* (New York: Continuum, 1998), 39–83. The main Persian account of an otherworldly journey is the late Pahlavi Book of Arda Viraf, but there are indications that the motif is much older in Iranian tradition. 74 G. Kaibel (ed.), *Epigrammata graeca ex lapidibus conlecta* (Berlin: Reimer, 1978), 2; cited by Wright, *The Early History*, 115. 75 *Peace* 832–4. 76 F. Cumont, *Lux Perpetua* (Paris: Geuthner, 1949), 142–288. 77 J. J. Collins, *Daniel* (Hermeneia; Minneapolis: Fortress, 1993), 393–4. 78 Cicero, *Republic* 6.13. 79 *De genio Socratis* 589F–592E.; *De sera numinis vindicta* (563B–568A). 80 For the motif of heavenly

Book of the Watchers, there is a contrast between the high and holy heaven, which the proper home of holy immortal beings, and the corruptible earth. The novelty of the Hellenistic age was the spread of the belief that mortals could pass from one realm to the other. An adequate explanation of this phenomenon would have to explore the *Zeitgeist* of the Hellenistic age and its expression in diverse local traditions, a task that goes well beyond the limits of this paper.[81] But however this development is to be explained, it transformed the traditional worldview of Israel and the ancient Near East and had enormous consequences for the development of Christianity.

ascent in Philo, see Segal, 'Heavenly Ascent', 1354–58. 81 See J. Z. Smith, 'Native Cults in the Hellenistic Period', *History of Religions* 11(1971), 236–49; J. J. Collins, 'Jewish Apocalyptic against its Hellenistic Near Eastern Environment', *Bulletin of the American Schools of Oriental Research* 220 (1975), 27–36 (= *Seers, Sibyls and Sages*, 59–74); *'Cosmos* and Salvation: Jewish Wisdom and Apocalyptic in the Hellenistic Age', *History of Religions* 17 (1977), 121–42 (= *Seers, Sibyls and Sages*, 317–38).

Iranian influences in Qumran?

Florentino García Martínez

The influence of Iranian religious ideas on the development of some key concepts in the Hebrew Bible was one of the most hotly debated issues among the adherents and adversaries of the *religionsgeschichtliche Schule* in the first part of the twentieth century.[1] The discovery of the Qumran texts gave a new impetus to this controversy, and provided both partisans and adversaries with new arguments.[2] However, in spite of the many studies,[3] a consensus cannot be said to have emerged and the discussion continues today. In the article on 'Zoroastrianism' in the *Encyclopedia of the Dead Sea Scrolls*, Klaus Koch asks himself:

> Were the later layers of the Hebrew scriptures, especially the apocalyptic writings, dependent on Iranian models or was the influence the other way around? In scholarly literature, this question is highly disputed.[4]

At this conference, dedicated to exploring the influence of Oriental ideas on Celtic thought within a Millennial perspective, it seems fitting to look again at

1 A good summary of the problem can be found in Anders Hultgård, 'Das Judentum in der hellenistisch-römischen Zeit und die iranische Religion – ein religionsgeschichtliches Problem', in W. Haase (ed.), *Aufstieg und Niedergang der römischen Welt*. II. 19.1 (Berlin/New York: de Gruyter, 1979) 512–90. See also Shaul Shaked, 'Qumran and Iran', *Israel Oriental Studies* 2 (1972), 433–46; – 'Iranian Influence on Judaism: First Century BCE to Second Century CE', in *Cambridge History of Judaism*, vol. I (Cambridge, CUP 1984), 308–25. The latest attempt to cast doubt on the influence is by James Barr, 'The question of religious influence: the case of Zoroastrianism, Judaism and Christianity', *JAAR* 52 (1985), 201–35. 2 See, among the first contributions, K.G. Kuhn, 'Die Sektenschrift und die iranische Religion', *ZTK* 49 (1952) 296–316; A. Dupont-Sommer, *Nouveaux aperçus sur les Manuscrits de la Mer Morte* (L'Orient ancien illustré 5; Paris: Maisonneuve, 1953), 157–72; H. Michaud, 'Un mythe zervanite dans un des manuscrits de Qumrân', *VT* 5 (1955), 137–47; J. Duchesne-Guillemin, 'Le Zervanisme et les manuscrits de la mer Morte', *Indo-Iranian Journal* 1 (1957), 96–99. 3 The latest studies I am aware are: Shaul Shaked, 'Qumran: Some Iranian Connections', in Zion Zevit, Seymour Gittin, and Michael Sokoloff (eds.), *Solving Riddles and Untying Knots: Biblical, Epigraphic, and Semitic Studies in Honor of Jonas C. Greenfield* (Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 1994), 277–81, and Geo Widengren, Anders Hultgård, Marc Philonenko, *Apocalyptique iranienne et dualisme qoumrânien* (Recherches intertestamentaires 2; Paris: Adrien Maisonneuve, 1995). 4 Lawrence H. Schiffman and James C. VanderKam (eds.), *Encyclopedia of the Dead Sea Scrolls*. 2 vols. (New York: Oxford University Press,

this issue from the specific perspective of the texts of Qumran, and to ask whether the influence of Iranian religion on some of the key apocalyptic ideas of the Qumran community is the most reasonable explanation for the appearance of these ideas in this typically Jewish context. If this were the case, and if it is reasonable to accept that these millennial ideas have traveled from the Persian Empire to the shores of the Dead Sea, their travel farther West to distant Ireland would be less of a surprise.

I am convinced that with the elements at our disposal, certainty on this matter, as with so many other aspects of historical research, is unattainable. Consequently, I do not intend to *prove* that this cross-fertilization took place. In a scale of possible, probable, and certain, my conclusion will remain at the level of probability.[5] But the two prime examples adduced show not only that this influence may reasonably be assumed, but also that it is the most likely explanation.

METHODOLOGICAL PREMISES

In order to show that certain ideas from one religion could have influenced another, two basic presuppositions are crucial:[6] an earlier attestation of these ideas in one of the two religious systems ('the temporal priority'), and the possibility of cultural contacts through which these ideas could have been canalized ('the channels of transmission'). Without these two presuppositions there can be no possibility of influence.

There can be no doubt about the cultural contacts in our case: Palestine was dominated by the Achaemenian empire from 538 BCE until the Macedonian conquest, a sizeable Jewish population was exiled to Mesopotamia, and many of the exiles remained there during the Parthian and Sassanian empires; in addition, some knowledge of Iranian religion was disseminated in the West during the Hellenistic period by Greek writers.[7] And within the Qumran writings we do have certain stories located precisely in the Persian court.[8] There is no doubt, therefore, about the existence of enough channels of transmission through which religious ideas could have been conveyed.

The temporal priority of Iranian religious ideas should not be a problem either. Even if the *floruit* of Zoroaster in the tenth century BCE is not accepted

2000), 1011. 5 I follow the methodology established by Richard N. Frye, 'Qumran and Iran. The State of Studies', in Jacob Neusner (ed.), *Christianity, Judaism and Other Greco-Roman Cults. Studies for Morton Smith at Sixty. Part Three: Judaism before 70* (Leiden: Brill, 1975), 167–73. 6 See Anders Hultgård, 'Persian Apocalypticism', in: John J. Collins (ed.), *The Encyclopedia of Apocalypticism. Volume 1: The Origins of Apocalypticism in Judaism and Christianity* (New York: Continuum, 1998), 39–83, p. 79. 7 J. Bidez & F. Cumont, *Les mages hellénisés, I – II* (Paris: Société d'éditions 'Les Belles Lettres', 1938); M. Boyce & F. Grenet, *A History of Zoroastrianism. III: Zoroastrianism under Macedonian and Roman Rule* (Leiden: Brill, 1991); A. de Jong, *Traditions of the Magi: Zoroastrianism in Greek and Latin Literature*

and a more conservative dating in the sixth century BCE is preferred, we are long before the foundation of the Qumran Community.[9] It is true that the attestation of the key ideas of Iranian religion in written form is of a much later and uncertain date – the main collection of religious writings, the *Avesta*, was written during the Sassanian period and has been only partially preserved in Pahlavi translations of the Islamic epoch, the same epoch in which major compositions such as the *Bahman Yašt*, the *Bundahišn* and the *Dēnkart*, should be dated;[10] but everybody acknowledges that the oldest part of the Avesta, the *Gāthās*, the sacred hymns attributed to Zoroaster, were in circulation long before they were put in writing.

Therefore, the *possibility* of the influence of Iranian ideas on the apocalyptic thought of Qumran can be accepted without reserve: the two basic presuppositions, temporal priority and channels of transmission, are certainly present. But realizing that such influence is possible does not really advance our knowledge if we cannot exclude other, equally valid possibilities.

For this reason we can assert, for example, that it is *possible* that the more developed angelology or demonology of Iranian religion could have influenced Qumranic angelology and demonology.[11] But since the presence of this general religious idea at Qumran (i.e. that between God and humanity there are a series of mediators) could also be due to the influence of other religions in which it appears, or to other factors, including an inner Jewish development on the basis of data already present in the Old Testament, asserting the possibility of Iranian influence does not advance our knowledge.

To raise the possibility to a higher, more convincing level, that is, to increase it to *probability*, other conditions are needed: not only should the general idea be common, but also some concrete, specific detail in this general idea, what Frye calls 'motif similarity'.[12] Take, for example, the belief that both just men

(Leiden: Brill, 1997). 8 4Q550, the so-called 'Proto Esther' text, is clearly located in the Court of Darius and the protagonists of the stories have Persian names, see Shaul Shaked, 'Qumran: Some Iranian Connections', art. cit. n. 3. 9 Mary Boyce, 'On the antiquity of Zoroastrian apocalyptic', *BSOAS* 47 (1985) 57–75, and her article 'Zoroaster, Zoroastrianism', in D. N. Freedman (ed.), *The Anchor Bible Dictionary. Vol. VI* (Doubleday: New York, 1992), 1168–74. 10 See J. de Menasce, 'Zoroastrian Pahlavi Writings', in E. Yarshater (ed.), *The Cambridge History of Iran*, vol. 3, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983), 1166–91; J. de Menasce 'Zoroastrian Literature after the Muslim Conquest', in R. N. Frye (ed.) *The Cambridge History of Iran*, vol. 4 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1975), 543–65. See also Philippe Gignoux, 'L'apocalyptique iranienne est-elle vraiment ancienne?' *RHR* 216 (1999), 213–27. 11 One of the classic points of the influence of the Iranian religion in the Jewish Bible according to the partisans of the *religionsgeschichtliche Schule*; see, for example Wilhem Bousset, *Die Religion des Judentums im späthellenistischen Zeitalter*. In dritter, verbesserter Auflage herausgegeben von Hugo Gressmann (Tübingen: Mohr, 1926), 320–42. 12 Frye, art. cit. p. 168: 'Many scholars, however, would accept my second category of borrowings as sufficient to demonstrate direct influence. This category I call that of "motif similarity", which means that not only are general beliefs similar but details of those beliefs

and the unrighteous should be rewarded or punished after their lives according to their conduct. This general idea is found both in Iranian religion and in Qumran; but without further concrete details, assessing the possible influence of one upon the other is meaningless because this is a general idea also and attested in many other religions. But if we should have in two different religions a common concrete detail connected with this general idea, the question of the influence and the order of this influence can be legitimately asked.

In order to illustrate this 'motif similarity', Frye quotes the imagery of the bridge. In Iranian religion (and as early as in the *Gāthās*, which assures us of the antiquity of the idea) the soul of each deceased man must cross the Chinvat bridge, a bridge over the abyss which widens itself to allow the righteous to reach Paradise and narrows to a knife edge from which the unrighteous fall into hell. This imagery of the bridge is not found in the Hebrew Bible[13] but it has recently showed up in a fragment from Cave 4.

In lines 11–15 of 4Q521 frag. 7 + 5 ii, its editor[14] reads:

11 Et la vallée de la mort *dans* [...]
12 et le pont de l'Abî[me (/des Abî[mes) ...]
13 se sont figés des maudit[s ...]
14 et les cieux sont allés au devant de(s) [justes/ ont accueilli[les justes (?) ...]
15 et to]us les anges [...]

In spite of the fragmentary state of the manuscript and of the problems with some readings – instead of the 'valley of death', וגי מות, read by the editor in line 11, a reading in which all the letters are uncertain, we have previously read 'he reveals them' יגלם, in our DSSE[15] – it is clear that in a context of the resurrection of the dead and of the righteous who receive the reward for their fidelity while the unrighteous receive the punishment they deserve,[16] our text speaks of a bridge over the abyss, a גשר תה]ום.

coincide.' 13 This image of a broad or narrow bridge appears later on in the Jewish world (in the Talmud of Babylon) as well as in Islamic theology (the famous al-sirat). 14 E. Puech, *Qumrân grotte 4. XVIII: Textes hébreux* (DJD 25; Oxford; Clarendon 1998), 23–28, plate III. 15 F. García Martínez & E. J.C. Tigchelaar, *The Dead Sea Scrolls Study Edition. Volume 2* (Leiden; Brill, 1998), 1046. 16 The fragmentary lines 4–8 are translated in *DSSSE*, p. 1047: '4 [...] those who do the good before the Lor[d] 5 [...] like these, the accursed. And [they] shall b[e] for death, [...] 6 [...] he who gives life to the dead of his people. 7 And we shall [gi]ve thanks and announce to you [...] of the Lord, wh[o ...] 8 [...] ... and opens [...].' Puech fills in some more of the missing text and translates: '4 [Réjouissez-vous (/vous vous réjouirez) vous to]us qui faites le bien devant le Seigneu[r, 5 les bénis et no]n comme ceux-ci, les maudit[s,] car [ils] seront pour la Mort [lorsque] 6 le Vivificateur [ressus]citera les morts de son peuple. 7 Alors nous ren[d]rons grâce et nous vous annoncerons les actes de justice du Seigneur qui [a délivré ?]'. Cf. DJD 25, p. 24.

In this case it is clearly not only the general idea and the general eschatological context which is in common with known Iranian beliefs, but also the concrete specific detail, 'the bridge over the abyss'. The question of influence here is not only possible but clearly something more, and the editor speaks of 'renvoi' to the Iranian ideas. His French text[17] could be translated as follows: 'Here we do not have a direct reference to the abyss you cannot cross of Luke 16:29 nor to the great sea and the passage narrow as a river of 4 Ezra 7:4–5. Within the context of the remains of this column, the image of the bridge over the Abyss refers to the Chinvat bridge in the similar conception of the end days of Zoroastrianism'.

The term Puech uses is ambiguous enough to be irreproachable. If what he really means by 'renvoi' (which I have translated by 'refers to') is that the influence of the Iranian concept of the Chinvat bridge is possible, I would certainly agree. I would say this influence is even probable,[18] since we have here not only a general idea, but also part of a specific point in common. But in order to obtain certainty, to consider the dependence *proved*, it is necessary to have the whole specific detail in common, including what I would call 'the linguistic link'.

Bridges are of many types. To be certain that the presence of the 'bridge over the abyss' in the Qumran text is dependent on the Iranian concept, we need to have not only 'a bridge' but the concrete Chinvat bridge, either as a loan word or as a translation, that is, the characteristic element in Iranian religion. *Chinuuatō peretuš*[19] means 'the bridge of the divider'. Chinvat in Middle Persian means precisely 'the one who divides, who separates' (the good and the bad people); the word used in Qumran Hebrew גשר[20] means precisely the opposite, 'to bridge' (from the root *gašar*, to unite, to make a bridge, derived from the Akkadian *gišru*). The specific common element is only the idea of a bridge (*peretu/gešer*) not the idea of *Chinvat*, that this concrete bridge will recognize people who have been good during their lives and separate them from the damned. Thus, in order to consider the influence of one religion upon another as *proved*, we need something more than a common idea and a specific motif, we also need a lexical connection, be it a loan word or a translation. That finding

17 E. Puech, DJD 25, p. 28 'Il n'y a sans doute pas ici de rapport direct avec 'l'abîme infranchissable' de Lc 16:26 ou l'inmense mer et le passage étroit comme un fleuve de 4 Esd 7: 4–5 et 96. Dans le contexte des restes de cette colonne l'image du 'pont de l'Abîme' renvoie au 'Pont du trieur – Pont Činvat' dans une conception comparable des fins dernières du Zoroastrisme'. 18 This seems to be the opinion of Puech in his more detailed treatment of the topic, E. Puech, *La croyance des esséniens en la vie future. II* (Etudes Bibliques 22; Paris: Gabalda, 1993), 687–92: 'le rapprochement suggéré ci-dessus semble devoir au moins être signalé comme source (indirecte?) vraisemblable'. (p. 691). 19 The phrase appears in the *Gāthās* (*Yasna* 46:10), where is translated by Humbach as 'the account-keeper's bridge'. See H. Humbach, in Collaboration with J. Elfenbein and P. O. Skjærvø, *The Gāthās of Zarathushtra and the Other Old Avestan Texts. Part I: Introduction, Text and Translation* (Heidelberg: Carl Winter, 1991), 170. 20 The word is not attested in Biblical Hebrew and is only known from later rabbinical sources. It is attested in Egyptian Aramaic with a different meaning. See the references given by Puech in DJD 25, 28.

this connection is not impossible is proved by the very well-known example of the devil Asmodaeus from the book of Tobit.[21] In the Greek text (Tob 3:8.17), we twice come across this demon, called in the manuscripts of the second Greek recension 'Ασμοδαῖος, 'Ασμοδεος or 'Ασμοδευς, and in the manuscripts of the first recension 'Ασμόδαυς, 'Ασμόδαῖος or 'Ασμόδαιον, and in both cases he is qualified as *τὸ δαιμόνιον τὸ πονερὸν* or *τὸ πονερὸν δαιμόνιον* respectively.[22] In this famous example, we find both the common general religious idea (demons have a bad influence in the lives of men) and a concrete specific detail (among these demons there is one, the demon of wrath who causes sickness to men); and we also find that both religious traditions use the same word to designate this figure. In this case, we can be *certain* that its presence in the Book of Tobit is due to the influence of the Persian religion.[23] It is well known that as early as in the *Gāthās* we encounter the figure of the 'demon of wrath' *aēšma-daēva*, which in the Pahlavi writings will develop into one of the main demonic powers, *xešm-dēv*, personified Wrath.[24] Since it is also equally well known that the name Asmodaeus does not appear in other places in the Hebrew Bible, and that the Greek text unnecessarily repeats the qualification of the figure as δαιμονιον, an element already included in the name Asmodaeus (*daēva* in Old Persian, *dēw* in Pahlavi), it is clear that in this case the influence comes from Iranian religion. The biblical book has imported the general idea, the specific detail and the name of the demon.

With these methodological caveats in mind, we can now look at the two best cases by which the influence of Iranian ideas in the apocalyptic thought of Qumran has been asserted. These two examples are the dualism of the Tractate of the Two Spirits in the *Rule of the Community*, and the scheme of the final war in seven alternate phases in which each of the two opposing forces has the upper hand in turn before the final victory of the forces of light.

21 The Greek versions of Tobit are available in a critical edition by R. Hanhart, *Vetus Testamentum Graecum Auctoritate Academiae Scientiarum Gottingensis editum. Vol. VIII, 5. Tobit* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1983). Five fragmentary copies have been found in Cave 4 from Qumran, four in Aramaic (4Q196–199) and one in Hebrew (4Q200). They have been edited by J. A. Fitzmyer in M. Broshi et al., *Qumran Cave 4. XIV: Parabiblical Texts Part 2* (Discoveries in the Judaean Desert 19; Oxford: Clarendon, 1995) 1–76, plates I–X. For a recent commentary, see Carey A. Moore, *Tobit* (The Anchor Bible 40A; Doubleday: New York, 1996). 22 The Latin versions use *Asmodaeus malus daemon* or *Asmodaeus daemonion nequissimun*. Unfortunately, the corresponding texts (Tob 3:8.17) have not been preserved in the Qumran copies, neither in Hebrew nor in Aramaic. 23 Which is also responsible for its later appearance in the Babylonian Talmud, *b Gittin* 58, in the story of Solomon and his ring. 24 See Shlomo Pines, 'Wrath and Creatures of Wrath in Pahlavi, Jewish and New Testament Sources', in Shaul Shaked (ed.), *Irano-Judaica. Studies relating to Jewish Contacts with Persian Culture throughout the Ages* (Jerusalem: Ben Zvi, 1982), 76–82.

THE DUALISM OF THE 'TRACTATE OF THE TWO SPIRITS'

The 'Tractate of the Two Spirits' is a unified whole, embodied in columns three and four of the copy of the *Rule* found in Cave 1 (1QS 3:13–4:26), in which the basic deterministic and dualistic conceptions of the Qumran group are expounded.[25]

The treatise begins with a solemn introduction (3:13–15), followed by the basic theological principle: 'From the God of knowledge stems all there is and all there shall be. Before they existed he made all their plans and when they come into being they will execute all their works in compliance with his instructions, according to his glorious design without altering anything'. (3:15–16)[26] From this deterministic formulation, the author deduces the basic dualistic structure of mankind expressed by the traditional symbols of light and darkness: 'He created man to rule the world and placed within him two spirits so that he would walk with them until the moment of his visitation: they are the spirit of truth and of deceit'. (3:17–19) The author develops his dualistic concept in detail, applying it not only to each individual but to the whole of humanity, which he describes as divided into two camps (two dominions), led respectively by the Prince of Light and by the Angel of Darkness: 'And in the hand of the Prince of Light is dominion over all the sons of justice; they walk in the paths of light. And in the hand of the Angel of Darkness is total dominion over the sons of deceit; they walk in the path of darkness'. (3:20–21). The Tractate explicitly extends this dualistic division to the angelic world, split in the same way as humanity and each individual into two camps: 'He created

25 M. Burrows with the assistance of J. C. Trever and W. H. Brownlee (eds.), *The Dead Sea Scrolls of St. Mark's Monastery. Vol. II. Fsc. 2: Plates and Transcription of the Manual of Discipline* (New Haven: The American Schools of Oriental Research, 1951). Among the classic studies of the 'Tractate', A. Dupont-Sommer, 'L'instruction sur les deux Esprits dans le 'Manuel de Discipline', RHR 142 (1952) 5–35; J. Licht, 'An Analysis of the Treatise of the Two Spirits in DSD', *Scripta Hierosolymitana* 4 (1958), 88–100; P. Wernberg-Møller, 'A Reconsideration of the Two Spirits in the Rule of the Community (1Qserek III, 13 – IV, 26)', *RevQ* 3 (1961), 413–41; P. von der Osten-Sacken, *Gott und Belial. Traditionsgeschichtliche Untersuchungen zum Dualismus in den Texten ausw Qumran* (SUNT 6; Göttingen: Vandenhoek & Ruprecht, 1969), 17–27 and 116–89; G. Maier, *Mensch und freier Wille*. (Tübingen, Mohr 1971), 222–61, still remains influential. Among more recent studies, the following are worthy of note: J. Duhaime, 'L'instruction sur les deux esprits et les interpolations dualistes à Qumrân', *RB* 84 (1987), 566–94; H. Stegemann, 'Zur Textbestand und Grundgedanken von 1QS III,13 – IV, 26', in F. García Martínez & E. Puech (eds.), *Mémorial Jean Carmignac* (Paris: Gabalda, 1988), 95–131; A. Lange, *Weisheit und Prädestination* (STDJ 18; Leiden: Brill, 1995), 121–70; J. Frey, 'Different Patterns of dualistic Thought in the Qumran Library: Reflections on Their Background and History', in M.J. Bernstein et al., *Legal Texts and Legal Issues* (STDJ 23; Leiden: Brill 1997) 275–335, and E. J. C. Tigchelaar, *To Increase Learning for the Understanding One* (STDJ 44; Leiden: Brill, 2001), 194–207. 26 Translations of 1QS are taken from F. García Martínez, *The Dead Sea Scrolls Translated. The Qumran Texts in English. Second Edition* (Leiden-Grand Rapids: Brill-Eerdmans 1996), 3–22.

the spirits of light and of darkness and on them established all his deeds, and on their paths all his labors. God loved one of them for all eternal ages and in all his deeds he takes pleasure for ever; of the other one he detests his advice and hates all his paths forever'. (3:25–4:1). The treatise goes further and describes the characteristic deeds which result from the dominion of each of the two angelic hosts, the contrasting human conducts which result from the influence of the opposing spirits, and the equally contrasting retribution for each man according to his share of light or darkness.This type of dualism is defined by Ugo Bianchi[27] as 'moderate' as opposed to 'radical dualism', in which there are two absolute principles of good and bad. In our Tractate, both Spirits are clearly subordinated to the unique God, the source of everything, thus uneasily staying within the limits of orthodoxy. This type of dualism, of course, has no precedent in the Bible nor any precise known parallel in Jewish literature. It was recognized almost as soon as the scroll was published that the thought in the Treatise of the Two Spirits is most akin to the myth of Iranian dualism with its twin spirits.[28] In the form of this myth transmitted in the later Pahlavi writings, Iranian dualism is of the kind Bianchi defines as 'radical', with a complete opposition between a good and an evil God, because Ahura Mazda (the supreme God) is fully identified with the Spenta Mainyu (the good Spirit) to which Ahura Mainyu (the evil Spirit) is opposed. But in the oldest form of this dualism, as it can be recognized in the *Gāthās* of the *Avesta*, Zoroastrian dualism is of the same sort as the dualism in our tractate, in which the supreme God, Ahura Mazda, although associated with the good Spirit, is clearly above the two conflicting entities. Ahura Mazda is the father of the good spirit, and although the texts do not say explicitly that he is also the father of the evil spirit, they do call the two spirits twins, sons of the supreme God. We can read in *Yasna* 30:3

> These (are) the two spirits (present) in the primal (stage of one's existence), twins who have become famed (manifesting themselves as) the two (kinds of) dreams, the two (kinds of) thoughts and words, (and) the two (kinds of) actions, the better and the evil. And between the two, the munificent discriminate rightly (but) not the miserly.[29]

Although the dualism of the treatise of the Two Spirits does not imply the initial option of men for one or other spirit, characteristic of the Persian myth, and although in the Two Spirits treatise the two spirits are emphatically created by God and completely subordinate to him, the opposition between the two Spirits is the same in both works. We can read in *Yasna* 45:2

27 U. Bianchi, 'Dualism', in M. Eliade (ed.), *The Encyclopedia of Religion. Vol. 4* (New York, MacMillan, 1987) 509–12. 28 Simultaneously in the articles by G. Kuhn in *ZTK* (note 2) and A. Dupont-Sommer in *RHR* (note 25). 29 Translation by H. Humbach, in Collaboration with J. Elfenbein and P.O. Skjærvø, *The Gāthās of Zarathushtra and the Other Old Avestan Texts. Part I: Introduction, Text and Translation* (Heidelberg: Carl Winter, 1991), 123. 30 Ibid., p. 164. 31 Translation by J. Gwyn Griffiths, *Plutarch's De Iside et Osiride* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 1970), 46. 32 Shaul Shaked, 'The notions *mēnōg* and *gētīg* in the Pahlavi texts and their relations to eschatology', in S. Shaked, *From Zoroastrian Iran to Islam* (Collected Studies Series 505; Aldershot: Variorum, 1995), 57–107 (originally published in *Acta Iranica* 33 [1971], 57–107). 33 The immaterial element, as oposed to the *gētīg*, the material element.

> I shall (now) proclaim the two spirits (present) in the primal (stage) of one's existence of whom the more prosperous one shall address the harmful one: 'Neither our thoughts, nor our pronouncements, nor our intellects, nor our choices, nor our statements, nor our actions, nor our religious views, nor our souls, agree'.[30]

It seems obvious that the general idea in both texts is the same, as they are the same in many of the specific details. Perhaps the most telling of these is that in both traditions the spirit of good and the spirit of evil each has an army of assistants, a host of good or evil spirits respectively, which help them in their opposite tasks, and that in both literary corpora these opposing elements are disposed in parallel lists. We may compare, for example, the lists of actions (the 'Two ways') which result from the influence of the angels of Light and of Darkness with the similar and even more systematic lists of the *Denkart*.

But, according to the methodology proposed, in order to close the case and consider the dependence of Qumran dualism on Iranian proved, we need to have not only the same general idea and the same specific elements in common but also a linguistic link. The opposition of good and evil is too general to be considered of any use. The basic metaphor of light and darkness (אור and חושך in Hebrew, *roshnih* and *tarikin* in Pahlavi) and its association with good and evil appears more promising. But this metaphor is too general and widespread (as in the beginning of Genesis 'and God saw that the light was good, and divided the light from darkness') and, besides, it does not appear in the oldest layers of the *Avesta*. It is frequently used in later writings and even appears in *De Iside et Osiride*:

> They (the Persians) also relate many mythical details about the gods, and the following are instances. Horomazes is born from the purest light and Areimanius from darkness, and they are at war with one another.[31]

But we are already in the second half of the first century, and in this case Plutarch does not quote any older authority.

One of the major specialists in Iranian religion, Shaul Shaked,[32] has tried to relate the term *mēnōg* to the Hebrew term רוח as used in our tractate, and has attributed to our רוח the three meanings of the *mēnōg*:[33] the two spiritual

entities of the ethic dualism, the two human qualities which correspond to this cosmic dualism, and the diverse human qualities conceived of as psychological and cosmological at the same time. But although רוח is certainly polyvalent in our Tractate, I do not think the texts support this triple meaning when talking of the human רוח. Besides, although this pair of concepts has its origins in the *Avesta*, in its fully developed form it is only found in the writings of the Sassanian period. So, in the end we lack the linguistic link. Therefore, although the influence of Iranian dualism on the development of the Dualism of the Dead Sea Scrolls provides the best available explanation, and due to the presence of the same general theme and several concrete details can be considered probable, it cannot be considered proved. This first prime example leaves us short of having obtained certainty.

We shall now examine the second example generally adduced: the scheme of the final war in seven alternative phases in the *Scroll of the War of the Sons of Light against the Sons of Darkness* (1QM).

THE FINAL BATTLE IN THE WAR SCROLL

This composition, known from a manuscript from Cave 1[34] and from several others from Cave 4,[35] is in all probability a compilation of at least two different documents.[36] One of them develops the idea of an eschatological conflagration in seven lots in which each of the sides has the upper hand during three lots and which ends with the victory of God. As stated in col. 1:

> In the war, the sons of light will be the strongest during three lots, in order to strike down wickedness; and in three (others), the army of Belial will gird themselves in order to force the lot of ... to retreat ... And in the seventh lot, God's great hand will subdue Belial and all the angels of his dominion and all the men of his lot (1QM 1:13–15).[37]

The same idea is found in cols. 14–19, in which, in spite of the bad state of preservation, we can discern that these seven lots alternate, a victory following a defeat, until the final victory of the Sons of Light in the seventh lot, when 'the Kittim shall be crushed without a remnant ... when the hand of the God of Israel is raised against the whole horde of Belial' (1QM 18:2–3). This war is envisaged on two levels, the human and the angelic: 'On this (day), the assembly of the gods and the congregation of men shall confront each other for great destruction' (1QM 1:10), but the angelic hosts appear to have no leader apart from God himself, who at the end decides the victory.

These two elements characterize the first document and allow us to distinguish it from the second one, presented in cols. 2–13, in which the war of seven lots is transformed into a progressive battle of forty years against each of the nations mentioned in Genesis 10, and in which the angelic army is guided by an angelic leader, the Prince of Light: 'From of old you appointed the Prince of Light to assist us, and in ... and all the spirits of truth are under his dominion' (1QM 13:10). This progressive battle, which is evidently based on the forty-year schema of Exodus, does not have any interruption other than the compulsory rest of the sabbatical years, five in a forty-year period. This leaves thirty-five years for the conduct of the war.

> During the thirty-five years of service, the war will be prepared during six years; and all the congregation together will prepare it. And the war of the divisions (will take place) during the remaining twenty-nine years. During the first year they shall wage war against Aram-Naharaim; during the second, against the sons of Lud; during the third they shall wage war against the remnant of the sons of Aram, against Uz and Hul, Togal and Mesha, who are beyond the Euphrates; during the fourth and fifth, they shall wage war against the sons of Arpachsad; during the sixth and seventh they shall wage war against all the sons of Assyria and Persia, and the eastern peoples up to the great desert; during the eighth year they shall wage war against the sons of Elam; during the ninth they shall wage war against the sons of Ishmael and Ketura; and during the following ten years the war will be divided against all the sons of Ham, ac[cording to their clans, in] their dwellings; and during the following ten years the war will be divided up against all [the sons of Japhet, in their dwe]llings (1QM 2:9–14)

34 Edited by E. L. Sukenik, *The Dead Sea Scrolls of the Hebrew University* (Jerusalem: Magnes Press- Hebrew University, 1955), 1–19, plates 16–34, 47. 35 4Q491–496, edited by M. Baillet, *Qumran grotte 4 (4Q482–4Q517)* (DJD 7; Oxford: Clarendon, 1982), 12–68, plates V–VIII. It is disputed whether all these materials are copies of the same composition represented by 1QM, or whether some of them are the remains of other compositions on the same topic. The same holds true for two other Qumran manuscripts, 4Q285 (DJD 36, pp. 228–48, plates XII–XIII) and 11Q14 (DJD 23, pp. 243–51, plate XXVII), which have preserved materials related to the eschatological battle and are now entitled *Sefer ha-Milhamah*. 36 For this basic division of 1QM into two documents see J. van der Ploeg, *Le Rouleau de la Guerre* (STDJ 2; Leiden: Brill 1959). This position is excellently summarized by J.J. Collins, *Apocalypticism in the Dead Sea Scrolls* (London-New York,: Routledge, 1997), 91–109. A more complex redaction is proposed by P.R. Davies, *1QM, the War Scroll from Qumran* (BibOri 32; Roma, PIB, 1977). For a presentation of the different interpretations of this document, see J. Duhaime's edition in *The Dead Sea Scrolls, Hebrew, Aramaic, and Greek Texts with English Translations. Volume 2: Damascus Document, War Scroll and Related Documents*, edited by J. H. Charlesworth (Tübingen-Louisville: Mohr-Westminster John Knox, 1994), 80–203. 37 Translations of 1QM are taken from F. García Martínez, *The Dead Sea Scrolls Translated. The Qumran Texts in English. Second Edition* (Leiden-Grand Rapids: Brill-Eerdmans 1996), 95–115.

For the author of this document (or for the redactor who has united it with the previous one), the war of seven lots of the first document seems to be understood as the first seven of the forty years, of which the seventh year is not the final victory but the first sabbatical year, and the other six either a general preparation for the war or a general battle of the whole congregation against the main enemies, depending on the interpretation given to the problematic expression in 2:9.[38] The remaining twenty-nine years are dedicated to eradicating all the enemies of Israel: nine years of war against the sons of Shem, ten years against the sons of Ham, and the last ten years against the sons of Japhet.

Although the idea of the forty-year war is clearly based on the biblical tradition and reminds us of the wandering in the wilderness, it is difficult to find a biblical precedent for the idea of the war of seven alternating lots, although there is an obvious similarity between the seven lots and the sabbatical structure that informs so much of Jewish thought. The closest parallel to this idea is, again, provided by Iranian religion. The alternating dominion of good and evil is a basic element in the writings of the Sassanian period. In *Bahman Yašt*, for example, we can read:

> Le Mauvais Esprit crie à Mihr, maître des vastes campagnes: 'lève-toi en justice, ô Mihr, maître des vastes campagnes.' Lors Mihr, maître des vastes campagnes, crie: 'pour ce qui est du traité (*pašt*) des neuf mille ans qu'il (sc. Ohrmazd) conclut, Dahāk de mauvaise religion, Frāsyāp le Turanien, Alexandre le Romain et les démons aux ceintures de cuir et aux cheveaux défaits ont régnée pendant une période qui dépasse l'accord par mille ans.' Le Mauvais Esprit, le trompeur, est étourdi losqu'il a entendu cela. (*Bahman Yašt* III. 33)[39]

Some texts speak of a period of 12,000 years, while others, such as the vision of Zoroaster of the tree whose seven branches symbolize the seven periods of history, refer to a shorter period of 7,000 years, which would be closer to the seven lots of the *War Scroll*. It is true that this myth is not present in the *Gāthās*, but in this case we can trust Plutarch, who quotes Theopompus (around 300

38 The reading of the manuscript is תערך המלחמה which may be understood as 'prepare for the battle' or 'set in array for the battle'. According to the preferred interpretation, the numbers of years that are mentioned in lines 6 (33), 9 (35) and 10 (29) need to be interpreted differently. In my interpretation, the redactor of 1QM harmonizes the two schemes (of 7 and of 40 years war) in the following way: the 40 years include 5 years of sabbatical rest, which leads him to mention the 35 years of העבודה in line 9; 'the remaining 33 years' in line 6 is obtained by subtracting the 7 years of the other document (6 years of 'work' and 1 year of rest) from the total of 40 years; but these 33 years also include 4 sabbatical years, and that leaves only the 29 years in line 10 for effective fighting after the first 7 years. 39 Translation by A. Hulgård, 'Mythe et histoire dans l'Iran ancien: Etude de quelques thèmes dans le *Bahman Yašt*', in *Apocalyptique iranienne et dualisme qoumrânien*

BCE) as his source of information, to be sure of the antiquity of the idea of the battle among the gods with alternating periods of victory:

> Theopompus says that, according to the Magians, for three thousand years alternately the one god will dominate the other and be dominated, and that for another three thousand years they will fight and make war, until one smashes up the domain of the other (*De Iside et Osiride*, 47).[40]

Although this text is not without problems – the Greek is ambiguous and the 3,000 alternate years could be interpreted as either giving a total of 12,000 or of only 6,000 years – it proves without doubt that in Iranian religion, not only the general idea (the final battle between the good and evil) but also the specific detail (the structure of the conflict, in which the protagonists are alternately victorious and in which the final result is fixed from the beginning) is already attested.

As with the former example, we may conclude that this Qumranic apocalyptic idea has most probably been developed under the influence of Iranian religion. But in this case, too, we lack the linguistic link that could have sealed the matter. For a moment, I thought I had found it in the word נחשיך, which I have translated as 'destruction' because it is in parallel with the well-known קרב. נחשיר is a lexical loan word from Persian, previously unknown in Hebrew, and in Qumran exclusively used in the first column of the *War Scroll* (where it appears three times 1QM 1:9.10.13) which, as said above, is a summary of the concept of the battle of seven alternate lots.[41] The word comes from the semantic field of hunting, at least in Syriac which has also borrowed it from Persian. But as far as I have been able to ascertain, the Pahlavi texts which deal with the final battle do not use it, and the two verbs employed by Plutarch (πολεμεῖν καὶ ἀναλύειν) are too general to be considered as lexical equivalents.

But it is time to finish. As I stated at the beginning, we cannot attain certainty in the matter of the Iranian origins of some key apocalyptic ideas in Qumran. But I think that it is reasonable to assume that the growth of theological ideas which have no roots in the biblical tradition is the result of cross-fertilization. The seed planted by the elusive prophet Zoroaster has flourished unexpectedly in a secluded community on the shores of the Dead Sea. And if this travel was indeed possible, a further traveling of Oriental ideas to Irish shores and their taking root in Celtic thought is less of a mystery.

(note 3), 63–162, p. 93. 40 J. Gwyn Griffiths, *Plutarch's De Iside et Osiride* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 1970), 47. 41 The word has been discussed by J. P. de Menasce, 'Iranien *naxčir*', *VT* 6 (1956).

The Apocalypse of John and its millennial themes

Adela Yarbro Collins

It is well known that the concept of the 'millennium' derives from the Apocalypse of John, the last book of the New Testament and of the Christian Bible in canonical order. The term 'millennium' derives via Latin from the Greek τὰ χίλια ἔτη, the thousand years during which the participants in the first resurrection will reign with Christ according to chapter 20 of the book of Revelation. Social scientists use the term 'millennialism' to describe movements that predict, promise or strive for a new age that is qualitatively better than the present and is often portrayed as ideal or even perfect. Such visions of the future are sometimes described as utopian.

In contrast to the term 'millennialism', which has this broader usage, the term 'chiliasm' is more closely related to its original, historical meaning, the expectation of 'a thousand-year reign of Christ and his saints on earth between his second coming and the last judgment.'[1] In his recent book, however, Charles E. Hill has argued that the definition should be reformulated so as to include contemporary Jewish expectations. He defines chiliasm or millennialism as 'belief in a temporary, earthly, Messianic kingdom to be realized sometime in the future: ... typically with Jerusalem as its capital ... '[2] One result of this redefinition, as Hill himself points out, is that the terms 'chiliasm' and 'millennialism' become misnomers, since the period of a thousand years was not normative in Jewish texts. There are other problems with it, to which I shall return.

The link between the vision of the thousand-year reign in the book of Revelation and social scientific reflection on millennial movements depends on the widespread view that the portrayal of the thousand-year reign in Revelation involves an earthly setting. Most historical critics of the twentieth century have concluded that the scene is set on earth.[3] Recently, however, two scholars have argued that the thousand-year reign is depicted as a heavenly, not an earthly kingdom.[4] Similarly, historians of early Christianity have tended to conclude

1 Charles E. Hill, *Regnum Caelorum: Patterns of Future Hope in Early Christianity* (Oxford Early Christian Studies; Oxford: Clarendon, 1992), 1. 2 Ibid., 5. 3 So, for example, David E. Aune, *Revelation 17–22* (Word Biblical Commentary 52C; Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1998), 1084, 1089. 4 Michael Gourgues, 'The Thousand-Year Reign (Rev 20:1–6): Terrestial or Celestial?' *Catholic Biblical Quarterly* 47 (1985), 676–81; Charles Homer Giblin,

that the expectation of a literal thousand-year messianic kingdom on earth dominated Christian thought in the first two centuries.[5] In this case also, two scholars have gathered evidence for an alternative view in the early church, eschatological expectation that does not involve such an earthly kingdom.[6]

In this essay, I shall assess this revisionist scholarship and discuss the nature and purpose of the thousand-year reign in the book of Revelation. I shall begin with Hill's reconstruction and evaluation of the original context and history of interpretation of Revelation 20 and then turn to the text itself.

Hill's main theses are, first, that the earliest ecclesiastical opponents of chiliasm were not purely negative in their opposition, but had their own constructive interpretation of Revelation 20; second, that there is evidence for an early, orthodox (that is, non-Gnostic) eschatology that was not chiliastic; third, that chiliasm is historically and logically connected with the doctrine that the souls of all the dead are detained in subterranean regions until the resurrection of the dead; fourth, that early, orthodox, non-chiliastic eschatology involved the immediate ascent of the soul to the presence of God and Christ in heaven; and fifth, that such an ascent of the soul immediately after death is incompatible with chiliasm.

Hill argues persuasively that Irenaeus, like many of his contemporaries and predecessors, at first believed that all the righteous would ascend to heaven immediately after death. He later rejected this doctrine because of the way it was used by the Gnostics.[7] In *Against Heresies*, book five, chapters 31–32, Irenaeus articulates an alternative view of the intermediate state, that is, the circumstances of the righteous between their deaths and the resurrection, and attempts to replace the traditional orthodox notion of a heavenly intermediate state with the teaching that the righteous dwell in a place beneath the earth allotted to them by God until the resurrection. He argues that since the Lord obeyed the 'law of the dead' by dwelling in Hades until it pleased God to raise him from the dead, his disciples must do the same, since no disciple is above his Master. He argues further that the resurrection of the just, that is, the first resurrection, and the earthly kingdom described in the Apocalypse, are part of the divine plan. Their purpose is to prepare gradually those who are worthy to attain to God, as well as to fulfill the promises to the fathers.[8]

'The Millennium (Rev 20.4–6) as Heaven', *New Testament Studies* 45 (1999), 553–70. For references to other modern scholars who have taken this position, see Hill, *Regnum Caelorum*, 177, n. 81. 5 See the discussion in Hill, *Regnum Caelorum*, 2–3. 6 Hill, *Regnum Caelorum*, 64–153; Everett Ferguson, 'Millennial and Amillenial Expectations in Christian Eschatology,' in Loren L. Johns (ed.), *Apocalypticism and Millennialism: Shaping a Believers Church Eschatology for the Twenty-First Century* (Studies in the Believers Church Tradition 2; Kitchener, Ontario: Pandora Press, 2000), 131–61. 7 Hill, *Regnum Caelorum*, 13–18, 184–88. 8 Irenaeus, *Against Heresies* 5.32.1. Ferguson notes the polemical purpose (against the Gnostics) of Irenaeus' chiliasm, as well as its role in his theology of creation and recapitulation; idem, 'Millennial and Amillenial Expectations in Christian Eschatology', 139.

Hill concludes that Irenaeus 'exposes a logical and systematic connection between belief in a heavenly intermediate state and refusal of the notion of a future, temporary kingdom of Christ on earth', arguing that the heavenly post-mortem existence 'takes the place of the millennium' and makes it 'redundant'.[9] He is able to show that Irenaeus and later chiliasts held both the doctrine of the earthly thousand-year reign and that of the subterranean intermediate state, although the exceptional teaching of Methodius shows that the two were not necessarily linked even after Irenaeus. Hill is not successful, however, in establishing this connection as a consistent feature of chiliasm prior to Irenaeus. The surviving fragments from Papias mention the extraordinary fertility of the coming earthly kingdom, but they do not mention the intermediate state. In two passages, Justin Martyr implies that the general resurrection and eternal rewards and punishments will follow immediately upon the second coming of Christ.[10] Two other passages imply an eternal kingdom following the resurrection of the just on a renewed earth centered on Jerusalem.[11] But in the *Dialogue with Trypho* 81, he states that the apostle John prophesied that those who believed in Christ would spend a thousand years in Jerusalem and that thereafter the general and eternal resurrection would take place as well as the general judgment. Justin does not mention a subterranean intermediate state. Although he criticizes those who deny the resurrection and claim that their souls will be taken to heaven when they die, he assumes that the martyrs will ascend to heaven immediately after death.[12] Justin stated that those who were ignorant of Jesus' messiahship put him to death, thinking that he, like some common mortal, would remain in Hades. This statement does not necessarily imply that Christians will remain in Hades after their deaths, since they are closely associated with Christ.[13] In sum, it is likely that Justin is the heir of divergent Christian traditions which he does not harmonize or systematize.[14]

Jewish literature of the Second Temple period manifests an analogous diversity. According to the Book of the Watchers, the souls of the dead are kept in four hollow places at the end of the earth in the far West.[15] Three of these places are designated for the souls of the righteous, which are separated from those of sinners. The righteous are near a spring of water and have light. The sinners receive great torment in their place until the general judgment. Only the righteous will be raised from the dead.[16] At the last judgment, the fallen angels will be confined to an abyss of fire for all eternity. Then all wrong will be removed from the earth, the righteous will live until they beget thousands, and

9 Hill, *Regnum Caelorum*, 17–18. 10 *1 Apology* 52; *Dialogue* 45. 11 *Dialogue* 113; 139. 12 The criticism is made in Dialogue 80; the assumption about the martyrs is expressed in *2 Apol.* 2; cf. *Martyrdom of the Holy Martyrs Justin, Chariton et al.* 4. 13 Contra Hill, *Regnum Caelorum*, 22. 14 This conclusion is mentioned but rejected by Hill, ibid., 23. 15 It may be, as Hill infers (*Regnum Caelorum*, 42), that these places are inside the high mountain that is mentioned in the context. 16 *1 Enoch* 22:1–14.

the earth will produce abundantly. Each measure of seed will produce a thousand, and each measure of olives will produce ten baths of oil. All humans will be righteous, and all nations will worship God.[17]

The *Biblical Antiquities* of Pseudo-Philo speaks of dead human beings as sleeping in the earth.[18] Another passage implies that it is the 'way of all flesh' to reside in hell after death.[19] It also states that the souls of the faithful are stored in peace until the time allotted to the world to be complete, and 'the fathers in their chambers of souls' are mentioned, but the location of these chambers is not indicated.[20] The vision of Kenaz in this work implies that the repose of the just is not located in the underworld, but in an invisible place which 'has no place whatsoever.'[21] In any case, the theme of an earthly, temporal messianic kingdom is virtually absent in this work.[22]

According to *4 Ezra*, when the decree goes forth that a particular human being must die, the soul leaves the body to return to him who gave it. First of all, it adores the divine glory. Then, if it is a sinner, it does not enter into a repository, but wanders about in torments.[23] If it is righteous, it has seven days to see the glory that awaits the just in the last days. Then it is gathered into the repositories where the souls of the righteous are guarded by angels in profound quiet.[24] Hill assumes, on the basis of *4 Ezra* 4:41–42, that the repositories of the souls are in Hades.[25] Michael Stone, however, has pointed out that the versions actually read 'the underworld and the treasuries' and concludes that the text may be referring to two different places.[26]

In any case, *4 Ezra* appears to be the first Jewish text to associate the repositories of the souls of the dead with the messianic kingdom. In the future, the signs that were foretold to Ezra will come to pass and the city which is now not seen shall appear, and the land which now is hidden shall appear. Those who have been delivered from the evils foretold to Ezra will see God's wonders, which include the revelation of the Messiah with whom they will rejoice for a period of four hundred years. Then the Messiah and all human beings will die. The world will be turned back to primeval silence for seven days. Then the world which is not yet awake will be roused and the corruptible will perish.

17 *1 Enoch* 10:13–22. 18 Pseudo-Philo, *Biblical Antiquities* 3.10; 19.12. 19 Ibid. 33:3; trans. by D. J. Harrington, 'Pseudo-Philo,' in James H. Charlesworth, *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha* (2 vols.; Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1983 and 1985) 2. 297–377; quotation from 347. See also 3:10 and 31:7. 20 Ibid., 23:13; 32.13; trans. by Harrington in Charlesworth, *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha*, 2. 333, 346. See also 21:9. 21 Ibid., 28:7–10; trans. by Harrington in Charlesworth, *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha*, 2. 341–42. 22 Only 62:9 gives a hint of any knowledge of such a tradition in its reference to 'a kingdom which will come in its own time' that has its beginning with David. Hill suggests that this passage and 48:1 may presuppose a limited reign in a future Davidic kingdom; *Regnum Caelorum*, 45. 23 On the 'repositories' or 'treasuries' of the souls, see Michael Edward Stone, *Fourth Ezra* (Hermeneia; Minneapolis: Fortress, 1990) 96. 24 *4 Ezra* 7:78–101. 25 Hill, *Regnum Caelorum*, 43. 26 Stone, *Fourth Ezra*, 99.

Then the resurrection will occur: 'And the earth shall give back those who are asleep in it, and the dust those who rest in it; and the repositories shall give up the souls which have been committed to them.'[27] After the general judgment, 'the pit of torment shall appear, and opposite it shall be the place of rest; and the furnace of Gehenna shall be disclosed, and opposite it the paradise of delight.'[28]

Like *4 Ezra*, *2 Baruch* has a two-stage eschatology. First the Messiah will be revealed, along with Behemoth and Leviathan, which will provide nourishment for those who are left. The earth will yield fruits ten thousandfold. The surviving remnant will also eat of the treasury of manna which will come down from heaven in those days.[29] Like *4 Ezra*, *2 Baruch* associates the motifs of the messianic reign and the repositories of the souls. Like the case of *4 Ezra*, the location of the repositories of the souls mentioned in *2 Baruch* is not entirely clear. In *2 Baruch* 21:23–24, Sheol and the repositories of the souls are both mentioned in what could be synonymous parallelism, but the text could just as well be referring to two different places.[30]

In any case, one passage states that, after the time of the Messiah, the repositories of the souls of the righteous will be opened, but the souls of the wicked will waste away all the more.[31] Another passage implies that all the dead will rise. Once the living have seen that the dead have been raised and they have recognized each other, the forms of the righteous will be changed to the splendour of angels, whereas the wicked will be changed to horrible shapes. Those who are saved will live in the heights of that world which is now invisible to them, and they will be like the angels and equal to the stars.[32]

The messianic kingdoms in the book of Revelation and *4 Ezra* are similar in that neither emphasizes the motif of great abundance that occurs in the Book of the Watchers and in *2 Baruch*.[33] *4 Ezra* and the book of Revelation are also similar in assigning a fixed period of time to the messianic reign, a thousand years in Revelation and 400 years in *4 Ezra*. *2 Baruch* mentions no specific length of time. *4 Ezra* and the book of Revelation are also similar in their description of the new cosmos as having only one level. In the book of Revelation, the center is the new Jerusalem and the nations and the lake of fire are outside it.[34] In *4 Ezra*, the divine seat of judgment is in the center and paradise is on one side of it and Gehenna on the other.[35] *2 Baruch* and Irenaeus, however, are similar in locating the participants in the eternal, new age, at various points in a cosmos with at least two levels. According to *2 Baruch*, the righteous will live in the heights of

27 *4 Ezra* 7:26–33; quotation from v. 32; trans. from Stone, ibid., 202, slightly modified. 28 *4 Ezra* 7:34–36; quotation from v. 36; trans. from Stone, ibid., 203, slightly modified. 29 *2 Baruch* 29. 30 The correlation of the books in which the sins of humanity are wriiten with the repositories of righteous souls in *2 Baruch* 24:1 makes a heavenly location of the repositories plausible. 31 *2 Baruch* 30:1–5. 32 *2 Baruch* 50:2–51:10. 33 The motif of great abundance may be implied by the reference in *4 Ezra* 7:27 to the wonders that the participants in the messianic kingdom will see. 34 Rev 21:8, 24–27. 35 *4 Ezra* 7:33, 36, 38.

the new world. The wicked, however, will see the righteous exalted over them.[36] Irenaeus says that, according to the elders, those who are deemed worthy of an abode in heaven will go there, others will be in Paradise, and yet others will inhabit the new Jerusalem. The first are those who, according to the parable of the sower, bear one hundredfold, the second those who bear sixtyfold, and the third those who bear thirtyfold.[37] It appears that, according to this cosmology, Paradise is not located in heaven.

In his argument, Hill claims that chiliasm and the notion of a subterranean intermediate state are linked. He argues persuasively that the book of Revelation implies that the faithful ascend to heaven immediately after death. He thus concludes that Revelation is not chiliastic. There are several problems with this argument. First, by defining chiliasm in such a way as to include *4 Ezra* and *2 Baruch*, Hill is able to argue that these works, along with Irenaeus, demonstrate that a subterranean intermediate state is a typical element of chiliasm. If *4 Ezra* and *2 Baruch* do not locate the repositories in the underworld, however, even this conclusion is called into question. But, more importantly, if chiliasm is defined as a Christian doctrine that incorporated and reinterpreted certain important Jewish traditions, the issue appears in a different light. Furthermore, Hill's own analysis of Irenaeus supports the conclusion that the doctrine of a subterranean intermediate state was not in fact a typical feature of chiliasm before Irenaeus insisted on it. Rather, he revived an ancient notion of personal afterlife, perhaps already left behind by *4 Ezra* and *2 Baruch*, in order to combat Gnostic soteriology.

I would like now to review briefly the evidence for a non-chiliastic reading of Revelation 20. Hill has argued that there was an early interpretation of the binding of Satan in Rev 20:1–3 as a present reality resulting from the death and resurrection of Christ. His main sources are Melito, Origen, and the *Epistle of the churches of Vienne and Lyons*. But it is highly unlikely that this was the original meaning of the passage. According to Rev 12:10–12, the death and resurrection of Christ resulted in Satan's being cast down from heaven to earth, where he is active for a short time in great wrath. It is clear from the overall context of the work that this short time of wrath characterizes the time of the author of the work. Since the time until the end is short, according to Rev 1:1,3 and 22:20, it is highly likely that the binding of Satan in the abyss described in Revelation 20 is a future event from the point of view of the author.

Hill also discovered two texts in which 'the first resurrection' of Rev 20:5–6 was interpreted as the rising of the soul to heaven at death. One is found in Hippolytus' commentary on Daniel and the other in Origen's homilies on Jeremiah. As is well known, the most common interpretation later on was that represented by Tyconius, Jerome and Augustine, according to which the first

36 *2 Baruch* 51:5, 10. 37 Irenaeus *Against Heresies* 5.36.1–2.

resurrection is that of the soul to new life in baptism.[38] Hill suggests that the association of the first resurrection with the ascent of the soul after death may well be the original meaning of the passage. I will return to this question in a moment.

An important part of Hill's argument for a non-chiliastic reading of the book of Revelation is his attempt to demonstrate that the Apostolic Fathers, Melito of Sardis, the *Ascension of Isaiah*, the *Apocalypse of Peter*, other Christian apocrypha, early martyrdoms, Hippolytus, Clement of Alexandria, Origen, Dionysius of Alexandria, and Cyprian all held the expectation of an immediate entry into heaven for the righteous at death. He also argues that none of them can be credited with chiliastic views.[39] Now it is quite clear that two of these authors not only did not hold chiliastic views, but argued against them, namely, Origen and Dionysius of Alexandria. It is dangerous, however, to assume that belief in the immediate ascent of the soul after death alone is evidence for the rejection of an earthly millennium. It is striking that Hill omits the Epistle attributed to Barnabas from his treatment of the Apostolic Fathers. In his discussion of the Sabbath, the author of this work cites Gen 2:2 as follows: 'And God made in six days the works of his hands and on the seventh day he made an end, and rested in it and sanctified it.' He interprets the statement 'He made an end in six days' to mean 'that the Lord will make an end of everything in six thousand years, for a day with him means a thousand years ... So then, children, in six days, that is, in six thousand years, everything will be completed,' supporting this conclusion with a citation of Psalm 90:4. He continues: '"And he rested on the seventh day." This means, when his Son comes he will destroy the time of the wicked one, and will judge the godless, and will change the sun and the moon and the stars, and then he will truly rest on the seventh day.' He argues that this thousand-year period will be the true sabbath because 'we shall indeed keep it holy at that time, when we enjoy true rest, when we shall be able to do so because we have been made righteous ourselves and have received the promise, when there is no more sin, but all things have been made new by the Lord ... ' It is likely that pseudo-Barnabas is referring here to an earthly messianic kingdom, lasting only a thousand years, rather than to an eternal kingdom, because he refers to 'the beginning of an eighth day, that is the beginning of another world.' He thus seems to presuppose a two-stage eschatology, like *4 Ezra*, *2 Baruch* and the book of Revelation.[40]

38 Hippolytus, *Commentary on Daniel* 2.37.4; Origen *Homilies on Jeremiah* 2.3; Hill, *Regnum Caelorum*, 191. Alfred Wikenhauser has argued persuasively that the allusions to Ezekiel 37 in Rev 20:4–5 indicate that the first resurrection in the latter text is a physical one, not a spiritual (Augustine) nor a heavenly (Origen) one; idem, 'Das Problem des tausendjährigen Reiches in der Johannes-Apokalypse,' *Römische Quartalschrift* 40 (1932) 18. 39 Hill, *Regnum Caelorum*, 64. 40 *Barnabas* 15; text and trans. in Kirsopp Lake, *The Apostolic Fathers* (2 vols.; Loeb Classical Library; Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press; London: Heinemann, 1912) 1. 392–97. Given the evidence of *Barnabas*, Ferguson's statement that 'The only apostolic father known to be a premillennialist was Papias' needs to be revised; idem, 'Millennial and Amillenial Expectations in Christian Eschatology,' 137; also his statement that 'In Irenaeus we see for the first time in Christian literature the scheme of 6,000 years for the world's history to be followed by 1,000 years of the earthly kingdom of Christ' (ibid., 138). Ferguson argues that, for Barnabas, the judgment occurs at the end of the 6,000 year period, not after the seventh millennium as in the usual chiliastic pattern (ibid., 143). But the judgment associated in *Barnabas* 15 with the return of Christ does not seem to be the general judgment; its description is compatible with the judgment implied in Rev 20:4. He also argues that the seventh-day rest is identified by the author as equivalent to the heavenly rest on the eighth day (ibid., 143–44). *Barnabas* 15.8–9 contrasts the unacceptable sabbaths observed by the Jews of his day on the seventh day (Saturday) with the celebration of the resurrection and ascension of Jesus on 'the eighth day', i.e., Sunday. The fact, however, that Sunday is called 'the eighth day' rather than 'the first day' does seem to reflect the idea of a cosmic week in which the seventh thousand-year period is the messianic kingdom and the eighth 'period' is the eternal new age. 41 Giblin, 'The Millennium (Rev 20.4–6) as Heaven,' 558; emphasis in original. 42 Ibid. 43 The initial stages of this battle are also described in association with the sixth trumpet in Rev 16:12–16. I agree with Giblin that the sixth trumpet refers to the same battle as that of 19:11–21, but not that the same battle is also described in 20:7–9 (ibid., 568). The fact that language from Ezekiel 39 is used to describe the battle of the Word of God against the beast (19:17) and from Ezekiel 38 to describe the final battle instigated by Satan (20:9) does not imply that the two battles are identical.

Let us turn now to the question of the original meaning of the binding of Satan and the thousand-year reign in Revelation 20. The interpretation of these passages depends upon how the interpreter understands the thematic and narrative arrangement of the book as a whole. Charles Homer Giblin has argued that the section from 16:1 through 22:10 'concentrates on the *very end* of the end-time.'[41] This conclusion is fair enough. But he then goes on to argue that this portion of the book 'brings to a single, "temporal" focus the (simultaneous) defeat of all the eschatological adversaries: Babylon, the Beasts and those they have gathered, Satan and those he has gathered, and Death and the Grave.'[42] The basis for this conclusion is far from clear. In 17:16–18, John describes in figurative language a battle in which the beast (Nero or a Nero-like figure) and his allies, the ten horns, who represent ten kings, will destroy the harlot named Babylon, who represents Rome. It seems fairly clear that this is a different battle from the one alluded to in 17:12–14, in which the ten horns and the beast will make war on the Lamb. It is the latter battle which is then described in 19:11–21.[43] This battle takes place after the victory over Babylon is celebrated in 19:1–10. At the end of it, the beast and his major ally, the false prophet, are thrown into the lake of fire, a place of definitive punishment from which there is no return (19:20). After the defeat of the beasts, the binding of Satan is described and his confinement in the abyss. Confinement in the abyss is not a definitive punishment in this context. Just as the fallen angels of *1 Enoch* are confined in places of punishment until the general judgment, after which they receive their definitive punishment, so Satan in Revelation is confined to the abyss for a limited time, before the general judgment. As Satan was cast out of heaven in chapter 12, he is confined to the abyss in chapter 20. These are not descriptions

of the same event, however, since he falls from heaven to become active on the earth and to instigate idolatry and persecution, whereas, when he is confined to the abyss, the earth is free from his baneful influence.[44] Verse 3 of chapter 20 explicitly states that he was confined 'in order that he not lead the nations astray any longer until the thousand years are ended.' According to verses 7 and 8, when Satan is set free after the thousand years, he deceives the nations and gathers them for battle. Verse 9, using the visionary past tense, states that 'they surrounded the camp of the saints and the beloved city and fire *came down from heaven* and burned them up.' The language clearly implies an earthly setting. Only after this final battle is Satan cast into the lake of fire and his story ended. Death and Hades meet their definitive end only in the next stage of the sequence of events, namely, the general judgment depicted in verses 11–15. Although the text of the book of Revelation does not always unfold in a simple, chronological narrative manner, it does imply a sequence of events. First the Nero-like figure and his allies will destroy Rome; then the Lamb, in the form of God's mighty Word, will defeat the beast and his allies; next comes the confinement of Satan which is simultaneous with the thousand-year reign; then the defeat of Satan, and only after that, the demise of Death and Hades.

Giblin also argues that the throne scene associated with the thousand-year reign 'is situated, in effect, in God's heavenly sanctuary.'[45] The mention of thrones, those seated upon them, and judgment calls Daniel 7:9–10 to mind, a judgment scene that is indeed set in heaven. But the language of Revelation also calls Matt 19:28 to mind: 'Jesus then said to them, 'Truly I say to you that, in the new age, when the Son of Man sits upon the throne of his glory, you who have followed me will also sit upon twelve thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel.' In this saying 'vertical eschatology' is combined with 'horizontal eschatology;' that is, the resurrected and exalted Son of Man and his glorious throne evoke a heavenly setting, whereas the motif of judging the twelve tribes of Israel evokes the tradition of Jewish restoration eschatology, which is earthly in character. The same tension is present in Revelation 20. As Hill pointed out, a significant difference between Revelation, on the one hand, and *2 Baruch* and *4 Ezra*, on the other, is the status of the human participants in the messianic kingdom. In the two Jewish works, they are the faithful who are alive at the time of the appearance of the Messiah. In Revelation, the human beings whose participation in the messianic reign is emphasized are those who have died a faithful death and been resurrected, specifically to participate in this reign. It should be noted, however, that *4 Ezra* and *2 Baruch* have some of the same tension noted in Matt 19:28. In each case, the Messiah is not an ordinary human being. He is portrayed as pre-existent and as being 'revealed.' He does not emerge as a leader in the usual way, but simply 'appears.'

44 Contrast the interpretation of Giblin, ibid., 565, n. 34. 45 Ibid., 566. Whereas Giblin argues that the whole scene takes place in heaven, Wikenhauser interpreted the judgment scene as taking place in heaven, but the resurrection of the martyrs on earth; idem, 'Das Problem des tausendjährigen Reiches,' 19. 46 The fact that Adam lived only 930 years (less than a thousand) played a role in Justin Martyr's argument that the earthly, messianic kingdom would last a thousand years; see Ferguson, 'Millennial and Amillenial Expectations in Christian Eschatology,' 138. 47 Giblin, 'The Millennium (Rev 20.4–6) as Heaven,' 568–69.

Even though it seems to Hill illogical that John would combine belief in a heavenly intermediate state with the expectation of an earthly messianic kingdom, it seems that that is precisely what he did do. On the one hand, like Matthew, he wanted to preserve some important aspects of Jewish restoration eschatology. The manifestation of the kingdom of God on earth as a reversal of the idolatrous and unjust rule of Rome was important to him. But his vision of the messianic kingdom was less social and political than those of *4 Ezra* and *2 Baruch*, less ethnically oriented. He transformed the idea of a messianic kingdom as the last in a sequence of world empires into an occasion for rewarding the martyrs. Those who were executed under Roman judicial and military authority will have authority over all the nations. Those who gave their lives will receive them back again; those whose years were cut short will live longer than any of the patriarchs listed in Genesis 5.[46]

This hypothesis, that the thousand-year reign in Revelation 20 is set on earth, even though the judges or rulers of that kingdom have been raised from the dead, fits with the eschatology of the book of Revelation as a whole. Giblin makes the insightful comment that the book of Revelation expresses both 'vertical' and 'horizontal' eschatology and attempts to reconcile the two. I also agree that the theme of God's Holy War is a major focus of the work.[47] I disagree, however, in his particular explanation of how the two types of eschatology are reconciled. The traditional outcome of holy war, as Giblin notes, is the entry into the promised land and secure dwelling there. He argues that this security is granted 'vertically' in the heavenly intermediate state prior to the end-time and then 'horizontally' in the New Creation. Thus, in his interpretation, the millennial kingdom on earth is superfluous.

I agree that in the present age, according to Revelation, victory in God's holy war means for the faithful who die a blessed intermediate state in heaven. John holds out this promise perhaps most vividly in 7:9–17. The 'horizontal' eschatology of the book, however, focuses first and foremost on the return of Christ. It is announced already in 1:7, portrayed in 19:11–21, and emphasized at the close of the work in 22:20. The return of Christ is the first stage in the reconciling of 'vertical' and 'horizontal' eschatology. The resurrected and glorified Christ returns, defeats the human eschatological adversary, and then the faithful dead are raised to reign on earth. This paradoxical merging of the heavenly and earthly is repeated in the second stage of this reconcilation. A new heaven and a new earth are created, according to 21:1, but the distinction between the two is annihilated by the descent of the New Jerusalem. As the faithful dead are portrayed as serving God in his heavenly temple in 7:15, 'the slaves' of God,

that is, those worthy to inhabit the New Jerusalem, serve him and see his face, according to 22:3. The lack of a temple in the New Jerusalem is, on the one hand, explained by the fact that the city itself is temple-like. It also signifies, however, the intimacy between God and the peoples of God in the new age. As the distance between heaven and earth is collapsed, the indirect relationship of humanity to God is replaced by an immediate one.

I would like to close with a comment about the use of the history of interpretation in the exegesis of New Testament texts. The history of the interpretation of Revelation 20 constructed by Hill is certainly illuminating. But it is dangerous to infer that the meaning of a classic or canonical text may be determined by such constructions alone. In most of the early Christian texts analyzed by Hill, either the heavenly intermediate state or hope for an earthly kingdom is emphasized. Rather than concluding that the book of Revelation fits into one or the other of these two types of text, it is more appropriate to recognize that it is distinctive, if not unique, in giving a significant place to both. Its attempt to reconcile 'vertical' or 'personal' eschatology with national and cosmic eschatology is rich and suggestive, although paradoxical and unstable. It was precisely the disparity between the two that led other early Christian writers to prefer one or the other.[48]

48 Tertullian resolved the tension by concluding that all souls are shut up in Hades except Christ and the martyrs; see Hill, *Regnum Caelorum* 16, 26–27; Ferguson, 'Millennial and Amillenial Expectations in Christian Eschatology,' 139–40; 142.

The Apocalypse of Paul: earlier history and later influence

Anthony Hilhorst

In his chapter on Saint Patrick, Jacobus de Voragine reports the following:

> He preached throughout Ireland but with very meagre results, so he besought the Lord to show some sign that would terrify the people and move them to repentance. He then did as the Lord commanded him, and in a certain place drew a large circle with a stick; and behold, the earth opened within the circle and a very deep, wide pit appeared. Then it was revealed to blessed Patrick that this was the place of Purgatory; that anyone who wished to go down into it would have no other penance to do and would endure no other purgatory for his sins; but that most would not come back from there, and that those who did come back would have had to stay below from one morning to the next.[1]

Jacobus then narrates how a certain Nicholas, who had committed many sins, repented of them and wanted to undergo the purgatory of Saint Patrick. He mortified himself by fasting for two weeks and then descended into the pit. There he saw many tortures inflicted by demons upon all sorts of sinners. We cannot evoke them all here, but the following passage is of special interest to our subject:

> Next he saw a large building where there were trenches filled with molten metal, into which some men had one foot, some had two, and others were in up to the knees, others to the waist, to the chest, to the neck, to the eyes … He proceeded farther and came in sight of a very wide hole out of which rose a horrible smoke and an intolerable stench, and men glowing like sparkling hot iron were trying to get out but were pushed back by the demons.[2]

Those familiar with the *Apocalypse of Paul* will immediately recall similar passages in the description of the place of punishments there. Indeed, as Paul entered it, he saw

1 Jacobus de Voragine, *Legenda Aurea* 49.10–12 (G. P. Maggioni, *Iacopo da Varazze, Legenda Aurea: Edizione critica* (Millennio Medievale 6; Tavarnuzze and Florence: SISMEL – Edizioni del Galluzzo, 1998), 322). The translation is from W. G. Ryan, *Jacobus de Voragine, The Golden Legend: Readings on the Saints*, vol. I (Princeton, N. J.: Princeton University Press, 1993), 194.
2 Jacobus de Voragine, *Legenda Aurea* 49.33–5 (p. 324 Maggioni); translation by W. G. Ryan,

> a river boiling with fire, and in it a multitude of men and women immersed up to the knees, and other men up to the navel, others even up to the lips, others up to the hair.[3]

Afterwards Paul was placed above a *puteus*, a 'pit' or 'well'. In his own words:

> I found it sealed with seven seals; and the angel who was with me said to the angel of that place, 'Open the mouth of the well that Paul, the well-beloved of God, may see, for authority is given him that he may see all the torments of hell.' And the angel said to me, 'Stand far off that you may be able to bear the stench of this place.' When the well was opened, immediately there arose from it a disagreeable and evil stench, which surpasses all punishments; and I looked into the well, and I saw fiery masses glowing on all sides and anguish.[4]

It seems as if the legend of Saint Patrick uses traditions originating from the *Apocalypse of Paul* or, to put it more cautiously, traditions to which the *Apocalypse of Paul* is among the first witnesses.

On the other hand, when reading the *Apocalypse of Paul*, we are impressed by a number of reminiscences of older, Jewish and Christian materials. Indeed, it is a receptacle of earlier traditions and at the same time a fountainhead of ideas and images in later texts, whether or not inherited from Judaism. Both aspects of the *Apocalypse*, its qualities as heir and testator, will be discussed here, though with no claim to exhaustiveness. However, prior to a detailed discussion, some background comments on the *Apocalypse of Paul* are desirable.[5]

THE APOCALYPSE OF PAUL

The text was originally written in Greek and then translated into Latin, Syriac, Armenian, Georgian, Coptic, Arabic, Church Slavonic, and Ethiopic. In the Middle Ages, many daughter translations in the different Mediaeval languages were produced, and revised forms of the ancient versions appeared. In the West alone it has been possible to discern no less than eleven Mediaeval Latin redactions.[6] In short, the work captivated the Christian imagination for over a

p. 195. 3 *Apocalypse of Paul* 31 (T. Silverstein and A. Hilhorst, *Apocalypse of Paul: A New Critical Edition of Three Long Latin Versions* (Cahiers d'Orientalisme 21; Geneva: Patrick Cramer Éditeur, 1997), 136). The translation is from J. K. Elliott, *The Apocryphal New Testament: A Collection of Apocryphal Christian Literature in an English Translation* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1993), 633. 4 *Apocalypse of Paul* 41 (p. 154 Silverstein and Hilhorst); translation by J. K. Elliott, p. 637. 5 For a more detailed account, see R. P. Casey, 'The Apocalypse of Paul', *The Journal of Theological Studies* 34 (1933) 1–32. For a fairly complete bibliography up to 1997, see Silverstein and Hilhorst (n. 3), 41–58. 6 Cf. Peter Dinzelbacher, 'Die Verbreitung der

millennium. To grasp this fully, one may consider that the temporal distance between the oldest and youngest Latin manuscript is greater than that between the youngest and our own time.[7]

The *Apocalypse of Paul* is a typical instance of a living text. The best witness to the original is not the surviving Greek text, which has been heavily shortened, but the Latin version known as L^1, in particular its ninth-century manuscript preserved in the Bibliothèque Nationale of Paris. The *editio princeps* of that manuscript came from the famous M. R. James in 1893. Theodore Silverstein edited the slightly younger St Gall manuscript in 1935, and recently he and I published the totality of textual evidence known to us for the three long Latin versions, including the first edition of a fifteenth-century manuscript written in Arnhem in the Netherlands. For our present purpose, however, we will base ourselves on the Paris manuscript.

This manuscript opens with an account of the text's discovery in Tarsus – in a marble box hidden under the house where Saint Paul had lived. It occurred, the manuscript informs us, 'in the consulship of Theodosius Augustus the Younger and Cynegius' (c. 1). There has been some dispute about the year of this consulship, but Silverstein has shown that 420 must have been meant.[8] At the same time, it is clear that this is the date of a re-publication of the text. In fact, Origen mentions the *Apocalypse of Paul* in one of his writings. Although, alas, this statement has survived only in a fragment transmitted by the thirteenth-century Syrian author Bar Hebraeus, scholars generally accept the fragment as authentic. Hence, some version of the *Apocalypse of Paul* must have existed in the first half of the third century, and some authors suggest a still earlier date, in the mid- or later second century.[9]

The work expands the mysterious passage in 2 Corinthians 12:1–5, which describes Paul's ascent into heaven – a passage used as an epigraph in several of the MSS. Seven parts may be distinguished in the Paris text:

1 (cc. 1–2): discovery of the *Apocalypse of Paul* in the house in Tarsus;
2 (cc. 3–6): appeal of the sun, moon, stars, sea and earth to God about man;
3 (cc. 7–10): daily reports of the angels to God about man's good or wicked deeds;
4 (cc. 11–18): the death and judgement of a righteous and a wicked person;
5 (cc. 19–30): Paul's vision of Paradise;
6 (cc. 31–44): Paul's vision of Hell, including a passage on Sunday rest for the damned;

apokryphen "Visio S. Pauli" im mittelalterlichen Europa', *Mittellateinisches Jahrbuch* 27 (1992), 77–90. 7 Paris, Nouv. acq. lat. 1631, ninth century, and Zürich, Codex C 101, fifteenth century, respectively. 8 T. Silverstein, 'The Date of the "Apocalypse of Paul"', *Mediaeval Studies* 24 (1962), 335–48; cf. Silverstein and Hilhorst (n. 3) 11 and 18 n. 3. 9 See Silverstein and Hilhorst (n. 3) 9 and 18 n. 3.

7 (cc. 45–51): a second vision of Paradise, without a proper conclusion to the work.

Recently, it has been argued that this structure is a well-ordered whole,[10] but there are several inconsistencies (for example, the repeated vision of Paradise) which make this theory less plausible. It is perhaps no accident that part 7 lacks many witnesses to the text. The repetition and several other indications suggest that the *Apocalypse of Paul* is a composite work. Nevertheless, for our present purposes, we will take it as a unity.

The subject will be examined in three sections. The first will address the Jewish traditions in the *Apocalypse of Paul*. The second will briefly discuss the text's Christian elements. The third will consider the afterlife of the *Apocalypse* and discuss a feature that seems to give the text its own characteristic place in the history of the traditions involved. Jewish writings will be quoted from Charlesworth's collection,[11] scriptural passages from the Jerusalem Bible, and Christian apocrypha, including the *Apocalypse of Paul*, from Elliott's *Apocryphal New Testament*.[12]

JEWISH TRADITIONS

It is unnecessary to show that our author is familiar with the Old Testament since any Christian writing from the first centuries may be supposed to draw upon it. Our interest, therefore, lies rather in the extra-biblical literature of the Second Temple period. However, a thorny methodological problem arises here, since so many of the relevant anonymous writings are living texts, just like the *Apocalypse of Paul* itself. They may, therefore, be hard to date, may be composite, and, worst of all, because reaching us through Christian hands, may (indeed sometimes do) contain Christian interpolations. Scholars still disagree on many of these points and thus some of the suggestions offered in the following pages may be contestable.[13] That said, we will discuss the Jewish element, using the sevenfold division mentioned above. Further, we will see if we can identify actual Jewish compositions used as models by the author of our text.

In part 1 (cc. 1–2), the discovery of the text of the *Apocalypse of Paul* hidden in his house at Tarsus, we find the motif of hiding a revelation. Also in *4 Esdr.* 10 (12).37 the seer receives the order to write everything down in a book and to

10 C. Carozzi, *Eschatologie et au-delà: Recherches sur* l'Apocalypse de Paul (Aix-en-Provence: Publications de l'Université de Provence, 1994), 35–46. 11 J. H. Charlesworth (ed.), *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha*, 2 volumes (London: Darton, Longman & Todd, 1983–1985). Less comprehensive, but equally useful, is A. Dupont-Sommer and M. Philonenko (eds.), *La Bible: Écrits intertestamentaires* (Bibliothèque de la Pléiade; [Paris]: Gallimard, 1987). 12 See n. 3 above. 13 For a recent stocktaking, see A.-M. Denis O.P. and collaborators, *Introduction à la littérature religieuse judéo-hellénistique*, 2 volumes (Turnhout: Brepols, 2000).

preserve it in a hidden place; cf. also the *Assumption of Moses* 1.17. This is of course a convenient device to account for the authorship of a figure from ancient times.

Part 2 (cc. 3–6), the appeal of the sun, moon, stars, sea and earth to God about man, uses many features known from Jewish sources. The idea that while all creation serves God the human race alone sins (cc. 3 and 7) is in *1 Enoch* 2.1–5.4.[14] Also God's patient bearing of men's iniquities in order to offer them every opportunity to repent (cc. 4–6; cf. c. 33) may be found in such Jewish texts as Wisdom 11:23 and 12:3–10, Aristeas 188 and the *Testament of Abraham*, short recension 12.13, and long recension 10.14. The earth protesting against the crimes it has to support (c. 6) appears in *1 Enoch* 7.6, where the context is the misdeeds of the Giants. Finally, the place of revelation, the third heaven (c. 3; again in c. 19), features in the *Testament of Levi* 2.8 and 3.3, *3 Baruch* 7.2 and *2 Enoch* 8.1.

In part 3 (cc. 7–10), c. 7, the angels worship God at sunset, as they do in the *Testament of Abraham*, short recension, 4.5, and their daily report to God about man is a development of a Jewish idea found in *Jubilees* 4.6, the *Testament of Levi* 3.7 and *3 Baruch* 11–16. Part 3 is also familiar with individuals' guardian angels (c. 7), an idea found in Psalm 91:11 and expressed, *inter alia*, in Pseudo-Philo 15.5 and 59.4.[15] Even the conception of angels at the head of peoples, which occurs in Daniel 10:13 and 20–21, Ecclesiasticus 17:17, the Septuagint of Deuteronomy 32:8, *Jubilees* 15.31, 2 *Enoch* 19.5, and in rabbinic literature,[16] is in our apocalypse: *angelus uniuscuiusque populi* (c. 7). Angels wishing to be relieved from their wicked charges (cc. 8 and 10) also occur in *3 Baruch* 13.1–4.

In part 4 (cc. 11–18), concerning the death and judgement of both a righteous and a wicked person, we find first of all the figure of the *angelus interpres* (c. 11), who will guide Paul and explain what he sees. This figure is a commonplace in Jewish texts from Ezekiel 40:3–4 onwards.[17] In this part we also hear about punishing angels (cc. 11 and 15) who feature in many early Jewish sources.[18] Our text uses phrases from Job 41:9–10 and Wisdom 11:19 (18) to depict them: 'I saw angels without mercy, having no pity, whose countenance was full of madness, and their teeth sticking out beyond the mouth; their eyes shone like

14 Cf. H. W. Hollander and M. de Jonge, *The Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs: A Commentary* (Studia in Veteris Testamenti Pseudepigrapha 8; Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1985), 305–6; G. W. E. Nickelsburg, *1 Enoch 1: A Commentary on the Book of 1 Enoch, Chapters 1–36; 81–108* (Hermeneia; Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2001), 152–5. 15 Cf. W. Bousset and H. Gressmann, *Die Religion des Judentums im späthellenistischen Zeitalter* (Handbuch zum Neuen Testament 21; Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr (Paul Siebeck), 1926³), 324; J. Michl, 'Engel II (jüdisch)', *Reallexikon für Antike und Christentum* 5 (1962) 60–97 at 74–5 and 87–8. In *1 Enoch* 100.5, the guardian angels are assigned to the righteous after death, cf. Nickelsburg (n. 14) 500–1. 16 Cf. Bousset and Gressmann (n. 15), 324–5, 326; Michl (n. 15) 75, 87; M. Mach, *Entwicklungsstadien des jüdischen Engelglaubens in vorrabbinischer Zeit* (Texte und Studien zum Antiken Judentum 34; Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr (Paul Siebeck),1992), 22–5, 62, 77–8, 257–62. 17 See Michl (n. 15) 67–8; Mach (n. 16) 61, 142–4, 254. 18 See Bousset and Gressmann (n. 15) 252, 333–4; Michl (n. 15) 75–6; Mach (n. 16) 62, 106–12, 256.

the morning star of the east, and from the hairs of their head or from their mouth sparks of fire went out' (c. 11). In the hour of death, holy and impious angels look on to see whether the soul of the dying is theirs (c. 14–16).[19] This image has biblical roots, cf. Zechariah 3:1: 'He showed me Joshua the high priest, standing before the angel of Yahweh, with Satan standing on his right to accuse him' (i.e. Joshua). The Septuagint, however, reads 'to resist him', probably meaning to resist the angel. The countenances shining as the sun (c. 12) are paralleled in *2 Enoch* 19.2 (1), and the angels' golden girdles in Daniel 10:5 and the *Apocalypse of Zephaniah* 6.12. C. 14 speaks of archangels and cherubim, well-known Old Testament figures. Less usual there, however, is Michael's designation as 'the angel of the Covenant'. This expression occurs in Malachi 3:1, but nowhere else in the Old Testament and Second Temple literature. According to Adam van der Woude, 'the angel of the Covenant' in Malachi is Michael.[20] Our text, which he does not mention, supports this suggestion.

Still more angelological material can be gleaned from this part. Again, there are guardian angels (cc. 12 and 16). In cc. 14, 16 and 18, the presence of 'a thousand thousand' angels in heaven can be paralleled with Daniel 7:10, *1 Enoch* 14.22, 40.1, and 60.1, and *Apocalypse of Zephaniah* 4.2 and Sahidic fragment. Angels keeping accounts of each person's good and evil deeds (c. 17) also feature in *1 Enoch* 89.62–64, 70; 90.14, 22; *2 Enoch* 19.5, the *Apocalypse of Zephaniah* 7.1–11, the *Testament of Abraham*, long recension 12.7–13.9 and other Jewish texts.[21] In the extant Greek text of our apocalypse, this feature is mentioned already in c. 16: ἐγώ εἰμι ὁ καθ' ἑκάστην ἡμέραν ἀπογραφόμενος τὰς ἁμαρτίας σου[22] and even in Part 3, c. 10: πάντα τὰ πραττόμενα παρ' ὑμῶν καθ' ἡμέραν ἄγγελοι ἀπογράφονται ἐν οὐρανοῖς. Finally, the idea of both sins and good works appearing in personified form before God's tribunal (cc. 14 and 15) may be mentioned. This looks like a development of Isaiah 59:12: 'Our sins are a witness against us' and Jeremiah 14:7: 'If our crimes are witnesses against us'. Still closer is Wisdom 4:20: 'They will come trembling to the reckoning of their sins, and their crimes, confronting them, will accuse them'.

Part 5 (cc. 19–30) narrates Paul's visit to Paradise. In c. 20, where he is in the third heaven, he meets two Old Testament personalities. The first, Enoch, is characterised as 'Enoch, the scribe of righteousness', a designation found also

19 See K. Berger, 'Der Streit des guten und des bösen Engels um die Seele: Beobachtungen zu 4Q Amr^{b} und Judas 9', *Journal for the Study of Judaism* 4 (1973), 1–18. 20 A. S. van der Woude, 'Der Engel des Bundes: Bemerkungen zu Maleachi 3,1c und seinem Kontext', in J. Jeremias and L. Perlitt (eds.), *Die Botschaft und die Boten: Festschrift für Hans Walter Wolff zum 70. Geburtstag* (Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener Verlag,1981), 289–300 at 298. 21 See Bousset and Gressmann (n. 15) 258; L. Koep, *Das himmlische Buch in Antike und Christentum: Eine religionsgeschichtliche Untersuchung zur altchristlichen Bildersprache* (Theophaneia 8; Bonn: Hanstein, 1952), 14–18, 27–30, 46–8; Michl (n. 15) 73–4; Mach (n. 16) 138, 256, 260 n. 411; Nickelsburg (n. 14) 478–80. 22 The corresponding Paris text has *referens ... ad dominum* for ἀπογραφόμενος.

in *1 Enoch* 12.4 and in the *Testament of Abraham*, short recension 11.3.[23] The second has suffered severely at the hands of Mediaeval copyists. In the Paris manuscript, he is called the sun (*solem*). The St Gall manuscript deteriorates this to *solum*, 'alone', with the result that this figure coincides with Enoch. The third manuscript, belonging to the Escorial library, at least realistically names him, *Salomonem*, but this is clearly a solution from embarrassment. Only the newly published Arnhem manuscript offers the originally mentioned name, Elijah. This shows that Arnhem had access to a better Greek manuscript, for whereas the first three mistook the Greek proper name Ἠλίας for the common name ἥλιος, the Arnhem text translator did not allow himself to be confused. Hence, the two persons Paul met were Enoch and Elijah, both Old Testament heroes who were thought to have gone to heaven; Enoch's ascension was mentioned in Genesis 5:24 and Elijah's narrated in 2 Kings 2:1–12. Both are alluded to as being in Paradise in *1 Enoch* 89.52 and mentioned as 'having become invisible' in Josephus *Ant.* 9.28.[24] Going from the third to the second heaven, the angel and Paul arrive in the 'land of promise' (c. 21), a clear transposition of an element from the Abraham narrative in Genesis 12:7 etc.; the expression is used in the terrestrial sense in the *Testament of Abraham*, long recension 8.5 and 20.11. This is a land of marvellous fertility, as it is described in c. 22: 'I saw a river flowing with milk and honey, and there were trees planted by the bank of that river, full of fruit; moreover, each single tree bore twelve <times> fruits in the year', with echoes of Numbers 16:14 and Ezekiel 47:12. 'There were', the text continues, 'trees full of fruits from the roots to the highest branches, of ten thousand fruits of palms upon ten thousand fruits. The grapevines had ten thousand plants. Moreover in the single vines there were ten thousand thousand bunches and in each of these a thousand single grapes.' This description follows closely that of *2 Baruch* 29.5; cf. also *1 Enoch* 10.19. In c. 24, the trees that 'bowed down and again erected themselves' call to mind *4Q385* frag. 2.10: 'a tree shall bend and shall stand erect' (trans. D. Dimant), although the tenor there is quite different.[25]

In the following chapters, Paul visits a heavenly city which has several features of the heavenly Jerusalem and indeed is called this in c. 29. Here also flow the four rivers of Paradise, designated as the rivers of honey, milk, oil, and wine (c. 23). Near the river of honey, Paul meets the prophets, whom the text names as Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Amos, Micah and Zechariah and groups together as 'the minor and major prophets', the earliest known occurrence of

23 See Bousset and Gressmann (n. 15) 353–4, 491; M. Black, *The Book of Enoch or I Enoch: A New English Edition with Commentary and Textual Notes* (Studia in Veteris Testamenti Pseudepigrapha 7; Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1985), 143; K. Berger, 'Henoch', *Reallexikon für Antike und Christentum* 14 (1988), 486, 498–500; Nickelsburg (n. 14) 270. 24 Cf. Berger (n. 23) 496–8. He points to the fact that Jewish texts tend to mention more persons besides Enoch and Elijah, especially Moses. 25 See D. Dimant, *Qumran Cave 4 XXI. Parabiblical Texts, Part 4: Pseudo-Prophetic Texts* (Discoveries in the Judaean Desert 30; Oxford: Clarendon

this designation[26] (c. 25). Near the river of wine he meets Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Lot, Job and other saints (c. 27). We should not omit here a feature destined for an important afterlife, namely the empty thrones in c. 29. M. R. James, in his edition, which is the basis of all modern translations, placed men on these thrones, reading *in trono* instead of *ii troni*. In fact, the thrones were meant to be empty. The best text-form here is the St Gall one, closely followed by the Arnhem version, where, to Paul's question *Qui sunt qui sessuri sunt super thronos?* the angel answers: 'These thrones belong to those who have goodness, innocence and understanding of heart.' The thrones will belong to them, namely after they have departed this life.[27] Again, there are Jewish textual parallels for this, one example being in the *Testament of Job* 33.2,3,5 and 41.4, where Job maintains before his friends that he has his throne in heaven.

Part 6 (cc. 31–44) describes the visit to the place of punishment. Martha Himmelfarb has shown that the punishments, including the measure for measure variety, ultimately stem from Jewish sources. In particular the *Apocalypse of Zephaniah* should be mentioned here.[28] In this part also appears the 'worm that never rests' (c. 42), known from Isaiah 66.24.[29] The last two chapters, cc. 43–44, are devoted to the Sunday respite from punishment. Michael and Paul obtain for the damned a favour formulated as follows by the Son of God: 'On the day on which I rose from the dead, I give to you all who are in punishment a night and a day of refreshment forever' (c. 44). The idea of a Sabbath rest for the damned may also be found in rabbinic literature,[30] and a trace of it in the *Greek Apocalypse of Esdras* 5.10, where those being punished say to Esdras, who has asked for mercy on their behalf, 'Since you came here, holy one of God, we have obtained a slight respite.' This may be a Jewish element in the admittedly Christian *Greek Apocalypse of Esdras*.[31]

In part 7 (cc. 45–51), the second visit of Paul to Paradise, the scene is described in a more detailed way than in part 4. Here we have the Paradise of Genesis 2–3, including the four rivers, the tree of life, and the tree of knowledge of good and

Press, 2001), 28–9. **26** See A. Hilhorst, 'De benaming grote en kleine profeten', in F. Garcia Martínez, C. H. J. de Geus and A. F. J. Klijn (eds.), *Profeten en profetische geschriften*, Kampen: Uitgeversmaatschappij J. H. Kok, and Nijkerk: Uitgeverij G. F. Callenbach, [1987]), 43–54. **27** See T. Silverstein, 'The Throne of the Emperor Henry in Dante's Paradise and the Mediaeval Conception of Christian Kingship', *Harvard Theological Review* 32 (1939), 115–29 at 116–17. Admittedly, he could use the St Gall text, which was unknown to James. **28** M. Himmelfarb, *Tours of Hell: An Apocalyptic Form in Jewish and Christian Literature* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1983), 142, 151, 169–70. **29** Ib. 109–10, 116–19. **30** See I. Lévi, 'Le repos sabbatique des âmes damnées', *Revue des Études Juives* 25 (1892), 1–13; id., 'Notes complémentaires sur le repos sabbatique des âmes damnées', ib. 26 (1893) 131–5, and the literature mentioned in E. Peterson, *Frühkirche, Judentum und Gnosis: Studien und Untersuchungen* (Rome, Freiburg and Vienna: Herder, 1959), 320 n. 35; R. Bauckham, *The Fate of the Dead: Studies on the Jewish and Christian Apocalypses* (Supplements to Novum Testamentum 93; Leiden, Boston and Cologne: Brill, 1998), 141 n. 27. **31** Cf. M. E. Stone in Charlesworth (n. 11) I 562.

evil (c. 45). Paul meets a varied group of people here – first, Mary, the Mother of the Lord (c. 46), and then a number of Old Testament figures, including Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, the twelve patriarchs, Moses, Isaiah, Jeremiah and Ezekiel, Lot, Job, Noah, and finally Elijah and Elisha. Once more, Jewish traditions are touched on, for example Joseph as the type of the suffering righteous one (c. 47),[32] the three major prophets' violent deaths (c. 49),[33] the guardian angel (c. 49), and Noah's fruitless call to repent (c. 50).[34]

So far, we have taken material from various documents without examining their relationship to our *Apocalypse*. Can we also show that its author used some of these documents as his models? Three texts seem at first sight to qualify: *1 Enoch* 1–36 (the 'Book of the Watchers'), *3 Baruch*, and the *Apocalypse of Zephaniah*. All three offer descriptions of otherworldly journeys and, moreover, exhibit specific points of contact. We cannot discuss these here in great detail, but the following observations merit consideration. The Book of the Watchers contains a vision of heaven (14.8–23) as well as two cosmic journeys (17–19 and 21–36). Details shared with the *Apocalypse of Paul* include the *angelus interpres* (or rather *angeli interpretes*) already noted, an interest in cosmological facts (17–18; cf. *Paul* 11, 13, 21, 31, 45), mention of wind directions (28–32 and 34–6; cf. *Paul* 27–8, 31–2, 41–2), and the passage on the tree of knowledge (32; cf. *Paul* 45). While these items are rather general, with some belonging to the literary genre used, more specific examples are the earth protesting against the crimes she has to support (already noted above) and Enoch's designation as 'scribe of righteousness'. Again, *3 Baruch*, describing Baruch's journey through the five heavens, has the *angelus interpres (passim)*, the cosmological facts *(passim)*, the wind directions (8.1), and the tree of knowledge (4.8). Furthermore, we find the plurality of heavens (2.2; 3.1; 7.2; 10.1; 11.1; cf. *Paul* 3, 19, 21, 29), the announcement of the angel that he will show greater things (2.6; 5.3, cf. *Paul* 22, 40), and the interest in huge measures (2.2,5; 3.2,6; 4.2; 5.3; 6.2,7; cf. *Paul* 23, 32, 49). More particular instances include the distress of those angels responsible for sinners and the joy of those responsible for the righteous (12.6; cf. *Paul* 7–10, 16), and the wish mentioned before of some angels to be relieved

32 Cf. H. W. Hollander, 'The Portrayal of Joseph in Hellenistic Jewish and Early Christian Literature', in M. E. Stone and T. A. Bergren (eds.), *Biblical Figures outside the Bible* (Harrisburg, PA: Trinity Press International, 1998), 237–63. **33** Cf. O. H. Steck, *Israel und das gewaltsame Geschick der Propheten: Untersuchungen zur Überlieferung des deuteronomistischen Geschichtsbildes im Alten Testament, Spätjudentum und Urchristentum* (Wissenschaftliche Monographien zum Alten und Neuen Testament 23; Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener Verlag, 1967); A. Hilhorst, 'Das Lebensende des Ezechiel', *Analecta Bollandiana* 115 (1997) 249–51; B. G. Wright, 'Talking with God and Losing His Head: Extrabiblical Traditions about the Prophet Ezekiel' in Stone and Bergren (n. 32), 290–315 at 304–11; M. E. Stone, B. G. Wright and D. Satran (eds.), *The Apocryphal Ezekiel* (Early Judaism and Its Literature 18; Atlanta, Georgia: Society of Biblical Literature, 2000), *passim*. **34** See D. Dimant, 'Noah in Early Jewish Literature', in Stone and Bergren (n. 32), 123–50 at 132.

from supervising the wicked. The fragmentary *Apocalypse of Zephaniah* recounts journeys inside this world, in heaven and in Hades. Details shared with the *Apocalypse of Paul* include the heavenly city (5; cf. *Paul* 23), the Old Testament's righteous ones in heaven (9.4–5; cf. *Paul* 27, 47–51), and, more strikingly, the seer sailing in a boat accompanied by hosts of angels (8.1–2; cf. *Paul* 23) as well as other details mentioned by Himmelfarb.[35] Nevertheless, while the more specific features which the *Apocalypse of Paul* shares with these three texts confirm some kind of relationship, few, if any, of the similarities are so striking that they suggest direct literary dependence of our *Apocalypse* on the texts. What the evidence does demonstrate, however, is that the *Apocalypse of Paul* is fraught with Jewish traditions, many of which are not represented in the Hebrew Bible or the Septuagint.

THE NEW TESTAMENT AND EARLY CHRISTIANITY

Naturally, as a Christian book with a Christian protagonist as its hero, the *Apocalypse of Paul* contains many Christian elements. The New Testament books it uses most extensively are the Book of Revelation, the Gospels and Acts. The Gospels provided the author with the details of Jesus' suffering (cc. 44 and 48) and with the Holy Innocents (c. 26; Matthew 2:16–18), who turn out to be inhabitants of Paradise, probably in their capacity as martyrs but most of all because of their chastity. An interesting example of creative work with Old and New Testament figures appears in c. 48, where Moses declares:

> And now I say to you, brother Paul, that in that hour when the people hanged Jesus whom you preach, the Father, the God of all, who gave me the law, and Michael and all the angels and archangels, and Abraham and Isaac, and Jacob, and all the righteous wept over the Son of God hanging on the cross. In that hour all the saints attended on me looking at me, and they said to me, 'See, Moses, what your people has done to the Son of God.'

It is but one of innumerable early Christian statements which cast responsibility for Jesus' crucifixion entirely on the Jewish people.

Clearly the Book of Revelation has strongly impressed our author. A telling example is the notion of the thousand-year reign (c. 21; cf. Revelation 20:4–6). Throughout the *Apocalypse of Paul* the celestial court is drawn after the picture of Revelation. We hear of 'angels whose countenance shone as the sun, their loins girded with golden girdles, having palms in their hands, and the sign of God, clothed with garments in which was written the name of the Son of God' (c. 12; cf. Revelation 1:13,16; 3:12; 7:9; 10:1; 15:6), and of 'the voices of a thousand

35 For more parallels, cf. Himmelfarb (n. 28) 147–51.

thousand angels and archangels and cherubim and twenty-four elders, saying hymns and glorifying the Lord' (c. 14; cf. Revelation 4:10; 5:11; 16:5,7; 19:2). And, still in c. 44, we have a characteristic passage: 'Suddenly, they threw themselves on their faces before the throne. And I saw twenty-four elders and the four beasts adoring God, and I saw an altar and veil and throne, and all were rejoicing; and the smoke of a good odour rose near the altar of the throne of God' (cf. Revelation 4:9–10; 6:9; 16:7). Admittedly, these parallels contain elements we have met already when dealing with Jewish texts – the faces shining as the sun, the golden girdles, the myriads of angels – but the combination with elements specifically stemming from Revelation seem to point to a borrowing from that source.

Still another Christian text, the *Apocalypse of Peter*, held to be Scripture by Clement of Alexandria and the Muratorian Canon but later dismissed as apocryphal, has strongly influenced the *Apocalypse of Paul*. It is generally dated to the early second century and describes a vision granted to the Apostles, in particular to Peter, showing the rewards of their brethren in the next world, either in Paradise or Hell. It shares many significant items with the *Apocalypse of Paul*, such as the punishment of sinners and mention of the baptism 'in the field of Akrosja (Acherusia)' (14; cf. *Paul* 22–3: the Acherusian Lake).[36] We will return to it shortly.

One general question regarding these literary precedents remains. Even if there are many Jewish traditions detectable in the *Apocalypse of Paul*, are they not to be explained as having reached our author via the books of the New Testament and other Christian writings considerably older than our *Apocalypse*? After all, Jewish matters are overwhelmingly present in early Christian literature. In a sense, this is the case. Thus, the myriads of angels we traced back to Daniel, *1 Enoch*, and the *Apocalypse of Zephaniah* are also found in Revelation 5:11, and many more examples could be cited. On the other hand, numerous Jewish elements discussed are absent from Christian texts earlier than the *Apocalypse of Paul*, or else they resemble more the corresponding elements in *Paul* than those in older Christian texts. Considering, as we have shown, that much of this material stems from outside the Old Testament, we can justifiably conclude that the *Apocalypse of Paul* is one of those texts that transmit extra-biblical Jewish material to the Christian world not only through the New Testament but also while bypassing it.

Leaving strictly literary topics, we must add to the dossier of the *Apocalypse*'s Christian character the fact that it often reflects a contemporary Christian environment. Hence the allusion to ascetics in c. 9. They are 'those who have renounced this world for the sake of your holy name, wandering as pilgrims in the caves of the rocks, and weeping every hour in which they inhabit the earth, and hungering and thirsting because of your name, with their loins girded, having in their hands the incense of their hearts, and praying and blessing every hour, and restraining and overcoming themselves, weeping and wailing above

36 See Himmelfarb (n. 28) 140–7. She points out the possibility that the *Apocalypse of Paul* may have borrowed these items from similar works lost to us, ibid. 6–7, 133–4, 142–4, 169–70.

the rest that inhabit the earth.' These seem to be hermits, but we also find monastic communities. In c. 30 monks are criticised for nodding while singing Alleluia, although senile monks are exculpated; in c. 39 there are terrible punishments for those breaking their fast before the appointed hour, and c. 40 brings monastic hospitality into view. It reads: 'These are they who seemed to renounce the world, putting on our garb ['our', that is, of the angels, the monastic habit being the angelic garment],[37] but the impediments of the world made them wretched, so that they did not maintain a single Agape, and they did not pity widows and orphans; they did not receive the stranger and the pilgrim, nor did they offer an oblation and they did not show mercy to their neighbour'. There are also references to what we might call parish life, such as celebration of the Eucharist (cc. 29, 31, 37), unworthy priests, bishops, deacons, and readers (cc. 34–7). Even dogmatic elements have found their way into our apocalypse. For example, in c. 41, those are denounced 'who do not confess that Christ has come in the flesh and that the Virgin Mary brought him forth' and 'who say that the bread and cup of the Eucharist of blessing are not the body and blood of Christ'. C. 42 further mentions 'those who say that Christ did not rise from the dead and that this flesh will not rise again'.

THE APOCALYPSE OF PAUL AS A SOURCE FOR LATER LITERATURE

The *Apocalypse of Paul* has suffered the lot of so many apocryphal works. It was rejected by leading Church figures, but remained in use in monastic and perhaps other circles. Augustine opposed it, if only because it describes at length what was called in 2 Corinthians 12:4 'things which must not and cannot be put into human language',[38] and the Gelasian Decree mentions it under works not to be read by the faithful. On the other hand, 'the anonymous author of that important collection of monastic rules called *Regula Magistri* ... cites it once by name and borrows many particulars from it, especially from its account of the heavenly Land of Promise', while Caesarius of Arles, 'in warning against the intrusions of worldliness into the lives of monks and nuns, quotes a sentence from it again and again, as if from Scripture: *impedimenta mundi fecerunt eos miseros*' (cc. 10 and 40).[39] Later texts seldom mention our apocalypse by name, but no less an author than Dante seems to speak of it when, at the beginning of the second Canto of his *Inferno* (2.32), he evokes earlier descriptions of a visit to the nether world with the words *Io non Enea, io non Paolo sono*, 'I am neither Aeneas nor Paul'. Indeed, 'the Apocalypse of Paul', J. K. Elliott remarks, 'more than any other of the apocryphal apocalypses was responsible for the spread of many of the popular ideas of Heaven and Hell throughout Christianity and especially in the Western church of the Middle Ages.'[40] The literary history of the works influenced by our apocryphon has been examined in a number of substantial studies in recent times.[41] Fros was able to collect up to 112 vision texts, many of them indebted directly or indirectly to our *Apocalypse*.[42] However, we will not rehearse or summarise them here.

Instead we will end by discussing one general problem. It was observed above that our apocalypse uses the Book of Revelation a number of times. However, what is striking when comparing these works is the absence in the *Apocalypse of Paul* of an awareness of the end of time, whereas Revelation's very first verse assures us that it concerns 'what must soon take place'. To use the categories of later theology, for Revelation the judgement is the General Judgement at the end of time (thought to be quite near), but for the *Apocalypse of Paul* the judgement is the judgement on each individual soul immediately on its separation from the body. Much of the impact of the *Apocalypse of Paul* can be explained from the image it paints of the condition of the dead, an image of much more practical importance than the idea of Christ's Second Coming at the end of time. Certainly, the author of our apocalypse is not the inventor of the new outlook. Both views are represented in the New Testament. On the one hand, Matthew 25:31–46 offers the standard expression of the view that the rewards will be granted during the Last Judgement – the sinners going away to eternal punishment and the virtuous to eternal life. The same view is taken in Revelation 20:11–21:8. On the other hand, Luke's gospel offers at least two passages which suppose a repayment directly after each individual's death: there is the parable of Dives and Lazarus in 16:19–31 and the story of the good thief in 23:42–43.

37 Cf. G. W. H. Lampe, *A Patristic Greek Lexicon* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1961–1968) s.v. ἀγγελικός B 7; S. Frank OFM, *'Αγγελικὸς βίος: Begriffsanalytische und begriffsgeschichtliche Untersuchung zum „engelgleichen Leben" im frühen Mönchtum* (Beiträge zur Geschichte des alten Mönchtums und des Benediktinerordens 26; Münster Westfalen: Aschendorffsche Verlagsbuchhandlung, 1964), 98–100. 38 Augustine *Tractate on John* 98.8 (CCSL 36,581). 39 Silverstein and Hilhorst (n. 3) 12.

40 Elliott (n. 3) 616. 41 M. McNamara, M.S.C., *The Apocrypha in the Irish Church* (Dublin: Dublin Institute for Advanced Studies, 1984 (= 1975)), 105–13; C. Zaleski, *Otherworld Journeys: Accounts of Near-Death Experience in Medieval and Modern Times* (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1987); M. P. Ciccarese, *Visioni dell'aldilà in Occidente. Fonti modelli testi* (Biblioteca Patristica 8; Florence: Nardini Editore, 1987); E. Gardiner, *Medieval Visions of Heaven and Hell: A Sourcebook* (Garland Medieval Bibliographies 11; Garland Reference Library of the Humanities 1256; New York and London: Garland Publishing, Inc., 1993); C. D. Wright, *The Irish Tradition in Old English Literature* (Cambridge Studies in Anglo-Saxon England 6; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 106–74; C. Carozzi, *Le voyage de l'âme dans l'Au-delà d'après la littérature latine (V^e-XIII^e siècle)* (Collection de l'École Française de Rome 189; Rome: École Française de Rome, Palais Farnèse, 1994); R. Easting, *Visions of the Other World in Middle English* (Annotated Bibliographies of Old and Middle English Literature 3; Cambridge: D. S. Brewer, 1997), 28–42. 42 H. Fros, 'Visionum medii aevi latini repertorium' in W. Verbeke, D. Verhelst and A. Welkenhuysen (eds.), *The Use and Abuse of Eschatology in the Middle Ages* (Mediaevalia Lovaniensia 1.15; Leuven: Leuven University Press, 1988), 481–98.

In this connection we must return to the *Apocalypse of Peter*. Here the situation is rather curious. Two versions of the text have come down to us, one preserved in Ethiopic and another, much more fragmentary, in Greek. Both deal with judgement, but whereas the Ethiopic version clings firmly to judgement at the end of time, the Greek fragment has all the appearance of being a revision made to replace the idea of a future General Judgement with a present-day particular one. The version of the *Apocalypse of Peter* represented by the Ethiopic text was, as generally agreed, composed in the first half of the second century.[43] But since it can be shown that the version represented by the Greek fragment echoes in the *Acts of Thomas* (55–7),[44] that version was quite possibly also made in the second century. In its turn, the *Apocalypse of Paul* heavily used this new version of the *Apocalypse of Peter*, and in doing so outshone its predecessor to such an extent as to supplant it completely. What had developed during a gradual process of reorientation – the replacement of the General Judgement at the end of time by a particular judgement for each human being at his or her death – apparently found classic expression in the *Apocalypse of Paul*. This, it would appear, explains its twelve centuries of success in the Christian world.[45]

43 Cf. Elliott (n. 3) 595. D. D. Buchholz, *Your Eyes Will Be Opened: A Study of the Greek (Ethiopic) Apocalypsè of Peter* (Society of Biblical Literature, Dissertation Series 97; Atlanta, Georgia: Scholars Press, 1988), 398–424, 428–9, argues for a date sometime during the Bar Kochba rebellion. 44 Cf. Buchholz (n. 44) 53–4. Again, Himmelfarb (n. 28) 12–13, 132–3 is sceptical as regards direct literary dependence. The *Acts of Thomas* may be dated between A.D. 220 and 240, cf. J. N. Bremmer, '*The Acts of Thomas*: Place, Date and Women', in id. (ed.), *The Apocryphal Acts of Thomas* (Studies on Early Christian Apocrypha 6; Leuven: Peeters, 2001), 74–90 at 77. 45 I am grateful to Jacques van Ruiten and Eibert Tigchelaar for stimulating comments on an earlier draft of this paper.

Apocalyptic and eschatological texts in Irish literature: oriental connections?

Martin McNamara

INTRODUCTION

M. R. James opens an essay on Irish Apocrypha in 1919[1] with the words: 'The Transmission of apocryphal writings, otherwise unknown, in the Irish vernacular would be a proper subject for a small monograph. That I cannot attempt; but I should like to put on record a contribution to it'. In this essay James studies the two Irish writings, the *Evernew Tongue* and the *Vision of Adamnán*, together with an examination of a Karlsruhe fragment of the description of the seven heavens.

The two texts studied by James in this essay belong to the subject proper of this present paper, namely apocalyptic and eschatological literature. This branch of learning would be a proper subject for a rather large monograph. And such a volume is now in the process of being prepared. In conjunction with AELAC (Association pour l'Étude de la Littérature Apocryphe Chrétienne) the Publications Committee of the Irish Biblical Association is involved in the preparation of critical editions of the New Testament Apocrypha as known in Irish tradition. The volumes will be published by Brepols, in the Series *Corpus Christianorum Series Apocryphorum*. Work has already been completed on the first volume, *Irish Infancy Narratives*, which after rather intense research over ten years or so has been published in the spring of 2002. The second volume in the series is to contain Irish apocalyptic and eschatological texts.

For this volume it will be necessary to define what is meant by the terms apocalyptic and eschatological in this context. It will also be required that reasons be given why each of the items we wish to include should be so regarded.

What constitutes an apocryphon, an apocryphal writing, would normally also require definition in collections of New Testament apocrypha. Does it require that the non-canonical work be attributed to some New Testament or biblical personage and furthermore have been composed by a given time, say the fourth century at the latest? Some publishing houses follow such a principle for inclusion of a work in their collections of New Testament Apocrypha. Not so AELAC, which works on a different understanding of Christian apocryphal literature.

1 M. R. James, 'Irish Apocrypha', *Journal of Theological Studies* 20 (1919), 9–16.

Terminology with regard to apocalyptic literature has changed and developed over recent decades. The designation derives from the Revelation (Apocalypse) of John, which opens with the words: 'The revelation (*apokalypsis*) of Jesus Christ, which God gave him to show his servants what must soon take place; and he made (it) known by sending through his servant John who testified to the word of God and to the testimony of Jesus Christ, (even) all that he saw' (Rev 1:1–2). The revelation comes from God through Jesus Christ and/or through an angel. This is the essential element of an apocalypse: revelation from God through an intermediary, generally about things that are to happen soon. This holds in the first instance for the Revelation of John. Part of the biblical book of Daniel is very similar to the Revelation of John, but is not called a revelation, an apocalypse. Much non-canonical Jewish literature is also similar, for instance the Enochic literature. The substantive 'apocalyptic' has been coined by scholars to designate this genre of Jewish literature. The world of ideas in which this genre originated and developed is described as apocalypticism. That there is an apocalypse in the New Testament is evident from the *Revelation* of John. Because of the genre other sections of the New Testament are referred to as apocalypses (for instance Mark 13 and parallels; portions of 1 and 2 Thessalonians). The situation becomes more complicated with regard to Early Christian literature. Some New Testament apocrypha can clearly be designated as apocalypses or belonging to apocalyptic literature, and bear, or are given, the title 'apocalypse' (Revelation). With regard to other such writings, for instance the *Shepherd of Hermas*, it is doubtful, and debated, whether they can be classed as belonging to apocalyptic.[2] In recent usage the terms apocalypse, apocalyptic, apocalypticism have been expanded to include writings of the patristic, medieval and modern periods.[3]

With regard to what may be included in a volume under the heading 'apocalyptic' we may safely follow the guide given by Professor Adela Yarbro Collins concerning the biblical evidence. She writes:[4]

> Two kinds of apocalyptic themes appear in biblical literature. One type is intrinsic to the genre 'apocalypse,' whose themes include the idea of revelation and narratives about the reception of revelation through dreams, visions, hearing voices, or taking journeys to heaven and other normally inaccessible places. They also include the idea of the fulfillment of history, for example, in a final, universal, peaceful, prosperous human community or in the destruction of the world and a new creation, including the resurrection of the dead. The other type is less closely related to the genre 'apocalypse,' but includes themes that cohere with the first group, such as the combat myth and the Antichrist.

2 See Carolyn Osiek, *The Shepherd of Hermas. A Commentary* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1999), 10–12. 3 See B. McGinn, *Apocalypticism in the Western Tradition* (Aldershot: Variorum Collected Studies Series, 1994); B. McGinn, *Visions of the End: Apocalyptic Tradition in the Middle Ages* (New York-Chichester: Columbia University Press, 1979; 1998 reprint). 4 Adela Yarbro Collins, 'Apocalyptic Themes in Biblical Literature', *Interpretation* 53 (1999), 117–30: 117. 5 J. H. Charlesworth, with J. R. Mueller, *The New Testament Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha: a Guide to Publications, with Excursuses on Apocalypses* (ATLA Bibliography Series 17; Metuchen, N.J. and London: The American Theological Library Association, 1987), p. 36. 6 Charlesworth, *New Testament Apocrypha*, p. 37. 7 M. McNamara, *The Apocrypha in the Irish Church* (Dublin: Dublin Institute for Advanced Studies, 1975; reprint with corrections 1984); hereafter cited as McNamara, *The Apocrypha*.

Among points made in modern writing on the subject two may be mentioned. One is that the continuum between early Christian apocalypses and those of the medieval period should not be lost sight of. In the words of J. H. Charlesworth: 'From the late fourth century until the tenth century, there is a continuum of *activity* that either produced new apocalypses or so thoroughly reworked earlier traditions or documents that they are now seen as new compilations'.[5] Charlesworth himself lists eight non-canonical works composed between the first and second centuries which may be considered apocalypses (among them the Apocalypse of Paul), and thirteen from the period of the fourth-fifth to the 10th centuries (among which are the *Apocalypse of Thomas, 1 Revelation of John* [the Apocryphal Apocalypse of John]) and the *Questions of Ezra*). Even though some of these (for instance the *Questions of Ezra*) are not precisely apocalypses, they are included because they evolve out of apocalypses.[6]

Most of the texts to be examined under the heading of 'apocalyptic and eschatological' have been listed, together with summary examination, by the present writer in *The Apocrypha in the Irish Church* (1975, reprint 1984).[7] The Irish texts date from the tenth to the fifteenth century, with some of them copied in manuscripts as late as the nineteenth century.

Two points regarding methodology need to be borne in mind with regard to these Irish texts. The first concerns the date of translation into Irish of Latin texts and the date the original reached Ireland. Irish texts composed in the tenth century or later, or translated into Irish at those dates, may well be dependent on earlier originals or translated from Latin texts no longer extant. The presence of Latin sentences or passages in some of these texts indicate that this was so. The central Irish texts of the Irish Infancy Narrative, already referred to, represent translations made into Middle Irish or Early Modern Irish of the twelfth to the early fifteenth century. There is, however, clear evidence that as regards content the form of the apocryphal Infancy Narrative they carry is no later than the year 800. The same may hold for other apocryphal items of an apocalyptic nature as well. However, in this particular area creativity is a noted feature in the transmission of these works, and we have also to reckon with the possibility of later Irish texts, dependent on, but not direct translations of, earlier originals. These are factors to be reckoned with in our study of the material.

Another matter to be borne in mind (and one of particular interest in the context of the Conference, the papers of which are now being published) is the assertion often made that certain of these Irish texts represent (or are translations of) oriental originals otherwise unknown. The truth or the likelihood of any such assumption must be examined with regard to each individual text. This is also true for presumed dependence on known Jewish or early Christian apocrypha, such as the *Book of Enoch* or the *Visio Pauli*. The evidence for the use of the Latin text of such a book in early Ireland has to be examined. If dependence there be, this might well be on traditions preserved in the book in question but transmitted also elsewhere, dependence on a similar work, or on traditions ultimately deriving from a particular eastern book, but through later developed forms of the tradition. The question of dependence of this nature must be examined on a case by case basis.

THE BOOK OF ENOCH AND THE BOOK OF JUBILEES

The Book of Enoch

Occasionally the opinion is expressed that a particular Irish text, or tradition, is dependent on the *Book of Enoch* or even uses the *Book of Enoch*, or in a more general way that the Enochic tradition has considerably influenced Irish tradition.[8] A desideratum in this field is the evidence for or against the availability of a Latin translation of the book. The *Book of Enoch* was most probably composed in Aramaic. It was translated into Greek. The best-known translation in modern times was the Ethiopic, first taken to Europe from Ethiopia in the eighteenth century by James Bruce.[9]

What appears to be a Latin translation of Enoch 106:1–18 was identified by M. R. James in 1893 in a ninth-century manuscript written in Brittany, now in the British Library manuscript BL Royal 5.E.XIII, fol. 79v.80r. James published the text that same year.[10] In his 1906 edition of the Ethiopic Book of Enoch R. H. Charles takes notes of James's work and comments that 'this [BL] MS. seems to point to a Latin translation of Enoch, and shows no sign of being an excerpt from a collection of excerpts'.[11] Charles takes up the question again in 1913 in volume 2 of *The Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha of the Old Testament in English*.[12] He reproduces the Latin text opposite his translation of the Ethiopic.[13] In his introduction to the text Charles notes that the Latin fragment constitutes

8 See, for instance, above p. 14, footnote 24. 9 See above, in the foreword, p. ix. 10 M. R. James, *Apocrypha Anecdota* (Texts and Studies, II, 3, Cambridge 1893), 146–150. 11 R. H. Charles, *The Ethiopic Book of Enoch* (Anecdota Oxoniensia, Semitic Series, part II) (Oxford, 1906), 219–222. 12 R. H. Charles (ed.), *The Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha of the Old Testament in English*, vol. 2. *Pseudepigrapha* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1913; reprint 1963). 13 Charles, *Pseudepigrapha*, 278–79.

a very imperfect reproduction of 106:1–18, but goes on to repeat his earlier statements that the BL manuscript seems to point to a Latin translation of Enoch, and shows no signs of being an excerpt from a collection of excerpts.[14]

In his edition of the Qumran Aramaic fragments of Enoch[15] J. T. Milik takes up the question of the Latin text published by M. R. James, which he describes as containing a summary of Enoch 106:1–18. In his view this text does not seem to be derived from a Latin translation, complete or incomplete, of the books of Enoch. He notes that '[t]he extract from the Book of Enoch is followed ... by three other passages, and ... all four alike refer to great sins of great sinners and their great punishments. ... We have here probably some extracts from a chronicle or from a collection of Exempla or of Testimonia'.[16] In conclusion he says that there is no irrefutable evidence for the existence of a Latin version of the Enochic writings. Nevertheless, he continues, the books of Enoch were well known indirectly in the Christian West, and traces of them are found both in patristic and medieval literature and in iconography.[17] The Latin text of the British Library manuscript immediately following on that which interests us has been edited by P. Petitmengin.[18] Petitmengin notes[19] that this Latin text is far removed from the Ethiopian, and it is not at all clear that there is question of an extract from a translation of the full work. Given this evidence one can only agree with Milik that it is far from clear that there ever was a Latin translation of the Book of Enoch. It remains to be determined to what extent Western tradition was (indirectly) influenced by Enochic tradition, and through which channels this influence was effected.

The Book of Jubilees

A Latin translation of about one fourth of the *Book of Jubilees* (under the name *Lepte Genesis*), which has 50 chapters has survived (Jubilees chapters 13,10–21; 15,20–49,22). The Latin translation was made in the mid-fifth century, and the surviving Latin text was written in the sixth century. It has been preserved in MS Milan, Ambrosiana C 73 inf. (sixth cent.), which came from the Scriptorium of Bobbio, a monastery founded in 612 by the Irish monk Columbanus (died 614) and which retained links with Ireland.[20]

We cannot say if this work was known in Ireland, but it possibly was. In an essay in 1954 B. Bischoff noted that it is cited twice in for MS Amb. M. 79 sup.

14 Charles, *Pseudepigrapha*, 167. 15 J. T. Milik, *The Books of Enoch. Aramaic Fragments from Qumran Cave 4* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1976), 80–81 (with edition of text). 16 Milik, *The Books of Enoch*, 80–81. 17 Milik, *The Books of Enoch*, 81. 18 Pierre Petitmengin, 'La compilation 'De uindictis magnis magnorum peccatorum' in *Philologia Sacra. Festschrift H. J. Frede & W. Thiele*, II (Freiburg: Herder, 1993), 622–638, with reference for an overview of the problems to R. Mellinkoff, 'Cain's Monstrous progeny in Beowulf. Part I, Noachic Tradition', *Anglo-Saxon England* 8 (1979), 143–162, at 160. 19 Petitmengin, 'La compilation', p. 623, n. 7. 20 Incipit and explicit: F. Stegmüller, *Repertorium Biblicum Medii Aevi* 1 (Madrid: Conesejo Superior de Investigaciones Cientificas: [1940, MCMXL, but

(saec. XI), with glosses from Theodore's school of Canterbury.[21] These glosses have since been edited by B. Bischoff and M. Lapidge.[22] In the work known as the first commentary on the Pentateuch (Pent1, item 44) commenting on Gen 3:8 the commentator says that according to Chrysostom Adam was created at the third hour, sinned at the sixth hour and was cast out of paradise at the ninth hour.[23] The Canterbury commentator goes on to say that other commentators say that Adam spent seven years less forty days in Paradise 'as it says in *Little Genesis*' (*ut in Leptigeneseos dicit*). For this information we may refer to *Jubilees* 3,9 and 15. Again on Gen 4:23, on the words of Lamech 'I have slain a man' (Pent1, item 54) the commentator refers to *Leptigeneseos* by name, remarking that many commentators, as *Little Genesis* (*ut in Leptigeneseos dixit*), say that the man killed was Cain.[24] The reference may be to *Jubilees* 4,31–33, which speaks of the death of Cain, but by the stones of a falling house rather than by Lamech. From the evidence of the glosses it is clear to the editors that the text of the *Book of Jubilees* was known in some form to the Canterbury Commentator;[25] but it is impossible to say whether it was with the Greek or Latin translation that the Commentator was familiar.[26]

This Latin manuscript pre-dates the foundation of the monastery of Bobbio. The provenance of this Latin translation of *Jubilees* is evidence of an interest in apocryphal texts in the monastery of Bobbio. It is possible that the Library of Bobbio had many more apocryphal works.

THE *VISIO SANCTI PAULI* IN IRELAND AND RELATED TEXTS

The only early apocryphal apocalyptic text of which we have clear evidence of its use in Ireland is the *Visio Pauli*. The original Greek *Apocalypse of Paul* (first

1950), # 77,3. Edition: M. A. Ceriani, *Monumenta Sacra et Profana* I, 1 (1861), 15–54; H. Rönsch, *Das Buch der Jubiläen oder Die Kleine Genesis* (Leipzig, Fues's Verlag (R. Reisland), 1874, reprint, Amsterdam: Rodopi, 1970, 1874), 10–94; R. H. Charles, *The Ethiopic Version of the Hebrew Book of Jubilees* (Oxford: Claredon Press, 1895). 21 B. Bischoff, 'Wendepunkte in der Geschichte der lateinischen Exegese im Frühmitterlater', *Sacris Erudiri* 6 (1954), 189–281: 193; reproduced in revised form in B. Bischoff, *Milltelarterliche Studien. Ausgewählte Aufsätze zur Schrictkunde und Literaturegeschichte* I, vol. 1 (Stuttgart: Hiersemann, 1966), 205–273: 209; English translation by Colm O'Grady in 'Turning Points in the History of Latin Exegesis in the Early Middle Ages' *Biblical Studies. The Medieval Irish Contribution*, ed. M. McNamara (*Proceedings of the Irish Biblical Association* 1, 1976), 73–160: 77. 22 B. Bischoff and M. Lapidge (eds.), *Biblical Commentaries from the Canterbury School of Theodore and Hadrian* (Cambridge Studies in Anglo-Saxon England 10) (Cambridge: University Press, 1994). 23 Bischoff and Lapidge, *Biblical Commentaries*, 310–311, with commentary 444–45. The editors have failed to find the precise text in Chrysostom's writings. It may be from Severin of Gabala or some other work, such as the Syriac *The Book of the Cave of Treasures*. 24 Bischoff and Lapidge, *Biblical Commentaries*, 314–315; commentary 446. 25 Bischoff and Lapidge, *Biblical Commentaries*, 200. 26 Bischoff and Lapidge, *Biblical Commentaries*, 445.

edition, so to speak) was composed in Egypt, and in the third century if not slightly earlier. A copy of the early Greek edition was brought to Asia Minor from which an expanded text was made in the early fifth century. The Western tradition of the work descends from a Late Latin translation of the Greek in its second edition.[27] The best witness to the second edition of the Greek text is the fuller Latin version, extant in a manuscript in the Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris (Nouv. acq. lat. 1631; ninth century). The Latin translation must have been made soon after the Greek original. It was used in the *Regula Magistri*, written in Italy, south-east of Rome *c.*500–525. It was also known to Benedict of Nursia (*c.*480–*c.*550), and in France by Caesarius of Arles (*c.*470–550). The *Visio* was extremely influential in the West. In the words of Theodore Silverstein, the *Visio* became 'one of the chief formative elements in the developments of the later legends of Heaven and Hell which culminated in the Divina Commedia of Dante'.[28] It is known to have influenced the *Vision of St Patrick's Purgatory*, and also the *Vision of Adamnán*, the *Visio Tnugdali*, and probably other Irish texts besides.

The *Visio Pauli* is a lengthy work, with fifty-one chapters, which are generally grouped in seven sections according to subject matter. An indication of its popularity in the Latin West is that together with the long versions eleven recensions (or redactions as they are generally referred to) are known, in which much of the material of the long versions is omitted. Apart from the distinctive Redaction VI, of which two ninth-century manuscripts are known, and Redaction XI extant in one ninth/tenth-century manuscript, the earliest manuscripts of the redactions are from the eleventh century. With regard to its transmission in Ireland it would be desirable to ascertain what evidence there is for its use there from earlier times, and also whether the full recension was known.[29] Answers to such questions remain for future research. In the meantime we can only survey the evidence with regard to the text of the *Visio* itself and the compositions apparently dependent on it.

Recension IV and Irish translation of the Visio Pauli

Two Irish translations of the *Visio Pauli* are known in manuscripts in the Royal Irish Academy (24 P 25 [475; known as *Leabhar Chloinne Suibhne*] and 23 O 48 [476; *Liber Flavus Fergusiorum*]. The former text is headed: 'The Vision of Paul

27 See Theodore Silverstein and Anthony Hilhorst, *Apocalypse of Paul. A New Critical Edition of Three Long Latin Versions* (Cahiers d'Orientalisme 21) (Geneva: Patrick Cramer Éditeur, 1997), 11–12. 28 Th. Silverstein, *Visio Sancti Pauli: The History of the Apocalypse in Latin together with Nine Texts* (Studies and Documents 4; London: 1935), 3. See also Peter Dinzelbacher, 'Die Verbreitung der apokryphen 'Visio S. Pauli' im mittelalterlichen Europa', *Mittellateinisches Jahrbuch* 27 (1992), 77–90. On the *Visio* see also M. McNamara, *The Apocrypha*, # 91 (pp. 105–06). 29 There is evidence that the long Latin version was known in England to Aldhelm (late seventh century) and to Aelfric (*c.*1000); see Charles D. Wright, *The Irish Tradition in Old English Literature* (Cambridge Studies in Anglo-Saxon England; Cambridge: University Press), 108. We can thus presume that it was known also in Ireland.

(*Aisling Po[il]*. The Vision of Paul concerning the pains of Hell. *Vissio Pauli de penis inferni per De[i] licentiam*'. Despite minor differences, both texts seem to represent the same recension. And this is Redaction IV of the Latin recensions, which recounts Paul's vision of Hell and the respite granted to the damned on Sunday through Paul's petition and that of the archangel Michael. It corresponds to chapters 31–44 of the long text.[30] Silverstein notes that Redaction IV was the version which was most frequently translated into the vernaculars and through which the *Visio Pauli* chiefly left its mark on the general body of vision literature of the Middle Ages.[31] He also notes that there is evidence for a special currency in England, and perhaps even for its origins there.[32] R. Willard is of the opinion that this Redaction must have been accomplished in the British Isles under Celtic influence, and that it was surely through insular channels that certain of the interpretations peculiar to this redaction became incorporated into the vision.[33]

Irish tradition and Redaction VI of the Visio Pauli

Redaction VI of the *Visio Pauli* is represented by the two codices Vatican Library, Codex Palatinus Latinus 216 (fol. 126v) of the ninth-tenth century and Codex 682 of St Gall, Stiftsbibliothek (pp. 193–204), of the ninth century.[34] This redaction represents a complete rewriting of the *Visio*. As Silverstein notes, not only has it interpolations that are easily isolated from the older materials, but the original incidents themselves are in general merely starting-points from elaborations which entirely change their appearances and meaning.[35] In the opinion of the same scholar, some light may be shed on many of the important passages by occasional reference to the *Apocalypse of Peter*, and more remarkably, to descriptions of Hell in a group of early Irish revelations, for instance the Visions of Laisrén and Adamnán, the *Voyage of Uí Chorra* and the Celtic version of the *Transitus Mariae*. After his study of the various interpolations of Redaction VI in the light of this literature[36] Silverstein concludes that the similarities between the Irish Visions and this recension are both numerous and obvious, even though their significance is a matter for conjecture. Silverstein's position is that the relationship is not direct on either side; rather are the Irish texts and Redaction VI independent debtors to a third work no longer extant.[37]

30 For recension IV and the Irish texts see McNamara, *The Apocrypha* # 91A (pp. 106–07); Silverstein. *Visio Sancti Pauli*, 52–56; English translation of the *Leabhar Chloinne Suibhne* text by M. Herbert, in M. Herbert and M. McNamara, *Irish Biblical Apocrypha*. Selected Texts in Translation (Edinburgh: T&T Clarke, 1989) (hereafter cited as *Irish Biblical Apocrypha*), 132–36 (# 25). 31 Silverstein, *Visio Sancti Pauli*, 52. 32 Theodore Silverstein, 'The Vision of Saint Paul: New Links and Patterns in the Western Tradition', *Archives d'histoire doctrinale et littéraires du moyen âge* 34 (1959), 199–248: 212. 33 R. Willard, 'The Latin Texts of the Three Utterances of the Soul', *Speculum* 12 (1937), 147–66: 157. See also Wright, *The Irish Tradition*, 109. 34 Published by Silverstein, *Visio Sancti Pauli*, 215–18. 35 Silverstein, *Visio Sancti Pauli*, 82. 36 Silverstein, *Visio Sancti Pauli*, 82–89. 37 Silverstein, *Visio Sancti Pauli*, 89–90.

Silverstein's observations on Redaction VI have been noted and endorsed by C. D. Wright and David Dumville.[38] Dumville has examined its influence on *Fís Adamnáin* and concludes that Redaction VI 'was composed, if not in Ireland, at any rate in an Irish continental centre retaining the closest links with the home culture'.[39]

Irish tradition and Redaction XI of the Visio Pauli

In 1988 M. E. Dwyer published a further abbreviated recension of the *Visio Pauli* now recognised as Redaction XI, identified in the ninth-century Vatican Codex Palatinus latinus 220 (fol. 56r-60r). This redaction, she notes, consists of extracts from a Long Latin 1 version of the *Visio Pauli* and interpolated material. It is notable for two major reasons at least: (1) it is the only medieval Latin redaction to make substantial use of the first visit to Paradise, redaction VI making only very brief use of this at the beginning, and the other redactions not using it at all; (2) some of its modifications and interpolated material may be connected to significant modifications and interpolations in the later medieval Latin reductions, the most notable of the interpolations being the sinners hanging from the fiery trees.[40] Dwyer ends her essay noting that 'Redaction XI and Redaction VI stand apart from the main body of the medieval Latin redactions. They are unique in their connection to the Long Latin version, and their authors exercise much more freedom in their use of the Long Latin original. Both are extant in manuscripts of the ninth century, and both have Irish or Anglo-Saxon connections'.[41] Charles D. Wright has argued for an insular, probably Irish, origin of Redaction XI.[42] Wright notes that the Vatican manuscript carrying this manuscript has other material regarded as Hiberno-Latin or connected with Irish tradition, for instance the homilies *In nomine Dei summi* edited by R. E. McNally, the interpolated text of the Apocalypse of Thomas, an apocryphon known in Ireland and translated in Anglo-Saxon England. He also believes that Recension XI has certain linguistic features which are consistent with an Irish origin. In his view, however, the most compelling internal evidence for an Irish connection is the quotation of verses 4–6 of the *Te Deum* according to the peculiar Irish textual tradition of this hymn. The cumulative weight of the evidence, in Wright's opinion, suggests that Redaction XI was compiled by an Irish monk or nun on the Continent.[43]

A peculiar Irish text of the Visio Pauli

In a number of manuscripts we have a peculiar Irish text of what appears to be the *Visio Pauli*.[44] The text begins with the remark that once while in Smyrna

38 C. D. Wright, *The Irish Tradition*, 110; D. Dumville, 'Towards an Interpretation of *Fís Adamnán*', *Studia Celtica* 12/13 (1977–8), 62–77. 39 Dumville, 'Towards an Interpretation', 70. 40 M. E. Dwyer, 'An Unstudied Redaction of the *Visio Pauli*', *Manuscripta* 32 (1988), 121–138: 121. 41 Dwyer, 'An Unstudied Redaction', 136. 42 C. D. Wright, 'Some Evidence for the Irish Origin of Redaction XI of the *Visio Pauli*', *Manuscripta* 34 (1990), 33–44; also Wright, *The Irish Tradition*, 111–13. 43 Wright, *The Irish Tradition*, 111–13. 44 For manuscripts, edition

Paul asked to have a vision of the pains of Hell. While he was at prayer, however, a youth came to him asking him to confirm the faith of a man who was at the point of death. The text goes on to narrate 'the manner wherein the soul departs from the body – as St Bernard, one of the arch-doctors of the Trinity, says'. After this there follows a dialogue between the soul and the body. We then return to Paul's original request. An Angel, called Michael, took Paul to the brink of a valley and showed him Hell and the various kinds of damned punished there in different ways: the haughty and proud; the adulterous; the greedy and the envious; the gluttonous; those who give themselves to anger, to disobedience and to despair; the slothful, those who remain away from Mass, from sermons and the service of God. Finally, there is a brief description of Paul's vision to heaven.

The text is obviously dependent on the *Vision of Paul*, even though no exact Latin original of it has as yet been found. This particular piece may be composite, with influences from the Irish texts on the 'Bringing Forth of the Soul' and other related apocrypha as well.

Heaven, Paradise, the Land of Promise in the Visio Pauli and Irish tradition

Chapters 19–30 of the *Visio Pauli* recount Paul's vision of Paradise. This is followed (cc. 31–34) by the apostle's visit to Hell (cc. 31–44), which is immediately followed by an account of Paul's second vision of Paradise (cc. 45–51). The Paradise in this second visit is the Paradise of Genesis 2–3, and quite different from that of the first visit. Since the geography of the heavenly realms and the terminology used may help in the study of later Irish visions and journeys (otherworld and others) I here treat of them in some detail.

The angel takes Paul into the third heaven and sets him at the door of a gate through which the righteous enter (chap. 19). When Pail entered within the gate of paradise he met Enoch and Elias. Paradise here seems to be identified with heaven, the third heaven, or located within it. The angel then brought Paul down from the third heaven, and led him into the second heaven, and again led him to the firmament and from the firmament he led him to the gates of heaven. The text goes on to say that the beginning of the foundation thereof was upon the river that waters the earth. To his question as to the identity of the river of water, the angel replied that it was the ocean (chap. 21). The text goes on to say (with Paul as speaker):[45]

> And suddenly I went out of heaven, and I understood that it is the light of heaven which lightens all the earth. For the land there is seven times brighter than silver. And I said, 'Lord, what is this place?' And he said to me, 'This is the land of promise [*terra repromissionis*]. Have you never heard what is written: Blessed are the meek for they shall inherit the earth

and translation see McNamara, *The Apocrypha*, 108–09 (# 91C). 45 In the translation of J. K. Elliott, *The Apocryphal New Testament* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1993), 628–29.

> [*terram*]?[Mat 5:4). The souls of the just, when they have gone out of the body, are dismissed to this place for a while.' And I said to the angel, 'Then this land will be manifested before the time?' The angel answered and said to me, 'When Christ, whom you preach, shall come to reign, then, by the sentence of God, the first earth will be dissolved (Apoc 20:4–6; 21:1) and this land of promise will then be revealed, and it will be like dew or cloud, and then the Lord Jesus Christ, the King Eternal, will be manifested and will come with all his saints to dwell in it, and he will reign over them a thousand years (Apoc 20:4–6), and they will eat of the good things which I shall now show you.'

The description of this land of promise follows immediately in chapter 22:[46]

> And I looked around upon that land, and I saw a river flowing with milk and honey, and there were trees planted by the bank of that river, full of fruit; moreover, each single tree bore twelve fruits in the year, having various and diverse fruits; and I saw the created things which are in that place and all the work of God, and I saw there palms of twenty cubits, but others of ten cubits; and that land was seven times brighter than silver. And there were trees full of fruits from the roots to the highest branches, of ten thousand fruits of palms upon ten thousand fruits. The grape-vines had ten thousand plants. Moreover in the single vines there were ten thousand bunches and in each of these a thousand single grapes; moreover these single trees bore a thousand fruits. And I said to the angel, 'Why does each tree bear a thousand fruits?' The angel answered and said to me, 'Because the Lord God gives an abounding profusion of gifts to the worthy and because they of their own will afflicted themselves when they were placed in the world doing all things on account of his holy name.' And again I said to the angel, 'Sir, are these the only promises which the Most Holy God makes?' And he answered and said to me, 'No! There are seven times greater than these. But I say to you that when the just go out of the body they shall see the promises and the good things which God has prepared for them. Till then, they shall sigh and lament, saying, 'Have we uttered any word from our mouth to grieve our neighbour even on one day?' I asked and said again, 'Are these alone the promises of God?' And the angel answered and said to me, 'These whom you now see are the souls of the married and those who kept the chastity of their nuptials, controlling themselves. But to the virgins and those who hunger and thirst after righteousness and those who afflicted themselves for the sake of the name of God, God will give seven times greater than these, which I shall now show you.'

46 Elliott, *The Apocryphal New Testament*, 629.

After this Paul is taken to be shown the City of Christ (22, end–30).

It is worthy of note that in the *Visio*, chap. 21 the thousand year reign of Christ of Apoc 20:4–6 is understood in the literal, not in a spiritual sense as had been the tradition from Tyconius (*c.*400) onwards.

The passage on the Land of Promise may be of significance for Irish ecclesiastical learning in two ways. First of all it may have influenced both terminology (*terra repromissionis; Tír Tairngiri*) and concepts in the Irish Voyage literature. The clearest example would appear to be the *Navigatio Brendani* (cap. 1), where Bernóc is said to have found the Delightful Island (*insulam ... nomine deliciosam*) and Saint Barrind says he was encouraged as follows: 'Father, embark in the boat and let us sail westwards to the island which is called the Promised Land of the Saints (*ad insulam quae dicitur terra repromissionis sanctorum*) which God will give to those who come after us at the end of time'.[47] Later he is told that here, in this island, 'it is always day, without blinding darkness. Our Lord Jesus Christ is the light of this island' (see Apoc 21:23). Later in the *Navigatio* Barrind encourages his brothers with the words: 'You are living undoubtedly at the gate of Paradise. Near here is an island which is called the Promised Land of the Saints (*terra repromissionis sanctorum*) where night does not fall nor day end'.[48] The influence of the *Visio Pauli* may explain the rather odd quest in time of an island, the Promised Land, which will be given to the saints only at the end of time.

This is not the place to explore this particular point further. This avenue of approach through the *Visio Pauli*, however, may throw light on the quest of the Promised Land, *Tír Tairngiri*, in the *Navigatio Brendani* and in some of the other Irish voyages.

Another matter on which the *Visio Pauli* may shed some light is the geography of the location of the just in Irish visions, such as the *Vision of Adamnán* and the *Visio Tnugdali*.[49]

The bringing forth of the soul in Irish literature

In *Visio Pauli* 13 Paul addresses his accompanying angel as follows: 'I would see the souls of the righteous and the sinners as they depart out of the world'. His request is granted (chapters 13–18). In Irish literature there is a homily on the bringing forth of the soul, which while not a translation of any part of the *Visio Pauli* seems to have been influenced by it.[50]

47 Ed. C. Selmer, *Navigatio Sancti Brendani Abbatis from Early Latin Manuscripts* (Publications in Mediaeval Studies The University of Notre Dame 16; University of Notre Dame Press, 1959), 5; English translation by John J. O'Meara, *The Voyage of Saint Brendan: Journey to the Promised Land* (Dublin: The Dolmen Press, 1976), 4. 48 Ed. Selmer, *Navigatio*, 7; trans. J. J. O'Meara, *The Voyage*, 5. 49 For the problems with regard to the *Vision of Adamnán* see M. McNamara, 'Some Aspects of Early Irish Medieval Eschatology', in *Ireland and Europe in the Early Middle Ages. Learning and Literature*, P. Ní Chatháin and M. Richter (eds.) (Stuttgart: Klett-Cotta, 1996), 42–75: 71–73. 50 For the manuscripts, editions and translations of the homily, see McNamara, *The Apocrypha*, 109–10 (# 91E).

Dialogue between the soul and body

The 'Debate of the Body and the Soul' is a work which was as widely used in Europe during the Middle Ages and later as was the *Visio Pauli*. Texts of the Dialogue or Debate have survived in Latin, in Irish, Welsh, and in a number of other European vernaculars. The substance of the debate is about a hermit who saw in a dream the corpse of a sinner who had just died. In the ensuing debate the body and soul make mutual accusations on the sins committed while they were united in one person on earth.

Many traditions, both eastern (including Egyptian) and western have gone into the formation of this work, of which several different forms are known. While it is not Paul who had the vision of the debate of the soul with the body, the *Visio Pauli* has, however, influenced the work.[51]

THE IRISH TRADITION ON ANTICHRIST (IRISH ANTICHRIST LEGEND) AND THE APOCRYPHAL APOCALYPSE OF JOHN

(Fragment of) An Irish text of an Apocalypse of John

In the manuscript known as the *Liber Flavus Fergusiorum* (RIA 23.O.48 [MS. 476]), written *c.*1437–1438, we have two texts concerned with John the Beloved Disciple. A colophon describes the work as 'The Life of John the Beloved Disciple' (literally 'of John of the Breast', i.e. who reclined in Jesus' breast at the Last Supper).[52] The colophon also tells us that this Life of John was translated from Latin into Irish by Augustine Mac Raighin, most probably the Canon regular of St Augustine of that name who died in 1405. Source analysis reveals that ultimately the work depends on the *Acts of John* by Pseudo-Melitus or Pseudo-Abdias and on a tradition on John's death (or sleep) found already in St Augustine. For some of the episodes, curiously enough, the source is material attested elsewhere only in the Acts of John as found in the Oxyrhynchus Papyri, no. 850.

The beginning of text 2 is lost. This text contains two items apparently drawn from some apocryphal apocalypse of John, the Beloved Disciple. The first of these speaks of the descent of Antichrist on Mount Garganus (in Apulia, Central Italy, in the reign of Pope Gelasius I, 492–496) to harm and attack the Christians. Michael is said to have killed the dragon. We are then given a description of Michael's appearance, followed by the manner in which

51 For the manuscripts, editions and translations of the Irish texts of the work, and for bibliographical references, see McNamara, *The Apocrypha*, 110–13 (# 91F). The oldest Welsh version of the work has been edited, with English translation, by J. E. Caerwyn Williams, "Aighneas and Chuirp leis an Anam'. An Leagan is Luaithe sa Bhreatnais', in *Cothú an Dúchais. Aisti in omós don Athair Diarmuid Ó Laoghaire S.J.*, M. Mac Conmara and É. Ní Thiarnaigh (eds.) (Baile Átha Cliath [Dublin]: An Clóchomhar, 1997), 218–27. 52 For manuscript, edition and studies see M. McNamara, *The Apocrypha*, 95–98 (# 83); English translation by M. Herbert in M. Herbert and M. McNamara, *Irish Biblical Apocrypha*, 95–96.

he killed Antichrist. This ends with the words: 'And that is the evil strange tale of Antichrist up to the present, as God confirmed to me, said John, the eloquent Beloved Disciple'.[53] The text goes on to say that 'The world will have three years of peace'. After that there will be great silence over the whole universe for forty days and forty nights. 'Then the signs of Doomsday will appear, on the fifteen days before the Judgement'. After these have come, four angels from the four cardinal points will call on the dead to arise. 'Then the beautiful pure souls of heaven and many evil souls from hell will go jointly with their bodies from the earthly graves in which they were buried to the judgement of Doomsday'. The text ends in a similar manner as the first: 'And that is a brief account of the end of this bad world, as was narrated to me by the creator, the good Lord, said John the beloved apostle'.[54]

The exact apocryphal Apocalypse of John from which these texts are drawn has yet to be identified. They can be compared with the *Apocryphal Apocalypse of John* published by C. Tischendorf.[55] This work is often dated to the fifth century, but may be considerably earlier. It has been little studied.[56] It speaks of Antichrist, who will rule the earth for three years, of universal death, resurrection, judgement, punishments and rewards.[57] A noticeable difference, however, is that the Irish fragment contains no description of Antichrist, while the other apocryphal apocalypse of John does. There the appearance of Antichrist is given as follows:[58]

> The appearance of his face is dusky (or: gloomy); the hairs of his head are sharp, like darts; his eyebrows like a wild beast's; his right eye like the star which rises in the morning, and the other like a lion's; his mouth about one cubit; his teeth span long; his fingers like scythes; the print of his feet of two spans; and on his face is an inscription: Antichrist.

The Irish Antichrist tradition and its antecedents

In the introduction to his edition of a text on 'The Conception and Characteristics of Antichrist' from the fourteenth-century Book of Uí Maine, Brian Ó Cuív

53 M. Herbert in *Irish Biblical Apocrypha*, 95. 54 M. Herbert in *Irish Biblical Apocrypha*, 96. 55 C. Tischendorf, *Apocalypses apocryphae* (Leipzig, 1866; reprint Hildesheim 1966), 70–93, found in Armenian, Arabic and Old Slavonic translations (*Clavis Apocryphorum Novi Testamenti*, M. Geerard (ed.), Turnhout: Brepols, 1992), # 331; cf. M. Erbetta (ed.), *Gli Apocrifi del Nuovo Testamenti*. III, *Lettere e Apocalissi* (Casale Monferrato: Marietti, 1969), 409–414; English translation, by A. Walker, in *Apocryphal Gospels, Acts, and Revelations* (Ante-Nicene Christian Library 16; Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1870), 493–505. 56 See comments on it by Adela Yarbro Collins, *Early Christian Apocalypticism: Genre and Social Setting* (Semeia 36; Decatur, GA: Scholars Press, 1986), 76–77. 57 On the (Apocryphal) Revelation of John, see J. H. Charlesworth & J. R. Mueller, *The NT Apocrypha and Psudepigrapha: A Guide to publications, with excursuses on apocalypses* (ALTA Bibliography Series 17) (Metuchen, N.J. and London: The American Theological Library Association and The Scarecrow Press, 1987), 36–37, and 57. 58 English translation , by A. Walker, in *Apocryphal Gospels, Acts and Revelations*, 493–505:

notes that Antichrist is referred to briefly in several Old and Middle Irish verse texts, and that Antichrist features more prominently in a number of Irish prose texts, which he lists: '*Dá Brón Flatha Nime*', homilies on Saint Michael in the *Leabhar Breac*, a life of St John the Evangelist [examined immediately above], a life of St Maighneann, an Irish saint of the seventh century, a text headed *Sgél Ainnte Crisd* ('The Story of Antichrist') in the Book of Lismore, and an extended version of this which is found in manuscripts dating from the eighteenth century.[59] Ó Cuív goes on to note that in so far as the Irish text he edits is intelligible the Antichrist story given there has the following elements: (1) Antichrist is the son of his own sister who conceives him when her father, a bishop in Jerusalem, lies with her on the Friday before Easter at the instigation of the devil; (2) in appearance Antichrist has a flat face with one eye; (3) he has miraculous powers: he can make gold out of grass and anise (?) and wine out of water, he can cause disease and can cure the sick, he can create a moon, sun and elements (?), he can do anything that Christ did on earth except restore people to life; (4) he has a thousand fair women in his company.

Ó Cuív goes on to note that comparison with other Irish texts shows several correspondences. In this he is quite correct. There is a rather distinctive Irish tradition on Antichrist, comprising the elements noted by Ó Cuív. The sources have also been listed by him, although we note that the 'Fragment of an Apocalypse of John' (part of a life of John) has little specific on Antichrist. It is important that we situate this Irish tradition as far as possible within the history of the Antichrist legend.

We are fortunate in that this theme has been the subject of intense research, particularly in recent years.[60] Bernard McGinn has traced the development of the tradition from the beginnings, down through patristic, early and later medieval times to our own day. In his study of the figure of Antichrist in the period of development (AD 100–500) McGinn devotes a section to Antichrist's physical appearance. For him the second important theme of this period (whose earliest written evidence comes from the third century) is that of the Antichrist physiognomies, the physical description of his unusual appearance. These are Eastern, rather than Western; indeed, McGinn notes, it is curious that they had so little effect on Latin Antichrist beliefs. It is possible that those texts had Jewish roots, but it is also clear that fascination with how physical features reveal character was widespread in the ancient world.[61] The Antichrist physiognomies

494. 59 B. Ó Cuív, 'Two Items from Irish Apocryphal Tradition', *Celtica* 10 (1973), 87–113: 87–88. See also M. McNamara, *The Apocrypha*, 139 (# 104J). 60 See in particular Bernard McGinn, 'Portraying the Antichrist in the Middle Ages', in *Use and Abuse of Eschatology in the Middle Ages*, W. Verbeke, D. Verhelst and W. Welkernhuysen (eds.) (Mediaevalia Lovaniensia 1,15) (Leuven: Leuven University Press, 1988), esp. 3–13; B. McGinn, *Antichrist. Two Thousand Years of the Human Fascination with Evil* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2000). See also J. Maasynbaerde Ford, 'The Physical Features of the Antichrist', *Journal for the Study of the Pseudepigrapha* 14 (1996), 23–41. 61 McGinn, *Antichrist*, 68.

currently known to us are found in texts that are not critically edited and that are difficult to date. Almost every important apocalyptic revealer (Elijah, Ezra, Daniel, John, and even the Sibyl) was eventually credited with providing a physical description of Antichrist, as the chart McGinn gives detailing fourteen examples shows. Of these fourteen most are eastern, two are Latin, two Irish (Leabhar Breac, Book of Lismore).[62]

The classical text on Antichrist in the West comes from around AD 950, in *De ortu et tempore Antichristi* of Adso, later abbot of Montier-en-Der. The Irish tradition does not belong to this. It is independent of it. As McGinn writes:[63]

> Antichrist physiognomies accompanied by unusual legendary accretions belonged to the Eastern imagination at this time [950–1000]. Yet they became prevalent in one place in western Europe – Ireland, at least from the tenth century on. The native imagination, coupled with Irish predilection for apocryphal literature suspect in other parts of Latin Christendom, seems to have had much to do with this unexpected turn of events.

McGinn then draws attention to a tenth-century Latin text edited by Bernhard Bischoff, with what Bischoff believes to be the oldest text on Antichrist in the West.[64] The text, now in Avranches, Bibliothèque municipale as MS 108, was from the 12th century at the latest, in the famous monastery of Mont St. Michel (Brittany) and Bischoff believes the legend originated there. Bischoff notes that this description of the Antichrist should be compared with a Latin-Irish text given in translation by G. Dottin in the introduction of his edition of 'The Two Sorrows of the Kingdom of Heaven', of which there is an almost identical description in the Book of Lismore.[65] There are some Latin phrases retained in the Irish text, an indication that the work is translated from Latin. The Latin text published by Bischoff has many irregular Latin forms which make understanding and translation difficult. The general sense, however, is clear. The text begins by reference to the phoenix, destroyed by fire from heaven. The fire is extinguished by rain from Africa. The text continues:[66]

> From the ash and the rain will be born the girl from whom Antichrist will come. Two young virgin girls will stand there, called Abilia and Lapidia, from whose breasts will pour the milk by which they will nourish him for five years. When the five years are over, he will begin to reign.

62 Charts in McGinn, *The Antichrist*, 72–73. 63 McGinn, *The Antichrist*, 97–98. 64 See B. Bischoff, 'Vom Ende der Welt und vom Antichrist (I); Fragment einer Jenseitsvision (II) (Zehntes Jahrhundert)', *Anecdota Novissima: Texte des vierten bis sechzehnten Jahrhunderts* (Stuttgart: Anton Hiersemann, 1984), 80–84; 82 for Latin text cited. 65 G. Dottin, 'Les deux Chagrins du royaume du Ciel', *Revue Celtique* 21 (1900), 349–87: 353–536, from MS Royal Irish Academy 23 N 15 (490). 66 In the translation of McGinn, *The Antichrist*, 98.

> His disciples said to Jesus: 'Lord, tell us what he will be like'. And Jesus said to them: 'His stature will be nine cubits. He will have black hair pulled up[?] like an iron chain. In his forehead he will have one eye shining like the dawn. His lower lips will be large, he will have no upper lips. On his hand the little finger will be the longer; his left foot will be wider. His stance will be similar [?]. He will come to the sea, say 'Dry up', and it will be dried. He says to the sun, 'Stand', and it will stop; and he says to the moon, 'Become dark', and it will be darkened. And the stars will fall from heaven.
>
> (... ex ipsa pulvera et pluia erit gerata puella, unde ortus erit antechristus. In illo loco stabunt duas puella virginis, quis apellatur Abilia et Lapidia, unde mamellas eorum lactus fundebatur et nutrierunt eum V annos. Quod fuerat annorum quinque, sic inciperat regnare. Et dixerunt ad Iesum discipuli eius: 'Domine, dic nobis, quod similia tenebatur.' Et dixit eis Iesus: 'Similia tenebatur status eius cubitorum novem. Habet capillum nigrum in tortorio sicut catena ferrea. In medio frontem habet oculum unum et lucebit sicut aurora. Labia subteriores grande habet, superiores non habet. In manus eius digitus minor longior erit. Pedes sinistro. latior erit. Status eius in similitudinem. Venit ad mare, dicit: 'Sica', et sicabitur, et dicit ad sol: 'Sta', et stetit, et dixit ad luna: 'Tenebriscare', et tenebricabitur, et stella cadent de celo.)

In the *Book of Lismore* text the description of the features of Antichrist is as follows:[67]

> The Lord said that he [Antichrist] would be born on Bethlehem, of a harlot of the tribe of Daniel, that he would be reared in Carbuban (*sic*) and that he would live in the city called Besasta. His body will be six hundred lengths high, and forty in width, He will have a single eye protruding from his forehead, with a flat-surfaced face, and a mouth extending as far as his chest. He will have no upper teeth, nor will he have knees, and the soles of his feet will be rounded like a cart-wheel. He will have fearsome black hair, and three fiery vapours from his nose and mouth which will rise in the air like flames of fire.

With McGinn's study and Bischoff's new text a beginning has been made for a further exploration of the Irish Antichrist tradition with its possible early and eastern origins.

67 In the translation of M. Herbert, in M. Herbert and M. McNamara, *Irish Biblical Apocrypha*, 149.

THE APOCALYPSE OF THOMAS AND THE IRISH SIGNS BEFORE DOOMSDAY TRADITION

The Apocalypse of Thomas

The *Apocalypse of Thomas* is extant in two versions, a longer and a shorter one. The shorter is regarded as the older and the original; the longer has an interpolated passage.[68] Latin is regarded as the language of the original, and is assigned a 5th century date. It narrates the events (signs) to take place on the seven days before the end of the world. The signs are assigned to each of the seven days, and to a particular hour on that day. The number of days recalls the seven seals of the Apocalypse of John, by which work the *Apocalypse of Thomas* is influenced. 'And at the eighth hour of the seventh day there will be voices in the four corners of heaven (cf. Rev 7:1). All the air will be set in motion and filled with holy angels. These will make war among themselves for the whole day (cf. Rev 12:7). In that day the elect will be delivered by the holy angels from the destruction of the world (cf. Rev. 7:13; Mat 24:31; Mk 13:27). Then all men will see that the hour of their destruction is come near. These are the signs of the seventh day. And when the seven days are finished, on the eighth day at the sixth hour there will be a gentle and pleasant voice in heaven from the east. Then that angel who has power over the holy angels will be made manifest. And there will go forth with him all the angels sitting on my Father's chariots of clouds, rejoicing and flying around in the air under heaven, to deliver the elect who believed in me; and they

68 See M. McNamara, *The Apocrypha*, 119–121 (# 96). The manuscript evidence is as follows: *Long version*: Munich, Clm 4585 (from Benediktbeuern) (s, IX), fol. 66v–67v; Verona, Library of the Chapter 1; Vatican, Palatinus latinus 220; Old English Version: Vercelli Anglo-Saxon MS (s. ix). *Shorter version*: Vienna, Codex Vindebonensis Palatinus 16 (formerly Bobiensis), fol. 67rv (5th cent.); Munich, Clm 4563, fol. 40rv; (s. xi). *Edition of shorter recension*: B. Bihlmeyer, 'Un texte non interpolé de l'Apocalypse de Thomas,' *Revue Bénédictine* 28 (1911), 270–282. Probable citation in homilies, believed to be Irish, or with Irish affiliations: D. De Bruyne, 'Fragments retrouvés d'Apocryphes Priscillianistes', *Revue Bénédictine* 24 (1907), 318–335; B. Bihlmeyer, 'Un texte non interpolé', 278–279. *Studies*: See M. Geerard (ed.), *Clavis apocryphorum Novi Testamenti* (Turnhout: Brepols, 1992), # 326; Dana Andrew Thomason, 'Thomas, Apocalypse of', *Anchor Bible Dictionary*, ed. D. N. Freedman, vol. 6 (New York: Doubleday, 1992), 534; M. R. James, 'Revelatio Thomae', *Journal of Theological Studies* 11 (1910), 288–292; M. R. James, *The Apocryphal New Testament* (Oxford, 1924), 555–562; English translation of A (Verona, Munich 4585), 556–559; English translation of B (Munich 4563 and Vienna: Short Version). 559–562); A. Dos Santos Otero, 'The Apocalypse of Thomas' in *New Testament Apocrypha*, vol. 2, ed. E. Hennecke and W. Schneemelcher; English translation by R. McL., Wilson, Philadelphia, 1965, 798–803 (fullest treatment); M. Erbetta, *Gli apocrifi del Nuovo Testamento*. III. *Lettere e apocalissi* (Casale Monferrato: Marietti, 1969), 390–95; Stegmüller, *Repertorium*, I and VIII, # 280; J. H. Charlesworth & J. R. Mueller (eds.), *The New Testament Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha: A Guide to Publications, with excursuses on Apocalypses* (Methuchen, N.J. and London: The American Theological Library Association and the Scarecrow Press, 1987); # 93,1–23 (pp. 372–74).

will rejoice that the destruction of the world has come. The words of the Saviour to Thomas about the end of this world are finished'.[69]

There is an Anglo-Saxon translation of the *Apocalypse of Thomas* in the ninth-century Codex Vercelli (no. xv). It tends to follow the longer recension. It names the days: first day Monday, and so on. This would give the seventh day as Sunday, and the final day as Monday. At the ending the Anglo-Saxon version differs from the Latin: at the request of the Virgin, Michael and Peter, sinners have their sins forgiven, but there is a final sentence as in Mat 25: *Venite benedicti* and *Discedite maledicti*.

There are indications that there has been earlier revision of the Latin text and that it has undergone a Priscillianist and Manichaean revision.[70]

With regard to the early knowledge of the *Apocalypse of Thomas* in Ireland we may surmise that its presence in England (where it was translated into Old English) makes it likely that it was known in Ireland as well. We may also note that one of the manuscripts of the longer, interpolated, recension (Vatican, Palatinus latinus 220) also carries the text of Redaction XI of the *Visio Pauli* (a work with probable Insular or Irish connections, even of Irish origin) as well as the set of homilies *In nomine Dei summi*, taken by some scholars as connected with Ireland. The *Apocalypse of Thomas*, of the tradition it carries, clearly has influenced the Irish *Saltair na Rann* ('Psalter of the Quatrains') and the Irish tradition on the Signs of Doomsday.

It has become obvious that little progress in this matter can be made without a fuller survey of the manuscript material (Latin and vernacular) and critical editions of all the relevant texts. We are fortunate that this work has now been taken in hand by Charles D. Wright, the Department of English, University of Illinois, Urbana. His current researches in this field came to my attention after completion of this essay, and he has very kindly put at my disposal a copy of a major study of his on the subject: '*The Apocalypse of Thomas*: Some new Latin texts and their Significance for the Old English Versions'.[71] In this essay he examines the known Latin texts of the 'Non-Interpolated' Version (2 MSS), of the 'Interpolated' Version (3 MSS) and draws attention to five new texts of an abbreviated version (of which one was already known). In an appendix he edits six new Latin texts of *The Apocalypse of Thomas*, one with the interpolated version, and five with the abbreviated text. The abbreviated versions have only the list of signs. He notes that the new texts he describes further underscore

69 A. De Santos Otero. *The Apocalypse of Thomas*,802–803. 70 De Santos Otero, *The Apocalypse of Thomas*, 799: 'in favour [of association with Manichaean and Priscillianist currents of thought] there is … some parallel places in Priscillianist writings', with reference to De Bruyne [*Revue Bénédictine* 24, 1907, 318–35] and Bihlmeyer [*Revue Bénédictine* 28, 1911, p. 279]. 71 Charles D. Wright, '*The Apocalypse of Thomas*: Some new Latin texts and their Significance for the Old English Versions', *Apocryphal Texts and Traditions*, ed. K. Powell and D. G. Scraggs (Woodbridge, Suffolk: Boydell and Brewer, 2003), 27–64.

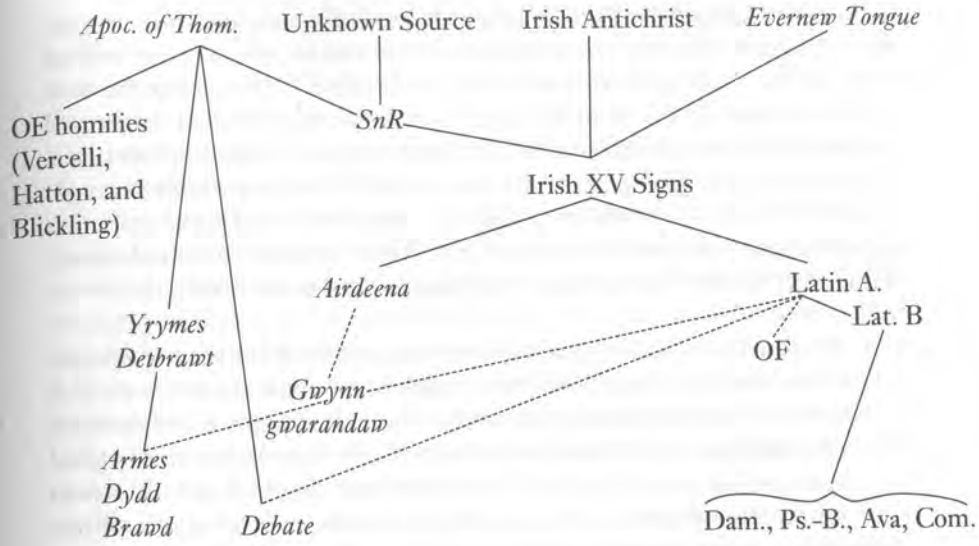
how *The Apocalypse of Thomas* was subject to redaction, interpolation and abbreviation, and remarks that it is hardly possible to reconstruct an original or archetypal text from the surviving witnesses, or even to critically edit just three primary recensions (non-interpolated, interpolated, abbreviated versions).[72] He cites approvingly the words of Thomas D. Hill in this regard: 'texts such as ... the *Apocalypse of Thomas* did not circulate in a single authorized version, and ... an edition of a single version ... would misrepresent the way in which most medieval readers had access to [it]'.[73] This most recent research should prove immensely helpful in the study of the Irish tradition on the Signs of Doomsday, to which we now turn.

The Irish tradition on the signs before doomsday

Christian interest in the signs before the end is very natural. After Jesus had predicted the destruction of the Temple, on the Mount of Olives, opposite the temple, Peter, James, John and Andrew asked Jesus privately: 'Tell us when will this be and what will be the sign that all these things are about to be accomplished?' (Mark 13:4; parallel in Mat 24:3: 'Tell us, when will this be, and what will be the signs of your coming and of the end of the age?').

There was an especial interest in the signs of the end in the West, as witnessed to by texts in Latin, in Old English Homilies, in Old French, Middle High German, Medieval Dutch, Irish and Welsh. The vernacular Irish evidence on the subject is particularly rich.[74] From the eleventh century or so the number of signs is generally given as fifteen. The classical work on the subject is that of W. W. Heist, *The Fifteen Signs Before Doomsday*,[75] working on the earlier studies of the Irish scholar St John D. Seymour. Heist has sought to identify the origins and affiliations of the present Latin and vernacular texts. He gives the following diagram as one possible explanation of the formation of the tradition and of the interrelationships of the various texts carrying the legend.[76]

72 Wright, '*The Apocalypse of Thomas*' (note 71). 73 Thomas D. Hill, in the introduction to *Sources of Anglo-Saxon Literary Culture: Volume One: Abbo of Fleury, Abbo of Saint-Germain-des-Prés, and Acta Sanctorum*, ed. Frederick M. Biggs et al. (Kalamazoo: Western Michigan University, Medieval Institute Publications, 2001), xxii. 74 See McNamara, *The Apocrypha*, 128–38 (# 104). 75 W. W. Heist, *The Fifteen Signs before Doomsday* (East Lansing, MI, 1952); see also C. Gerhardt and N. F. Palmer, *.xu. signa ante iudicium. Studien und Texte zur Überlieferungsgeschichte eines eschatologischen Themas* (Trier, 1986) (preprint). 76 Heist, *The Fifteen Signs*, 99.



For him the primary sources are the *Apocalypse of Thomas*, an unknown source, the Irish Antichrist legend and the Irish text *The Evernew Tongue*. The *Apocalypse of Thomas* would have directly influenced the Old English homilies, some of the Welsh texts, among them *Yrymes Detbrawt* (or in its normalised spelling *Armes Dydd Brawd*, 'Prophecy of the Day of Judgment', edited critically below by Professor Pierre-Yves Lambert). It is the view of Heist that the Irish *Saltair na Rann* (composed AD 988) would have been influenced by the *Apocalypse of Thomas* and the Unknown Source. *Saltair na Rann* itself, with the Irish Antichrist text and the *Evernew Tongue*, would have given rise to a composition which Heist calls the 'Irish XV Signs', which in turn would have given rise to the Latin, Irish, to Old French and Welsh Fifteen Signs traditions.

At the end of his work, having stressed the importance of the Irish *Saltair na Rann* strophes as the primary source of the Fifteen Signs, with the *Evernew Tongue* serving as the most important secondary source, Heist grants that we cannot quite exclude the possibility that the legend had been already formed when the *Saltair na Rann* was composed and that the latter borrowed from the legend as well as from the *Apocalypse of Thomas*, upon which it is primarily based.[77]

Heist's work on the Fifteen Signs has been extremely influential. His viewpoint, however, is not without some problems. An initial difficulty with his position is that he places (as indeed he must) the text with the Fifteen Signs of the *Collectanea Bedae* at the very end of the process, dependent on the 'Irish XV Signs', and on Latin A and Latin B. The *Collectanea*, although demonstrably

77 Heist, *The Fifteen Signs*, 193.

not from Bede, has generally been regarded as an early work, probably from the eighth century. This, too, is the opinion of the editors of the recent critical edition of the *Collectanea* M. Bayless and M. Lapidge.[78] They divide the work into 388 items, with '*De quindecim signis*' as items 356–371. The editors believe it would be possible to think of the *Collectanea* as broadly tripartite: Part 1: nos. 1–304; part II: nos. 305–379; part III: nos. 380–388. As a hypothesis for origin of part I they give the following: An Irish scholar (8th cent.) began collecting *dicta* of various sorts, mainly connected with biblical wisdom, in Ireland, moved to England (possibly Glastonbury, Northumbria) and to the Continent.

> At some (later?) point a second compiler, possibly inspired by the nature of some of the materials in Part I, appended a sequence of items which have as their common ground an interest in numerology. [*De duodecim lapidibus* (305-16); *De duodecim luminaribus ecclesiae* (317–29); *De septem donis spiritus sanci* (330–37); *De septem ordinibus* (338–47) *De septem uestimentis ecclesiasticis* (348–355); *De quindecim signis* (356–71); *De quatuor lignis crucis Domini* (372); *De septem peccatis* (374); *De sex aetatibus* (377–78) ... With the exception of the two brief treatises on ecclesiastical orders and vestments (nos 338–47; 348–55), nearly all the items for Part II show the same patterns of affiliation as we saw in Part I, namely with Ireland, England and Irish communities on the Continent, especially in Austria and Bavaria. Hypotheses similar to those advanced for Part I might best explain the assemblage of materials in Part II ...'.[79]

Further difficulties with regard to Heist's plan come from the recognition that the Fifteen Signs tradition exists also in Armenian literature. Working from the Armenian tradition, Michael E. Stone in 1981 published *Signs of the Judgement, Onomastica Sacra and The Generations from Adam.*[80] In his study of the Signs before Judgment he noted the Irish tradition and the position of W. W. Heist on the presumed (tenth-century) Irish origin of the Fifteen Signs tradition. He remarks that the Fifteen Signs tradition is also present in Armenian literature, and notes that this may conceivably indicate, in spite of Heist's analysis, that an earlier stage of this text should be posited.[81] Stone returned to the question again in a paper which he read at the International Dublin Conference on 'The Aramaic Bible. Targums in their Historical Context'.[82] He draws attention once

78 M. Bayless and M. Lapidge (eds.), *Colllectanea Pseudo-Bedae* (Scriptores Latini Hiberniae14; Dublin: Dublin Institute for Advanced Studies, 1998). 79 Michael Lapidge, in 'The Origin of the *Collectanea*', in Bayless and Lapidge, *Collectanea Pseudo-Bedae*, 8–10. 80 M. E. Stone, *Signs of the Judgement, Onomastica Sacra and The Generations from Adam* (Armenian Texts and Studies 3; Chicago: Scholars Press, 1981). 81 Stone, *Signs of Judgement*, 4–5. 82 M. Stone , 'Jewish Tradition, the Pseudepigrapha and the Christian West', in *The Aramaic Bible. Targums in their Historical Setting*. D. R. G. Beattie and M. J. McNamara (eds.), (Journal for the Study of the Old Testament Supplement Series 166)

again to the complexity of the question and the importance of the Armenian tradition and the manner in which it parallels the Irish. He notes the Irish, Armenian and Jewish (Hebrew text) traditions on the Fifteen Signs before Doomsday. It is not demonstrable that the Armenian version goes back to a Latin text; nothing in it indicates this (nor, however, does anything in it indicate the contrary). He wonders whether Heist has traced the document back to its very origins; it may still incorporate older Jewish material. 'This complexity,' he continues, 'serves to alert us to the fact that the channels of communication between the Eastern traditions, including the Greek, and the Western traditions, including the Irish, are very convoluted, certainly as far as the transmission of pseudepigraphical materials is concerned. If indeed the *Signs of Judgment* is an Irish composition, dependent on the oriental *Apocalypse of Thomas*, a work not preserved in Ireland nor (apparently) known on the Continent, then it moved back to the East at some point, embellished with an attribution to a Jewish source, and was translated into Armenian'.[83]

The conclusion from the foregoing seems to be that the time is ripe for a reconsideration of the formation of the tradition on the signs before doomsday, in particular on the Fifteen Signs tradition in Ireland. A prior requirement here will the critical edition of each of the Irish texts, and related Latin witnesses (for instance the so-called Priscillianist fragments) accompanied with the study of their individual sources, and of the interrelationships between them.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

In keeping with the overall theme of the conference, in this essay I have confined myself principally to consideration of the Irish apocalyptic and eschatological texts which appear to be related to known apocryphal writings such as the *Visio Pauli*, the Antichrist and the apocryphal *Apocalypse of John*, the *Apocalypse of Thomas*. Consideration of some major Irish texts which can be reckoned as apocalyptic or eschatological has been omitted, such as *The Evernew Tongue*, the *Two Sorrows of the Kingdom of Heaven*. And there are others besides. Those considered, however, would seem to indicate that this branch of Irish tradition has drawn from the heritage which had its roots in the Middle East. Future research may define more sharply how close the links of Ireland with the ancient Near East really are.

(Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1994), 431–49. 83 Stone, 'Jewish Tradition', 434.

Visions of the other world and afterlife in Welsh and Breton tradition

Pierre-Yves Lambert

As is well known, the genre called 'vision' is regarded as among the original compositions of Irish religious literature.[1] According to our leading authority in the field of Medieval Welsh religious texts, the late Prof. John Caerwyn Williams, all the visions known to exist in Middle Welsh are translations from Latin: there are three of them, *Breuddwyd Pawl*, or Visio Sancti Pauli, *Ysbryd Gwiddo* (or De Spiritu Guidonis) and *Purdan Padrig*, the Welsh version of St. Patrick's Purgatory, all of which have been edited by Professor Williams. In the same paper, delivered in 1963,[2] John Caerwyn Williams maintained that 'Strange as it may seem, the Welsh Church did not manifest any special interest in Visions of Heaven and Hell'.

However, the lack of original visions does not necessarily mean a lack of interest in the theme itself: and the number of manuscripts of the three translations referred to might undicate, on the contrary, some interest, at least around the 14th century. The same could be said about Middle-Breton literature, where the description of the punishments in Hell, in the mystery about the Passion of Our Lord, betrays a late composition on a French model: it is presented as an account by Lazarus, newly raised from the dead. This setting is attested in Middle-French mysteries and the piece itself enjoyed so much popularity in French that it was printed separately in one of the earliest printed books, the *Kalendrier des Bergiers*.[3]

This general idea about the absence of a genre called 'vision' must, however, be tempered by some additional observations: one has to recognize pieces of description of the Otherworld in many other texts, whether translations or not. Hell is described in *Historia Pilati*[4] (the second part of the Gospel of Nicodemus);

1 See J. E. Caerwyn Williams and Máirín Ní Mhuiríosa, *Traidisiún litheartha na nGael* (Baile Átha Cliath [Dublin]: An Clóchomhar Tta, 1979), 139–43; J. E. Caerwyn Williams and P. K. Ford, *The Irish Literary Tradition* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press; Belmont, MA: Ford & Bailie, 1992), 143. 2 J. E. Caerwyn Williams, 'Medieval Welsh Religious Prose', *Proceedings to the Second International Congress of Celtic Studies*, held in Cardiff 6–13 July 1963 (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 1966), 65–97 (82). 3 P.-Y. Lambert, 'Nótai faoin Pháis Mheán-Bhriotáinise', *Cothú an Dúchais, Aistí in ómós don Athair Diarmuid Ó Laoghaire, S. J.*, ed. by M. Mac Conmara, E. Ni Thiarnaigh (Baile Átha Cliath: An Clóchomhar Tta, 1997), 70–80. 4 See J. E. Caerwyn Williams, 'Efengyl Nicodemus yn

heaven is described in *Kyssegrlan Vuched*.[5] But most interest has been given to Doomsday, the Fifteen Signs before Doomsday, the coming of Antichrist, etc. It seems to me that the Welsh audience was evidently more receptive to texts belonging to the genre of prophecy rather than to the genre of vision. They were more interested in a message foretelling the end of the world than in the description of otherworlds or next worlds.

Prophecy has always been very popular in Wales. That it was a special gift of the ancient bard is shown by the number of prophecies to which a famous poet has attached his name: Taliesin, Myrddin were the authorities. But even Latin writers such as Gildas, (pseudo-)Nennius or Geoffrey of Monmouth were engaged in the writing of prophecies. Indeed prophetic inspiration is essential in Gildas's satire of the Gwynedd king, and in the redaction of Geoffrey of Monmouth's History as well. The same word *brud* came to mean both history and prophecy, a fact which shows that the act of writing on the past is inspired and orientated by an expectation about the future yet to come: Gildas expects Maelgwn to be a better king, and Geoffrey expects the Anglo-Norman monarchy to be worthy of its supposed Arthurian ancestry.

With regard to the Myrddin prophecies it is unfortunate that we lack information about their historical background. Their inspiration may appear all the more poetic. One should not forget however that, like the other poets, Myrddin had to glorify a patron (we are just given his name, Rhydderch Gwaessawc) and suggest to his followers that he was the prince bound to win every battle.[6]

These secular prophecies are numerous in Medieval Wales at all periods. Some have a more precise political meaning, such as *Arymes Prydein*,[7] an appeal to the Celts to gather and repel the Saxons from Wales. This text is of particular interest because it is in the same manuscript as the poem of the Prophecy on Doomsday, to which I shall devote the second part of this study. Moreover, these are the only two vernacular texts bearing this label of *armes*, which is otherwise Latinized as *Ormesta*, a word which, significantly, replaces *Historia* or

Gymraeg', *Bulletin of the Board of Celtic Studies* 14 (1951–1952), 108–12, 257–73. The Acts of Pilate are followed by the *Epistula Pilati ad Claudium* in some versions: cf. *Bulletin of the Board of Celtic Studies* 14 (1951–1952), 272–273 (Peniarth 5), and J. E. Caerwyn Williams, 'Medieval Welsh Religious Prose' (see note 2), p. 79, n. 6. 5 Only the third book of this 'Consecration of Life' has been kept, under the name *Ymborth yr Eneit* 'Support for the Soul'. See: R. Iestyn Daniel, *Ymborth yr Enaid* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 1995). In the third part we find a revelation of the form of Jesus Christ (*Pryt y Mab*) and other visions, particularly about the nine ranks of angels. The source has not been found: probably some writing inspired by Franciscan mysticism. 6 Main references: A. O. H. Jarman, *The Legend of Merlin, An inaugural lecture* ... (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 1960). A. O. H. Jarman, *Ymddiddan Myrddin a Thaliesin* (*o Lyfr Du Caerfyrddin*) (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 1951). A. O. H. Jarman, *Llyfr Du Caerfyrddin, gyda rhagymadrodd* etc. (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 1982): on Myrddin's poems, see preface, xxxiv–xl. 7 See Ifor Williams, *Armes Prydein o Lyfr Taliesin* ... (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 1955). For a discussion of this text, together with an English translation, see Andrew Breeze, '*Armes*

Excidium in some manuscripts of Gildas and Orosius. Should we translate it as 'prophecy', as most of the commentators do, or 'catastrophe', as the equivalence with *excidium* should lead us to do? The etymology might favour the first meaning, with the shade of 'premonition', 'divination'.

An important fact about so-called secular prophecies is that the frontier is not closed between them and religious prophecies, whether canonical or not. This is easy to understand: the poet speaking about the future is necessarily influenced by religious conceptions and expressions. One could trace some reminiscences of the Apocalypse of John, as well as some old Celtic phraseology[8] in the prophetical poems of Myrddin. The prophetic poems attributed to Taliesin and conserved in very late manuscripts, are filled with references to apocryphal texts in their latest recensions.[9]

And the reverse is true: in the translations of the apocrypha which have an eschatological dimension, we occasionally find references to the present history of Medieval Wales, so that they give the same sort of mixture between prophecy and history as the political or lay prophecies.

The Tract on Antichrist is known from five manuscripts: two of them have been edited, representing two different versions. This is a late compilation,[10] with quotations from the Gospels, from Augustine, from the Apocalypse of John. Its description of Antichrist might be inspired by the second part of Nicodemus' Gospel. It includes also the list of the fifteen signs before Doomsday, and a long speech of Our Lord addressed to the different kinds of sinners. But what is most surprising is the announcement of the coming of Antichrist for the year 1403, in both versions. And also in both versions, the emperor Henry, probably Henry Barbarossa, is named as an example of how evil times can come about, times when the Devil is unbound. This tract, which has various titles in the different manuscripts: *Ystori y Varn* 'History of Last Judgement'(British Library, Titus D. XXII) or *Llymma o law hynn y treithir o Antkrist* 'Here comes the tract on Antichrist' (National Library of Wales, Llanstephan 2), has evidently been used to frighten readers in a precise historical context, exactly in the same way as the *De excidio Britanniae* of Gildas. But as this is a translation we should perhaps not rely too much on such a text; the date 1403 might have been already in the model.

Prydein, Hywel Dda, and the reign of Edmund of Wessex', *Études Celtiques* 33 (1997), 209–22. 8 See Graham R. Isaac, 'The End of the World in Welsh and Irish: A common disaster', *Studia Celtica* 28 (1994), 173–74: about an exact Irish parallel for Welsh *gwragedd heb (g)wyledd, gwyr heb (g)wrhyd* 'women without modesty, men without virility'. A comparable phraseology occurs in the battle narratives, Ir. *fir gontair, mná bertair, baé agtair* 'men are slain, women are kidnapped, cows are driven away', Táin Bó Cuailnge (Ernst Windisch, *Die altirische Heldensager* T. B. C ... Leipzig, 1905, = Irische Texte, Extra-band) line 4722, cf. Lebor na hUidre (Richard I. Best, Osborn Bergin, *Lebor na Huidre, The Book of the Dun Cow* [Dublin, Royal Irish Academy, 1929] line 5563. 9 Patrick K. Ford, *Ystoria Taliesin* (Cardiff: Univ. of Wales Press, 1992). 10 Powel, 'A description of the Day of Judgment', *Y Cymmrodor* 4 (1881), 106–38 (from ms. Titus D. xxii); Thomas Jones, 'Yr Anghrist a Dydd y

Margaret Enid Griffiths in her learned book on the Welsh prophecies[11] set out a clear classification according to periods, kinds of inspiration, kinds of formulation etc. The prophecies she deals with are mostly political or politically orientated: in a suffering nation prophecies answered a deep desire for a better life. As she puts it, 'the prophecy (of Merlinus Ambrosius, in Nennius's *Historia Brittonum*) is the first expression we have of the hope of final triumph for the Britons, a hope which continued to flourish throughout the centuries in the face of tremendous difficulties' (p. 31). The main message is the announcement that a great leader is coming back to save his people: Cynan, Cadwaladr, or Arthur. It is worth remembering that at least one example of such prophecy is known in Middle-Breton literature, the *Dialogue between Arthur and Guinglaff*, a text rediscovered in 1924 in a manuscript written at the beginning of the 18th by Dom Le Pelletier.[12]

It can be said that these political prophecies share some features with the religious Apocalyptic texts: animal allegories or metaphors, premonitory signs, personal testimony of a prophet and so on. They frequently have a poetic form, as is clear in the case of *Armes Prydein*. They can, in some instances, draw on the apocrypha and particularly those connected with Antichrist or the Last Judgment.

In some cases, the prophecy draws on popular beliefs about the possible return of Arthur from the dead. This is the theme of a Welsh tale, 'the six warriors sleeping in their grave'. In other cases, we certainly have a parallel Middle English prophecy, as it is the case during the Hundred Years War.[13] Political prophecies were still being written in the seventeenth century (*cywyddau brud*).

As expected, this prophetical inspiration on the religious level has focussed on the Last Judgement, and the End of the world. Doomsday is a very popular theme in Middle Welsh literature. You might find it very frequently in the eulogy of dead patrons (*marwnadau*), or in the meditations on Death (*marwysgafn*, 'death-bed [song]'). In the *marwnadau*, incidentally, the poet cannot imagine that the soul of his patron could wait in Purgatory: his soul deserves Paradise. Purgatory would tend rather to be mentioned in love poetry as a metaphor for the painful and distressed state of mind of the unhappy lover.

Doomsday is the main theme of the text on Antichrist and the Last Judgment already mentioned, two manuscripts of which have been published. This text includes a list of the fifteen signs before Doomsday, a theme which has also been treated for its own sake, both in prose and in poetry. William Heist

Farn', *Bulletin of the Board of Celtic Studies* 13 (1948–1950), 174–184 (from ms. Llanstephan 2), a text followed by 'Dehongleu Teruyneu y Byt', *Bulletin of the Board of Celtic Studies* 14 (1950–1952), 229–33 (from the same manuscript). 11 Margaret Enid Griffiths, *Early Vaticination in Welsh, with English parallels*, Ed. Prof. T. Gwynn Jones (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 1937). 12 The edition, prepared by Largillière, was seen through the press by É. Ernault. See *Annales de Bretagne* 38 (1929), 640–74. 13 Cf. D. Johnston, *Gwaith Iolo Goch* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 1988), piece I, *I'r Brenin Edward y Trydydd*, and notes pp. 176–77.

studied carefully all the Welsh versions on the subject in his book on the Fifteen signs before Doomsday in 1952. He divided them into seven classes, relying on different Latin versions. A poem on the fifteen signs, *Arwydon kynn Dydbrawt*, attributed to Llywelyn Fardd, has been shown by Catherine McKenna in 1983 to draw directly on Peter Damian's version.[14]

A common theme in religious poetry, Doomsday is generally described according to a very common scheme, that of the *Dies Irae*. As an example here is a summary of Iolo Goch's narration:[15]

- sounding of trumpet, then resurrection of all dead people, going to 'the place where the Lord suffered'; enumeration of the patriarchs of the Old Testament (55–74);
- sun, moon, planets and stars falling on earth (75–78);
- liberation of the damned out of Hell (79–86);
- apparition of Jesus-Christ, with the instruments of his passion (87–98);
- the archangel Michael dividing the souls; 'then there will be lamentation, by my faith in the Creed, on Mount Olivet' (99–110).
- intercession by St. Mary (111–22).

By comparison, a poem on the same theme by Siôn Cent,[16] a later writer, appears to be much closer to the text we are going to study in the next section: exposition of the wounds of Jesus-Christ, address from Jesus Christ to the saved and to the damned, reply by the damned, etc.

Before we turn to one of the oldest witnesses of this interest in Doomsday, it is worth recalling that Doomsday in Medieval Welsh poetry is accompanied by a lot of popular beliefs, some of them widely known throughout Europe: for example, that St Michael weighs the soul in a scale,[17] or that every dead person has the list of his sins written with ink on his forehead, an inscription which disappears during his stay in Purgatory. Eurys Rowlands[18] listed all the examples of this theme, from Tudur Aled to Hywel Swrdwal and a late version of the Dialogue between the Soul and the Body. It was also commonly believed that every soul has something to pay on the Last Day (Guto'r Glyn, Dafydd ap Edmwnd).

14 See Catherine A. McKenna, 'Welsh Versions of the Fifteen Signs before Doomsday Reconsidered', in *Celtic Folklore and Christianity. Studies in Memory of William Heist*, ed. Patrick K. Ford (Santa Barbara): McNally and Loftin; Los Angeles: Univ. of California, 1983, 84–112. 15 D. R. Johnston, *Gwaith Iolo Goch* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 1988), piece no. XXVII 'Y Deuddeg Apostol a'r Farn' (110–121: numerous manuscripts). 16 Siôn Cent, 'I'r Farn Fawr' (For the Great Judgement), in: Henry Lewis, Thomas Roberts, Ifor Williams, *Cywyddau Iolo Goch ac Eraill* (argraffiad newydd) (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 1937), 280–83 (p. 267 f. in the first edition). 17 Cf. e. g. D. Gwenallt Jones, in *Bulletin of the Board of Celtic Studies* 6 (1929–1931) 14. 18 Eurys I. Rowlands, 'Dydd Brawd a Thâl', *Llên Cymru* 4, fasc. 2 (July 1956), 80–89. This belief survives in the Breton mystery-play *Ar Varn diwezhan*.

A WELSH PROPHETIC POEM ON DOOMSDAY (*YRYMES DETBRAWT*) FROM THE BOOK OF TALIESIN

Yrymes Detbrawt or, in a normalized spelling, *Armes Dydd Brawd* 'Prophecy on the Day of Judgment': this title has been introduced by a later hand in the ms. of the 'Book of Taliesin'(= Aberystwyth, National Library of Wales, Peniarth Ms. n. 2) , f° 4b-6a; we have another copy in Panton Ms. n.14 written by Ieuan Fardd; apart from the diplomatic edition of the Book of Taliesin, issued in 1910, we may use two editions of this poem, one by Henry Lewis, *Hen Gerddi Crefyddol* (1931), no. VIII, pp. 11–13, (henceforward HGC) and the other by Marged Haycock, *Blodeugerdd Barddas o Ganu Crefyddol Cynnar* (1994), pp. 170–202 (henceforward MH).[19]

This text includes many difficult and sometimes obscure passages. There is a modernized version, easier to understand, but this late version is so different from the older one that Henry Lewis decided to edit it as a different poem, on the basis of five manuscripts, in his *Hen Gerddi Crefyddol* IX, pp. 14–17.

To return to the main manuscript of our text, The Book of Taliesin (or Peniarth 2), in the National Library of Wales, Aberystwyth: this has been copied in the first quarter of the fourteenth century. It was named after the great semi-legendary poet Taliesin, because many of the poems in the manuscript are ascribed to him. According to modern scholarship, only a few of them are the work of the historical Taliesin, a poet living in Rheged in the sixth century. The main subject[20] is the praise of the patron, or his elegy after his death. However, the manuscript also contains other kinds of poems:

- prophecies, political as *Armes Prydein*, or religious as *Yrymes Det Brawt*;
- didactic poems conveying some sort of medieval learning: the history of Alexander,[21] etc.

The metrics of our poem is extremely simple: lines of six syllables with a rhyme between two successive lines. I have adopted the typographic system of Henry Lewis (twelve syllables on a line).

Notes on the language:
1) This is an archaic, or archaizing text. Although conserved in a 14th century-manuscript, the poem has preserved some words which are hapax legomena:

19 A previous edition issued by William Skene in the *Four Ancient Books of Wales* (Edinburgh: Edmonston and Douglas, 1868) vol. II, 118–23, is by now obsolete, as well as the transcription given by John Strachan, *An Introduction to Middle Welsh* (Manchester: At the University Press, 1909), 227–32. 20 Cf. Ifor Williams, *The Poems of Taliesin* (Dublin: Dublin Institute for Advanced Studies, 1968), an English version of his *Canu Taliesin* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 1960). 21 Marged Haycock, "Some talk of Alexander and some of Hercules', Three Early Medieval poems from the Book of Taliesin', *Cambridge Medieval Celtic Studies*, 13 (Summer 1987), 7–38.

l. 12, *echrwys*, clearly a compound of **eks-* and *gwrys* 'heat'.

l. 17, *go petror* 'in the four directions', with two archaisms, the prepositional use of **gwo* > *go* 'under', normally used only as a prefix, and an hapax, *petror*, apparently a compound of *pedr-* the composition form of the ordinal 'four' with a word meaning direction (*or*, or **hor* ?)

l. 71, *eissyfflat*, according to Lloyd-Jones 1929 is a borrowing from Lat. *exsufflatus*, meaning 'excommunicated', by reference to a common rite, cf. Old Irish. *caindel-báithed* 'extinction of candels', with the same meaning, 'excommunication'. Compare also Old Breton *dilucet*, glossing anathema.

Still unclear are the following hapax legomenc: l. 29 *ebryn*, l. 35 *ymrythwch*, l. 42 *eirant*, a verb according to John Rhys, and l. 80 *ryrys*.

In some cases, these rare words find parallels only in the Old Welsh (or Old Breton) glosses:

l. 33 *budinn* is found only in a Llandâv charter (the second element, cognate with Old Irish *dind*, reoccurs in another compound, *tyddyn*, 'a house with a garden', or 'the garden attached to a house', J. Loth, *Revue Celtique* 38 (1927), 170–171; I. Williams, *C.Ll.H.* p. 160).

l. 58–66 *tauaw*, *teueuwch*, comparable to Old Breton *antemeuetic* (see Commentary on line 58).

l. 80 *rygosswy*, *rygossys*, comparable only with a verb found in the Juvencus englynion, *gorcosam* (cf. also Middle and Modern Welsh *dangos*, and its etymology according to F. O. Lindeman, *Studia celtica* 28 (1996), 124).

Relics of an Old Welsh phonology:

duw 'God', l. 7, undoubtedly rhymes with *pluvyf* 'parish', 'people': Henry Lewis suggested restoring in both cases the old diphtong -ui-, followed in one case by semiconsonantal -w-, and in the other by a labio-dental -v-: *duiw / pluiv* (these are graphically identical in Old Welsh: *duiu / pluiu*). It would be possible to suppose an exact rhyme, by accepting that final -v in *pluiv* is realised as a semi-vowel.

Clear evidence of an archaic morphology, parallel to that of the Old Welsh glosses:

1. Verbal endings of an old future tense (originally an *-ā-* subjunctive): 3 sg. *-hawt* (*lloscawt* 19, *bydawt* 28), 3 pl. *-hawnt* > *-ant* (*drychafant* 41 etc.), pass. 3 sg. *-hawr* (*ergelawr* 14, *ergelhawr* 15), or *-etawr* (*dygetawr* 15) or *-ator* (*kayator* 82).

2. Prepositional use of *go* 'under, towards' and *ech* 'out of'. We already referred to the case of *go*; *ech* l.23 is similarly an exceptional use of the word as a preposition.

For all these reasons, one can suppose a rather long written transmission, which allows for some emendations. As in the text of the *Gododdin*, we can accept the possibility of confusion between *n* and *u* (a common fault in the Old Welsh

period): thus Dr Marged Haycock emends *enuyn* 'to send' into *ennyn* 'to kindle' (l. 31) and similarly, but in the reverse direction, I would emend the difficult *diffurn* (l. 21) into *diffuru*, apparently a calque on Lat. *deformis*.

Nevertheless some places of the text remain more or less obscure. The last editor left three half lines untranslated (in lines 17, 56, 80) and some other words here and there. But on the whole, Mrs Haycock's edition is remarkably reliable, probably because she admitted only very few emendations (there are 16 of them).

As we shall see, Ifor Williams advanced the argument that this poem was composed around the end of the first millenium. Although this opinion rests on a quite heavy emendation at the end of the text, we have seen that the language would corroborate a date towards the end of the Old Welsh period. But are we obliged to date it precisely in the year 1000?

'Noble Jesus has humbly come and it is now a thousand years since he is living', this is the translation of line 83 according to Ifor Williams, who interprets this as a dating colophon. All we can concede is that there was some sort of dating at the end of this poem and that the poet had probably had some important date in mind.

A dating to the year one thousand would obviously add another dimension to this evocation of Doomsday. Millenary fears have been the object of recent debates in France: some scholars argue that only literate persons (that is, mainly clerics), would have been aware of the exact computus and would have known when the year 1000 was coming. This argument is only partly valid, and in any case all documents from that period would have survived only through the learned. We are not really obliged to accept Ifor Williams' dating, but the ascription to a member of the clergy is necessary. And a *clericus* could have reflected on the end of time at any date.

As is clear from the initial invocation, the poet inserts Latin words, a proof of his learned background. This is not pedantry; the same Latinisms occur in the didactic poems of the Book of Taliesin (see for example poems on macrocosmos and microcosmos). This is a kind of personalized signature by a Latinist proud of his learning.

Latin borrowings are frequent. Particularly interesting are *aches* and *reges*, borrowed from *accessus* and *recessus*, 'tide' and 'ebb'. Learning about tides was held in high regard amongst Celtic and Anglo-Saxon scholars: Bede devoted to it a whole chapter of his *De Natura Rerum*, and it is the subject of Anglo-Saxon Latin riddles.

The Signs before Doomsday has already been carefully analysed[22] by William Heist, *The Fifteen Signs before Doomsday* (East Lansing, Michigan:1952). The

22 See also a previous study: William Heist, 'Welsh Prose Versions of the Fifteen Signs Before Doomsday', *Speculum* 19 (1944), 421–32, and Catherine A. McKenna, 'Welsh Versions of the Fifteen Signs before Doomsday Reconsidered', in *Celtic Folklore and*

account here under consideration does not seem to be precise enough to rank with what has been classified as 'accounts with seven signs' (as in the Apocalypse of John), as opposed to 'accounts with fifteen signs'. Biblical reminiscences from the Apocalypse of John are of course numerous. It inspired the Divine speech to the sinners. Other references to the Bible are often obvious, as the '*Dies Irae, dies illa*', from the Prophets. Biblical marvels, such as monsters (Leviathan) have been added.

Henry Lewis, the first editor, was convinced of a link with a Late Latin poem about Doomsday, an alphabetical poem beginning: *Apparebit repentina dies magna Domini.*[23] But we have no literal correspondence in the description of the signs, except for: *equabitur terra* = Welsh *neu byd mor wastat* line 24. Anyway one can admit that this Latin poem develops exactly as ours: first the description of the signs, then the description of the great trial with a separation between good souls and sinners, and finally a long address by God to the wicked. Of course many other poems develop in the same way.[24]

In the final address of God to the wicked, we may note the insistence on Christ's wounds (a feature that is attested elsewhere, as noted by Marged Haycock). When Christ says, 'Behold my wounds, behold the hole made by a spear etc.', he is displaying his wounds not to be recognized (as in his conversation with Thomas), but to let sinners recognize their sin, according to theological doctrine that puts the responsibility for the Crucifixion on all the sinners of the world. This is treated here in a particularly dramatic fashion. The narrator allows the sinners to defend themselves in a vivid dialogue. This has the emotional strength of a trial report. Of course the defence proves to be ineffective; by saying that they did not recognize Christ when crucifying him, they actually confess to their fault.

Concerning the mention of Enoch at the end of the poem, I must say I have been unable to trace to any source the thirty thousand years mentioned as the duration of our world. According to Ifor Williams, Enoch comes here as an additional piece of learning, more or less disconnected, apart from the obvious connection between the end of time and the fact that Enoch is an everlasting witness to human history.

In conclusion, I would like to say a few words on the use of *yrymas / armes* in the title: this poem has been designed on the model of a political prophecy (or history) in order to impress the audience with the idea that the end of the world could arrive very soon. But this does not mean that it had to be composed

Christianity, A Festschrift for William Heist, ed. Patrick K. Ford, (Santa Barbara: 1980?), 84–112. **23** See Hermann Hagen, *Carmina Medii aevii maximam partem inedita* ... (Bern: 1877) 106–07, and *The Oxford Book of Medieval Latin verse*. ed. by Stephen Gaselee (Oxford: Clarendon Press 1928), 3–4, new edition by F. J. E. Raby (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1959), 14–15: The work of Hilary of Poitiers according to S. Gaselee, but the work of Bede according to F. J. E. Raby. **24** Cf. the poem by Siôn Cent already mentioned.

shortly before the year one thousand. The author obeyed the rules of a prophetical genre completely at home in Welsh literature, but filled his composition with learned and religious themes belonging to current insular Latin literature.

The Text

a) The invocation

Dews Duw delwat Gwledic gwaed neirthyat
Crist Iessu gwylyat, rwysc rihyd amnat
Atuelach kaffat

1. gwlad P, to be preferred — 3: incomplete line.

'O *Deus*, divine Creator, King giving strength to the country,
O Christ Jesus, the watcher, authority, conspicuous / recognized kingship, that has been found stronger ...'

1 MH keeps *gwaed*, with the meaning 'nation'.
3:'Someone stronger (than us) has been found', MH.

Ny'm gwnel heb ranned moli dy trugared.
Ny dyfu yma Gwledic, dy gynna
Ni dyfu, ny dyfyd, neb kystal a Douyd
Ni ganet yn dyd plwyw neb kystal a Duw;
Nac nyt adef neb kystal ac ef;
Vch nef is nef nyt gwledic namyn ef;
Vch mor is mor ef a'n crewys.

'Let him not deprive me of a share in the praise of your mercy; here, Prince, there never came anyone as good as you; there never was, there will never come anybody as noble as the Lord; there never was born, in the people of one day,* anybody as noble as God. Nobody ever admitted (to be) as good as Him. Above the sky and under the sky, there is no other king than him; above the sea and under the sea, he has created us.'

6. *yn dyd-plwyf* is probably a compound: the people of one day (= the transitory, mortal people, cf. *dayar dywrnawd*, 23) or, possibly, the people of day-light? As H. Lewis already noted, there is a rhyme between *plwyf* and *Duw*, pronounced *plwyw / Dwyw*. This rhyme itself suggests a Welsh expression coined on *plebs Dei*, a concept different from *plwyf* 'parish': *plebs Dei / pluiu Duiu* would mean the entire humanity, = Middle Bret. *an bedis* 'inhabitants of the world'.
MH considers *dydd* as spurious; she translates line 6: 'there never was born to our people (*y'n plwyf*) anyone as good as God'.
Line 7 means, according to MH: 'and he does not recognize (admit) anyone to be as good as Him'.

Line 10 is probably made of two half-lines taken from a longer text : there is no linking rhyme.

b) Signs foretelling Doomsday

11	Pan dyffo Dews	ef an gwnaho mawr trws,
	Dydbrawt yn echwrys	kennadeu o drws;
	Gwynt a mor a than	lluchet a thar[y]an
	Eiryf ab gwengan	llwyth byt yg griduan,
15	Ergelawr [huan]	dygetawr llawhethan
	Ergelhawr mor a syr	
	Pan discynho Pater	y dadyl a'e nifer
	A chyrn go-petror	ac enynnu mor,
	Llwyth byt lloscetawr	hyny uwynt marwawr
	Lloscawt ynyal ran	rac y vawr varan
20	Ef tynho aches	rac y varanres
	Diffurn dyd reges,	gwae a'e arhoes

15 *huan*, according to the later version

'When *Deus* arrives, this will produce for us a great tumult / noise, fiery Day of Judgment, (there will come) messengers of noise: Wind, sea and fire, lightning and thunder, The pure, immaculate son will rise, the inhabitants of the world, shaking, the sun will hide, Leviathan (a sea-monster) will rise, the sea and the stars will hide.
When *Pater* comes down to meet his flock, with horns / trumpets, (blowing, sounding) in the four directions, and the sea blazing up, the inhabitants of the world will be burnt and reduced to embers. The desert portion [of the world] will burn before his great anger, the tide will withdraw, before his furor, Horrible day of ebb-tide, woe to him that awaits it.'

12. *echwrys* 'fiery', hapax; comp. de *ech-* (intensive **eks-*) + *gwrys* 'furor, anger', this is a possible reminiscence of the Biblical expression *Dies irae*.
12.'messengers' or angels: a possible reference to the Angels of the Apocalypse. Heist reads *drws* as the word for 'door': 'messengers from the door'.
14. *eiryf*: cf. OBret. *eirim* gl. fabula ('legend, tale'); and Old Irish. *ad-rími* 'he tells, reckons', verbal noun *áirem* (idem, *Geirfa*); *eiry* could also stand for *ery*, *erhy* 'will exspect' (from the verb *arhos*); or *eriu* = *er-yw*, from a compound *ar-fod* 'to withstand'. *Eiry-fab* 'snow son' (Strachan) is out of place.
ab gwengan: perhaps 'an abbot with a fine song', by supposing a doublet *abb* / *abad*, respectively borrowed from *abbas* et *abbatem*; but this would be the only example of **ab* 'abbot'. *Eiry fab Gwengan(t)* could also be a personal name.

15. *Llawhethan*: cf. I. Williams, *Bulletin of the Board of Celtic Studies* 9 (1937–1939), 137. — This text exhibits a fine set of Old Welsh present passive forms in *-hawr*; it is uncertain whether the double ending, *-et-hawr* (*dygethawr, lloscetawr*), with the passive *-ed*, has a peculiar meaning or not.
18. *marwawr*, 'embers, cinders'; could also be a collective formation on *marw* 'dead, dead body', as this is the case in version 2 (*HGC* IX, 33).
20. *aches* has often been translated as 'ocean, sea'. Here *aches* and *rheges* are obviously coupled, they are clearly borrowed from Latin *accessus* and *recessus*, 'tide' and 'ebb-tide'. Celtic glossators were as much interested by such natural phenomena, as their Anglo-Saxon colleagues.
tynho, 20, has been understood the other way by MH (sea-tide will fill up).
21. *diffurn* Henry Lewis tried to connect with *ffwrn* 'furnace , oven'. In Lloyd-Jones' *Geirfa*, it was corrected into *divurn* 'bright, manifest' (accepted by MH). It is certainly corrupted for *diffuru* = *diffurf*, cf. Lat. *deformis*, 'horrible'.

22	Ef tardho talawr	terdit nef y lawr
	Gwynt rud dygetawr	ech y gadwynawr
	Neu byt mor wastat	mal pan great.
25	Seith Pedyr a'e dywawt	dayar diwarnawt,
	Dywawt duw Sadwrn	dayar yn vn ffwrn
	Sadwrn vore, rwyd	y'n gwnaho-ny Culwyd.

'Hills will explode, the sky will spread on the floor,
a red wind will rise out of its chains,
then the world [will be] as flat as when it was created.
Saint Peter said it, the last day of earth,
he said that on Saturday, the earth will be but one furnace,
and on Saturday morning, the Lord will make us free.'

22. hills (*tal-awr*) MH; literally, foreheads.
24. Without verb. *Neu* may sometimes function as a copula. H. Lewis compared a line in a Latin hymn, *equabitur terra*.
25. *dayar diwarnawt*, the (last) day of the earth according to MH. May also mean 'earth of one day', but MH is certainly right in pointing out here the particular meaning of *diwrnawt* 'the day of death' (see J. E. Caerwyn Williams, *Bulletin of the Board of Celtic Studies* 24 (1972), pp. 477–481).
26. *Sadwrn*: The dating of Doomsday to a peculiar day of the week has parallels in Old Irish and in Old-English: in Irish sources generally, Doomsday is believed to occur on a Monday. See the sources quoted by MH.
27. 'The Lord will make us free': 'easily the Lord will do it to us' MH. However, Doomsday usually begins by the setting free of the souls out of Hell. A parallel expression (with the more precise adj. *rhydd* 'free') occurs in *HGC*, poem III, line 8: *Guledic deduit / a'n gunel in rit / erbin dit braud, = Gwledig dedwydd a'n gwnel yn rhydd erbyn Dydd Brawd* 'The Blessed Prince will make us free at the time of Doomsday'.

Tir bydawt tywyd	gwynt y todo gwyd.
Ebryn pop dyhed	pan losco mynyded.

Atuyd triganed a chyrn rac rihed;
Kyfoethawc ae henuyn mor a tir a llyn.
Atuyd cryn dygryn a dayar gychwyn
Ac uch pob mehyn a marw mein uudyn.
Eryf argelwch ac ennynu llwch
Ton aghyolwch taryan ymrythwch.

'There will be a bad weather on earth, wind will smelt trees (into a dew) – tumult furious (or: on every side) when hills blaze up. There will be music of horns before his majesty, powerful is he who will set them on fire, the sea, the earth, and the lakes. There will be a complete shake and a jump (startle, leap) of the earth, and above all places – the sadness of hut-stones. Number of mystery, and blazing of the lake, the surface of the earth (or of the sea ?) irritated, thunder in a storm'

29. *ebryn* hapax; tumult, cf. *ebrwydd*. Cf. Old Irish *sechrann* 'to rise', according to MH ; 'flat, without hill', according to Loth, *Revue Celtique* 32 (1911), 303. Other interpretations were given by I. Williams (*rhynn* adj. 'hard', with a reinforcing prefix *eb-*, *Arymes Prydein*, 43 n. 101), and by J. Lloyd-Jones (*Geirfa* s.v.: comparing Old Irish *echrann* 'conflict').
29. *dyhed* (*dyhedd*) normally means'war', an antonym to *hedd* 'peace', but H. Lewis suggests to correct it into *tuhedd* 'sides', as in l. 2.
30. *triganed*: read try-*ganedd* 'chant, music'.
31. *ae henuyn* 'who sends them': corrected by MH to *a'e hennyn* 'who sets them on fire'.
33. *uch* understood as a comparative, not a preposition, by MH: 'and every place (will be) higher'.
33. *budyn*: possibly to be compared to *budinn*, (Ll. Land.), a kind of cow-shed or hut. Heist: 'the stones will be dead' (as if *budin* = Middle Welsh *byddint*). MH: *a'r meirwon yn y ? lloches fein* 'and the dead in the hut of stones'. We have supposed that *amarw* is an Old Welsh orthography for *afar(w)*,'sadness, sorrow'. It would seem semantically better to correct *budyn* as *byddin* 'troup' ('a troup of (people) stone-dead'), but this would alter the rhyme.
34. *eryf* 'banquet'?? We follow MH in identifying *eryf* with *eirif* 'reckoning, number'.
34. *llwch* 'lake', from Old Irish *loch*, or 'dust'?
35. *a[n]ghyolwch*, antonym to *cywolwch*.
35b. Here we follow MH's translation. Read *taran* 'thunder' instead of *taryan* 'shield'; *ymrythwch*, from *rhwth* 'globulous, swollen'.

Teithiawc afar ac eryf trwy alar,
Ac enynnu trwy var rwg nef a dayar.
Pan dyffo Trindawt ymaes maestawt
Llu nef ymdanaw, llwyth llydan attaw,
Kyrd a cherdoryon a chathleu egylyon,
Drychafant o vedeu, eirant o dechreu,
Eirant kwn coet, a'r gymeint adoet
A rewinywys mor a wnant mawr gawr.

'A legitimate/natural sorrow, and banquet in grief, and irritation of anger, between heaven and earth; when Trinity presents itself on the ground of its majesty, celestial troupes (will come) to accompany it, a large crowd (will come) to it, music and musicians, and angels' choirs. They will rise out of their graves, (the dead) since the beginning of creation, (those which were eaten) by wood dogs, and by all types of death, and those which were swallowed in the sea, and they will utter a big shout'.

41. *eirant*: John Rhys, *Revue Celtique* 6, fasc 1 (1883), p. 27, supposed *eireant* to be a verb meaning 'they will raise again', but he would have corrected *eirant* in line 42 into a verb meaning 'to devour'. Possibly a *plurale tantum* of the type *anant* : 'the dead, the killed', formed on *aer* 'carnage'? or on **argio-* 'white'?
42. *adoet: addoed / addwyd* 'death; fatal accident or illness'.

Pryt pan dyffo ef a'e gwahano;
'Y sawl a uo meu, ymchoelant o deheu,
A digonwy kamwed, ymchoelent y parth gled.
Ponyt erlys dy gyfreu a lefeir dy eneu ?
Dy vynet yn du hynt yn nanheu yn tywyll heb leuuereu.
Ac y'm oed-y ereu ac y'm oed-i ieitheu,
Ac y'm oed-i ganwlat ac eu cant lloneit.
Canuet gwlat pressent ny bum heb gatwent;
Oed mynych kyfar chwerw yrof a'm kefynderw
Oed mynych kyryscwydat yrof-y a'm kywlat
Oed mynych kyflafan yrof-i ar truan.

'At the time when he comes, he will set them apart,' 'Those who are mine, let them turn to the right, those who did harm, let them turn to the left. Is it not this that [deserves] your speech, (the speech) your mouth speaks, that you go in the glens, dark ways without lights. And (yet) I had furrows (lands), and I had languages (= peoples), and I had a hundred countries, with their hundred peoples.
Up to the hundredth country of the world, I was not without a battlefield; bitter contention was frequent (?) between me and my cousins, conflict was frequent between me and my countrymen, wounding was frequent between me and the wretched'.

47. *erlys*, considered as connected with *llyssu* 'to contest' by H. Lewis who suggests the translation, 'are they not hateful the sayings that your mouth utters ?'. It seems preferable to connect *erlys* (read *erllys*) with *erllyddaf / derllyddaf-* ou *dyrllyddaf* 'to deserve'(so *GPC*, which has only one other example for this verb, *erllyt*, = *erllydd* 15th century).
48. Line 48 is too long, H. Lewis deletes *yn tywyll* as a spurious gloss incorporated into the text; our translation follows his restored text: *dy vynet yn nanheu, du hynt heb leuuereu*.
51. *cadwent*: 'battle; battle field'; or possibly 'battle rampart, defence'?

52. *kyfar chwerw*: could have been a compound (with the double preverb *cyfr-*= **kom-ro-*), 'that which is very bitter'.
53. *kyryscwydiat*: for *crysgwydiat*, 'battle, conflict' (Lloyd-Jones, *Geirfa*).

A'm goryw hwn vyth ny'm gwnaei dyn byth,
A'm gyrrwys yg croc, awidwn ynoc,
A' gyrrwys ym pren, dipynwys vym pen.
Tafaw-ti vyn deu troet mor tru eu hadoet.
Tauaw dy'r boenet escyrn vyn traet.
Tauaw-dy vyn dwy vreich ny ny dybyd eu beich
Tauaw-dy vyn dwy yscwyd handit mor dyuyd.
Tauaw dy'r cethron ymywn vyg callon.
Tauaw dy gethrawt yrwg vyn deu lygat.
Tauawyr daallat coron drein y'm iat.
Tauaw dy oestru a wanpwyt vyn tu.
Teuywchitheu, mal yr ywch, llaw deheu,
Iwch ny byd madeu vy gwan a bereu.'

'What this one did to me, none would ever do it to me; he has led me to the Cross, he whose nocent character I knew, he has led me to the gallows, and he set my head to pieces.
Touch/ Behold my two feet, (see) how pitiable was their destiny, touch how the bones of my feet have suffered, touch my two arms, their load will not come (?), touch my two shoulders, which have become so wretched (?), touch the points right in the middle of my heart, touch the spear blow between my two eyes, touch what has been produced by the thorny crown on the summit of my skull. Touch, O unhappy time, how my side has been pierced; touch, all of you, since you are right-handed (?); there will be no forgiveness for you, after having pierced me with spits'.

56. It would be difficult to read *a wyddwn* (impf. 1sg. of *gwybot* 'to know'); or to read *annog* 'to entice' in *ynoc*, and correct *auidwn* into *auid im* (*awydd y'm* 'desire for me'?). It seems preferable to suppose a new word, *nog*, borrowed from Vulgar Latin **nocium* (Latin *nocere*): cf. French *noise*, Breton *noaz*. Or possibly another reference to Enoch ? (In order to retain a connection with the root we render through 'nocent character', with use of the archaic 'nocent'.)
58–66. *tauaw:* 'touch' according to Loth, *Revue Celtique* 32 (1911), 18–20, 'behold' according to I. Williams comparing Old Breton. *antemeuetic*, gl. incircumspecta, *Zeitschrift für celtische Philologie* 21 (1939), 295–97 (see also I. Williams, *C. Tal.* 1960, 55); Fleuriot, however (*Dictionnaire des Gloses en Vieux Breton*, Paris: Klincksieck, 1964, 68) turned back to Loth's opinion, translating *antemeuetic* as 'not tasted; unusual'; (in any case there is no connection with Welsh *tafod*, 'tongue, language' V. Henry, quoted by Fleuriot, *Dictionnaire des Gloses en Vieux Breton*; see E. P. Hamp, *Études Celtiques* 15, fasc. 1, 1976–77, 193).
60. *ny ny* : read *nu ny*.
61. *handynt mor dyuyd*, MH corrected *handit* to *handynt* ; *dywydd* 'chwithig, afrwydd, afrwiog' (*Geirfa*)

64. *yr daallat*, has nothing to do with *dall* 'blind', but is simply a graph for *dy-allu* (Loth, Lloyd-Jones); Loth: 'touche jusqu'où a pu entrer, etc.'
65. *oestru*: 'sangiad' according to Loth.

'A Wledic, ny wydyem pan oed ti a grogem,
Gwledic nef Gwledic pop tut ny wydem-ni, Grist, [tut] vyhut.
Bei a'th wybydem, Crist, a'th athechem.'

'O King, we did not know it was you that we hanged, O King of the sky, King of all peoples, we did not know that you were Christ. If we had known you, O Christ, we would have avoided you'.

69b : *tut* was corrected into *cut* (*cwd* 'where ?') by H. Lewis: 'we did not know, O Christ, where (?) you would be'. We prefer to delete *tut*, as MH does.

'Nyt aruollir gwat gan llwyth eissyfflat,
Digonsawch-i anuat yn erbyn Dofydyat.
Can mil egylyon yssyd imi yn tyston
A doeth y'm kyrchaw gwedy vyg crogaw
Yg croc yn greulet my hun y'm gwaret.
Yn nefoedd by cryt pan ym crogyssit,
Pan orelwis Eli dy Culwyd uch Keli;
A chenwch deu Ieuan ragof y deu gynran,
A deu lyfyr yn ach llaw yn eu darlleaw.
Nys deubi ryrys rygosswy rygossys.
Ac awch bi wynnyeith gwerth awch ynuyt areith.
Kayator y dyleith arnawch y vffern lleith.'

'A denial cannot be accepted from a cursed troop (?); you have performed evil against the Lord. A hundred thousand angels are witnesses to me, who came to fetch me after my hanging, blood dripping, on the cross, to collect myself.
There happened a shake in heaven, when I was hanged, when I called for Eli, the Lord above sky.
With you, the two Johns – the two chieftains before me, and two books in your hands, being read.
(80) There will be no escape (?), let him be punished (judged), whom I have punished and for you it will be punishment, a right reward for your foolish speech. The lock will be closed upon you, on the hell of death (or better: on the disintegration of hell)'.

71. *eissyfflat*: A borrowing from Lat. *exsufflo* which came to mean 'to curse or excommunicate' (J. Lloyd-Jones, *Bulletin of the Board of Celtic Studies* 4 (1927–29), 222–23).
77. *dy*, perhaps prep. *di* > MW. y . H. Lewis: *Duw*.

78. *deu*, for *daw*, 'will come', not registered in Simon Evans's *Grammar*, but cf. *Geirfa*.
80a. *ryrys*: seemingly a comp. of **rhes*, itself probably a Verbal Noun of *rhed-* 'to run': 'escape'. Compare, *Bulletin of the Board of Celtic Studies* 2 (1923–25), p. 10, *O ryres dy wyr y mywn dirwyon yn dy lys, ... dirwya wynt* 'if your men, liable to penalties in your court, escape (their punishment), punish them'.
80b. *rygosswy:* has been compared to *guorcosam*, Juvencus' Englynion, see *Bulletin of the Board of Celtic Studies* 6 (1931–1933), pp. 101–103; 'to judge' (formed on Lat. *causa*). A possible connection with *dangos* 'to show', recently explained (F. O. Lindeman, *Studia Celtica*, 28 (1994), 178–79) as a cognate of Old Irish. **do-in(d)chosaig*: if this is correct, then the verbal radical *coss-* would correspond to Old Irish *cosc*, Middle Welsh *cosb* 'punishment, repression'.
81. *gwynnieith*, 'vengeance, punishment'; borrowed from Lat. *vindicta*.

Crist Iessu uchel ryseilas trychamil blwydyned
Er pan yttiw ym buched.
Ac eil mil kyn croc yt lewychi Enoc.
Neu nyt atwen drut meint eu heissylut.
Gwlat pressent yth ermut a chyt awch bei odit
Trychan mil blwydyned namyn un oric
Odit buched tragywyd.

'Noble Jesus-Christ has [humbly] come and it is a thousand years since he is living (?) and a second thousand before Crucifixion, Enoch was shining. Mad people/heroes don't understand the importance of their (evil) disposition (?). The present world is honouring you, and even if it is short time for you (?), these thirty thousand years — less one small hour, it is rare to obtain eternal life'.

82. *ryseilas* 'has come', cf. I. Williams, *Arymes Prydein*, pp. 52–53.
This is the dating passage, which was discussed by I. Williams, 'Amseriad Armes Dydd Brawd', *Bulletin of the Board of Celtic Studies* 16, fasc. 2 (Nov. 1955), p. 189. Our translation follows the text restored by I. Williams:
Crist Iessu uchel ryseilas yn isel
ha mil blwydyned er pan yttiw ym buched
85. *lewychi* = *llewyrchys* ? This is the learned expression, corresponding to Lat. floruit.
86. *eissylut*, / *eissyllud*, 'disposition, nature' (*GPC*); 'anian, natur; ? tâl, tâl pwyth, gwobrwy, dial' (*Geirfa*: the later meanings suggested by a derivation from Lat. exsolutio) Cf. *A dreic Mon mor drud y eissylud / yn aer* H 6a15–6 (Gwalchmai) 'Anglesey drake, whose descendance is so heroic in slaughter'; or 'whose nature is so courageous in battle'?; cf. *CLlH* 71, *CA* 141, 208, 315.
87. *ermut* = *ermid*, from Old Irish. *airmitiu* (*fĕid*) 'to honour'.
88. 'thirty thousand': 'three hundred thousand' MH.

THE 'LAST JUDGEMENT' IN BRETON LITERATURE

Doomsday is the theme of numerous canticles and also of a few mystery-plays. Already in Middle Breton literature, we find some extracts devoted to the theme: it is for example the theme of the final part of the poem *Buhez Mab Den* (no. 1 below). And a few independent compositions focus on the Last Judgement, particularly a poem adapted from St. Augustine (no. 3) and a *Cantiq Spirituel* inserted in *Doctrinal ar Christenien* (no. 2). Modern literature will be very briefly examined, essentially to account for the mystery play and a few canticles.

1. The religious poem *Buhez Mab Den* 'The Life of Man'[25] is really about Death, for the first two thirds, and about Doomsday for the last third (verses 267–85). The theme of Death is treated exactly in the same way as in many French or English poems: it is the 'Dance Macabre' which involves everyone, which takes away every thing.[26] The evocation of Doomsday is more original. Signs of Doomsday are admittedly rather commonplace:

§ 268 en dyuez an bet, caleter,
tempest du, cruel a guelher [...]
'At the end of the world, there will be seen hardship, [and] a black and cruel tempest'

§ 269 an dour dyluyg a dystrugo
neat an bet man, glan ne mano
un dro na pleno an bro man,
pan duy hep mez oll da golo
quen splann dyoz an knech mar seacho
tom ne chomo na coezo tan
'flood waters will completely destroy this world, no place (? *dro*) will remain intact so that they will level all this country; when it comes to cover everything without fault, [or when everything becomes thatch, (*colof*), it will dry under such a light from the heights, there will not remain a stack on which fire will not fall'.

What is particularly interesting is, after the apparition of the supreme Judge with his mother and angels, and all the celestial court, the description of the righteous souls (§271–72), going gladly and hurriedly to join their former bodies, in order to 'double their joys', *quen splann ha qualan ma* 'as bright as

25 Cf. Vicomte Hersart de la Villemarqué, *Poèmes Bretons du Moyen Age* (Paris: Librairie académique Didier, 1879), 90–117 = Roparz Hémon, *Trois Poèmes en moyen-breton* (Dublin: Dublin Institute for Advanced Studies, 1962; Mediaeval and Modern Breton Series, 1), 76–101. 26 Gwenael Le Duc has made a cursory analysis of the text, *Klask* (Université de Rennes-II), 2 (1992), 62–68. The combination of both themes, Death and Doomsday (+ a description of Hell) is rather common in Middle French literature, see for ex. Guillaume Tardif, *L'art de bien vivre et de bien mourir*, published by the printer Vérard, Paris (no date;

Calends of May', or, rather, *quen(t) splannha Calan Mae* 'before the Calends of May come and shine'. This specifically Celtic date of Calan Mae is unexpected in such a context.

On the opposite side, the damned are depicted as doubling their pains as soon as they are reincarnated; but they already belong to hell, and their only wish is precisely to stay there, however great may be their suffering. Doomsday for them means also a kind of voyage in order to be reincarnated, but they would wish never to have been reincarnated.

Then, on a sign of God, the sounds of Gabriel's horn give every soul the signal to join its body: throughout every kind of place, the souls are running to their bodies. After that, the separation between the good and the wicked takes place, and God addresses the two groups, one after the other. To the false Christians he says that they started from a state of innocence on the day of their baptism, and that he suffered his passion and crucifixion on account of them: they are condemned to remain in the same situation as before (that is, to stay in hell). On the other hand, God accepts the righteous into his kingdom and proclaims to them a perfect joy, without hunger, thirst nor pain.

2. In Middle Breton literature, no independent composition has focused on the Last Judgement, except for a *Cantiq Spirituel* inserted in *Doctrinal ar Christenien*.

Its title is:

Canticq Spirituel var ar barn diveza ...
evit m'ac'h ajusto an Den é cont er bet man

'Spiritual Canticle on the Last Judgement, so that Man can put his life in order (lit. arrange his account) in this world'

(twenty four-line stanzas, *ACL* I, 570–77)

It was edited a century ago[27] with a French translation by Émile Ernault, from a defective edition (lacking the title page) – and with a somewhat confused presentation.[28]

We are indebted to the work of Dr. Louis Dujardin[29] ('Loeiz Lok'), for the correct identification of the book and of its author: *Doctrinal ar Christenien* was composed by Father Bernard du Saint-Esprit, a Carmelite, and published in

beginning of 16th century) **27** Émile Ernault, 'Les cantiques bretons du Doctrinal', published in three parts, *Archiv für Celtische Lexicographie (ACL)*, vol. I, fasc. 2 (1898), 213–23, fasc. 3 (1899), 360–93, fasc. 4 (1900), 556–627 (with a glossary ibid. 606–27). **28** Ernault obviously confused *Doctrinal ar Christenien* with *Doctrin ar Christenien*, a translation of Ledesma's Catechism by Tanguy Gueguen, published in Morlaix in 1622 – a confusion which goes back to a list of Breton books inserted at the end of the *Dictionnaire Breton-Français* by Hersart de la Villemarqué (Saint-Brieuc: Prud'homme, 1847). The same confusion was continually repeated by later authors, until R. Hemon published a new edition of *Doctrin ar Christenien* (Dublin: Dublin Institute for Advanced Studies, 1977; Mediaeval and Modern Breton Series, 4). See, for example, Kenneth Jackson, who inserted an addendum to correct this mistake in *A Historical Phonology of Breton* (Dublin: Dublin Institute for Advanced Studies, 1967), p. 853. **29** L. Lok, 'Notennou lennegez', '[1.] Breur

three different editions, 1645, 1680 (the edition used by Ernault, a complete copy of which was kept in the (private) Kerdanet library) and 1689.

In addition to the text of the *Canticles* edited by Ernault, we should refer to the fourteen tunes, later published by Henri Corbes.[30] The same author made a valuable report on modern research about this book.[31]

What is most interesting concerning this canticle, is the frequent use of whole lines taken from *Mirouer de la Mort*, a Middle-Breton poem on the Last Things, adapted from Denys the Cartusian's *Quattuor novissima*. When he later edited this text,[32] É. Ernault did not miss these 'borrowings' which amount to a third of the text. Some surrounding poems in the same collection drew also heavily on *Mirouer de la Mort*: actually they form a series of four canticles, corresponding to the four Last Things, and introduced with the general title *Pevar canticq spirituel var ar pevar fin diveza eus an den* 'Four spiritual songs on the four last ends of Man':

XII. ... *da quenta var ar maro, evit gallout en em dispos bepret deza* 'first on death, so that one can always prepare oneself for it'

XIII *Canticq spirituel var ar barn diveza* etc. (already quoted)

XIV. *Canticq spirituel voar ar poaniou eux an Iffern* 'Spiritual Song on the pains in Hell'

XV. *Canticq spirituel var ar ioaiou eux ar Barados* 'Spiritual Song on the bliss of Paradise'.

The second stanza is entirely taken from the Mirouer:[33]

An deiz-se en divez ditruez à vezo,
Deiz à buanegues ur vez hac à vezo,
Oll bombançou ar bet à so meurbet hedro,
An deiz-se drouc ha mat [?][34] stat ha quemiado.

= Mirouer 1447–50:

Bernez ar Spered Santel' in *Kaierou Kristen* [published by *Studi hag Ober*] cahier no. 4, (August 1947), 54–58, reprinted in: Louis Dujardin [Loeiz Lok], *Hor Skrivagnerien*, fascicle I (Lesneven: Mouladurioù Hor Yezh, 1992), 24–30. **30** *Mémoires de la Société d'Émulation des Côtes-du-Nord* 70 (1938), 287–98. **31** *Mémoires de la Société d'Émulation des Côtes-du-Nord* 77 (1947), and above all, in a sort of scientific autobiography, *ibid.* 99 (1970), 147. **32** É. Ernault, *Le Mirouer de la mort, Poème breton du XVI^e siècle, publié d'après l'exemplaire unique* ... (Paris: Champion 1914); also published in instalments in the successive fascicles of *Revue Celtique*, from vol. 31 (1910), to vol. 37 (1917–19). **33** Other identified borrowings (those noticed by Ernault are underlined): §3 a–b = M. 763–64; §4 a–b = M. 1043–44; §4 c–d = (approx.) M. 1049–50; §5 a–b = M. 1915–16; §5 c–d = (approx.) M. 1900–01; §9 a–b = M. 1931–32; §10 c = M 648; §11 c–d = M. 695–96; § 12 a–b = M. 699–700; §11 c = M. 697; §14 a, cf. M. 922, §14 b, cf. M. 920, §14 c, cf. M. 927–28, §14 d, cf. M. 859; §15 a–b = M. 905–06; §15 c–d = (approx.) M. 901–02; §16 b, cf. M. 891; §17 a–b = M. 1571–72, §17 c, cf. M. 749; §19 a–b = M. 1763, 1765; §20 c, cf. M. 1769. **34** One syllable lacking; in its edition, Ernault suggested reading: *[pep] stat ho quemiado* 'every class (of people) will part from them

An dez man en diuez, ditruez á vezo,
Dez á buaneguez, vn guez hac á fæço,
Holl bombançou an bet, gant he fet peur hedro,
En dez man drouc ha mat, he stat á quemiado.

'This day, finally, will be without mercy, a day of anger, which in one turn will defeat all luxuries of the world, with their very light substance: on this day, everything, good or evil, will part from its position'.

Apart from tiny alterations (*-se* 'that 'instead of *-man* 'this'), we may notice deeper changes in syntax and meaning in every line (except the first): line 2. becomes, 'which will be one time a day of anger', line 3 'all luxuries of the world are very light (lit.: easy to turn)', and line 4'on that day, good or evil, [all] status will take leave'.

3. Another canticle on Doomsday was found in the appendix to a collection of Christmas Carols, the title of which reads:

AN NOVELOV ANCIEN HA DEVOT, an oll amantet, corriget hag augmentet à vn nombr re neuez quen Brezonec, ha Gallec, gant Tanguy Gueguen, Belec, natif à Leon. Imprimet e Quemper Caurentin, gant George Allienne. Imprimeur dar Roué, er Palm Curunet, MDCL (Bibliothèque Nationale)

Omitted in the first edition,[35] the final pieces of the appendix were eventually edited by G. Pinault in 1969,[36] and again in 1984.

The poem on Doomsday had been previously edited and studied by É. Ernault[37] in 1906.

Title: *Sybilla* (= *Sibylla*) *Eritrea de Iudicio*
Inc. :
IVdicij signum tellus sudore madescet,
E Cœlo Rex adneniet (= *adueniet*), *per secla futurus*
E syn an barn, an douar hep arat,
En pep bro a chueso an goat:
Maz duy an effaou dezraou mat,
Vn Roue à reno dreist pep oat.

(luxuries)'. 35 'Anciens Noëls bretons', edited by Vicomte Hersart de la Villemarqué, *RC* tomes 10–12 (1889–1891). 36 Georges Pinault, 'AN NOVELOV ANCIEN HA DEVOT §§ 534–580', *Annales de Bretagne* (Rennes) 76, fasc. 4 (déc. 1969), 663–703 (see text and translation 676–681, notes 693–700); cf. also a complete edition of the book of 1650 by the same author: Goulven Pennaod, *AN NOVELOV ANCIEN HA DEVOT Les Noëls anciens et dévots, Texte de 1650 accompagné d'une traduction française* (Quimper: Preder, 1984); see 172–75. 37 Émile Ernault, 'Nouvelles Études Vannetaises, II. Le Cantique des Signes du Jugement, deuxième livraison', *Revue morbihannaise* 10 (1906), 177–83. For the other contents of this series, see below 39 and 40.

'As a sign of the Judgement, the untilled earth will transpire blood in every country; when comes from heaven, a good beginning, a King that will reign over all generations.'

This poem was rightly identified by Ernault as a translation of the famous acrostic poem which St Augustine composed, in his *De Ciuitate Dei*, book 18, chapter 23, as a translation of a Greek poem believed to go back to the Erythrean Sibyl (and still preserved in *Oracula Sibyllina*, book VIII).

It is a rather close translation, each one of the thirteen couplets being rendered with a four-lines stanza. Each stanza is preceded by the corresponding Latin couplet, Latin and Breton texts being equally corrupt (a feature common to all works of Tanguy Gueguen, it seems). We did not find any closer link with the Old French version,[38] which seems to be a rather paraphrastic rendering.

É. Ernault also edited Breton versions of the 'Fifteen Signs before Doomsday', one in the Vannes dialect,[39] from the 17th c., another in the Treguier dialect,[40] and taken out of a mystery-play later edited by Roparz Hemon. This edition of a mystery about Doomsday, *Ar Varn Jeneral*, was recently printed by Gwennole Le Menn.[41] The text is believed to go back to Middle Breton times on account of metrical archaisms. It was extended to last 'two days' (mystère en deux journées) by inclusion of a play on Antichrist. We have no French model – French mystery plays about Doomsday being extremely rare (we know of only one ms. from Besançon). It is also possible that this is an adaptation from French canticles and religious prose texts. Amongst other sources we may note the description of the pains of the damned by Lazarus, a widespread French text, the first Breton witness[42] being found in the Middle Breton Passion mystery-play printed in 1530.

Later Breton literature seems to be richer. Another canticle, which I know from *Kanaouennou Santel* of Abbé Henry, displays a very vivid and colourful description of the Last Judgement.

This canticle, with the title *Ar Varn Jeneral*, seems to have enjoyed some popularity. It might be of interest to quote its first stanza, because the text was later corrected in order to expurgate the excessive number of French words:[43]

38 Edited by P. Meyer, *Bulletin de la Société des anciens textes français* (1879), 79–83. Provençal and Catalan texts were edited by M. Mila y Fontanals, 'El Canto de la Sibila', *Romania* 9 (1880), 353–65. 39 *Revue morbihannaise* 9 (1905), 283–94. This was reedited by Roparz Hemon in his *Christmas Hymns in the Vannes dialect of Breton* (Dublin: Dublin Institute for Advanced Studies, 1956), no. 6 (in fact, the first text of the manuscript), 1–6. Many other hymns in this book are about Doomsday, or the pains of the damned: no. 7, 10, 12, 13, 14, 16, 17, 20. 40 *Revue morbihannaise* 12 (1908), 315–23. 41 Roparz Hemon, *Ar Varn Diwezhañ, Le Jugement dernier, pièce de théâtre bretonne (trégorois, XVIIIème siècle)*, avec la collaboration de Gwenaël Le Duc et Gwennole Le Menn, (Saint-Brieuc: Skol, 1998, 2 vol.). The poem on the fifteen signs is in vol. 2, 686–97: incipit, *Scrivet eo gant an doctoret, pan deuy jesus da varn ar bet …* 42 See P.-Y. Lambert, 'Nótaí faoin Pháis Mheán-Bhriotáinise', in *Cothú an Dúchais, Aistí in ómós don Athair Diarmuid Ó Laoghaire S. J.*, ed. M. Mac Conmara, É. Ní Thiarnaigh (Baile Atha Cliath [Dublin]: An Clóchomhar Tta, 1997), 70–80 (p. 75). Cf. also, on the same theme, Émile Roy, *Le Mystère de la Passion en France*, (Paris-Dijon: 1904), 1ère partie, 58–59. 43 The author of

Kanaouennou santel, (Saint-Brieuc, 1842), 73–78
AR VARN JENERAL
Ton: Ar Garnel,51

Tavit, o tud inkredul,	Keep silent, unbelievers,
Inutil eo plédi;	pleading is no use;
List ho kaked ridikul	Stop your ludicrous cackle
Ha deskit humbl kredi:	And learn to humbly believe:
E faç ann env, ann douar,	In front of earth and heaven
Oll e vezimp barnet;	all of us shall be judged;
Ann Eternel hel lavar,	The Eternal one says it
He c'her zo eunn arret.	His word is an order.

Kantikou Brezounek Eskopti Kemper ha Leon,
(De Kerangal, Quimper, 1908), 39–44:
AR VARN JENERAL
Ton anavezet

Tavit, o tud heb kredenn,	Keep silent, people without faith,
Gant ho komzou goullo,	with your void chatter,
Lezit peb sot prezegenn	stop any of your silly talks
Ha sonjit mad hirio:	and reflect well on this today:
Dirak ann env, ann douar,	in front of heaven and earth
Holl e vezimp barnet.	we are all going to be judged
Ann Eternel hel lavar,	The Eternel says it,
He c'her ne jencho ket.	His word will not change

One of the many interesting features of this canticle is that it depicts the coming of Antichrist, together with a false prophet. Enoch and Elijah figure prominently as the true prophets. It is a very long text (38 stanzas), of great emotional strength.

Breton spirituality is mainly concerned with the fear of death, and peculiar representations of Death, *An Ankou*, have been fruitfully studied in this context.[44] But the texts most easily available are popular tales or other testimonies to popular beliefs, such as those gathered by Anatole Le Braz, in *La Légende de la Mort*. I think, however, that this falls outside of the scope of the present study.

Kanaouennou santel, Abbé Henry, already quotes in a footnote an attempt by 'Monsieur Le Jeune' at expurgating this first stanza. 44 Cf. Gwennole Le Menn, 'La Mort dans la littérature bretonne du XV[e] au XVII[e] siècle', in *Mémoires de la Société d'Histoire et d'Art de Bretagne* 56 (1979), 5–40.

The seven heavens and the twelve dragons in Insular apocalyptic

John Carey

Fís Adomnáin or 'The Vision of Adomnán', written in the tenth or the early eleventh century, is probably the richest and most vivid of Irish eschatological texts.[1] In what follows, I shall be discussing one of its most remarkable sections: a description of the soul's ascent through seven heavens, and of the subsequent devouring of the damned by twelve infernal dragons. This section begins as follows in the version of the text preserved in the manuscript Leabhar Breac:

> It is difficult for the soul to reach the throne of the Creator, after being the companion and neighbour of the flesh with its slumber and luxury and comfort, unless it has angels to guide it; for there are very many hardships on the ladder of the seven heavens, and none of them is easier than the others. There are six doorways set before the human race on the way to heaven. A watchman and doorkeeper from the household of heaven has been set to guard each of the doorways.

There follows a description of the 'ladder of the seven heaven,' in which the soul's ascent is portrayed as a purgative process: prolonged and agonising for the wicked, speedy and painless for the righteous. The first heaven is watched over by the archangel Michael, accompanied by 'two virgins with iron rods in their bosoms to scourge and beat the sinners;' the second heaven is the province of the archangel Uriel or Ariel and two more virgins armed with fiery whips, and contains both a river of fire (guarded by an angel whose name, Abersetus, perhaps reflects Greek *asbestos* 'unquenchable') and a cleansing well; the third heaven contains an enormous furnace; the fourth a fiery stream and a wall of burning lead; and the fifth another fiery stream, this one containing an enormous whirlpool. In the sixth heaven there are no torments, 'but it is bright with the light and brilliance of precious stones': here the souls are judged. The redeemed enter the delights of heaven, while the reprobate are condemned to hell. The account of the latter's fate concludes with a gruesome and memorable detail:

1 In revising this paper for publication I have benefited from the helpful comments of Jacqueline Borsje and Adele Yarbro Collins.

> Then the twelve fiery dragons swallow [the soul], one after the other, until the lowest dragon releases it into the Devil's mouth.[2]

As has frequently been noted, this account can be parallelled in other sources. In Ireland, similar descriptions appear in the latest of the recensions of the cosmological treatise *In Tenga Bithnua*,[3] and in a brief tract preserved in Liber Flavus Fergusiorum: following the example of its editor, I shall in what follows refer to the latter as 'Na Seacht Neamha'.[4] Another version appears in an Old English sermon in Cambridge, Corpus Christi College MS 41 (*c.*1100), part of a collection of material reflecting Irish influence.[5] Finally, the third portion of Karlsruhe MS Augiensis 254, written in Reichenau *c.*800, contains a fragmentary treatise written in very faulty Latin which belongs here as well: several other pieces in the same manuscript have Irish connections.[6] Resemblances between the Irish, Old English, and Latin versions, extending in some instances to verbal correspondence, leave no doubt that all of them derive ultimately from a single document, probably composed or redacted in Ireland:[7] on the evidence of the Karlsruhe fragment, this document can be dated to the eighth century or earlier.[8] This lost work will be referred to below as the 'Insular Seven Heavens Apocalypse'.

This much seems clear, but considerable work remains to be done in interpreting the evidence in greater depth and detail.[9] Essential to such a project is an understanding of the interrelationship of the Irish witnesses.

2 Translation, slightly modified, from John Carey, *King of Mysteries: Early Irish Religious Writings* (Dublin: Four Courts, 1998), 267–9. A translation based on the text in Lebor na hUidre, and references to earlier scholarship, are provided by Máire Herbert and Martin McNamara, *Irish Biblical Apocrypha*. Selected Texts in Translation (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1989), 137–48, 185–6. 3 Georges Dottin, 'Une rédaction moderne du Teanga Bithnua', *Revue Celtique* 28 (1907), 278–307: 295–8. 4 Gearóid Mac Niocaill, 'Na Seacht Neamha', *Éigse* 8 (1956–7), 239–41. 5 Rudolph Willard (ed.), *Two Apocrypha in Old English Homilies* (Beiträge zur Englischen Philologie 30; Leipzig: Bernhard Tauchnitz, 1935), 1–30. On the homily's context see Jane Stevenson, 'Ascent through the Heavens, from Egypt to Ireland', *Cambridge Medieval Celtic Studies* 5 (1983), 21–35: 22, 34; cited with approval by Charles D. Wright, *The Irish Tradition in Old English Literature* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 219. Another Old English homily includes a further description of the twelve dragons: Willard, *Two Apocrypha*, 24–5. 6 The most recent edition is that of Richard Bauckham, 'The *Apocalypse of the Seven Heavens*: The Latin Version', *Apocrypha* 4 (1993), 141–75: 153–4. 7 Cf. Stevenson's remarks cited above, 'Ascent', 34. 8 Bauckham ('*Apocalypse*', 145–6) holds that 'a trace of dependence on our apocalypse is almost certainly to be found' in *Féilire Oengusso*, a poem of the early ninth century: he cites a verse which speaks of the beatific existence of the soul 'after it has been carried beyond suffering to the fortress of the seven heavens' (my translation, *King of Mysteries*, 213). I am less confident that the *Félire*'s words demand so specific an interpretation here: the contrast between the tribulations of the righteous in this life and their joys hereafter, and the idea that there are seven heavens, can both be parallelled elsewhere in the poem in more general contexts. (For the first of these points cf. *King of Mysteries*, 185–7; for the second, 184.) 9 The most thorough comparative discussion remains that of Willard, *Two Apocrypha*; see especially his synthetic outline, 28. 10 The text has been edited from both of these manuscripts by Ernst Windisch, *Irische Texte mit Wörterbuch* (Leipzig: Hirzel, 1880), 165–96. 11 J. Vendryes, 'Aislingthi Adhamnáin d'après le texte du manuscrit de Paris', *Revue Celtique* 30 (1909), 349–83. 12 Whitley Stokes, 'The Adventure of St. Columba's Clerics', *Revue Celtique* 26 (1905), 141–59: 148–53. 13 K: 'Dominus iudicat de illo homo peccator & tradator hunc ad angelum tartarucho. Et angelum dimergit eum in infernum' (Bauckham, '*Apocalypse*', 153 §11); B: 'Hanc *anim*am multo p*e*ccantem angelo tartari tradite ⁊ demergat eam in infernum' (Leabhar Breac, page 255a, lines 10–11). 14 'Towards an Interpretation of *Fís Adamnán*' *Studia Celtica* 12/13 (1977–8), 62–77: 65–6. It should further be noted that the Corpus Christi sermon gives a version of this speech which is a close Old English rendering of the Latin as this appears in *Fís Adomnáin*: 'Syllað þa synfullan sawla þam grimman engle to cwilmianne and to besencanne in helle' (Willard, *Two Apocrypha*, 5–6). 15 The Latin speech in F reads: 'Hanc anamam multo peccantem angelo Tartari tradide ⁊ dimergad eam in infernum' (Liber Flavus, folio 19rb, lines 29–30). 16 This involves seeing most of the

Fís Adomnáin survives in four manuscripts, three of them preserved in the library of the Royal Irish Academy: Lebor na hUidre (Dublin, R.I.A. MS 23.E.25; s. xii); Leabhar Breac (Dublin, R.I.A. MS 23.P.16; s. xv);[10] Liber Flavus Fergusiorum (Dublin, R.I.A. MS 23.O.48; s. xv); and a sixteenth-century manuscript in the Bibliothèque Nationale in Paris (B.N., fonds celtique ms 1).[11] The copy in the Liber Flavus has not yet been published. A fifth version, extensively abbreviated, has been interpolated in the recension of the voyage tale *Immram Snédgusa ⁊ Meic Riagla* in the Yellow Book of Lecan (Dublin, Trinity College MS 1318 [formerly H.2.16]; s. xiv–xvi).[12]

David Dumville has demonstrated that the text of *Fís Adomnáin* in Leabhar Breac (B) belongs to a recension distinct from that of the Paris (P) and Lebor na hUidre (U) copies: the most obvious differences are a homiletic opening, and a subsequent speech in Latin which is closely related to a sentence in the Karlsruhe text (K).[13] As Dumville points out, a feature shared by Irish and Latin witnesses must go back to the archetype, indicating that the Leabhar Breac recension of *Fís Adomnáin* is in at least some respects the more conservative of the two.[14] It seems not yet to have been mentioned in print that the Liber Flavus copy (F) belongs to the same recension as B, containing both the exordium and the Latin speech.[15] The extensively abbreviated version in the Yellow Book of Lecan (Y) has omitted both of these diagnostic passages, and shares some readings with UP and others with BF. The following examples are drawn from the section of *Fís Adomnáin* which contains the description of the seven heavens, and follows the paragraph-numbering employed by Windisch and Dottin:

Y agrees with UP

§16 na pecdachu U, na pecthacha P, na pecthach Y *vs.* m*a*ccu báis B, m*a*ccu bais F
ins. ⁊ coméda B, ⁊ forocoimedus F

§18 co dorus UPY *vs.* do dorus BF
taisfenat U, taispeanadar P, taisbenand Y *vs.* taisselbait B, taisealbad F

Y agrees with BF

§15 dorsioir ⁊ cométaid U, doirrseoir ⁊ cometaid<áid> P *vs.* cometaid ⁊ doirseoir B, comhedaidh ⁊ dorseoir F, cometaid ⁊ doirseoraig Y
§16 *ins.* in sruth sin BFY
§17 do gréss andside U, do gr*é*s annsin P *vs.* annside do gr*é*s B, andsin do gres F, a ndorus in tres nime do gr*é*s Y
ergorid U, argoíridh P *vs.* ér fuirgit B, fuirghi F, furighter Y
ins. luaidi B, luaighi F, luaigi Y
§18 Dé U, De P *vs.* in duilemun B, an duileamhan F, in duileaman Y

It appears accordingly that Y occupies a place in the stemma of *Fís Adomnáin* intermediate between these two groups. The evidence given here represents only a sampling, and can accordingly have no more than a suggestive value: it seems however to be compatible with the hypothesis that Y reflects a version of *Fís Adomnáin* belonging to the same branch of the text tradition as B and F, but occupying a point earlier on the stemma than the exemplar shared by those two copies.[16]

We may now turn to 'Na Seacht Neamha' (S), also contained in Liber Flavus Fergusiorum. This tract begins by enumerating the seven heavens as Air, Ether, Olympus, *Firmamentum*, *Caelum Igneum, Caelum Angelorum*, and *Sedes Trinitatis*: similar lists can be found in other Irish sources, and an exact match to this one is provided by the *Liber de numeris*, a Hiberno-Latin work probably written on the Continent in the eighth century.[17] There follows an account of the soul's ascent through the seven heavens, which is verbally extremely close to that of *Fís Adomnáin*: it differs from the latter however in undertaking to supply the names of the gates of each of the heavens, in naming the punishing virgins in the second heaven, in giving a far more elaborate account of the rod wielded by an angel in the fifth heaven, and in substituting for the Latin speech already mentioned the statement, familiar from other Irish texts, that there are seventy-two rewards in heaven and seventy-two punishments in hell.[18] S concludes with a list of the six rivers of hell: Acheron, Cocytus, Styx, and Phlegethon, together with the less familiar Asericus and Mannog.

What relationship does S bear to *Fís Adomnáin*? Most obviously, it reflects the original 'Apocalypse' in ways in which *Fís Adomnáin* does not: several of the

agreements of UPY against BF as cases in which the former preserve a preferable reading. Where agreement of BFS weighs against this interpretation (see discussion of S below), other explanations must be sought: in the two examples cited from §16 above, *na pecthach* vs. *maccu báis* in BFS looks like a *lectio facilior*; while absence of anything corresponding to ⁊ *coméda* B, ⁊ *forocoimedus* F, *&* *forcoimeda* S is probably due to the penchant for radical abbreviation which characterises Y in general. 17 Cf. Carey, 'Cosmology in *Saltair na Rann*', *Celtica* 17 (1985), 33–52: 41. 18 Cf. Kuno Meyer, 'Mitteilungen aus irischen Handschriften', *Zeitschrift für celtische Philologie* 4 (1903), 31–47, 234–40, 467–69: 235 §9; Whitley Stokes, 'The Evernew Tongue', *Ériu* 2 (1905), 96–162: 132.

distinctive features which I have just mentioned correspond to elements in the Corpus Christi sermon, and must accordingly reflect the archetype shared by the Irish and Old English versions.[19] On the other hand, most of the wording of S is as already stated that of *Fís Adomnáin*: again, it will be useful to look at some of the readings which it shares with the different manuscript copies.

S agrees with BF

§16 na pecdachu U, na p*ec*thacha P, na pecthach Y *vs.* m*a*ccu báis B, m*a*ccu bais F, macu bais S
ins. ⁊ coméda B, ⁊ *fo*rocoimedus F, & forcoimeda S
ins. in sruth sin BFY, an sruth sin S
§17 ergorid U, argoíridh P *vs.* érfuirgit B, fuirghi F, furighter Y, fuirgid S
ocá thimchell U, oca timchill P *vs.* oca airchell B, oca tharceall F, ig a tairceall S
§18 Dé U, De P *vs.* in duilemun B, an duileamhan F, in duileaman Y
§19 tabraid UP *vs.* aititnid B, nos aithmídh F, atnaidh S
§20 thrúag U, truaid P *vs.* anfechtnaig B, aínfeachtnach F, ainmfeachtnach S
tánic U, tanicc P *vs.* tucad B, tucadh F, tugad S
dochum nimi U, docum nime P *vs.* co ríched B, co rriched F, gu ruigi an rightheadh neimhe S

S agrees with UP

§16 péne ⁊ pennaite U, pene ⁊ penaiti P, peine & peannuide S *vs.* péine B, peannaidi ⁊ peine F, pene Y
§17 sornd tentide U, sorn tentighe P, (so)sornd teinntighi S *vs.* sornd tened B, sornd teíneadh teinntighi F, sornd tened Y
ins. luaidi B, luaighi F, luaigi Y; *om.* UPS
§18 co tócband U, co togbann P, gu togbunn S *vs.* co tocaib B, co docaibh F, ⁊ tocbaid Y
co dorus UPY, cu dorus S *vs.* do dorus BF
taisfenat U, taispeanadar P, taisbenand Y, taisbeanuid S *vs.* taisselbait B, taisealbad F

Although any such judgment must remain tentative in the absence of a full critical edition of *Fís Adomnáin*,[20] the evidence presented above appears to indicate that S belongs to neither of the main branches of that text's trans-

19 Thus the Old English account opens with a list of the seven heavens themselves which is comparable to that in 'Na Seacht Neamha'; gives names similar to those in 'Na Seacht Neamha' to the first, second, third, fourth, and sixth heavens; and provides names for the virgins in both the first and second heavens. 20 Thus the picture is rendered more confusing by instances of S's agreement uniquely with either F or Y: e.g. *ina meadon* F, *ina meadhoin* S vs. *i mmedon* etc. UPBY; *comflaithius* Y, *comflaithes* S vs. *comslaintius* U, *comlantius*

mission. Given that it contains information which was evidently present in the original 'Seven Heavens Apocalypse', but which has not been preserved in *Fís Adomnáin*, it appears reasonable to see S as an (extensively modernised) copy of the 'Apocalypse', which the author of the *Fís* inserted into his own work. Where S agrees with either UP or BF, this may be taken to be probably the original reading: thus *macu bais* 'sons of death' rather than *na pecthachu* 'the sinners' in §16 looks like the *lectio difficilior*; and the statement in §17 that the burning wall in the fourth heaven is made of lead, found only in BFY, corresponds to nothing in the Latin or Old English versions of the 'Apocalypse'. Use of the 3 sg. present indicative ending *-ann* in *gu togbunn* (§18) shows S agreeing with UP in using a relatively late linguistic form, as opposed to the more conservative *co tocaib* of BF: this may represent coincidental innovation, but it is also worth noting that the same ending is attested in all manuscripts in the case of *nos lenand* (§16).

Finally, there is the discussion of the seven heavens in the third recension of *In Tenga Bithnua*. Copies of this recension survive in many manuscripts of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries: only one of these, an exceptionally late and corrupt example, has yet been printed.[21] While this state of affairs renders it impossible to discuss the work definitively, I believe that the evidence provided by the sole published copy may suffice for our present purposes. Even a cursory scrutiny shows that the relevant section is simply a version of S – agreeing with the latter for instance in the initial listing of the heavens, in supplying versions of several of the names found there but not in *Fís Adomnáin*, and in enumerating heavenly rewards, infernal punishments, and the rivers of hell – which has been inserted between the paragraphs corresponding to §§39 and 40 in In *Tenga Bithnua*'s second recension. In most respects this version is clearly inferior, with extensive gaps which diminish the number of heavens described and often seriously impair the sense. In some cases, however, comparison with *Fís Adomnáin* shows that *In Tenga Bithnua* preserves readings which have been modified in the sole surviving copy of S:[22] this raises the interesting possibility that certain statements to which nothing in the latter corresponds may have been present in S's original form as well. It will only be possible to pursue this question

PB, *comlanís* F. 21 G. Dottin, 'Une rédaction moderne du *Teanga Bithnua*', *Revue Celtique* 28 (1907), 278–307: 294–7. Other manuscripts are listed by Martin McNamara, *The Apocrypha in the Irish Church* (Dublin: Dublin Institute for Advanced Stuides, 1975), 116–17. It should be noted that one copy of this recension is known to exist in an older manuscript: this is Edinburgh, National Library of Scotland (Advocates' Library) MS XLVII, dating apparently from the fifteenth century. Unfortunately the text is fragmentary, only the beginning and the end having been preserved: while there is no reason not to assume that this copy originally contained an account of the seven heavens, no trace of this has survived. The manuscript is described by Donald Mackinnon, *A Descriptive Catalogue of Gaelic Manuscripts in the Advocates' Library, Edinburgh, and elsewhere in Scotland* (Edinburgh: William Brown, 1912), 96–97. 22 Thus where *Fís Adomnáin* reads *slucit* UB, *sluicit* P, *sluicid* F (§20; the relevant line is omitted in Y), *In Tenga Bithnua* reads *sloigid* by contrast with *suigis* in S.

systematically, however, when the third recension of *In Tenga Bithnua* has been critically edited.

We may now turn to the question of the origins of the 'Insular Seven Heavens Apocalypse'. This has in the past two decades been the subject of important contributions by Jane Stevenson (in 1983)[23] and by Richard Bauckham (in 1993).[24]

The central contention of Dr Stevenson's article is that the 'common source' of the various texts which we have been considering can be identified as one of the documents in the celebrated collection of Gnostic papyri found at Nag Hammadi in Egypt: an *Apocalypse of Paul* which differs markedly from the well-known *Visio Sancti Pauli* and its many derivatives. Here Paul is said to have been conducted through ten heavens, only some of which are described: in the fourth heaven he sees angels, and souls being judged and scourged; in the fifth heaven there are angels with iron rods and whips; the sixth heaven is illuminated by light from above; and in the seventh heaven an old man, representing the Gnostic demiurge, is seated on a radiant throne.[25] Stevenson points to resemblances between this description and those in the Insular 'Seven Heavens' accounts, and mentions some other features of the latter for which she proposes an origin in the widely disseminated apocalypses of Peter and Paul, or in 'pre-fourth-century Coptic texts' more generally. As an afterthought, she gives some account of the sevenfold journey of the soul described in Recension A of the Armenian *Questions of Ezra*.[26]

Professor Bauckham's discussion is more detailed: while not ruling out the possibility that the vernacular texts may preserve some early features not found in the Latin version in the Karlsruhe fragment, he argues that in practice the testimony of the latter should be accorded preference in any speculations regarding the archetype which they share. He holds that Stevenson has erred in concentrating on the Nag Hammadi *Apocalypse of Paul*, and that there is no reason to connect the original 'Seven Heavens Apocalypse' either with Gnosticism or with Egypt. Going through the Latin text point by point, he compares it with a range of early Jewish and Christian writings, concluding that the most impressive parallels are afforded by the Armenian apocryphon already mentioned. Since the relevant passage in the latter is only paraphrased by Bauckham, it may facilitate comparison to cite it directly here. Ezra is informed that:

> [An angel] takes the soul, brings it to the east; they pass through frost, through snow, through darkness, through hail, through ice, through storm, through hosts of Satan, through streams, through the winds of

23 Cf. note 5 above. 24 Cf. note 6 above. 25 The text has been edited and translated by W. R. Murdock and G. W. MacRae in D. M. Parrott, ed., *Nag Hammadi Codices V, 2–5 and VI with Papyrus Berolinensis 8502, 1 and 4* (Nag Hammadi Studies 11; Leiden: Brill, 1979), 47–64. 26 Attention had already been called to this text by St. John D. Seymour, 'The Seven Heavens in Irish Literature', *Zeitschrift für Celtische Philologie* 14 (1923), 18–30: 24.

> terrible rains, through terrible and astounding paths, through narrow defiles, and through high mountains. O wondrous way, for one foot is behind the other and before it are fiery rivers! ... To that way there are seven camps and seven steps to the Divinity, if I can make (someone) pass along it. Because the first lodgings are bad and wondrous; the second fearsome and indescribable; the third hell and icy cold; the fourth quarrels and wars; in the fifth, then, investigation – if he is just, he shines, and if he is a sinner, he is darkened; in the sixth, then, the soul of the righteous man sparkles like the sun; in the seventh, then, having brought (him) I make him approach the great throne of the Divinity, opposite the garden, facing the glory of God where the sublime light is.[27]

I believe that Bauckham is correct in rejecting Stevenson's specific claims for the Nag Hammadi *Apocalypse of Paul*: the correspondences on which she builds her argument are not in the end so close as to necessitate a hypothesis of direct derivation, nor indeed are the features in question difficult to parallel elsewhere in writing of this kind. But I also feel that there are points in Bauckham's own position which have not been convincingly demonstrated: his denial of a connection with Gnostic Egypt, and his view that the 'greatest overall affinity' with the 'Seven Heavens Apocalypse' is to be found in Recension A of the *Questions of Ezra*. A look at his principal arguments will, I hope, show that there is room for another reading of the evidence.

One problem with Bauckham's overall approach is his privileging of the oldest witness, the Karlsruhe fragment, vis-à-vis the Irish and Old English versions. In support of this analysis he cites two passages in which, in his view, this version is closest to the original.[28] It is striking that the comparative evidence adduced by Bauckham to demonstrate the Latin text's conservatism is derived in neither of these instances from the passage in the *Questions of Ezra* which he considers to be our 'Apocalypse''s closest counterpart.[29] But this is not all. In the detailed commentary on the Karlsruhe fragment which accompanies his edition, Bauckham concedes on no less than four occasions that the vernacular

27 'Questions of Ezra', trans. M. E. Stone, in James H. Charlesworth, ed., *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha*, 2 vols.(Garden City: Doubleday, 1983–5), i.591–99: 597. 28 '*Apocalypse*', 147–52. 29 In fact, the principal comparandum for the first passage (an account of a fiery wheel assigned by K to the sixth heaven, corresponding to the whirlpool in *Fís Adamnáin*) is drawn specifically from an Egyptian source, the Coptic *Apocalypse of John* (for a further possible parallel, this one Manichaean, see Franz Cumont, 'La roue à puiser les âmes du manichéisme', *Revue de l'Histoire des Religions* 72 [1915] 384–8). As his second instance, Bauckham argued that the light from precious stones assigned to the sixth heaven by the Irish and Old English versions is secondary, without adverting to the fact that the *Questions of Ezra* as well depicts the sixth 'stage' as a place of radiance. In this general context, it may be mentioned that K differs from all other versions of the 'Apocalypse' in making the sixth heaven a region of punishment.

texts may be closer to the source than is the Latin.[30] Even on his own showing, then, it is by no means evident that 'the Latin text (K) ... tends to be preferable to the Anglo-Saxon and Irish versions,' or that 'priority must be given to K.'[31]

I shall now look at Bauckham's commentary, with specific reference to his claim that Recension A of the *Questions of Ezra* bears a significant relationship to the 'Insular Seven Heavens Apocalypse' in a way that Gnostic and/or Egyptian materials do not.[32]

(i) The Karlsruhe fragment begins with a statement regarding the origins of dew, apparently in the second heaven: Bauckham is surely correct in attributing this to the original 'Apocalypse'. He notes that information about the sources of meteorological phenomena is a common feature in apocalyptic texts. Of the parallels which he cites, however, one of the closest is afforded by the Coptic *Mysteries of John*,[33] while his attempt to find something comparable in the *Questions of Ezra* is more forced.[34]

(ii) Bauckham compares the names associated with the heavens to similar names found 'in Christian and Gnostic literature': no such names appear in the account in the *Questions of Ezra*. This is one of the cases in which Bauckham acknowledges the possibility that the vernacular 'Seven Heavens' texts adhere to the source more closely than the Latin in assigning the names not to the heavens but to their doors, since 'doors and doorkeepers are a feature of ancient accounts of the seven heavens.' Of the four examples of this feature which he cites, two are Coptic.[35]

30 '*Apocalypse*', 156 (names for gates of heavens), 157–8 (both good and evil souls traverse the heavens), 159 (fiery wall), 164 (infernal dragons swallow souls): further points could easily have been included. Thus the Latin names of the virgins in the Corpus Christi sermon (two of them rendered into Irish in 'Na Seacht Neamha') must be old, as they represent translations of the Greek terms for the cardinal virtues independent of the Latin equivalents which had been familiar since the time of Cicero, and were employed as Christian terminology by such writers as Jerome and Augustine (cf. Willard, *Two Apocrypha*, 11–12). Again, a comparison with *Visio Sancti Pauli* shows that God's speech to the angels in *Fís Adomnáin* and the Corpus Christi sermon is closer to the original text than its counterpart in the Karlsruhe fragment (cf. Bauckham, '*Apocalypse*', 163). 31 Bauckham, '*Apocalypse*', 147, 152. On the latter page, the more cautious formulation 'the Anglo-Saxon and Irish versions derive originally from a Latin text no less corrupt than K' may be nearer to the truth. 32 I shall not recapitulate all of Bauckham's discussion here: several of the points which he covers involve features so widespread in descriptions of a punitive afterworld that they cannot be used as evidence for any specific claims of affiliation. 33 Edited and translated, from a manuscript written in AD 1006, by E. A. W. Budge, *Coptic Apocrypha in the Dialect of Upper Egypt* (London: British Museum, 1913), 59–74, 241–57: a celestial fountain of dew is described on 247. 34 Bauckham, '*Apocalypse*', 155: 'Something of a parallel could be found in *QuesEzra* A16, which integrates the meteorological phenomena of the lower heavens into the theme of the souls' ascent through the heavens by making them hazards through which the soul must pass.' These meteorological phenomena do not however include dew. 35 Bauckham, '*Apocalypse*', 156. The Coptic texts in question are the Nag Hammadi *Apocalypse of Paul* and the Coptic *Mysteries of John*, mentioned above; Bauckham also cites

Here there is more to be said. Several of the names in our 'Apocalypse', especially as they appear in the Corpus Christi sermon, look like versions of Hebrew names of God: *Sabaoth* is an obvious example, while *Elioth* (in the form *Elloeuth*) and *Ioth* are variants of *El* and *Yah* respectively which are cited by Irenaeus;[36] *Iohim* is perhaps a conflation of *Yah* and *Elohim*. Many names in Gnostic mythology can be traced to the same origin, especially those which are applied to the guardians of the seven heavens: thus the Nag Hammadi tract *On the Origin of the World* includes *Yao*, *Eloai*, and *Sabaoth* among the 'powers of the seven heavens.'[37]

(iii) Bauckham observes that several apocalyptic works place regions of punishment in the heavens, but that the 'Seven Heavens Apocalypse';

> seems peculiar in that it narrates successive punishments through which the wicked souls pass in the third, fourth, (fifth?) and sixth heavens, before being judged by God in the seventh heaven and then consigned to hell. But something similar seems to be in view in the abbreviated account in *QuesEzra* A20, where not only is hell in the third heaven, but all of the lower heavens are hazardous, up to the fifth heaven, in which the soul is investigated and its fate determined.

The closest parallel to our texts which Bauckham can find, however, is *Pistis Sophia*, a Coptic Gnostic treatise of the third century, where a long series of punishments leads to the soul's judgment, and the condemned are swallowed by an enormous serpent. To this serpent we shall have occasion to return. Bauckham states of the *Pistis Sophia* version that 'behind this Gnosticized account probably lies an apocalyptic one similar in conception to that in our text;' but whether it is in fact necessary to postulate such a pre-Gnostic prototype remains to be seen.[38]

(iv) For the fixed periods which the 'Seven Heavens' texts allot to sinful souls in the different regions of punishment, the closest parallels known to Bauckham

the apocryphal *Ascension of Isaiah* and *3 Baruch*. 36 Adelin Rousseau, Louis Doutreleau, and Charles Mercier, eds, *Iréné de Lyon: Contre les hérésies*, 10 vols.(Sources Chrétiennes 34, 100, 152–53, 210–11, 263–64, 293; Paris: CERF, 1952–82), ii.364. 37 Bentley Layton, ed. and trans., *Nag Hammadi Codex II, 2–7 together with XIII, 2*, Brit. Lib. Or. 4926 (1) and P. Oxy. 1, 654, 655* (Nag Hammadi Studies 21; Leiden/New York/København/Köln: Brill, 1989), 36–37. *Eloim* appears as an unrighteous archon in the *Apocryphon of John*: Michael Waldstein and Frederik Wisse (eds. and trans.), *The Apocryphon of John* Synopsis of Nag Hammadi Codices II, 1; III, 1; and IV, 1 with BG 8502,2 (Nag Hammadi and Manichaean Studies 33; Leiden/New York/Köln: Brill, 1995), 138–9. Cf. the accounts of the Ophites by Origen (discussed below) and Irenaeus (*Aduersus haereses* I.xxx.5: Rousseau et al., *Iréné de Lyon*, ii.368–71). 38 Bauckham, '*Apocalypse*', 156–7. Cf. 158, where after listing a series of comparanda Bauckham singles out the *Questions of Ezra* and *Pistis Sophia* as being those which specifically involve 'preliminary punishments prior to judgment.'

are again to be found in *Pistis Sophia*. This concept does not figure in the *Questions of Ezra*.[39]

(v) Another respect in which Bauckham holds that the Old English and Irish versions may be closer than the Latin to their shared source is in their descriptions of the fate of those souls which are finally damned. In the Karlsruhe fragment, it is said of the condemned soul that 'the angel plunges him into hell, an iron city and walls and fiery iron walls, and twelve towers and twelve dragons in each tower and twelve punishments and twelve burning whips.'[40] In the vernacular versions there are twelve dragons whose relationship with one another, and with their victim, is as we have seen more hideously direct: each of them swallows the soul in turn, discharging it into the jaws of the next until it is at last devoured by Satan. In considering the possibility that the latter scenario reflects the original, Bauckham notes comparable descriptions in the Arabic *Testament of Isaac*[41] and the Coptic *Visio Sancti Pauli*[42] (both, again, works composed in Egypt). As a more distant analogue to the scenario as presented in the Karlsruhe fragment, he mentions the description in *Pistis Sophia*, already alluded to, of how 'the ultimate hell, the dragon of outer darkness, contains twelve chambers ... in each of which an archon inflicts punishments.'[43] Stevenson too cites the *Testament of Isaac* and the Coptic *Visio Sancti Pauli*, as well as the testimony of Epiphanius of Salamis that some Gnostics believed in a dragon which swallows souls prior to their reincarnation.[44]

I shall come back to the twelve dragons shortly; but first a few more general remarks regarding Bauckham's analysis are in order. It will have been observed that, notwithstanding his assertions to the contrary, close correspondences between the 'Insular Seven Heavens Apocalypse' and Recension A of the *Questions of Ezra* are relatively meagre. Wherever such a parallelism can be proposed, resemblances which are at least as close can be cited from Egyptian (and especially Egyptian Gnostic) sources. Nor is this all: in several instances, features of the 'Apocalypse' can be matched in Egyptian writings where nothing similar is to be found in the *Questions of Ezra*. Even if we limit ourselves, therefore, to the evidence as Bauckham presents it, it is difficult to see on what grounds the hypothesis of an Egyptian provenance is to be rejected.

39 Bauckham, '*Apocalypse*', 158. 40 Bauckham's translation, '*Apocalypse*', 154; for another rendering of this passage, with discussion, see Jacqueline Borsje, *From Chaos to Enemy* Encounters with Monsters in Early Irish Texts (Instrumenta Patristica 29; Turnhout: Brepols, 1996), 282. 41 On the Egyptian background of the *Testament of Isaac* see the remarks of W. F. Stinespring in Charlesworth, *Old Testament Pseudepigrapha*, i.903–4; there are also Coptic and Ethiopic versions. 42 In calling this text the 'Coptic *Visio Sancti Pauli*', I seek to indicate its close kinship with the influential Latin apocalypse of that name. In this it differs from the Nag Hammadi *Apocalypse of Paul* discussed above, a text also of course written in Coptic. 43 Bauckham, '*Apocalypse*', 164–5. I would contend that this passage too is closer to the vernacular versions than to the Latin, as it depicts the swallowing of the soul by an infernal monster. 44 Stevenson, 'Ascent', 31–2.

It may also be worth while to look a little more closely at the *Questions of Ezra* itself. This is an Armenian work which exists in two recensions: the shorter (B) is found in the fourth recension of the *Menologium* of the Armenian Church; while the longer (A) appears to survive uniquely in a manuscript written in the year 1208, preserved in the library of the Mekhitarist Fathers in Venice. It is uncertain whether A represents the expansion of a source text resembling B, or B reflects the abbreviation of a text like A. In either case, it seems to be generally agreed that the section of A in which the seven stages of the soul's progress are described derives from a source different from that of the remainder of the text. This extraneous material has been characterised by the most recent translator of the *Questions of Ezra* as 'a pastiche of ideas drawn from older sources.'[45]

These textual details have, I think, a bearing on Bauckham's overall position. The passage in Recension A to which he assigns such importance would appear to have no integral connection with the text in which it is found, or with the family of apocalyptic treatises associated with Ezra to which the *Questions of Ezra* belongs. Rather, it seems to have made its way into this body of material because it shares with the Ezra writings a concern with the fate of the soul – a fate which, however, the latter visualised in ways which have little in common with our 'Seven Heavens' texts. Like the description of the seven heavens in *Fís Adomnáin*, the Armenian passage survives only in isolation, inserted in a medieval witness remote from its original context: even if its resemblances to the Insular accounts were much closer than is in fact the case, it would still be able to tell us very little about the latter's background.

If we turn from the *Questions of Ezra* to the other apocalyptic texts cited by Bauckham, close parallels continue to be elusive: there are descriptions of the seven heavens, enumerations of their names, accounts of celestial regions of punishment, and so on, but very little which answers to our own 'Apocalypse's 'main theme' of 'the passage of souls through the heavens.'[46] Bauckham makes the interesting observation that the seven heavens receive relatively little attention in Christian apocalyptic (outside Ireland), and suggests that the topic may have been discredited in Christian eyes by its prominence in the speculations of the Gnostics.[47] Philip Alexander has reminded me that the literature of Jewish Merkavah mysticism deals with visionary ascent (or descent) through seven heavens: these accounts are themselves in some ways reminiscent of the Gnostic descriptions of the soul's journey which I shall discuss below. As Ithamar Gruenwald points out, however, they differ from the latter – and from the 'Seven Heavens Apocalypse' – in significant respects:

45 Stone, in Charlesworth, *Old Testament Pseudepigrapha*, i.593. Cf. the discussion in Bauckham, '*Apocalypse*', 169. 46 Bauckham, '*Apocalypse*', 155. Cf. 165 n. 54, where the closest parallels apart from the *Questions of Ezra* are acknowledged to be three Coptic works: an *Apocalypse of John*, the *Mysteries of John* cited above, and *Pistis Sophia*. 47 '*Apocalypse*', 167 and n. 59.

> Since [the Merkavah] writings are basically mystical writings with no immediate redemptive claims, they are to be strictly distinguished from the gnostic concepts and writings which have an emphatic redemptive quality ... While gnosticism by and large means a final escape from the bonds of the material, evil, world, the mysticism of the Merkavah presupposes that the mystic always returns from his celestial adventures to his body on earth.[48]

In looking for a way forward, I shall return to Stevenson's view that the 'Insular Seven Heavens Apocalypse' derives from an Egyptian Gnostic source, without however following her in her proposal that this source can be identified specifically as the Nag Hammadi *Apocalypse of Paul*. In this connection I shall focus on two of the 'Apocalypse''s most conspicuous features: the account of twelve infernal dragons; and the naming of the gates and presiding archangels associated with various of the seven heavens.

I have already discussed the first of these topics in an article published in 1994, in which I argued that it is *Pistis Sophia* which provides us with the closest counterpart to the twelve dragons of the 'Insular Seven Heavens Apocalypse'.[49] This work, as we have already noted, includes a description of 'the dragon of the outer darkness,' a serpent encircling the earth and biting its own tail: within its body are twelve 'places of judgment' or 'chambers of punishment,' each presided over by a diabolical 'archon' with the face of an animal. The names and appearances of these archons are listed, together with the names of the gates of the twelve chambers: armed with this knowledge, it is possible for a soul to escape from the dragon.[50]

Here the twelvefold division corresponds to that in all versions of the 'Insular Seven Heavens Apocalypse', a resemblance not parallelled in the *Testament of Isaac*, in the Coptic *Visio Sancti Pauli*, or indeed in the description of the dragon in Epiphanius. Furthermore, *Pistis Sophia*'s account involves both twelve regions of punishment (as in the Karlsruhe fragment, and also in the Corpus Christi sermon) and the swallowing of a lost soul by a dragon (recalling the soul's swallowing by multiple dragons in the Irish and Old English versions). It seems reasonable to conclude that our apocalypse probably drew, in this respect as in others already discussed, on a text resembling *Pistis Sophia*.

48 *Apocalyptic and Merkavah Mysticism* (Arbeiten zur Geschichte des antiken Judentums und des Urchristentums 14; Leiden: Brill, 1980), 110–11; the discussion on the ensuing pages is also valuable. Bauckham alludes to Merkavah literature on page 156 of his article; as he observes on page 170, however, the 'Seven Heavens Apocalypse' differs from this and from most of his other comparanda in that it is not 'the kind of apocalypse in which a seer is conducted through the seven heavens to view their contents.' 49 'The Sun's Night Journey: a Pharaonic Image in Medieval Ireland', *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* 57 (1994), 14–34: 24–6. 50 C. Schmidt (trans.), *Pistis Sophia* (Leipzig: Hinrichs, 1925), 233–5.

The dragon attested in *Pistis Sophia* (and more cursorily in Epiphanius) belongs to Gnostic mythology; but it has been recognised that its antecedents are to be sought in ancient Egyptian doctrines concerning the afterlife. Here too we find descriptions both of an enormous infernal serpent and of an underworld divided into twelve regions with twelve gates; here too there are interminable lists of the names of the gates and regions, and of the names and the animal aspects of their guardians.[51] It appears most probable, then, that the final section of our 'Apocalypse' likewise derives specifically from the Gnosticism of Egypt.

We may now look back to the main body of our account: here the soul rises through seven heavens, most of them places of trial and punishment, until it finally reaches the presence of God. In its original form, to judge from the information scattered among the surviving witnesses, the 'Apocalypse' appears not only to have described the ordeals encountered in each of the heavens, but also to have named the gates of the heavens and of at least some of the archangels who watched over them. As I have already briefly indicated, information of this kind is particularly common in Gnostic sources. In the Gnostic world-view, the heavens were like the concentric walls of a prison, separating mankind from liberation and from union with the true God: the names of the archons who watched over these heavens could serve as passwords, enabling the enlightened soul to pass beyond. Thus the *Two Books of Jeu*, a Coptic Gnostic treatise closely related to *Pistis Sophia*, describes

> the ascension which will lead the souls of the disciples, thus purified, initiated and saved, through the aeons of the transcendent world to the place of 'the great invisible God' ... Here also are imparted the secret names of the aeons, their several numbers, the 'seals' and 'pass-words', the formulae which allow free passage through each of their spheres, one after the other, and ensure escape from their grasp and their power.[52]

Especially intriguing in this context is the account of the beliefs of the Gnostic sect of the Ophites which is provided by Origen in his apologetic work *Contra Celsum*. According to Origen, the Ophites envisaged the illuminated soul as being able to cross the 'fence of evil, gates which are bound to the world of archons' by addressing the rulers of the seven heavens with a series of formulaic invocations. A single example will give a sense of the flavour of these speeches:

> Astaphaeus, archon of the third gate, overseer of the first origin of water: looking upon me as an initiate, allow me to pass, purified with the spirit of a virgin, you who see the essence of the universe. Let the grace be with me, father, let it be with me.

51 I have provided references to this effect in 'Sun's Night Journey', 25 n. 70. 52 Synopsis by H.-C. Puech in E. Heinecke and W. Schneemelcher (eds.), *New Testament Apocrypha*, trans. ed. R. McL. Wilson, 2 vols. (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1963–5), i.262–3.

Origen also claimed to have seen an Ophite diagram which portrayed the seven archons as having the faces of animals[53] – we may recall the animal-headed archons within the 'serpent of the outer darkness' in *Pistis Sophia* – and which assigned to some of them the names of Judaeo-Christian angels. Here there is a suggestive correspondence with the insular 'Seven Heavens' texts: like them, the Ophite diagram assigned the first heaven to Michael. It is tempting to see a further link in the second heaven, where Uriel reigns according to the Insular texts, Suriel according to the Ophites.[54]

It may be noted in passing that Gnostics were not the only esoteric group in Graeco-Roman Egypt to associate the seven heavens with ordeal and purification. Speaking of the redemption of the soul, the first treatise in the *Corpus Hermeticum* has this to say:

> ... And thus one proceeds to journey upward through the Harmony. And to the first zone he gives up the power of increase and decrease; to the second the devising of evils, trickery being [now rendered] powerless; to the third the deception of lust, [now rendered] powerless; to the fourth the magnificence of power, [now] stripped of its advantages; to the fifth impious rashness and headlong daring; to the sixth wrongful undertakings [in quest] of wealth, [now rendered] powerless; and to the seventh zone the lurking lie.[55]

53 His testimony is now corroborated by the Nag Hammadi finds: see Waldstein and Wisse, *Apocryphon of John*, 68–73. 54 *Contra Celsum* VI.30–1: see Marcel Borret (ed. and trans.), *Origène: Contre Celse*, 5 vols. (Sources Chrétiennes 132, 136, 147, 150, 227; Paris: CERF, 1967–76), iv.252–59 (my translation). An even closer parallel appears in a list of seven supreme angels in the *Apocryphon of John*: Michael, Ouriel, Asmenedas, Saphasatoel, Aarmouriam, Richram, and Amiorps (Waldstein and Wisse, *Apocryphon of John*, 105). *Fís Adomnáin*, 'Na Seacht Neamha', and the Old English homily all give Michael and Uriel/Ariel as the angels of the first two heavens, but name none of the angels thereafter: is this because the original 'Apocalypse' had a list like that in the *Apocryphon of John*, where the first two names were familiar and the rest forbiddingly outlandish? As Jacqueline Borsje has kindly pointed out to me, the Ethiopic *1 Enoch* 9:1 closely associates Michael with an angel whose name is given as *Surafel*, *Uryan*, and *Ur'el* in different manuscripts (Charlesworth, *Old Testament Pseudepigrapha*, i.16). 55 *Corpus Hermeticum* I.25, in A. D. Nock and A.-J. Festugière (eds. and trans.), *Corpus Hermeticum*, 4 vols. (Paris: Belles Lettres, 1945–54), i.15–16 (my translation). With the description of the serpent whose body contains twelve prisons, already discussed, we can compare another passage, this one in the thirteenth treatise. Hermes Trismegistus there informs his son that he has twelve 'torturers' within him, which he identifies as twelve sins. 'They force the inner man to suffer in his senses, by means of the prison of the body. But they withdraw, [though] not all at once, from the one on whom God has had mercy: in this way are brought about the means and teaching of rebirth' (XIII.7; Nock and Festugière, *Corpus Hermeticum*, ii.203). Reckonings of the archons as numbering seven and twelve are juxtaposed or superimposed in several Gnostic writings: see the remarks of Simone Pétrement, *A Separate God* The Christian Origins of Gnosticism, trans. Carol Harrison (New York: HarperCollins, 1990), 73–4.

As with the infernal dragon, it can be argued that Gnostic (and, in this instance, Hermetic) teachings owe a debt here to the indigenous traditions of Egypt. Chapter 147 in the *Book of the Dead* describes how the soul must pass seven gates, or Ārits: the names and appearances of those who watch at these gates are detailed, as are the invocations with which they can be placated. Thus the Papyrus of Ani states that the wardens of the seventh Ārit are named Sekhmet-em-tesu-sen ('Prevailer over Their Knives'), Āa-māa-kheru ('Loud-voiced'), and Khesef-khemi ('Repeller of Attackers'): they have the heads of a hare, a lion, and a man and are armed with two knives and a whisk.[56] Upon reaching the Ārit, the soul is to say:

> I have come unto thee, Osiris, that I may be cleansed through thy efflux and adore thee and cause thy efflux to increase. Thou circlest the sky facing Re; thou seest the common folk. Sole one, thou invokest Re in the night bark as he circles the horizon of the sky. I tell my desire for his dignity and his power. What I say comes to pass like what he says, though I be kept away from him. Thou hast prepared for me all the best ways unto thee.[57]

The resemblances to Origen's account of Ophite doctrine are especially noteworthy here: the soul confronts a series of seven barriers, and must know the names and appearances of their keepers as well as ritual invocations in which esoteric boasting is combined with aretalogical flattery.

To sum up: the distinctive features of the 'Insular Seven Heavens Apocalypse' can be parallelled most closely in Egyptian apocalyptic writings, specifically those of the Gnostics. Particularly significant correspondences are to be found in the treatise *Pistis Sophia*, and in the teachings of the Ophites. In both cases, the Gnostic doctrines in question appear to draw upon native Egyptian belief:[58] the roots of *Fís Adomnáin*'s account of the seven heavens lie in one of the most ancient civilisations whose writings have come down to us.[59]

56 It is tempting to compare the scenario here, where each Ārit is guarded by three spirits armed with knives and whisks, with that in the 'Seven Heavens Apocalypse', where the first and second heavens are each guarded by an angel accompanied by two virgins armed with rods or whips. In various Gnostic accounts the seven archons have female companions whose names, like those of the virgins in the 'Apocalypse', are those of abstract qualities (*Apocryphon of John*: Waldstein and Wisse, *Apocryphon of John*, 74–75; *On the Origin of the World*: Layton, *Nag Hammadi Codex II, 2–7*, 36–37). 57 Thomas George Allen, trans., *The Book of the Dead or Going Forth by Day* (Chicago: University of Chicago, 1974), 138–9; cf. E. A. W. Budge (ed. and trans.), *The Book of the Dead* (New York: University Books, 1960), 268–72, 402–08. 58 In making this assertion I am putting forward no claims regarding Gnosticism as a whole: different experts have seen its ultimate origins as lying in Judaism, in Christianity, in Iran, and elsewhere. Whatever the answer(s) to this larger question may be, it is obvious that the various Gnostic sects were highly eclectic: I see nothing unreasonable in the view that Egyptian Gnostics drew upon Egyptian traditions. 59 On the 'close agreement' between Egyptian doctrines and the account of the seven heavens in *Fís Adomnáin* see already C. S. Boswell, *An Irish Precursor of Dante* (Grimm Library 18; London: Nutt, 1909), 89–90, 193 n. 1.

Some remarks on the happy otherworld of the 'Voyage of Bran'

Donncha Ó hAodha

The Old Irish tale of the 'Voyage of Bran'[1] is arguably, given its length, the text of early Irish literature which has been subjected to the most extensive critical scrutiny over the last century.[2] There are very many reasons for this great interest in the tale on the part of scholars, the very first of which is the question of the category of tale to which it properly belongs. It is clear that there was hesitation within the tradition as to whether it was an *echtrae* or an *immram*. The *echtrae* 'outing, adventure' is the journey of the hero to the Otherworld, whether across the sea or otherwise, and whether or not he returns home again.[3] The *immram* 'voyage', which is a younger type, is the story of the sea-journey to fabulous islands beyond the world inhabited by men. Our tale is given the title *Immram Brain* within the text itself (l. 289), and this is the title adopted by all three editors of the tale. On the other hand it is accorded the title *Echtra Brain maic Febail* 'The Adventure of Bran son of Febal' in the Middle Irish Tale-list B.[4] The only manuscript which has a scribal heading over its copy

1 There are three editions of the entire tale. The first was in two volumes: K. Meyer, *The Voyage of Bran*, I (London, David Nutt, 1895); A. Nutt, *The Voyage of Bran*, II (*The Celtic Doctrine of Re-birth*) (London, David Nutt, 1897). It was next edited (but without translation) by A. G. Van Hamel in *Immrama* (Dublin, 1941). The most recent edition is by S. Mac Mathúna: *Immram Brain. Bran's Journey to the Land of the Women* (Tuebingen, 1985). See L. Breatnach, *Celtica* 20 (1988) 177–92 for a review of the latter edition. References in the present article are to the lines of Mac Mathúna's edition. Quotations from the original text and from the translation are also based on Mac Mathúna although sometimes with modification, most often based on the work of other scholars. 2 Aside from the editions just cited, the following constitute a minimal bibliography: M. Dillon, *Early Irish Literature* (Chicago, 1948), 104–7; J. Carney, *Studies in Irish Literature and History* (Dublin, 1955), 280–95; P. Mac Cana, 'Mongán mac Fiachna and *Immram Brain*', *Ériu* 23 (1972) 102–42; idem, 'On the 'prehistory' of *Immram Brain*', *Ériu* 26 (1975), 33–52; idem, 'The sinless otherworld of *Immram Brain*', *Ériu* 27 (1976), 95–115; D. N. Dumville, '*Echtrae* and *Immram*: Some problems of definition', *Ériu* 27 (1976), 73–94; J. Carey, 'On the Interrelationships of some *Cín Dromma Snechtai* Texts', *Ériu* 46 (1995), 71–92; K. McCone, *Echtrae Chonnlai and the Beginnings of Vernacular Narrative Writing in Ireland* (Maynooth, 2000); J. Wooding, *The Otherworld Voyage in Irish Literature: an Anthology of Criticism* (Dublin, 2000). 3 See McCone, op. cit., for *Echtrae Chonnlai* ' The Adventure of Connlae' which is closely related to *Immram Brain*. 4 See P. Mac Cana, *The Learned Tales of Medieval Ireland* (Dublin, 1980), 53.

of the tale, the Yellow Book of Lecan, combines the two terms: *Imram Brain meic Febuil andso 7 a eachtra annso síss*[5] 'This below is a copy of the Voyage of Bran son of Febal and his Adventure'. The tale would seem to be a transitional type in that Bran and his companions on their journey in the Otherworld do encounter one fantastic island: *Inis Subai* 'The Island of Hilarity' (ll. 255 ff.). On the other hand the *immram*-type as fully developed involves visits to a whole series of fabulous islands. It should be noted that the story of Bran is the only *immram* which does not have a Christian or even an ecclesiastical setting. The story is set in the period before the time of Christ.

Another reason for the great scholarly interest in our story is the fact that it consists almost entirely of lyric poetry.[6] The literary structure of *Immram Brain* is unusual. It consists essentially of two long poems (each containing 28 quatrains) – which parallel each other in many respects – describing the Otherworld , the first in the mouth of 'the woman from the lands of wonders' (ll. 1–2) who has come to invite Bran to the Otherworld, the second in the mouth of the Otherworld personage Manannán mac Lir after Bran has already set sail. Each of the two poems is preceded by a brief prose introduction, and the second poem is followed by a prose passage which constitutes the end of the story describing Bran's arrival at his destination in the Otherworld and the aftermath of that.

When the nameless woman from the Otherworld is introduced in the opening prose passage, she is not without tokens of her origin. One of these tokens is a magic branch which is given to Bran. The first line of the woman's poem identifies the branch as *Cróeb dind abaill a hEmain* 'A branch from the apple-tree of Emain' (l. 17).[7] On the other hand at the close of her poem she identifies the goal to which she is inviting Bran as *Tír na mBan* 'The Land of Women'[8] The Otherworld is not only multilocational, it is also particularly rich in nomenclature.

A large element of the parallelism between the two poems of the tale lies in the structure of the poems themselves. Broadly speaking they both begin with a description of the Otherworld and its inhabitants, followed by a prophecy of the birth of Christ and ending with an exhortation to Bran to set out or continue on his journey. In the case of the first of the poems the opening description of the Otherworld is by far the longest section, consisting of 23 quatrains (ll. 17–108). This is followed by 3 quatrains prophesying the birth and redemption of Christ (ll.109–20). The poem ends with two quatrains addressed specifically to Bran and urging him to set sail (ll. 121–8). In its description of the Otherworld it begins with reference to a single island and ends (ll. 105–8):

5 See Mac Mathúna, op. cit., 61. 6 Carney spoke loosely of *Immram Brain* as a 'poem'; see op. cit., 282. 7 *Emain* is referred to elsewhere as *Emain Ablach* 'Emain of the Apple-trees' and is associated in particular with Manannán mac Lir. 8 Note also the identification of *Tír inna mBan* with (the variant form) *Emnae* at the end of the second poem (ll. 252 and 253).

'There are thrice fifty islands far away in the ocean to the west of us; each of them is twice or three times the size of Ireland'. Great stress is laid throughout on the beauty of the Otherworld. Of the single island mentioned at the beginning it is said (ll. 32–6):

Fil and bile co mbláthaib	There is an ancient tree in blossom there
Fors-ngairet éoin do thráthaib,	on which the birds call to the Hours
Is tre cho(i)cetal is gnáth	it is in harmony usually that
Con-gairet uili cach tráth.	they all call together every Hour.

The topos of people's souls being in the form of birds may have belonged originally to the apocryphal tradition; it becomes widespread in Irish in the later Voyage and other eschatological tales.The Otherworld, here as elsewhere, is a land of happiness: 'Not known is wailing or treachery … there is no rough or harsh voice save only sweet music which strikes the ear. Without sorrow, without grief, without death, without any sickness …' (ll. 41–46). That the inhabitants are not destined to die is reiterated twice more, in the same words: *ní-frescat aithbe ná éc* ' they expect neither death nor decay' (ll. 80 and 100). The inhabitants are women: *Emnae … i fil ilmíli brecc mban* 'Emnae … in which there are many thousands of women in variegated dress' (ll. 81–83). The prophecy of Christ's coming begins at l. 109: 'A great person will come after ages … the son of a woman who will not "know" a spouse …' The final two quatrains are addressed specifically to Bran, and the second of these (ll. 125–28) reads: 'Do not fall on a bed of sloth; let not your drunkenness overcome you; begin a voyage across the clear sea to see if you might reach the Land of Women'.

This first poem is followed by a very brief prose passage which tells that the woman went from them, they did not know where. The following day Bran went to sea, accompanied by companions. After two days and two nights at sea 'he saw a man approaching him in a chariot over the sea' (ll. 136–37). The man identified himself as Manannán mac Lir and said that he was destined 'to come to Ireland after long ages' (ll. 139–40) where he would father the hero Mongán mac Fiachnai. Manannán then recited the second poem of the story.[9] It is noteworthy that the author of *Immram Brain* is careful to call Manannán, an Otherworld personage associated in particular with the sea, *in fer* 'a man/one'. While Manannán's poem broadly follows the same structure as that of the first poem, its pattern is slightly more complex. Its first 12 quatrains (ll. 143–90) give a description of the Otherworld and its inhabitants, both men and women in this case. He says that they have not been affected by original sin. On the other hand, as is explained in the following 3 quatrains (ll.191–202), original sin has

9 This poem (on its own) has been edited also by G. Murphy, *Early Irish Lyrics* (Oxford, 1956), 92–100. I am indebted to Murphy's edition in the translation of a few of the quotations cited below.

certainly had most dire consequences for the human race. A redeemer however will come (ll. 203–06): 'He will be both God and man' (l. 206). The prophecy here is followed by 11 quatrains (ll. 207–50) in which Manannán further prophesies the birth and career of his own son Mongán son of Fiachnae. This instance of the Birth of the Hero myth is in reference to the independent tale *Compert Mongáin* 'The Conception of Mongán'. The poem ends with a single quatrain of exhortation (ll. 251–54): 'Steadily then let Bran row, it is not far to the Land of Women …' Dillon characterised Manannán's poem as 'rather incoherent'.[10] This is hardly fair comment, even if the passage on Mongán is rather lengthy. In his description of the Otherworld Manannán says that what to the human eye of Bran is sea upon which he travels in his boat, is for Manannán himself solid land upon which he travels in his chariot.There is a hint of this same conceit in the first poem of *Immram Brain* also, but it is not articulated explicitly there. The conceit is further developed here. Where Bran sees waves, Manannán see flowers – and so on: *i crích Manannáin mac Lir* 'in the land of Manannán son of Ler' (l. 158). Nor can Bran see the very many people of this land. Of these people the poem says (ll. 175–78):

Clu(i)che n-aímin n-inmeldag	A gentle pleasant game
aigdit fri find-imborbag,	they play in fair contest,
fir is mná míne fo dossmen	and gentle women under a bush,
cen peccad, cen immarboss.	Without sin, without transgression.

That is to say apparently that they engage freely in sexual relations, but without sin. They are not destined to die: 'without age, without decay of freshness, we do not expect lack of strength through decay, original sin has not touched us' (ll. 187–90). Original sin however has most certainly touched the human world, as is explained in ll. 191–202. These lines speak of the fall of Adam 'by which he has ruined his noble race, he went, a withered body, to an abode of pain and an eternal dwelling of torment. It is the law of pride in this world (*i mbith ché*) to believe in creatures, to forget God, wreaking of havoc by diseases and age, death of soul through deceit' (ll. 196–202). This seems to be the only passage in the tale which refers to punishment in the afterlife. The phrase 'in this world', which clearly refers here and elsewhere to the world of humans, occurs twice in the passage, though it is scarcely very apt in the mouth of Manannán in this instance. Men however will be redeemed: 'Noble deliverance will come from the King who has created the heavens …' (ll. 203–04). There follows then the passage on Mongán mac Fiachnai (ll. 207–50). Manannán says: *arum-thá echtra dia taig cosin mnaí i lLinemaig* 'a journey is in store for me to meet a woman in her home in Mag Line' (ll. 209–10), in

10 See Dillon, op. cit., 105. He is echoing Nutt here; cp. K. Meyer, op. cit., I, 148.

reference to the conception of Mongán. It is interesting that the word *echtra(e)*, which normally refers to the journey out from the world of humans to the Otherworld, is used here to signify a journey by an Otherworld personage in the opposite direction. The poem ends: 'Steadily then let Bran row, it is not far to the Land of Women; before the setting of the sun he shall reach Emnae with its manifold hospitality'.

The tale concludes with a narrative passage in prose. First of all they come upon the one fantastic island which is encountered on this voyage: *Inis Subai* 'The Island of Hilarity'. Bran 'was rowing round about it and there was a large crowd gaping and laughing' (ll. 255–57) all the time. Bran sent one of his own people on to the island, but he began immediately to behave in exactly the same way and he had to be abandoned there. Shortly afterwards they reached the Land of Women. Bran was nervous of going ashore, but the leader of the women succeeded in drawing the boat to land. 'Then they went into a large house. There happened to be a couch for every couple there'[11] (ll. 274–75). 'It was a year (that) it seemed to them that they had been there. It really was many years' (ll. 277–78). The tale ends with an account of a brief visit, due to the loneliness of one of Bran's companions, back to Ireland, from which they again departed never to be heard of again. Of course the land inhabited only by women, whether its ultimate origin be native or foreign, occurs elsewhere in similar tales also. Likewise the contrast in regard to perception of the passage of time as between the human world and the Otherworld is a commonplace elsewhere. 'The leader of the women' (*toísech inna mban*, l. 268) here, who is not named, is most probably to be identified with 'the woman from the lands of wonders' (l. 1) who invites Bran to go to the Otherworld in the first place, although this identification is not made explicitly in the text. She is certainly made by the author in the text to seem to be expecting him: 'The leader of the women said: 'Come here on to the land, O Bran son of Febal. Your coming is welcome' (ll. 268–69)'.

I would like now to focus very briefly on the question of the Christian and/or secular (whether native or foreign) sources of inspiration underlying the tale. Nutt says: 'the Christian element produces in both cases[12] the same impression of being thrust into the story without rhyme or reason'.[13] Dillon once again echoes Nutt here. Speaking of ll. 109–20 in the first of the two long poems in *Immram Brain*, he says: 'In three quatrains, apparently interpolated, the woman suddenly turns to prophesy the birth of Christ'.[14] Speaking of ll. 187 ff, in the poem put into the mouth of Manannán, he says: 'Here, as in the first poem, there is a sudden interpolation of religious matter. The sin of Adam is recalled and the coming of Christ foretold'.[15] Carney however quite rightly pointed out:[16] 'no linguistic, metrical, or stylistic evidence has been adduced (nor in my opinion can it be) to

11 See Breatnach, loc. cit., 188 for the translation of this sentence. 12 i.e. in the case of *Echtrae Chonnlai* and of *Immram Brain*. 13 See K. Meyer, op. cit., I, 148. 14 See Dillon, op. cit., 105. 15 See Dillon, op. cit., 105–06. 16 Carney, op. cit., 281.

show that these stanzas differ from the rest of the poetry in authorship or period of composition'. He went on to characterise *Immram Brain* as 'from beginning to end, a thoroughly Christian poem. It seems in fact to be an allegory showing Man setting out on the voyage to Paradise'.[17] He says further that the tale 'is an allegory which assumes the existence of an earthly paradise'.[18]

Is *Immram Brain* 'thoroughly Christian'? The quatrains which caused difficulties for Nutt and Dillon do certainly articulate orthodox Christian doctrine on the Incarnation and the Redemption. In the second poem, put into the mouth of Manannán, we are told explicitly that the explanation for the state of happiness and for the immortality of the inhabitants (both men and women, in that case) of the land of Manannán son of Ler is that they were not affected by the sin of Adam. The human world was not so fortunate however and the poem goes on to refer to the Fall: 'Under an ill omen did the serpent come to the father', i.e. to Adam (ll. 191–92). Adam 'has destroyed himself in that gluttony and greed by which he has ruined his noble race' (ll. 195–96). Part of the ruin of the human race consists of 'wreaking of havoc by diseases and age' (l. 201). The human world however will be redeemed: 'Noble deliverance will come from the King who has created the heavens, a blessed law will stir the seas, He will be both God and man' (ll. 203–6). In the case of the corresponding section of the first poem the same doctrine is articulated. It could be said in fact that their treatment of the doctrine is complementary. The Fall is not referred to explicitly in the first poem; on the other hand it deals with the effects of the Redemption at slightly greater length: 'A great person will come after ages ... he will assume the kingship of the many thousands. A king without beginning without end, He has created the whole world, His are land and sea; woe to the one who will be under His displeasure. It is He who has made the heavens – Happy the one who will be pure of heart! – He will cleanse hosts by means of blessed water, it is He who will heal your sicknesses' (ll. 109–20). Aside from these quatrains which articulate Christian doctrine so explicitly, one could point also – and scholars have done so in some cases – to many other elements of the tale which are probably or possibly of Christian inspiration, even perhaps at the level of expression. Cp. e.g. *Cen brón, cen dubae, cen bás, cen nach galar* ' Without sorrow, without grief, without death, without any sickness' (ll. 45–46) with *et absterget Deus omnem lacrymam ab oculis eorum: et mors ultra non erit neque luctus, neque clamor, neque dolor erit ultra, quia prima abierunt* (Apoc. 21:4). Or cp. *Et in conspectus sedis tamquam mare vitreum simile crystallo* (Apoc. 4:6) with ll. 53–56 of *Immram Brain*:

Má ad-cetha Aircthech íar tain	If you should see Aircthech after a while
for-snig dracoin ocus glain,	on which dragonstones and crystals drop,

17 Op. cit., 282. 18 Op. cit., 283.

do-snig a mmuir fri tír toinn,	the sea washes the wave against the land,
trillsi glana asa moing.	tresses of crystal from its mane.

Nevertheless it seems to be the case that the underlying concept or concepts of the Otherworld embodied in the tale are not originally of Christian inspiration nor are they the original composition of the author, but derive rather from pre-existing secular traditions and story-patterns which were very attractive to the author's public. It is true that the author sought to 'baptize'[19] these, and even perhaps to make use of them to teach Christian doctrine – always of course within the limits of his given materials. Carney says e.g. that 'I have no doubt that the author of *Immram Brain* used the tale *Compert Mongáin* as a deliberate analogy to the Incarnation'.[20] The Otherworld depicted is not of course intended to refer to the heavenly paradise, such as is meant e.g. at the end of the following gloss: ... *asrúaim mór indforcitil spirdáldi arrodibaid ítith indisrahel spiurdalti innanóib indiththrub in beotho ocascnam tíre tairngiri innambéo* 'the mighty stream of spiritual doctrine, which has quenched the thirst of the spiritual Israel of the saints in the desert of the world, who strive towards the Land of Promise of the Living', Wb. 11a19, being a gloss on I Cor. 10:4.[21] Rather it equiparates the Otherworld of Irish secular tradition with an earthly paradise, such as was thought to exist and which was in its turn identified with the Garden of Eden of Genesis. Among the many other questions which arise in regard to *Immram Brain*, and which have been commented on by other scholars, is that of possible overall authorial intention, in particular for allegorical purposes. I would like to address that question on another occasion.

19 The 'baptism' seems rather forced at times. Thus Manannán, as we have seen, speaks of the men and women of his kingdom engaging freely in sexual relations *cen peccad, cen immarboss* 'without sin, without transgression' (l. 178), a notion which is very far from orthodox doctrine. On the other hand the relationships established by Bran and his companions when they finally reached their destination, the Land of Women, were at least monogamous. 20 See Carney, op. cit., p. 290. 21 See W. Stokes and J. Strachan (eds.), *Thesaurus Palaeohibernicus* (Dublin, 1975), p. 566.

Visions of the End and Irish high crosses

Kees Veelenturf

As the single art-historical contribution to this volume on apocalyptic and eschatological themes from Oriental and Celtic regions, this paper will deal with images; visual images, reliefs on high crosses, on sculptures in the round which no doubt are the most important monuments that early medieval Ireland has left us.[1] These are sculptures for which no equivalents from the same period can be found on the European Continent.[2] They are highly enigmatic, some of masterly design and scale, sometimes completely incomprehensible – so it seems – impressive, some crude, some very elegant, usually or seemingly not prone to straightforward comparison with other monuments.[3]

Since most readers of this book will not be quite familiar with the historiography of early Irish art, as well as reporting on work still in progress which seems to point in new directions, I propose to summarize some of the findings from research which have already been published. The focus will be chiefly on the main scenes of the more elaborately carved sculptures, among which are the so-called scripture crosses. These scenes are usually found in the centre of the cross heads. Except for these images, the form of the Irish high cross itself will come first into the discussion. The monuments will be considered as being of basically an eschatological nature,[4] and not just because it is the overall theme of this volume.

1 The Irish high crosses have been presented in a splendid photographic documentation, accompanied by a lengthy text volume containing inter alia descriptions and interpretations: Peter Harbison, *The High Crosses of Ireland*. An Iconographical and Photographic Survey, 3 vols. (Römisch-Germanisches Zentralmuseum, Forschungsinstitut für Vor- und Frühgeschichte [Mainz], Monographien 17,1–3; Bonn: Rudolf Habelt, 1992), henceforth *The High Crosses of Ireland*. This work is also indispensable because of its copious bibliographical references. 2 It is accepted that monuments of the size, shape and scope of the Irish crosses are absent on the Continent. However, Peter Harbison, who in this respect followed early observations by Françoise Henry, has more than once advocated the thesis that Irish high cross *iconography* owes a great deal to Carolingian art. For a different view, see: Roger Stalley, 'European Art and the Irish High Crosses', *Proceedings of the Royal Irish Academy* 90 C (1990), 135–58; Roger Stalley, review of *The High Crosses of Ireland* (as in note 1), *The GPA Irish Arts Review Yearbook* 10 (1994), 258–60. 3 See: Kees Veelenturf, 'Stenen raadsels. De hoogkruisen van Ierland', *Millennium*.Tijdschrift voor middeleeuwse studies 9 (1995), 46–61. 4 This perspective emanates from the findings in: Kees Veelenturf, *Dia Brátha*. Eschatological

When looking at works of art, at images, as sources for historical information on the religion of a certain people – including ideas on eschatology, apocalypticism, and their components – two things should be borne in mind: *a)* Images are not mere illustrations of what is related in texts, but appear according to their own 'laws' and have their idiosyncratic means or 'language' of conveying messages; *b)* like words and texts, images may be ambiguous or may contain ambiguous elements.[5] Religious images in particular, like those derived from Scripture, often not only depict their 'subject' like the Ascension of Christ or the Majesty of the Lord, but may even imply or simply allude to other, related, notions like the Second Coming of Christ at the end of time[6] or the harmony of the gospels and the perfection of the true Christians who abide by the divine law.[7] For biblical and literary scholars metaphorical and allusive language, textual imagery and their ambiguities are household phenomena. Art historians sometimes have more difficulties with the equivalents of these matters which nevertheless are equally plentiful in the visual arts.

Since early Christian and early medieval iconography abounds with ambiguities and complexities of connotation or stratification of meanings[8] (in fact they are very common), it comes as no surprise that the visual 'language' of the Irish high crosses also possesses polyvalent characteristics. This is fully in keeping with the sophisticated nature of the crosses. For the present-day beholder these iconographical qualities are difficult to grasp, but their complexity is, for instance, corroborated by the way the monuments have been designed, for which mathematical principles appear to have been employed, principles that only very recently have become noticed and investigated.[9] Of course these principles do not reduce the religious content of the distinct cross forms, but rather imbue their morphology with even more meaning.

Theophanies and Irish High Crosses (Amsterdamse historische reeks, kleine serie 33; Amsterdam: Stichting Amsterdamse Historische Reeks, 1997), henceforth *Dia Brátha*. 5 In connection with high cross iconography, I have explored some of these ambiguities in: 'Irish High Crosses and Continental Art. Shades of Iconographical Ambiguity', *From Ireland Coming*. Irish Art from the Early Christian to the Late Gothic Period and its European Context (ed. Colum Hourihane) (Index of Christian Art Occasional Papers 4; Princeton: Department of Art and Archaeology, Princeton University Press, 2001), 83–101. 6 See: *Dia Brátha* (as in note 4), 71–73. 7 See: *Dia Brátha* (as in note 4), 30–46. 8 See the exemplary analyses of early Christian works of art and the description of their methods in: Josef Engemann, *Deutung und Bedeutung frühchristlicher Bildwerke* (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1997), and in many scholarly papers by the same author preceding this work. 9 This methodological breakthrough towards the understanding of the morphology of the Irish high cross was made in recent studies by Robert D. Stevick, who proposed and demonstrated that the shape of the crosses was 'devised by constructive geometry' exhibiting the aesthetic rules of 'parsimony of ratios and commodulation of measures'. See the following papers by Robert D. Stevick: 'Shapes of Early Sculptured Crosses of Ireland', *Gesta* 38 (1999), no. 1, 3–21 (quotation from the abstract on p. 3); 'The Shape of the Durrow Cross', *Peritia* 13 (1999), 142–53; 'High Cross Design', *Pattern and Purpose in Insular Art*.

In Christian iconography the cross form itself is interpretatively open to a number of usually interrelated meanings. The main message intended to be conveyed by the cross is rather naturally that of cross of the Passion, the most prominent item among the *arma Christi*, the objects which were instrumental in Christ's final suffering. Since on the Irish high cross no Passion cross is carved in the figural relief depicting the Crucifixion, it is clear that we may interpret the monument itself as a Passion cross on which Christ has been affixed. Apart from this interpretation the high cross can simultaneously be identified as the sign of the Son of Man, a sign which in Scripture is prophesied to appear at the end of time, thus heralding the coming of Christ the Final Judge.[10] For this meaning, or symbolical function, of the high cross we have an interpretative clue in the principle that governs the positioning of the central iconography of the sculptures. In a great number of instances we see the Crucifixion of Christ on the west face of the cross heads, whereas the east face displays the figure of the eschatological Christ. This image of Christ may be the central part of a Last Judgment scene, or of the Second Coming, or simply a single figure, that resembles the cross form so closely that it may be called cruciate.[10a] Both main faces of the high cross, with their respective Passion and Parousia imagery depicted as focal points, contribute to the symbolical content of the high cross as a formal sculptural entity.

There is some circumstantial evidence to support these findings.[11] First of all we have the presence of Stephaton, the wielder of the rod with the sponge, and the lance bearer Longinus. These subsidiary figures are included in many Irish Crucifixion scenes, not only on the high crosses (fig. 1). The acts of these soldiers, the offering of a sponge with vinegar on hyssop and the piercing of Christ's side, although shown within one single image, took place before and after the death of Christ.[12] This conflated image is an artistic way of expressing the hypostatic union in Christ. He is seen on the cross as both dead as a human, and alive as God. Moreover, in Scripture the piercing has not only been seen as a fulfilment of a prophecy by Zechariah,[13] but in the Apocalypse of John it is

Proceedings of the Fourth International Conference on Insular Art held at the National Museum & Gallery, Cardiff 3–6 September 1998 (ed. M. Redknap et al.) (Oxford: Oxbow Books, 2001), 221–32. **10** *Dia Brátha* (as in note 4), 143. Perhaps it was exactly this eschatological quality of the high cross that has led the early medieval Irish saint Mochuda to prophesy that he would collect his monks at a cross on Doomsday; see: Carolus Plummer, *Vitae Sanctorum Hiberniae partim hactenus ineditae ad fidem codicum manuscriptorum recognovit prolegomenis notis indicibus instruxit*, 1 (Oxonii: e Typographeo Clarendoniano, 1910), 192. **10a** The word 'cruciate' is a term taken from zoology (and also used in botany). I have introduced this term in writing on high cross iconography to describe images of Christ in which he is almost reduced to a +-form, but where he is clearly not represented as the Crucified. **11** This section is based on: *Dia Brátha* (as in note 4), 139–42. **12** John 19:28–34; Matt. 27:33–59 (48); Mark 15:22–45 (36); Luke 23:26–53 (36). **13** John 19:37; Zech. 12:10.

1 The Cross of Muiredach in Monasterboice (Co. Louth): the west face displaying the Crucifixion on the cross head.

associated with the Second of Coming of Christ: 'Behold, he comes with the clouds, and every eye shall see him, and they also that pierced him.'[14] The theophanical nature of the Crucifixion thus receives an eschatological aspect. The same goes for the depiction of sun and moon[15] and angels in Crucifixion scenes, which cannot be simply explained from the scriptural Passion narratives. It follows that the Crucifixion carvings are never just illustrative or narrative, but are always permeated by theological notions and relationships that may be quite complex.

The counter-images of the Crucifixion scenes are no straightforward eschatological scenes either. A feature peculiar to the Irish crosses is that Christ is never displayed as seated on his throne. Invariably he is standing upright in what is known as the 'Osiris pose'.[16] On the high crosses we see Christ in this fashion in two of the three eschatological image types. These two types are very much alike, and they differ from each other as to the elaborateness of detail within the composition. When judgmental features can be distinguished, like the separation between the elect and the damned, it is methodologically justified to label a scene as the 'Last Judgment'.[17] If such aspects cannot be discerned, the appropriate term is 'Second Coming of Christ'. We may note, however, that with this distinction we have not solved all problems provided by this iconography, for there are many details that require more external data which would help to interpret them less speculatively.

Evidently, the Last Judgment scene on the high cross is in a category of its own in Christian iconography. The Cross of Muiredach in Monasterboice, doubtlessly the best known of the Irish crosses, displays on the east face the most elaborate Last Judgment scene in early Irish art (fig. 2).[18] It covers the whole of the cross head, with the exclusion of the capstone and the ring. In the centre we see Christ standing in his Osiris pose. He holds a sceptre in his right hand, and a cross-staff in his left hand. Above his head a bird, apparently an eagle, is seen, which extends its right wing, and turns its head in the same direction. On the left cross arm three rows of four figures and six more on the indented part of the cross arm move toward Christ. These are the elect. We also see musicians, and there are books; the latter most likely being books of life, in which the deeds of mankind are recorded. On the other side of Christ a wind-instrument player is seated on a chair or throne, while he looks toward Christ. Next to him a winged or mantled figure with a fork moves away from Christ. He

14 Apoc. 1:7. 15 The presence of *sol* and *luna* has, in my view, a strong eschatological significance; see: *Dia Brátha* (as in note 4), 141 n. 736. 16 The Osiris pose of Christ can be encountered in some other media in Insular art as well, for which see: *Dia Brátha* (as in note 4), 109. 17 This criterion was established in: Beat Brenk, *Tradition und Neuerung in der christlichen Kunst des ersten Jahrtausends*. Studien zur Geschichte des Weltgerichtsbildes (Wiener byzantinistische Studien 3; Wien: Österreichische Akademie der Wissenschaften [etc.], 1966), 35–36. 18 *The High Crosses of Ireland* (as in note 1), 141–42 (no. 174; head, centre and arms), 297–98, figs 472–73, 940.

2 The Cross of Muiredach in Monasterboice (Co. Louth), the west face of the cross head with the image of the Last Judgment.

is the last figure of a group of sixteen who occupy the right hand cross arm. These figures are of course the damned being led to hell by a devil. Beneath Christ's feet is a separate scene in which St Michael weighs a small figure representing a soul in a balance. Under this balance a recumbent devil pulls at the scale, while the archangel pushes a spear into his head. This view of the Last Judgment is a masterly composition in which cross head form and imagery blend perfectly.[19]

On the high cross of Durrow we see a much less elaborate and detailed scene than on the Cross of Muiredach (fig. 3).[20] Here the sculptor just contented

19 *Dia Brátha* (as in note 4), 104–07, pl. VII. 20 *The High Crosses of Ireland* (as in note 1), 79–80 (no. 89; head, centre), figs 247–48, 939.

3 The high cross at Durrow (Co. Offaly), detail of the east face of the cross head showing the Second Coming of Christ.

himself with depicting Christ in his Osiris pose while being accompanied by some musicians. This scene is best designated by the term 'Second Coming'.[21]

The third type of eschatological image on the high cross heads is the figure of the 'cruciate eschatological Christ'. This is a more symbol-like or 'abbreviated' rendition of the eschatological Christ figure, which is rather different from the 'Osiris' Christ figures on the high crosses. He stands upright, with outstretched arms, in the pose of the Crucified. Yet, it is clear that Christ is not depicted as being crucified, for the usual assistant figures are lacking, and sometimes it is precisely the counter-image of this cruciate Christ figure that represents the Crucifixion! This third image type makes more clear than any other how

21 *Dia Brátha* (as in note 4), 84–85, pl. IV.

Crucifixion and eschatological theophany may to some extent graphically intertwine. As was sometimes believed in the early Middle Ages, it is in this cruciate pose that Christ will be seen by the damned when history comes to a close.[22]

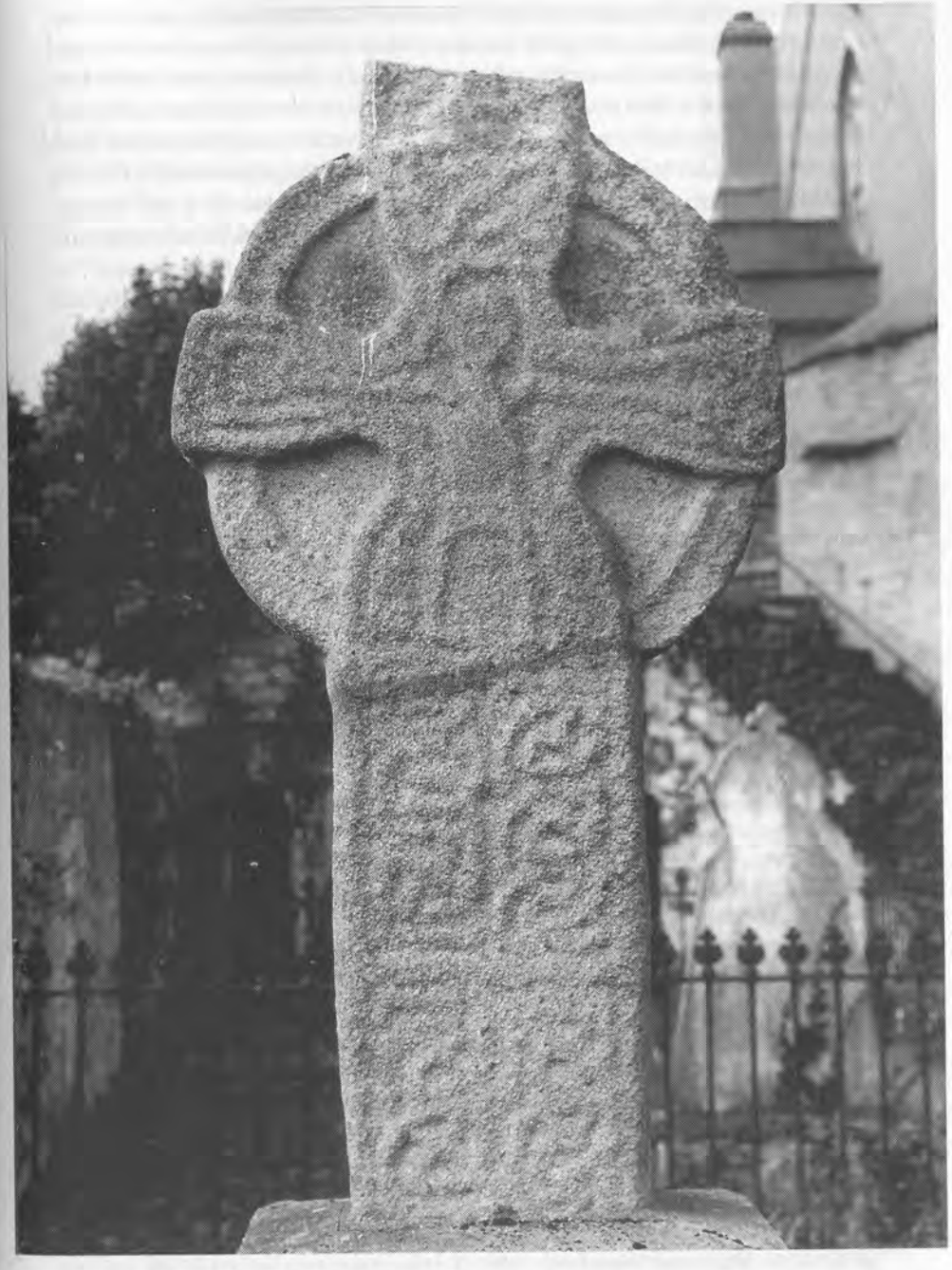
There are at least thirteen high crosses on which this representation has been carved.[23] We will take the South Cross in Graiguenamanagh for an example.[24] On its west face we have the Crucifixion, to judge from the faint depiction of the assistant figures of Stephaton and Longinus (fig. 4). The east face displays the cruciate eschatological Christ (fig. 5).[25] It is not conceivable that we would have here two different types of Crucifixion scenes, but the resemblance of these carvings is of course deliberate: eschatological theophany and Crucifixion are correlated, just like they are in the more explicitly antithetical pairings of images on other high crosses. In this case, however, the rapport is also and more strongly of a visual nature.

Now that we have seen how form and iconographic meaning may relate to one another in the high cross as a sculptural monument, it is appropriate to scrutinize another important element. The ring encircling the crossing of arms and shaft of many Irish high crosses is a very distinct characteristic. Several theories have in the past been brought forward to explain the symbolical or functional reason for this feature.[26] Naturally, it is very hard to pinpoint a

22 The Irish image type of the cruciate eschatological Christ has been defined and substantiated in chapter VI 'The crucified and the eschatological Christ', in: *Dia brátha* (as in note 4), 129–39. 23 See Tables 4–6 in: *Dia Brátha* (as in note 4), 182–83. 24 *The High Crosses of Ireland* (as in note 1), 97 (no. 117), figs 315–16. 25 *Dia Brátha* (as in note 4), 132, pls XXII–XXIII. 26 The most important publications on this matter with references to other literature on the subject are: Seán P. Ó Ríordáin, 'The Genesis of the Celtic Cross', *Féilscríbhinn Torna*. Tráchtaisí léanta in onóir don Ollamh Tadhg Ua Donnchadha, D. Litt., in am a dheichiú bliana agus trí fichid, an ceathrú lá de mhí Mheán Fhómhair, 1944 (ed. Séamus Pender) (Corcaigh: Cló Ollscoile Chorcaí [Cork: Cork University Press], 1947), 108–14, 5 pls (figs); Helen M. Roe, 'The Irish High Cross. Morphology and Iconography', *Journal of the Royal Society of Antiquaries of Ireland* 95 (1965), 213–26; Nancy Edwards, 'The Origins of the Free-standing Stone Cross in Ireland: Imitation or Innovation?' *Bwletin y Bwrdd Gwybodau Celtaidd / The Bulletin of the Board of Celtic Studies* 32 (1985), 393–410, 6 pls: 402–06; Walter Horn, 'Appendix: On the Origin of the Celtic Cross. A New Interpretation', in: Walter Horn, Jenny White Marshall, Grellan D. Rourke, *The Forgotten Hermitage of Skellig Michael* (California Studies in the History of Art. Discovery Series 2; Berkeley-Los Angeles-Oxford: University of California Press, 1989), 88–97; Martin Werner, 'On the Origin of the Form of the Irish High Cross', *Gesta* 29 (1990), no. 1, 98–110; Dorothy Kelly, 'The Heart of the Matter. Models for Irish High Crosses', *Journal of the Royal Society of Antiquaries of Ireland* 121 (1991), 105–45: 128–29, 141; *The High Crosses of Ireland* (as in note 1), vol. 1: 349–51.

The Irish high crosses have more than once attracted the attention of anthroposophical writers, for whom the form of the high cross head apparently is very appealing. They like to connect it with the idea of the 'sun wheel'. The problem with anthroposophical interpretation is that the last word is always with the founder of anthroposophy, Rudolf Steiner, and hardly ever truly historical data are given as evidence for findings. See: Bettina

4 The South Cross, Graiguenamanagh (Co. Kilkenny), the Crucifixion on the west face.



5 The South Cross, Graiguenamanagh (Co. Kilkenny), the east face with the cruciate eschatological Christ.

specific meaning for a form which is as ancient and common as the circle or ring. However, since archetypical forms are often archetypical symbols, we need not be surprised that in a society which is essentially Christian these forms have been integrated within the Christian system of understanding formal designs. In the case of the high cross head we are dealing with the combination of cross and circle.[27] In early interpretations it was suggested that, symbolically, the ring would have derived from Neolithic and Bronze Age solar (disc and cup-in-circle) symbols,[28] or from the circle which surrounds the Chi-Rho monogram[29] or from the Greek cross-in-circle on slabs and pillars in early Christian art,[30] or that it was meant to represent a halo or glory around the cross and the Crucified (and representing and symbolizing a Eucharistic wafer).[31] The cross and ring

Brandt-Förster, *Das irische Hochkreuz*. Ursprung, Entwicklung, Gestalt (Stuttgart: Urachhaus, 1978), 150–52. This is not to say that all conclusions drawn by anthroposophical writers are nonsensical, but a sensible-looking conclusion like 'Entscheidend ist, daß in der reinen Form des Hochkreuzes sich eine elementar-kosmisches und ein zukünftig spirituelles Erlebnis des Christus in der Natur darstellt, wobei das Bild der Kreuzigung nur als eine Durchgangsphase erscheint.' (Brandt-Förster, *Das irische Hochkreuz*, 156) needs more support than is provided in the book quoted – moreover, it needs to be modified. **27** In a poem about Oengus *céle Dé* (*c.*800) it is said of Beechen Hermitage (Dísert Bethech) that it was 'a pious cloister behind a circle of crosses' (cathair credlach iar cuairt cross), but the combined occurrence of circle and cross here obviously is descriptive or perhaps idiomatic rather than symbolically significant. See: Whitley Stokes, *Félire Óengusso céli Dé. The Martyrology of Oengus the Culdee*. Critically Edited from Ten Manuscripts, with a Preface, Translation, Notes, and Indices ([Dublin:] Dublin Institute for Advanced Studies, 1984²), xxiv. **28** Oskar Montelius, 'Das Sonnenrad und das christliche Kreuz', *Mannus*. Zeitschrift für Vorgeschichte. Organ der Deutschen Gesellschaft für Vorgeschichte 1 (1909), 53–69, 169–86, in which the wheel with four spokes is assigned a pivotal role in the genesis of the Christian cross-inscribed circle; George Coffey, *Guide to the Celtic Antiquities of the Christian Period Preserved in the National Museum, Dublin* (Dublin-London: Hodges, Figgis, & Co.-Williams & Norgate, 1910²), 85; Louis Gougaud, *Christianity in Celtic Lands*. A History of the Churches of the Celts, Their Origin, Their Development, Influence, and Mutual Relations (London: Sheed & Ward, 1932), 347–48; Ó Ríordáin, 'The Genesis of the Celtic Cross' (as in note 26), 109; Roe, 'The Irish High Cross. Morphology and Iconography' (as in note 26), 213; Edwards, 'The Origins of the Free-standing Stone Cross in Ireland' (as in note 26), 402. **29** J. Romilly Allen, *Early Christian Symbolism in Great Britain and Ireland Before the Thirteenth Century* (The Rhind Lectures in Archaeology for 1885; London: Whiting & Co., 1887), 92; Coffey, *Guide to the Celtic Antiquities* (as in note 28), 85; Gougaud, *Christianity in Celtic Lands* (as in note 28), 347; Françoise Henry, *La sculpture irlandaise pendant les douze premiers siècles de l'ère chrétienne*, 1 Texte (Paris: Librairie Ernest Leroux, 1933), 163; Ó Ríordáin, 'The Genesis of the Celtic Cross' (as in note 26), 109; Roe, 'The Irish High Cross. Morphology and Iconography' (as in note 26), 213; Edwards, 'The Origins of the Free-standing Stone Cross in Ireland' (as in note 26), 402–03. **30** Henry, *La sculpture irlandaise*, 1 (as in note 29), 163–64; Ó Ríordáin, 'The Genesis of the Celtic Cross' (as in note 26), 110. **31** R. A. S. Macalister, *Muiredach, Abbot of Monasterboice 890–923 A.D. His Life and Surroundings* (The Margaret Stokes Lectures, 1913; Dublin: Hodges, Figgis & Co., 1914), 67; Gougaud, *Christianity in Celtic Lands* (as in note 28), 348; Ó Ríordáin, 'The Genesis of the Celtic Cross' (as in note 26), 110; Roe, 'The Irish High Cross. Morphology and Iconography'

have also been taken to derive from early Christian triumphal devices which are transformations of Roman imperial trophies. Helen Roe has adduced the symbolical motifs of the *gloria crucis* or *scutum fidei*, the *trop(h)aeum crucis*, the *arbor vitae*, the *crux gemmata*, and, especially, the *crux florida*, which she thought may have been the 'ultimate inspiration' for the decoration of high crosses and cross slabs. The best iconographic parallel for the high cross form she found was on some of the sixth-century Palestinian oil flasks which are being kept in the abbey church of St Columbanus in Bobbio, Italy.[32] Influence from Egyptian forms that

(as in note 26), 213–14; Edwards, 'The Origins of the Free-standing Stone Cross in Ireland' (as in note 26), 402–03. The wafer interpretation is put forward in: R. A. S. Macalister, *Guide to Monasterboice* (Dundalk: Dundalgan Press, 1966), 7, where no relevant source or reference is given. No doubt the author had an extremely interesting and by now well-known Irish liturgical text in mind. The Stowe Missal (Dublin, Royal Irish Academy, ms. D ii 3) contains on fol. 64v–66r an Old-Irish tract which explains the symbolism of the Mass. It contains an illuminative description of the so-called *cofractio* of the host: '[...] and that is the number of the particles that is in the Host of Easter and Christmas and Whitsunday, for in Christ is all that comprised, and in the form of a cross is all set on the paten, and the upper part is inclined on the left hand, as was said: *Inclinato capite tradidit spiritum*.

The arrangement of the confraction at Easter and Christmas: thirteen particles in the stem of the crosses, nine in its cross-piece, twenty particles in its circle-wheel, five particles in each angle, sixteen both in the circle and in the body of the crosses, that is, four for every part. The middle particle is that to which the masspriest goes i.e. the figure of the breast with the secrets. What is from that upwards of the shaft to bishops: the cross-piece on the left hand to priests: that on the right hand to all subgrades; that from the cross-piece down to anchorites and penitents: that which is in the left upper angle to true young clerics: the right upper to innocent children; the left lower to folk of repentance. The right lower to folk lawfully married and to those that go not before to communion.' (7 ishæ lin pars *in*sin bis *in*obli casc 7 not*laic* 7 cheñńcigis *ar*coṅgaibther huile hí cr*ist in*sin 7 ishitorrund cruisse suidigthir huile fors*in*méis 7 isforclóen *in*pars ochtarach forlai*m* clii · ut dictu*m est* inclinato capite tradidit sp*irit*um:~

Suidigoth co*m*buig casc 7 not*laic* ·III· parsa deac in eo na cros · a ·UIIII· *in*natarsno ·XX· pars *in*nacuairt roth ·U· parsæ cache oxile a ·XUI· it*ir in*cuaird 7 chorp nacros .i. a ·IIII· cacharainne *in*pars medonach ishí diatet *in*tii oifres .i. fig*or in*bruinni cosnarúnaib a*m*bís hoṡen suas dind eo · doepscopbaib · atar · sno · f*or*lai*m* cli dosacardaib · a ni · f*or*lai*m* deis · dohuilib fog*r*adaib · aní ondtarsno sís doanchortib 7 aes na aithirge. Aní bís isi*n*doxil ochtarthuaiscerdig dofirma*cc*lerchib indochtardescerdach doma*cc*aib enngaib · anichtarthuais*cerdach* doaes aitherge · anichta*r*des*cerdach* do ais lanamnassa dligthig 7 doaes na tet dolaim ria*m*.) See: Whitley Stokes and John Strachan (ed.), *Thesaurus Palaeohibernicus*. A Collection of Old-Irish Glosses, Scholia, Prose and Verse, 2 ([Dublin:] Dublin Institute for Advanced Studies, 1975r), 254–55. For a diagram of this arrangement of the particles of the host according to the Stowe Missal tract, see: Peter O'Dwyer, *Céli Dé*. Spiritual Reform in Ireland 750–900 (Dublin: Editions Tailliura, 1981²), 157.

Was the *cofractio* layout as described inspired by an already familiar cross form, or was it a source for the high cross form, or did host and high cross head evolve simultaneously? Perhaps we will not find an answer to these questions, but it certainly cannot be ruled out that mystical notions as expressed in the Stowe Missal tract became pertinent to the form of the high cross head some time during the early Middle Ages. **32** Roe, 'The Irish High Cross. Morphology and Iconography' (as in note 26). The three relevant Bobbio ampullae are

would have been transmitted to the Insular world before the middle of the eighth century has also been suggested by several authors.[33] In all of these interpretations there are plausible, or at least remarkable, elements or aspects.

The perception of the high cross as an essentially eschatological monument opens up a new perspective for the interpretation of the high cross ring. The two principle meanings of the Christian cross have been touched upon above, so we may limit the discussion to the circle or ring and its concurrence with the cross. When we realize that in the early Irish world-view the cosmos and all matter were circular, the combination of the two basic geometrical forms in the high cross head appears to become comprehensible.

The Irish apocryphon *An Teanga Bithnua* (The Evernew Tongue) expounds 'the manner of arrangements in the world' in a typical mystical way:

> Though you do not see it, [...] every element happens to be round, in accordance with the shapes of the world. For the heavens were rounded, as were the seven seas surrounding them, and thus also the earth was made. And in circular motion the stars encircle the round wheel of the earth. It is as circular shapes that souls appear after going forth from bodies. It is as a circle that the circuit of majestic heaven is seen, and the circuit of sun and moon is rounded. All of this is fitting, for the Lord is as a circle, without beginning or end, he who always was, and always will be, he who created all of this. That is the reason why the world was formed as a round shape.[34]

The *Saltair na Rann* (Psalter of the Staves)[35] contains similar information:

discussed and reproduced in: André Grabar, *Ampoules de Terre Sainte (Monza-Bobbio)* (Paris: Éditions Klincksieck, 1958), 34–35, 55–58, pls XXXVI–XXXVI. 33 See, in particular: Horn, 'Appendix: On the Origin of the Celtic Cross' (as in note 26), 91–92, 95–97, fig. 67; Werner, 'On the Origin of the Form of the Irish High Cross' (as in note 26), 101–06, figs 6, 11; see *Dia Brátha* (as in note 4), 109. 34 'cenco accid-si, [...] is i cruinne dorraladh c*ach* duil cid iar ndelbuib dom*ain*. Ar is i torachta chruinne doralta na nime, 7 is i torachta doronta na *secht* muire immacuairt, 7 is i torachta dorónad in tal*am*. Oc*us* i torachta cruinne doimchellat na renda roth cruinn in domuin, 7 iss i cruinde dhelbha atchit*er* na hanmand iar n-escumluth a c*orpaib*. 7 iss i cruinde atchither cuairt in richidh uasail, 7 iss i cruinne atcit*her* cuairt gr*éne* 7 esca. IS deithbeir uile sein, ar is toruchta cen tosach cen for*cend* in Coimde ro bhithbhai 7 bhithbias 7 dorighne na huili sin. Is aire is i ndeilb chruind ro damnaiged in doman.' This passage in the First Recension of *An Teanga Bithnua* in the Book of Lismore (Chatsworth, library of the Duke of Devonshire) is quoted from: Whitley Stokes, 'The Evernew Tongue', *Ériu* 2 (1905), 96–162: 106. The translation is taken from: *Irish Biblical Apocrypha*. Selected Texts in Translation (ed. Martin McNamara and Máire Herbert) (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1989), 113; see also the translation in: John Carey, *King of Mysteries. Early Irish Religious Writings* (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 1998), 81. 35 The *Psalter of the Staves* is made up of 162 poems, and dates to the early Middle Irish period. It was edited by Whitley Stokes, from the only complete source: Oxford, Bodleian Library, ms. Rawl. B. 502, fol. 19–40.

> The illustrious mighty King carved
> from the noble first substance
> the heavy fertile earth – the tale is certain –
> established upon its foundation in length and breadth.
>
> The King, unstinting in his designs, created
> in the hollow of the firmament
> the beautiful world, sure [abode] of a multitude,
> like a fine round apple.[36]

So we learn that the view existed in Ireland that the universe, earth and all matter are round. It has been stated that '[t]he classical notion that the earth is a sphere had found its way to Ireland, but it is by no means obvious that it was the accepted view, nor indeed that it was clearly understood.'[37] No doubt it is true that the Irish perception of the earth as spherical is not without problems and ambiguities.[38] We may wonder whether one of these is not just the graphical perception of 'round', in which the difference between two-dimensional and three-dimensional can be ignored or obscured, as is often still the case in colloquial language. This problem, however, is not of significance for our concern here.

Because the cross is the pivotal Christian symbol, it is hardly speculative to associate it with early views on the lay-out of the world which include the notion of the cardinal points. We find this feature implicitly in the explanation for the name of Adam which was current in early Irish learned circles. The four letters of the first human's name come from the cardinal points, and for these the Greek names for the four corners of the world were used: Anatole (East), Dysis (West), Arctos (North), and Mesembria (South).[39] Four cardinal points in a world which is circular produce the graph of a cross-inscribed circle.

36 *Saltair na Rann*, lines 29–36: 'Ri rothepi, bladmar, brass, / asinchetadbar admas, / talam tromm toracht, delm chert, / dian'fonn fothacht fotlethet. // Ri rochruthaig, nícuac cinte, / hicuairt nafirmiminte, / domun delbda derbda druing, / mar ubull febda fircruind.' Irish text from: *Saltair na Rann* (ed. Whitley Stokes) (Anecdota Oxoniensia. Texts, Documents, and Extracts Chiefly from Manuscripts in the Bodleian and Other Oxford Libraries. Mediaeval and Modern Series vol. I part III; Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1883), 1; translation from: Carey, *King of Mysteries* (as in note 34), 99, cf. 103, 106. Cf. the translation in: *The Poem-Book of the Gael*. Translations from Irish Gaelic Poetry into English Prose and Verse (ed. Eleanor Hull) (London: Chatto & Windus: 1913), 4: 'King who hewed, gloriously, with energy, / out of the very shapely primal stuff, / the heavy, round earth, / with foundations, ... length and breadth. // King who shaped within no narrow limits / in the circle of the firmament / the globe fashioned / like a goodly apple, truly round'. 37 Marina Smyth, *Understanding the Universe in Seventh-Century Ireland* (Studies in Celtic History XV; Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 1996), 272; see also: John Carey, 'Cosmology in *Saltair na Rann*', *Celtica* 17 (1985), 33–52: 36. 38 Marina Smyth, *Understanding the Universe in Seventh-Century Ireland* (as in note 37), 271–79. 39 See: Whitley Stokes (ed.), *Saltair na Rann* (as in note 36), 16, lines

The figure of Adam is also connected with the cross, because in early Christian tradition it was believed that Adam was buried in the place where the Passion cross of Christ was later to be erected: Calvary or Golgotha. Christ's death on the cross, moreover, marked the end of the era of Adam. It is, then, not surprising that in Crucifixion iconography we may see the head, skull or even the figure of Adam beneath the cross. Calvary or Golgotha, which means '(the place of a) skull', making the inclusion of Adam's skull even more appropriate, was seen as the centre of the world from an early time onward, and the cross of Christ thus stood in this very centre.[40] Apart from the theological sense of this configuration of Christ's cross and Adam's skull – the sin of the first human made the redemption of mankind by Christ's Crucifixion necessary – it is not hazardous to suppose that the idea of the cardinal points as hidden in the personal name of Adam is connoted in this particular scene.[41]

We may adduce two instances from early medieval art which are very much relevant in this regard. One of the panels of the wooden doors of the Santa Sabina church in Rome, dating to *c.*430, has a peculiar rendering of the Second Coming (fig. 6). It depicts in its lower register the sign of the Son of Man coming down from heaven: a Latin cross enclosed, except for the stem, by a circle, perhaps meant to indicate glory. Here the cross has a clear eschatological meaning.[42] The inclusion of the high cross forms in a Second Coming miniature in the eighth- or ninth-century Irish gospel-book in Turin is apparently due to cosmological notions (fig. 7).[43] They are distributed crosswise at the frame of the miniature, which in the centre has the figure of Christ, who is surrounded by ninety-six smaller figures. Here, within an eschatological context, the crosses are associated with the cardinal points of the universe.[44]

1053–56: 'Coroainmniged iarsain / onacethri rétglannaib, / Archon, Dissis, rotdelb Dia, / Anatole, Missi[mb]ria.'

The explanation of how Adam's name was derived is no Irish invention, but apparently it is very old and occurs frequently in Irish exegesis. See: Martin McNamara, *The Apocrypha in the Irish Church* ([Dublin:] Dublin Institute for Advanced Studies, 1984²), 21–23 (no. 4). 40 Although this feature is more frequently encountered in Byzantine art than in Western iconography, it certainly is not unknown in the West. See: Alfred A. Schmid, 'Zum Torso eines Kruzifixes im Museum von Freiburg i[m] Ü[chtland]', *Der Mensch und die Künste.* Festschrift Heinrich Lützeler zum 60. Geburtstage (Düsseldorf: Verlag L. Schwann, 1962), 377–93, Abbn 29a–34: 380–82; Gertrud Schiller, *Ikonographie der christlichen Kunst*, 2 Die Passion Jesu Christi (Gütersloh: Gütersloher Verlagshaus Gerd Mohn, 1968), 142–45; G. Ristow and G. Jászai, 'Golgotha', *Lexikon der christlichen Ikonographie*, 2 (ed. Engelbert Kirschbaum et al.) (Rom etc.: Herder, 1970), 163–65, with further references. 41 See: Schiller, *Ikonographie der christlichen Kunst*, 2 (as in note 40), 144. 42 See: Ernst H. Kantorowicz, 'The 'King's Advent' and the Enigmatic Panels in the Doors of Santa Sabina', *Selected Studies* (Locust Valley [NY]: J. J. Augustin, 1965), 37–75: 62–71, pl. 19 fig. 41. 43 Turin, Biblioteca Nazionale, ms. O. IV. 20, fol. 2r. 44 Otto-Karl Werckmeister, *Irisch-northumbrische Buchmalerei des 8. Jahrhunderts und monastische Spiritualität* (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter & Co., 1967), 118–19; *Dia Brátha* (as in note 4), 81–82, pl. X (on p. 81 a double

6 Panel on a door of the church of Santa Sabina, Rome, with the sign of the Son of Man coming down from heaven.

It must be clear that all these instances of cross-inscribed circles are in some way pertinent to the form of the Irish high cross head. Cross and circle may symbolize or refer to world design, beginning and structure, and to world end, the completion of Existence. The notions of Passion cross and sign of the Son of Man as instrumental and symbolic attributes in central events in Christian belief blend seamlessly with these meanings. Therefore, we may safely conclude that the ring of the Irish high cross is considerably charged with cosmo-eschatological concepts. At the same time, it is a matter of course that other connotations just add to the core meaning of the combined cross and circle.[45]

If we accept that the ideas touched upon briefly above have determined, or at least play an important part in, the symbolism of the morphology of the high cross head, then it is not unreasonable that we should make an attemp to expand these findings. It is perhaps not surprising that the circularity of the material world is analogously continued, as it were, in the revolving movement of the disc or wheel form as it is found in descriptions of phenomena with a strong eschatological aspect. We encounter the wheel for instance in the 'Hiberno'–Latin version of *(The Apocalypse of) the Seven Heavens*,[46] where the sinner's soul on the way to his judgment in the seventh heaven passes through the sixth heaven called Seloth:

> In the midst of it [there is] a wheel, and an angel of Tartarus striking the wheel with iron rods. By this means (?) he turns it around, and three rivers (?). The person who is a sinner is put on the wheel and is tormented for twelve years. A hundred sparks come from the wheel, and a hundred pounds in each splinter, and a hundred souls are burnt up.[47]

There are four texts in vernacular Irish containing information on the seven heavens and these are related in different ways to this Latin apocalypse.[48]

typesetting error corrupts the text: 'This bordered image is surrounded by ninety-six smaller figures, of which eighty-eight are three-quarter length, while six [*read*: four] above the middle frame as well as six [*read*: four] others below are full-length.'). 45 See also: Roe, 'The Irish High Cross. Morphology and Iconography' (as in note 26), 217: 'Following St. Paul, the main theme of the Early Fathers was the victory of Christ in which death is swallowed up and through which all are made alive; the Cross itself, its four members equated with the four axes of the Cosmos, was held to bear witness to the universality of the redemption; the sign of the cross (*signaculum*) to fortify and protect the believer in all eventualities of human life.' 46 Karlsruhe, Badische Landesbibliothek, ms. Augiensis CCLIV, fol. 156r–v. 47 'In medio eius rotam et angelo tartarucho cum uirgis ferreis percutientis rotam et inde uoluitur in gyru et flumine tres; ponitur homo peccatur super rotam, XII annis tormentatur. Centum scintille procedit de rotam & centum pondus in uno scindule & centum anime percremant.' Text (edited by L. De Bruyne) and English translation from: Richard Bauckham, 'The *Apocalypse of the Seven Heavens*. The Latin Version', *Apocrypha* 4 (1993), 141–75: 153–54. 48 See for a discussion of the Irish versions of the *Seven Heavens Apocalypse* and their relationships

7 The Second Coming of Christ, miniature (fol. 2a) in an Irish gospels fragment, ms. O. IV. 20, Turin, Biblioteca Nazionale Universitaria.

However, in the Irish *Na Seacht Neamha* the wheel is replaced by another device and located in the fifth heaven. In *Fís Adamnáin* (The Vision of Adamnán) we read that sinners have to wait for sixteen years in a whirlpool of fire, where they move round and round, after which they are uplifted by an angel with a rod.[49] Another version mentions the whirlpool and elaborates on the rod, which now is spiky and has a hundred points with which the sinners are being wounded.[50]

Except for a wheel or a fiery whirlpool, we also find a rotating 'solar mass' associated with eschatological or rather apocalyptic upheaval. Thus, for instance, in *An Teanga Bithnua* (The Evernew Tongue):

with the Latin version: Bauckham, 'The *Apocalypse of the Seven Heavens*' (as in note 47), 145–47, 148, 150–52.

The seven heavens were perceived as being concentric. For discussions of the Irish seven heavens tradition, see: St. John D. Seymour, 'The Seven Heavens in Irish Literature', *Zeitschrift für celtische Philologie* 14 (1923), 18–30; McNamara, *The Apocrypha in the Irish Church* (as in note 39), 141–42 (no. 108); Jane Stevenson, 'Ascent through the Heavens, from Egypt to Ireland', *Cambridge Medieval Celtic Studies* 5 (Summer 1983), 21–35. **49** 'there is a distinctive whirlpool in the middle of this one [= the fifth heaven]. This swirls around the souls of sinners, and holds them fast for sixteen years. [...] When it is time to release the sinners, the angel strikes the stream with a rod which is hard like a stone, and lifts up the souls with the end of the rod' (itá sóebchore sainraedach i mmedon in tsrotha sin. 7 impaíd immá cuaird anmand inna pecthach 7 nos fastand co cend se mbli*a*dna déc. [...] In tan iarom as mithig túaslucud inna pecthach ass be*n*aid in t-aingel in sruth co fleisc dúir co n-aic*n*iud lecdu co tócband inna anmand súas do chind na flesci). Irish text from: *Lebor na Huidre / Book of the Dun Cow* (ed. R. I. Best and Osborn Bergin) (Dublin: Royal Irish Academy, 1929, 71–72 (lines 2113–18); English translation from: McNamara and Herbert (eds.), *Irish Biblical Apocrypha* (as in note 34), 142. **50** See, for the variants: Bauckham, 'The *Apocalypse of the Seven Heavens*' (as in note 47), 148, and 150: 'The wheel has been replaced by a whirlpool, presumably through some misunderstanding of *rota*. The thorns or spikes [...] may result from reading *scintille* (sparks) as *spinule* (thorns) or *spicula* (spikes).'

Wheels of torture within an eschatological setting are also found in other Christian texts, for instance in the *Apocalypse of Peter*, the *Visio Sancti Pauli*, the *Sibylline Oracles*, the Coptic *Apocalypse of John*, and the *Vision of Gunthelm*. See the discussion in: Bauckham, 'The *Apocalypse of the Seven Heavens*', and: Howard Rollin Patch, *The Other World According to Descriptions in Medieval Literature* (Smith College Studies in Modern Languages. New Series I; Cambridge [Mass.]: Harvard University Press, 1950), 88, 92, 93, 117, 127; cf. 297, 324.

In *Páis Georgi* (The Passion of St George) in the Leabhar Breac (Dublin, Royal Irish Academy, ms. 23 P 16) the 'first death' of this saint is also caused by a torture wheel. It is almost naturally associated with the death of Christ on the cross: 'On the next day the king had prepared a great wheel with sharp spikes and two-edged swords in its midst, on which he ordered George to be flung. At the sight of this, the martyr at first began to reflect how he might be delivered from this wheel, but then shaking his head in repentance at that thought, 'Fie on thee, George!' said he; 'remember the time when Christ was crucified between the two thieves. Hear me now, O God! [...]' (Is-in ló iar n-a barach, forcongair in rig roth mor do thabairt chuca, 7 bera áithe 7 clóidbe de-fhoebracha do thabairt i n-a medon, 7 Georgi do chur ind. O thanic tra Georgí, 7 o 'tconnairc in roth, is ed ro-s-imraid oice, indus no-m-saerfaither o'n roth-sa, 7 is ed atbert, la cúmscugud a chind co n-aithrige de-sin: – 'Mairg det-siu, a

> Thereafter, suddenly, at the end of the eve of Easter, there was heard in the clouds a noise like thunder, or like the crackle of fire. There was a thunderous blast meanwhile, whereby suddenly a solar mass, like a bright sun, was seen in the midst of the tumult. That radiant solar mass revolved around in such a way that eyes could not look on it, for it was seven times brighter than the sun.
>
> Immediately afterwards, as the eyes of the host awaited the crash, for they thought that it was a sign of Doomsday, there was heard ...[51]

Tumult, loud noise, revolving movement, thunder and lightning: these were certainly phenomena which were believed to appear before Doomsday, and the early medieval Irish had a specific reason to fear tumultuous and whirling progressions. As is attested in a corpus of texts, a belief regarding these existed in early Ireland, a belief which had a strong apocalyptic flavour. Whereas the high cross form discussed above is in its essence eschatological, the Irish expectancy of an imminent End was apocalyptic. A text called *Adamnán's Second Vision* describes this apocalyptic prophecy most concisely:[52]

> Woe to the harlots and sinners who will be burnt like hay and stubble, by a fire kindled in a bisextile leap year, and at the end of a cycle, and on the feast of the Decollation of John the Baptist.
>
> Now in that year a pestilence will come on a Friday, unless the folk stay it by devout penance, even as did the Ninevites.[53]

This particular prophecy caused a panic in the year 1096, which has its fullest documentation in the seventeenth-century compilation of the *Annals of the Four Masters:*

Georgí, bat cúimnech ina hamsire-si, in ro-crochad Crist eter na dá latrand; no-m-cluin-se anosa, a Dé [...]). See: *The Passions and the Homilies from Leabhar Breac*. Text, Translation, and Glossary (ed. Robert Atkinson) (Todd Lecture Series II; Dublin: Royal Irish Academy etc., 1887), 74–75 (Irish text); 317 (English translation). **51** 'Talmaidiu iarsein, intan ba deadh n-aidche inna casc, co clos ni, a ndeilm isnaib neluib am*al* fhogur torainn, *nó* ba cosmail re cichnaig thened dara. Ba tinfisiu thorni colleic, *con*acces in talmaidiu in gr*i*anbruth am*al* gréin n-etraicht i medon in delma. Immesoid (?) macuairt in gr*i*anbruth etracht sin, co n*ach* tairthed rosc sula, ar ba etrachtu fo shecht innas in gr*i*an.

Talmaidiu iarsein co clos ni, ar ro bhatar sella in tsloigh oc fresce in delma, ar dorum*e*natar ba hairdhe br*a*tha, co clos ni ...' Irish text from: Stokes, 'The Evernew Tongue' (as in note 34), 100; translation from: McNamara and Herbert (eds.), *Irish Biblical Apocrypha* (as in note 34), 110. **52** The text beginning in Latin with 'Visio q*uam* uidit Adamnan*us*' is found in the Leabhar Breac (Dublin, Royal Irish Academy, ms. 23 P 16), 258–59. **53** 'Vae m*e*ritricib*us* et pecc*a*torib*us* q*ui* sic*ut* foenum et stipul*a* *con*cremabunt*ur* a bura ignita in anno bisextili et embolesmi et in fine cycli et in Decollatione Ioh*a*nnis Bautistae! / IN sexta feria *autem* plaga *con*veni[e]t in illo anno, nis*i* [populus] deuota poenitentia pr*o*hibue*rit*, ut Nin*i*uetae feceru*nt*.', see: Whitley Stokes, 'Adamnán's Second Vision', *Revue Celtique* 12

> [1096] The festival of John fell on Friday this year; the men of Ireland were seized with great fear in consequence, and the resolution adopted by the clergy of Ireland, with the successor of Patrick [at their head], to protect them against the pestilence which had been predicted to them at a remote period, was, to command all in general to observe abstinence, from Wednesday till Sunday, every month, and to fast [on one meal] every day till the end of a year, except on Sundays, solemnities, and great festivals; and they also made alms and many offerings to God; and many lands were granted to churches and clergymen by kings and chieftains; and the men of Ireland were saved for that time from the fire of vengeance[54]

There are several inconsistencies in this tradition. Firstly, not all conditions appear to have been fulfilled in the year 1096. Nevertheless, the fact that a great mortality already raged in Ireland from August 1095 to May 1096 may have played a part, arousing further fearful expectations.[55] Moreover, it is very likely

(1891), 420–43: 422–23. **54** 'Feil Eóin for Aoine isin mbliad*h*ainsi. Ro g*h*ab*h* imeagla m*h*ór fiora Ereann reimpi, conad*h* i com*h*airle arriacht lá cleirc*h*ib*h* Ereann im comarba Phátraicc dia nimd*h*ide*a*n ar an te*adh*maim ro tircanad*h* dóib*h* ó c*h*éin a forc*h*ongra for c*h*ach a ccoitc*h*inne tred*hea*nos ó Che*a*daoin go Dom*h*nach do dénam*h* gacha mís, 7 trosccad*h* gach laoi go ce*a*nn mbliad*h*na, cen mo tát Dom*h*naig*h*e, 7 sollamna, 7 airdf*h*eile, 7 dan do ratsat almsana, 7 edbarta iomd*h*a do d*h*ia. Tuccad*h* dan fe*a*ranna iomd*h*a do eccailsib*h*, 7 c*h*léirscib*h*, ó ríog*h*aib*h*, 7 taoisec*h*aib*h*, 7 ro saort*h*a fir Ereann an tucht sin ar téine na dío*gh*la', see: John O'Donovan (ed.), *Annala Rioghachta Eireann. Annals of the Kingdom of Ireland, by the Four Masters, from the Earliest Period to the Year 1616*. Edited from Mss. in the Library of the Royal Irish Academy and of Trinity College, Dublin, with a Translation, and Copious Notes, 2 (Dublin: Hodges, Smith, and Co., 1856²), 952–53.

See also the entries in three other, earlier annals: '[1096] 3. Great fear seized the men of Ireland before the feast of John in this year, and God protected them through the fasts of the successor of Patrick and the other clerics of Ireland' (3. Uamon mór f*or* feraibh Er*enn* ria feil Eoin na blia*dna*-sa co ro thesairc Dia tria troisctibh com*arba* Pat*raic* 7 cleirech nEr*enn* archena), see: Seán Mac Airt and Gearóid Mac Niocaill (eds.), *The Annals of Ulster (to A.D. 1131)*, 1 Text and Translation ([Dublin:] Dublin Institute for Advanced Studies, 1983), 530–31; '[1096] Great terror over the men of all Erinn before the festival of John of this year; but God and Patrick saved them through the fastings of the comarb of Patrick and the clerics of Erinn besides' (Uaman mór for feruib*h* Erenn uile ria b*h*féil Eoin na bliadna sin, gurro t*h*esairc Dia ocus Patraic tre troisct*hib*h c*h*omarba Patraic ocus c*h*leirech nErenn airchéna), see: William M. Hennessy (ed.), *The Annals of Loch Cé. A Chronicle of Irish Affairs from* A.D. 1014 to A.D. 1590. Edited, with a Translation, 1 (Rerum Britannicarum Medii Aevi Scriptores. Rolls Series 54; London: Her Majesty's Stationery Office, 1871 [reprint without mention of place of publication 1965], 82–83; 'Exit mal*us* an*nus et* ueniat bon*us* an*nus* .i. bl*iadan* na feli Eoi*n* [‹‹i.e. the year of the festival of S. John››]', see: Whitley Stokes, 'The Annals of Tigernach. The Continuation, A.D. 1088–A.D. 1178', *Revue Celtique* 18 (1897), 9–59, 150–97, 267–303: 18. **55** James F. Kenney, *The Sources for the Early History of Ireland: Ecclesiastical*. An Introduction and Guide (Records of Civilization. Sources and Studies, 11; Dublin: Pádraic Ó Táilliúir, 1979; [reprint of the second edition, New York 1966, with Preface, corrections, and additions by Ludwig Bieler], 750; McNamara, *The Apocrypha in the*

that the Irish expectations in 1096 were connected with beliefs which were topical on the European Continent. From there we have records which describe expectations that have a comparable apocalyptic hue. In a chronicle written by abbot Ekkehard of Aura it is recorded that in the summer of 1096 a rumour circulated stating that emperor Charlemagne had risen from the grave to lead the crusaders of the First Crusade to Jerusalem. Another Continental author, Guibert of Nogent, suggested that the liberation of the same Holy City would usher in the coming of Antichrist. We cannot conclude that these expectations were general in Western Europe, but neither should we assume that we have here another 'historiographers' myth' like that of the Year 1000. What this evidence suggests is that in 1096 some expectations were simultaneously current in Europe which certainly were not devoid of apocalyptic aspects.[56]

As a date 1096 is quite late in connection with early medieval apocalyptic beliefs, but it has not yet been mentioned that the events of this year constitute the culminating point of a tradition which must have been accumulating in Ireland for several centuries.[57] A central figure in this tradition is Mog Ruith, an Irish druid, who had become notorious as a pupil of the magician Simon Magus, and as the man who had beheaded St John the Baptist at the court of king Herod.[58] Because of his involvement in this crime the Irish people had become guilt-ridden, which led to the belief that Ireland would suffer a special apocalyptic treatment. There are some differences in the tradition as it has been preserved in the textual sources of the Mog Ruith cycle. For instance, it is not wholly clear whether the apocalyptic disaster would occur in the final stage of

Irish Church (as in note 39), 66–67 (no. 57). **56** Ekkehard de Aura, 'Hierosolymita, de oppressione, liberatione ac restauratione Jerosolymitanae ecclesiae', *Recueil des historiens des croisades publié par les soins de l'Académie des Inscriptions et Belles-Lettres: historiens occidentaux*, 5 (Paris: Imprimerie Nationale, 1895), 1–40: 19; Guibert de Nogent-sous-Coucy, 'Historia quae dicitur Gesta Dei per Francos', *Recueil des historiens des croisades publié par les soins de l'Académie des Inscriptions et Belles-Lettres: historiens occidentaux*, 4 (Paris: Imprimerie Nationale, 1879), 113–263: 138–39, cf. 239; Norman Cohn, *The Pursuit of the Millennium*. Revolutionary Millenarians and Mystical Anarchists of the Middle Ages (Paladin Book; London etc.: Granada Publishing, 1970³), 71–73, cf. 113. **57** Kenney, *The Sources for the Early History of Ireland: Ecclesiastical* (as in note 55), 752; McNamara, *The Apocrypha in the Irish Church* (as in note 39), 66 (no. 57). **58** For the lore and texts on Mog Ruith, see: Eugene O'Curry, *Lectures on the Manuscript Materials of Ancient Irish History*. Delivered at the Catholic University of Ireland, During the Sessions of 1855 and 1856 (Dublin: William A. Hinch and Patrick Traynor, 1878), 200, 272, 385, 401–04, 421, 423–30, 629, 632–34; R. A. S. Macalister, 'Temair Breg. A Study of the Remains and Traditions of Tara', *Proceedings of the Royal Irish Academy* 34 C (1919), 231–399, pls VII–X: 344–56; Annie M. Scarre, 'The Beheading of John the Baptist by Mog Ruith', *Ériu* 4 (1910), 173–81; Käte Müller-Lisowski, 'Texte zur Mog Ruith Sage', *Zeitschrift für celtische Philologie* 14 (1923), 145–63; Käte Müller-Lisowski, 'La légende de St Jean dans la tradition irlandaise et le druide Mog Ruith', *Études Celtiques* 3 (1938), 46–70; Brian Ó Cuív, 'Two Items from Irish Apocryphal Tradition', *Celtica* 10 (1973), 87–113: 102–13; Thomas F. O'Rahilly, *Early Irish History and Mythology* (Dublin: Dublin Institute for Advanced Studies, 1984 reprint), 519–22; McNamara, *The Apocrypha in*

the world's time or earlier. The name Mog Ruith is to be translated as 'Slave of the Wheel', and as such it is very significant.[59] The druid's wheel has been named 'an engine of destruction', but in the texts this instrumental device is sometimes described as 'the rolling wheel', sometimes as 'the dragon', and these are but two variants.[60] In some sources the prophecy refers to Europe, in others to Ireland.[61] The conflated nature of this lore makes it impossible at this stage to draw up an historically faithful picture of the Irish expectations of the dreadful events.[62]

Although much more analysis of the sources is necessary, it appears that wheel form, whirlwind, and revolving movement are conspicuous in these particular apocalyptic notions or beliefs of the early Irish.

As we have seen, we may regard the Irish high cross as an eschatological monument. Does it evince any apocalyptic notions, like those associated with Mog Ruith and the beheading and festival of St John the Baptist? There seems to be hardly anything in the iconography of the high crosses that can be called apocalyptic in a sense which relates to the Apocalypse of St John.[63] Neither are there motifs or subjects in the figural imagery that have been identified as relating to historical apocalyptic beliefs. The figure of Antichrist, for instance,

the Irish Church (as in note 39), 64–67 (nos. 55–57). **59** *Mug, mog* means 'male slave or servant', see: (*Contributions to a*) *Dictionary of the Irish Language*. Based Mainly on Old and Middle Irish Materials ([Dublin:] Royal Irish Academy, 1913–1976), *s.v.* mug (mog) II. **60** See: Kenney, *The Sources for the Early History of Ireland: Ecclesiastical* (as in note 55), 749–53, where the relevant sources are discussed under the heading 'The "Broom out of Fánad"'. **61** For the tradition which places the ravages at the end of time I here give two variants: 'the rolling wheel that will come over Europe before Judgment' (in roth rāmach tic tar Eoraip ria mbráth), from Oxford, Bodleian Library, Ms. Laud 610, 109, see: Kuno Meyer, 'The Laud Genealogies and Tribal Histories', *Zeitschrift für celtische Philologie* 8 (1912), 291–338: 332; 'the rolling wheel that will come over Europe before Judgment' (*i*n roth ramach tic da*r* Eoraip ria*m*brath), from Oxford, Bodleian Library, Ms. Rawlinson B 502, 157, see: Käte Müller-Lisowski, 'Texte zur Mog Ruith Sage', (as in note 58) 162; 'and this is the dragon prophesied to arise on S. John's eve and to afflict Ireland in the world's latter time' (ocus is é sin in draig tairngiter im féil Eoin do thurgbáil for Eirinn fri deired domain), from the Book of Ballymote (Dublin, Royal Irish Academy, ms. 23 P 12), 107, see: *Silva Gadelica (I.–XXXI.)* A Collection of Tales in Irish with Extracts Illustrating Persons and Places. Edited from Mss. and Translated, 2 Translation and Notes (ed. Standish H. O'Grady) (London-Edinburgh: Williams and Norgate, 1892), 477, 523; 'And that is the dragon which is prophesied to arise on St John's day at the end of the world and afflict Ireland in vengeance for John the Baptist' (7 issé sin in draig tairṅgerthar im féil Eóin do turgabáil for Erinn fri deredh domhain [i ndigail Eoin Baiste]), see: Whitley Stokes, 'The Prose Tales in the Rennes Dindṡenchas [33. Róiriu-80. Loch nÉrne]', *Revue Celtique* 15 (1894), 418–84: 441. **62** This is only one aspect of the Mog Ruith lore which needs much more study. See: Kees Veelenturf, 'Apocalyptic Elements in Irish High Cross Iconography?', *Pattern and Purpose in Insular Art*. Proceedings of the Fourth International Conference on Insular Art held at the National Museum & Gallery, Cardiff, 3–6 September 1998 (ed. M. Redknap et al.) (Oxford: Oxbow Books, 2001) 209–19, colour pls XX–XXI: 212–13. **63** See: Veelenturf, 'Apocalyptic Elements in Irish High Cross Iconography?' (as in note 62), 209–10.

8 The north face of the high cross from Kinnitty at Castlebernard (Co. Offaly), with the spiral whorl on the cross head.

which is a well-known protagonist in early texts from Ireland, is apparently never seen in the iconography of the high crosses. It appears, however, that apocalyptic imagery is indeed present in the high cross iconography, but in quite a sophisticated, or perhaps better, veiled guise.

On six high crosses we see a whorl of spiralled bosses on the east face of the cross head.[64] In alphabetical order of location, these are the Kinnitty Cross at Castlebernard (fig. 8),[65] the North Cross in Duleek (fig. 9),[66] the East Cross of Eglish,[67] the Cross of Patrick and Columba in Kells (fig. 10),[68] the high cross of Tihilly,[69] and the Island Cross in Tynan.[70] The device consists of six interconnected spiral bosses positioned around a central boss.[71] Similar configurations also appear elsewhere in Irish sculpture.

On three crosses this device makes up the counter-image of the Crucifixion on the west face, viz. the Castlebernard high cross, the North Cross at Duleek, and the Tihilly Cross. On the Cross of Patrick and Columba in Kells the whorl is matched by an image of Christ at his Second Coming which is right above a carving of the Crucifixion. In three instances the device therefore takes the place of a figural scene which is usually of an eschatological nature, while in Kells the association is somewhat more complex. The important position in the cross head's centre as well as the pairing with the Crucifixion creates an analogy with the three eschatological types in high cross iconography discussed above.

The spiral whorl makes an impression of revolving movement, and resembles some sort of turning wheel or propeller. It is difficult to avoid the impression that in the eschatological context of the high crosses this whorl belongs to the complex of attributes and phenomena in early Irish apocalyptic beliefs.

We must pass over a basic discussion of the interpretation of so-called decorative or non-representational motifs in early medieval art, which of course has its problems. We feel justified in doing so, since in Ireland the spiral whorl configuration occurs only within the eschatological context of the high cross heads. Moreover, as Hilary Richardson has observed: 'The careful arrangement of raised bosses in high relief of some of the crosses is likely to be based on [...] language of numbers'.[72] The whorl displays six plus one bosses, making the numbers six and seven conspicuous, as I have remarked elsewhere:

64 The following is based on: Veelenturf, 'Apocalyptic Elements in Irish High Cross Iconography?' (as in note 62), 213–16. **65** *The High Crosses of Ireland* (as in note 1), 36 (no. 35; head), fig. 99. **66** Ibid., 76–77 (no. 87; head, centre), fig. 239. **67** Ibid., 86 (no. 92), fig. 266. **68** Ibid., 109 (no. 127; head, centre), fig. 346. **69** Ibid., 172 (no. 210; head), fig. 589. **70** Ibid., 180 (no. 225), fig. 629. **71** The East Cross of Eglish has eight plus one bosses. **72** Hilary Richardson, 'Number and Symbol in Early Christian Irish Art', *Journal of the Royal Society of Antiquaries of Ireland* 114 (1984), 28–47: 31.

9 The spiral whorl on the east face of the North Cross in Duleek (Co. Louth).

10 The Cross of Patrick and Columba in Kells (Co. Meath) showing the spiral whorl on the east face in the centre of the cross head.

11 The east face of the high cross at Durrow (Co. Offaly).

> In Christian number symbolism six is a perfect number connected with the days of the Creation and also with salvation's history, from the creation of Adam to the Last Judgment: it is a number of completion. Seven is no less a perfect and holy number, especially in Scripture, and is of course often related to the seventh day. On account of the week cycle of six days plus one, God's rest day after the six days of Creation, and *sex aetates mundi* followed by the rest period of eternity, seven is particularly the sign of earthly circular time. In this respect seven also has significance because of its position after the number six. Perfect numbers that relate to the completion of time are, of course, especially suited to figure in an eschatological context.[73]

There are more non-figural motifs on the Irish high crosses which suggest whirling or revolving movement, but these designs are not juxtaposed with the Crucifixion, or their position apparently is not subject to a rule or a system as in the case of the spiral whorl discussed here. Perhaps this whorl is not the only one with an apocalyptic association. On some scripture crosses, like those of Durrow and Clonmacnoise, we see similar carvings. Above the eschatological Judge on the high cross of Durrow there are four bosses with animals emerging from them (fig. 11),[74] and we meet cognate decorations above the Crucifixion on the Cross of the Scriptures in Clonmacnoise[75] and above and below the crucified Christ on Muiredach's Cross, Monasterboice.[76] It would be going too far to surmise that we have here a reminiscence of the dragon which sometimes takes the place of the wheel in Irish apocalyptic,[77] but a more specific iconographic meaning for combinations of bosses, whorl and animals cannot be ruled out altogether.

The seven spiral devices make up a distinctive group. It is, however, not improbable that the sculptors of the high crosses have used a much more extensive repertoire of 'non-representational' motifs to express iconographic meaning of an eschatological or an apocalyptic nature. The same motifs may have varying symbolic content, which is dependent on, and articulated by, their context. This would make a close parallel to figural iconography, in which different subjects can represent or allude to one theological truth or concept, or where one subject can simultaneously imply several of such ideas. It is clear that non-figural devices can never be merely illustrations representing events or objects, but that does not at all preclude that they may be imbued with an iconographic meaning.

The developed high cross which is a product of early beliefs in Ireland is in my view essentially an eschatological monument. The way of rendering and of positioning the Crucifixion and the eschatological image of Second Coming or

73 Veelenturf, 'Apocalyptic Elements in Irish High Cross Iconography?' (as in note 62), 216. 74 *The High Crosses of Ireland* (as in note 1), figs 247–48. 75 Ibid., fig. 132, 134. 76 Ibid., figs 480–81. 77 See above and n. 61.

Last Judgment, as well as the morphology of the monuments themselves, are clear indicators for this. It seems that apocalyptic elements have also found a place within the iconography of the crosses, but in a more veiled and subtle manner. The study of these motifs, however, requires a methodology of its own with an adequate verifiable foundation. Such a methodology, however, has as yet not been fully developed. Should we be able to expand and further substantiate findings like those concerning the spiral whorl presented above in the body of this essay, we would have further evidence still in favour of the sophistication of the monuments.

Iconographically speaking, the high cross expresses hope for Redemption after death and at the end of time. It is a sculpture of hope for the future. For the archaeologists and art historians who study these monuments with their intricate decoration and difficult imagery there should also be hope for progress in our understanding of these sculptures which adorn the Irish countryside in such a graceful and also intellectually challenging fashion.[78]

78 I am very grateful to the editor of this book for his patience and for his correction of my English.

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