

# CLASSICAL AND SECULAR LEARNING AMONG THE IRISH BEFORE THE CAROLINGIAN RENAISSANCE

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Any paper on the old topic of Irish learning in the Dark Ages, a question to which so many erudite books and articles have been devoted,<sup>1</sup> requires some kind of explanation from the writer, especially when he does not intend to present very much in the way of new evidence. To put matters succinctly, the reason for this foray into familiar territory is a methodological one. The question of the state of learning in early medi-aeval Ireland has long been vexed by confusions. The most serious of these has been a certain fuzziness regarding "classical learning," which *semper et ubique* refers to the direct study of the best literary products of the Greek and Roman civilizations up to about the second century A.D., and "secular learning," which is based upon "classical learning" and is intimately bound up, but not identical, with it. Secular learning embraces a host of *non-theological* subjects<sup>2</sup> and is more or less identical with the liberal arts in the form in which they were transmitted by handbooks to the early Middle Ages. Secular learning includes, in addition to the canonical seven or nine liberal arts,<sup>3</sup> the numerous topics that make up "natural science" (including geography, ethnography, even some areas of history, i.e., the social sciences of today). Classical and secular learning maintained their close association with each other until the end of antiquity, when they gradually became divorced. Bede could write his *De Schematibus et Tropis* without reference to classical literature,<sup>4</sup> and as

we shall argue, the Irish studied Vergilian commentaries without knowing much, if anything, about Vergil.

This brings us to a second point of confusion. Many have assumed that because the Irish were bound up with the revival of classical learning on the continent in the ninth century, they must have *a priori* had access to a good many classical texts in their homeland. But no one yet has done the work of collecting quotations and reminiscences of classical authors in Ireland prior to 800, or for that matter, of all the bits of manuscript evidence for their knowledge. Nor has there been any survey of grammars, encyclopedias, and poetic commentaries known to the Irish of that period. This paper will attempt to lay the groundwork for such a task. On methodological considerations I have decided to survey the evidence for "classical learning," strictly defined, separately from that relating to the broader category of "secular learning."

In beginning with the question of classical learning, it may be useful to investigate the grounds for the belief that the Irish of the pre-Carolingian Dark Ages cultivated a taste for the Latin classics at least.<sup>5</sup> We must recall that this is a belief held by serious scholars up to the present time. For example, as recently as 1957, F.J.E. Raby could claim: "It seems reasonable to assume that at Bangor a clever scholar had an opportunity of mastering the elements of prosody and of reading the best among the classical and Christian poets."<sup>6</sup> Raby was speaking of Bangor at the middle of the sixth century when Columbanus was a student there. Moreover, in 1971 Ludwig Bieler re-stated his belief that the Irish "do seem to have played a leading part [sc. in the transmission of Horace's poems] during the eighth and ninth centuries." But Bieler goes even further in suggesting "a tradition of Horatian studies in Ireland from the sixth century onwards."<sup>7</sup>

I suggest that the following pieces of evidence, some explicit, some tacit, form the foundation of the belief that there was widespread classical Latin learning in Dark Age Ireland: (1) the overall reputation for learning that the Irish enjoyed abroad in the seventh and eighth centuries; (2) Irish activity as conservers of classical literature in the ninth and following centuries; (3) seventh- and eighth-century quotations of classical literature; (4) Irish command of classical prosody; (5) the special case

of Columbanus; (6) the evidence given by the *Leyden Glossary* that Gaulish scholars emigrated to Ireland in the fifth or sixth century.

E. Coccia, in his remarkable survey of Hiberno-Latin literature, has collected a great many *testimonia* to Irish learning from the seventh to the tenth century.<sup>8</sup> Here we shall confine ourselves to the evidence before Alcuin. First, England. Nearly all the evidence provided by Bede regarding the learning of the Irish relates to scriptural study. Still, he takes care to note Irishmen of exceptional learning and to name individual Englishmen who studied in Ireland.<sup>9</sup> He lauds the Irish for their generosity in educating large numbers of English students at their own expense.<sup>10</sup> Aldhelm, writing in the last quarter of the seventh century,<sup>11</sup> seemed to think that the Irish savants were overrated, and he enjoyed having a bit of fun at their expense.<sup>12</sup> (We learn from William of Malmesbury that Aldhelm purged the *scabredo Scotica* from his pupil Artuil.<sup>13</sup>) But he took the trouble to tell us a good deal about late seventh-century Irish teaching, and his close contacts with a number of Irishmen make his testimony highly valuable.<sup>14</sup> Aldhelm singled out for mention Irish expertise in grammar, biblical exegesis, geometry and physics (!),<sup>15</sup> and classical mythology, though he says nothing of ancient authors read in Ireland. His remarks on the alleged passion of the Irish for classical mythology are perhaps worth quoting in full:

What, pray, I beseech you eagerly, is the benefit to the sanctity of the orthodox faith to expend energy by reading and studying the foul pollution of base Proserpina, which I shrink from mentioning in plain speech; or to revere, through celebration in study, Hermione, the wanton offspring of Menelaus and Helen, who, as the ancient texts report, was engaged for a while by right of dowry to Orestes, then, having changed her mind married Neoptolemus?<sup>16</sup>

Aldhelm's homiletic pedantry becomes relevant to our question through the context. His disciple Wihtfrith is about to embark on a journey to Ireland to pursue his studies there. In his opening remarks to his student, Aldhelm queries the wisdom of that decision and outlines the dangers of that course, among which are "the troublesome meanderings of the [sc. Irish]

worldly philosophers."<sup>17</sup> When we discount the obvious *parti pris* of Aldhelm's tone, the letter constitutes remarkable evidence for Irish knowledge of and interest in classical mythology, although it tells us nothing about the source of that knowledge.

Somewhat before the middle of the seventh century, the Irish reputation for learning (doubtless created by the mission of Columbanus and his successors) was well established in France. The Frank Agilbert (later the Bishop of Wessex who participated in the Synod of Whitby<sup>18</sup>) came to Ireland to study, albeit only scriptural pursuits are mentioned by Bede.<sup>19</sup> In 656 Bishop Dido of Poitiers took Dagobert II to Ireland, where he was supposed to have studied.<sup>20</sup> Furthermore, Gertrude, a daughter of Pepin of Landen, may have imported Irish scholars to her convent in Nivelles to set up a programme of studies; in any case her *Vita* gives good evidence for the importation of Irish books into Frankish territory.<sup>21</sup> Jonas, the Italian biographer of Columbanus, writing about a generation after the saint's death, has this to say of his education:

When the years of his infancy had passed and he had grown to boyhood, he dedicated his sharp wits *litterarum doctrinis et grammaticorum studiis*, which he pursued throughout the entirety of his boyhood and adolescence, until they reached fruition in his adult years.<sup>22</sup>

Later, in a rather vague passage which need not refer directly to Columbanus' own education, Jonas speaks of "labour wasted in the study of grammar, rhetoric, geometry, and Holy Scripture, should one fall into the snares of secular life."<sup>23</sup> Jonas' testimony, therefore, valuable as it is, tells us little more than that some kind of training in the liberal arts was available in sixth-century Ireland. It is interesting, however, that his description of the curriculum coincides closely with that given by Aldhelm at the end of the same century. Geometry, incidentally, was probably not Euclidean geometry, but simply the subject of "earth measurement," including more broadly the subject of geography.<sup>24</sup>

The foregoing evidence shows that Ireland's reputation for learning was especially bright from the latter part of the sixth century to the early eighth. Saxon and Frank alike went to Ireland to study throughout

most of the seventh century. The emphasis of the curriculum was doubtless scriptural studies, as Bede asserts and numerous Irish biblical commentaries attest.<sup>25</sup> However, the early reception of the works of Isidore and other continental textbooks (see the discussion below, pp.131-32) gave impetus to a fairly broad curriculum, including rudimentary natural science.<sup>26</sup> From the late eighth to late ninth century, foreign testimony regarding the learning of the Irish *peregrini* is abundant. However, between circa 725 and circa 775, external evidence virtually disappears. Interestingly, this silence coincides with a hiatus in the Irish sources. Although scriptoria continued to flourish in the eighth century,<sup>27</sup> datable and localizable Irish literary productions in Latin are scarce, and in sharp contrast to the seventh century and very early eighth few literary personalities emerge.<sup>28</sup> If there is any explanation for this phenomenon, it is not to be sought in the Norse incursions, which began only at the end of the eighth century, but rather in a noticeable shift away from Latin to the Irish vernacular as the medium of learned expression.<sup>29</sup> If eighth-century Ireland was in decline as a centre of Latin studies in the broadest sense, then we may have a solitary witness to this decline in the enigmatic Aethicus Ister, who in all probability was himself an Irishman active on the continent towards the middle of the century.<sup>30</sup> He claims to have visited Ireland, where he found "workers without skill and teachers without learning."<sup>31</sup>

As Bieler himself remarked, "The number of classical texts which have come down to us in copies made by Irish scribes is exceedingly small, and these few copies were made on the continent where Irish script was practised widely during the seventh and eighth centuries."<sup>32</sup> To be sure, there are a good number of Irish copies of late Roman grammarians and of other types of textbooks, which we shall discuss below. Furthermore, Christian poetry of the fourth and fifth centuries is preserved in Irish copies, most notably Iuvencus, furnished with Irish glosses in Cambridge Univ. Lib. Ff. IV.42 (written in Wales).<sup>33</sup> Some patristic literature, which is outside the range of this discussion, is also preserved in Irish copies. But Roman authors of the Golden Age were not favoured by Irish scribes, even in the Carolingian period. There is really only one surviving copy of a substantial collection of classical whole texts (as opposed to excerpts) and that is Berne 363, a late ninth-or early tenth-

century manuscript that contains an almost complete collection of the works of Horace, selections from Ovid, and a text of Servius.<sup>34</sup> To this evidence must be added that of Sedulius Scottus' *Collectaneum*, which contains extracts from Cicero's orations and oratorical works (as well as the pseudo-Ciceronian *Ad Herennium*).<sup>35</sup> This compilation reveals some of the earliest evidence for acquaintance with Cicero since the end of antiquity;<sup>36</sup> yet given the negative evidence for earlier Irish acquaintance with Cicero's orations either at home or on the continent, one must conclude that Sedulius derived his knowledge of that author from continental scholars or libraries. Other remarkable occurrences in the *Collectaneum* include a fragment of Frontinus and of the *Scriptores Historiae Augustae*.<sup>37</sup>

Another important class of evidence to be examined is that of Irish traces in the text traditions of individual authors. M. Díaz y Díaz has ably shown that some of the confusions resulting in Poggio's famous copy of the *Cena Trimalchionis* can be traced to an insular exemplar.<sup>38</sup> But his argument that the hypothetical exemplar was Irish rather than English is not convincing. Indeed, given other evidence, it is more likely to have been English. John of Salisbury knew the *Cena*,<sup>39</sup> and recently original and independent evidence for English knowledge of Petronius has come to light in Colker's publication of the "Petronius Redivivus,"<sup>40</sup> conserved in a late thirteenth-century Dublin manuscript, doubtless copied from an English exemplar.<sup>41</sup> An argument for an insular tradition has also been advanced for the Scholia on Juvenal.<sup>42</sup> In that instance one cannot rule out an Irish connection, given their demonstrated interest in scholia to other classical texts (see discussion below pp. 135-37).

A third class of Carolingian and post-Carolingian evidence is in some ways more considerable, in others, more difficult to assess. I refer here to the adaptations and "free translations" in the Irish language of a number of classical tales (Greek and Latin).<sup>43</sup> The so-called "free versions" (adaptations) include the following stories: the adventures of Hercules, Jason and Achilles, the subsequent adventures of Aeneas, Romulus and Remus, Jason and the golden fleece, Tantalus, Cadmus and Harmonia, Theseus and the Minotaur, Daedalus and Icarus, legends of Alexander the Great, and the wanderings of Ulysses. These adaptations usually contain a substantial kernel of an original classical tale together with a great deal of improvisation and incorporation of material from Irish saga. To

the group just mentioned may now be added to Irish *Achillead*.<sup>44</sup> The editor believes that the source of the Irish work was Statius' own fragmentary composition (interrupted by the author's death), but again, there is a great deal of invention and interpolation of Irish material. The second group, or "translations," includes Vergil's *Aeneid*, Lucan's *Pharsalia*, Statius' *Thebaid*, and Dares Phrygius' *Historia de Excidio Troiae*. In the case of the free versions, the classical sources cannot be identified with certainty in many cases.<sup>45</sup> The existing manuscripts for both classes stem from the twelfth century at the earliest and are often considerably younger;<sup>46</sup> their antecedents can only be hypothesized. The most probable conclusion to be drawn from the evidence of the Irish material is that serious and direct study of the pagan classics by the Irish did not really get under way until after the middle of the ninth century, by which time there was a good distribution of the major Latin poetic classics, at least, in major centres on the continent.

If we make an exception of Columbanus' case, there are remarkably few citations of classical authors by Irish writers before the Carolingian Renaissance. Even the case for Vergil, who was known to the seventh- and eighth-century English colleagues of the Irish,<sup>47</sup> is quite weak. It is surprising that so conscientious a scholar as Laistner could speak of Vergil as "a favourite with the Irish" without giving his reasons.<sup>48</sup> It is remarkable, for instance, that Adomnan, who may have known several commentaries on Vergil (see the discussion below, p. 136), used that writer so little in his proven compositions. Even the parallels adduced by Brüning are not beyond challenge.<sup>49</sup> I have noted Vergilian echoes in the *Hisperica Famina*,<sup>50</sup> but I am no longer convinced that the knowledge of that writer by the faminator had to be direct. Virgil the Grammarian, writing towards the middle of the seventh century,<sup>51</sup> knew a single line of parody of *Eclogues* III, 90: *qui favum mellis non amat, odit tua carmina, Maevi* (Huemer, p. 165 = Polara, p. 300). The Mantuan's words are: *Qui Bavium non odit, amet tua carmina, Maevi*. But the Grammarian's citation of this line shows knowledge, not of Vergil, or even necessarily of his parodist, but rather of some lost commentary on Vergil's *Eclogues*. A reminiscence of Vergil himself in the writings of Virgil the Grammarian was brought to my attention by Edouard Jeuneau. At the end of the *Epitomae*

the Grammarian wrote (Huemer, p. 92 = Polara, p. 168): *In Principio celum terramque mare omniaque astra spiritus intus fovet*. This must be some kind of free paraphrase of Aen. V, 724-27: *Principio caelum ac terram camposque liquentis / lucentemque globum lunae Titaniaque astra / spiritus intus alit*. Whence did Virgil the Grammarian derive this paraphrase? Did he make it himself, or was it ready made? The evidence for the answer is not to hand. Bieler, in his new edition of Muirchú's *Life of Patrick*,<sup>52</sup> has adduced one quite good parallel. Muirchú writes at II, 8, 1: *Nox non inruit et fuscis tellurem amplexerat alis*. This is a prose negativizing of Aen. VIII, 369: *Nox ruit et fuscis tellurem amplecitur alis*. One must admit that these poor scraps scarcely prove that a text of Vergil's work circulated anywhere in Ireland. Still one can wonder what canons of proof are demanded to establish direct knowledge of a writer. Recently the distinguished Cambridge historian Peter Hunter Blair has argued that Bede himself did not know Vergil directly, but got his quotations from that author from various grammars and metrical works in his library.<sup>53</sup> Out of some seventy-eight definite Vergilian quotations in Bede's grammatical writings, seventy-one can be traced to handbooks for which we have extant texts. Blair argues that the remainder must come from lost handbooks! What will one say of the Irish, *dum vix iustus sit securus*? Yet Vergil is the only old pagan writer for whom there is any evidence for acquaintance by the Irish in the sixth, seventh, and eighth centuries -- once again making an exception of Columbanus.

Let us now turn to the question of prosody in Ireland before circa 800. By prosody, of course, we refer to the composition of poems according to the strict rules of classical quantitative metre. The evidence from Virgil the Grammarian may provide us with a good picture of the normal situation in Ireland before the Carolingian Renaissance. I have been using Virgil as evidence for seventh-century Hiberno-Latin culture. Whether Virgil was an ethnic Irishman (as I think) or a Spaniard who went to Ireland (as Bischoff holds<sup>54</sup>) is not a serious issue. It can now be generally agreed that Virgil gives us good evidence for Latin learning in Ireland around the middle of the seventh century<sup>55</sup>. Though Virgil frequently cites "sources" such as Cicero, Cato, and Terence, the quotations assigned to them cannot be traced to genuine classical sources. Virgil's authorities



are either entirely bogus or represent "cover names" for members of his own circle.<sup>56</sup> The Grammarian's section on metre (*Epitomae* IV, Huemer, pp. 12-18; Polara, pp. 18-30) provides a fascinating commentary on Irish classical learning at this stage. Although he borrows metrical terminology from the Roman grammarians, it is clear from the examples he provides (mostly self-made?) that he knows nothing about its proper application. All the examples of verse provided by Virgil are accentual or syllabic and correspond to authenticated types of such verse from late antiquity and the early Middle Ages.<sup>57</sup>

There were very few, if any, Irishmen at home or abroad before the latter half of the eighth century about whom it can be said with certainty that they could compose in classical metres.<sup>58</sup> The evidence that Cellanus of Péronne (*Perrona Scottorum*) composed hexameters on St. Patrick is not as "hard" as it might be.<sup>59</sup> As to the so-called "Verses of an Irishman on the Alphabet" (Kenney, no. 103<sup>60</sup>), the assertion that they were written in Ireland around the middle of the seventh century remains at the level of suggestion. In a forthcoming study I hope to show that these verses belong to a continental *milieu* of the second half of the eighth century.

This brings us to Columbanus and the claim that a clever scholar had the opportunity of mastering the elements of prosody and reading the best among the classical and Christian poets in Ireland around the middle of the sixth century. We have seen something of the state of classical learning in Ireland in the seventh and eighth (and even ninth) centuries. Was there, then, a great flowering of classical culture in Ireland in the early years that wilted in later times? Is it possible that Columbanus was the last Irish "humanist" until the ninth century?

It appears that almost the entire case for a genuine (if limited) classical tradition in Ireland is based on the authenticity of three metrical poems attributed to Columbanus or Columba the Younger.<sup>61</sup> These poems reveal a sure command of at least two species of quantitative verse and a first-hand knowledge of a number of classical and Christian poets: Vergil, Horace, Ovid, Ausonius, Fortunatus, and others. Furthermore, a number of classical reminiscences have been alleged for the letters of Columbanus whose authenticity has never been questioned. About a decade

ago, J.W. Smit successfully demonstrated that the classical reminiscences alleged for the letters could be explained as deriving from intermediate sources, especially the Letters of Jerome, or as belonging to the common stock of Latin metaphor.<sup>62</sup> Smit was less successful in his arguments against the authenticity of the poems,<sup>63</sup> and with the destruction of his major argument by Ludwig Bieler,<sup>64</sup> the case in favour of authenticity was again tenable. Recently, however, Michael Lapidge, in an important article,<sup>65</sup> advanced an entirely new case against the authenticity of the three poems. The main part of the article deals with the adonic *Ad Fidolium*, but all three poems are eventually dealt with. Lapidge argues that the *Ad Fidolium* was not written in the late sixth or early seventh century, but in the late eighth. There are four bases to his case: (1) the literary and metrical form of the poem; (2) the sources; (3) the manuscripts; (4) the identity of the recipient of the work. According to Lapidge, the adonic verses of Paulus Diaconus, Alcuin and Columbanus stood together in some intimate relationship: their use of Ennodius, the epistolary form, and their shared vocabulary and diction. The knowledge of Ennodius seems to have been preserved only in Italy and must have been brought to the court of Charlemagne by Paulus. As to the classical sources of the *Ad Fidolium*, Lapidge advances the argument that the eight examples of the evils deriving from the love of gold given in the poem can only be explained by the poet's knowledge of Tiberianus' *De Auro* and the First Vatican Mythographer. Now Tiberianus lived in the fourth century, but the First Vatican Mythographer is dependent upon Isidore's *Etymologies* and therefore must post-date the middle of the seventh century (recalling, of course, that Columbanus died in 615). The earliest manuscript of the poem is Diez. B Sant. 66, dated by Bischoff to circa 790.<sup>66</sup> It is therefore possible that an eighth-century poet could have written the *Ad Fidolium*; indeed, the author could have lived on into the ninth century. Finally, there has been no satisfactory explanation of the name Fidolius. Lapidge has located a *Fidolius presbyter et monachus* active in the familia of the Irish bishop Virgil of Salzburg (767-784). This critic goes on to identify the author of the poem (and the two other metrical poems) with the author of the *Placatus* for Charlemagne.<sup>67</sup>

Lapidge has advanced the case for late eighth-century authorship of

these poems to high probability; yet some doubts linger. A sixth-century Columbanus could have read and utilized Ennodius when he was in Italy. The argument for the use of the First Vatican Mythographer is a powerful one, but a sixth-century Columbanus *could* have drawn the motifs from elsewhere. The use of motifs coming from specific texts is much harder to demonstrate than the use of words coming from specific texts. The manuscript evidence would fit either a sixth- or an eighth-century Columbanus. However, the discovery of a late eighth-century Fidolius in an Irish colony in Salzburg is a major find, given the total absence of earlier occurrences. Equally convincing is Lapidge's identification of the late eighth-century Hunolt, a monk of St. Gall, with the recipient of *Ad Hunaldum*. Finally, there is the identification of the author of these poems with Columbanus of St. Trond. But we cannot be entirely sure that the poet is addressing himself when he says in the *Planctus: O Columbane, stringe tuas lacrimas*. The possibility still remains that the poem was written to some Columbanus.<sup>68</sup>

Despite these difficulties, I am inclined to favour an eighth-century dating for the poems on grounds I have already suggested. It is very difficult to believe that the metrical compositions of so influential a man as Columbanus of Bobbio would have found no (or very few) imitators among his countrymen in the next one-hundred-and-fifty years. It is even more difficult to credit that the classical poets known to Columbanus and presumably stored in his library at Bobbio would have found no other definitely known Irish readers until the ninth century. The one Bobbio writer whom we know to have lived within a generation of Columbanus and who was to become the Founder's biographer, Jonas, betrays no trace of classical learning in his work. Moreover, the curious poems which preface each of the two books of his life are not exactly metrical.<sup>69</sup>

Why the Irish active before Carolingian times did not pursue the writing of quantitative verse to any noticeable degree -- I shall not assert categorically that they never did so -- is a puzzling question, especially in the light of the impressive activity in this field across the Irish channel. Aldhelm, whose early education was conducted under Irish tutelage,<sup>70</sup> wrote extensively in hexameter verses and composed a highly competent treatise on metrics.<sup>71</sup> But Aldhelm's training in metrics, as one

infers from his correspondence,<sup>72</sup> was received at the hands of the Afro-Italian Hadrian, not from his Irish teacher. The Christianized classical tradition that was firmly implanted in England (Canterbury, Malmesbury, Wearmouth-Jarrow [?], York) in the latter part of the seventh century is directly attributable to the closely cultivated contacts between England and Rome.<sup>73</sup>

I have discussed elsewhere<sup>74</sup> the evidence of the *Leyden Glossary* (MS Leyden Voss. Lat. F.70<sup>75</sup>) regarding an influx of Gaulish grammarians into Ireland in the wake of the barbarian invasions of the fifth century. If there is any truth to this legend no tangible evidence remains to support it. Fifth-century Ireland had no towns and probably no monasteries or schools even at the end of the century.<sup>76</sup> I cannot imagine that men who were neither missionaries nor organizers of the monastic movement would have sought out Ireland much before the late sixth or early seventh century (when our evidence for visiting scholars of one kind or another begins). But this is speculation. The most telling evidence against the legend is that there is really no trace of activity of these scholars. Heinrich Zimmer wanted to see Virgil the Grammarian as a representative of that group.<sup>77</sup> But nearly all scholars agree now that Virgil belongs to the seventh century, not the fifth. Moreover, that writer's classical culture is so shallow that he could in no way be seen as a representative of Sidonius' world.<sup>78</sup> He was much closer to the cultural level of the world of Gregory of Tours.

We can only conclude from the foregoing survey that genuine classical culture in Ireland before the Carolingian Renaissance was virtually non-existent. But it should not surprise us that Ireland was not the beacon of classical learning in the Dark Ages that it has so often been alleged to be. Indeed, when one looks at the historical situation, it is rather difficult to fathom how these claims originated. There is no evidence for the existence of Latin schools in Ireland before the sixth century, and the first half of that era is dimly documented. At the time when these schools were founded, a real education in the Roman poets and prose writers of the Golden Age was hard to obtain anywhere in Europe. Most literary historians agree that by the second half of the sixth century a real literary training had been replaced by a study of grammars, commentaries,

and other handbooks.<sup>79</sup> If Servius, Macrobius, Martianus Capella, and their ilk were standard fare on the continent, can it be surprising that the study of such works constituted a liberal arts education in the remotest country of Europe, an island which had never known a Roman army or the schools that followed? Another explanation for the paucity of classical learning in Ireland also has to do with geography. When the earliest Irish missionaries and monks began to initiate contacts with the outside world, their intercourse was not with the great urban cultural centres of the Mediterranean, but with rural areas on the perimeter of Europe: Scotland, Wales, Northern and Southern England, Picardy and Northern France, the Vosges, South Germany, Switzerland, Northern Italy.<sup>80</sup> Furthermore, the earliest outsiders to visit Ireland came from Southwest Britain, the Frankish Kingdom, and a little later, from Anglo-Saxon England. Only in the late sixth or early seventh century did contacts with Visigothic Spain really open up.<sup>81</sup> Also to be considered is the fact that charges of Pelagianism and Irish intransigence over Easter reckoning and other matters of outward observance inhibited the kind of fruitful contact with Rome that England was to enjoy. Our earliest records of Ireland's relations with Rome point to a spirit of mistrust and contentiousness.<sup>82</sup>

Despite these apparently unfavourable circumstances, Dark-Age Ireland developed remarkably in diverse areas of secular Latin studies. These studies ranged far beyond the bare basics of Latin grammar so necessary for participation in the life of the universal Church, though to be sure, such participation was the catalyst for much of their intellectual pursuit. As we shall see, in grammatical studies their interests ranged to speculative questions and to comparisons between Latin and Irish. And their passion for computistical questions took them into more abstract regions of natural science, especially astronomy.<sup>83</sup> Moreover, their far-reaching missionary activities and other spiritual peregrinations stimulated their interest in geography generally. Indeed it can be fairly said that the Irish monopolized geographical literature in the Dark Ages. Not all of the contents of that literature was based on *auctoritas*; some of it clearly reflects first-hand experience.<sup>84</sup>

The bases of these studies, apart from patristic works (which are outside our scope here) were a fairly substantial number of grammars,

poetic commentaries, and general encyclopedias. Indeed, in their acquisition of the "secondary literature" of scholarship, mostly dating from the late Empire, the Irish can be compared favourably to other nationalities, including the English, to whom they transmitted a number of texts (see the ensuing discussion). Without doubt the most influential text for all fields of enquiry in Ireland in the seventh and eighth (and later) centuries was the *Etymologies* of Isidore of Seville, known in Ireland sometimes as the *Culmen*, a work transmitted to Ireland at a very early period, perhaps even before 650.<sup>85</sup> Isidore's *De Natura Rerum* was also used -- indeed, that work seems to have undergone a separate Irish recension.<sup>86</sup> There is also evidence for the use of Pliny's *Natural History*.<sup>87</sup> Aldhelm's early knowledge of the *Etymologies* and other Isidorian works can almost certainly be traced to the Irish; moreover, Wesley Stevens has recently postulated a Wessex recension for the *De Natura Rerum*.<sup>88</sup> It is certainly possible that Bede's knowledge of these Isidorian works came from Irish hands as did (more certainly) his knowledge of Macrobius' *Saturnalia* and Pliny's *Natural History*.<sup>89</sup>

What of Martianus? He disappears from sight on the continent after Isidore and was apparently unknown in England throughout the eighth century.<sup>90</sup> (His omission from Alcuin's famous catalogue of authors represented in the library at York could be due to metrical reasons.) Evidence for study by Irishmen up to the ninth century is no better. Yet one could speculate that in the space between Isidore's writings and the Carolingian Renaissance Martianus was read in Ireland alone. The earliest commentaries on Martianus are both Irish and they apparently derive from a single source.<sup>91</sup> In addition we possess the teaching notes on Martianus that belonged to Martinus Hiberniensis (Martin of Laon).<sup>92</sup> The first "non Irish" work on Martianus is that of Remigius of Auxerre, written probably in the early tenth century and dependent in many places on Eriugena's commentary.<sup>93</sup> One of course cannot be entirely certain that the pre-Carolingian or early Carolingian archetype of all these commentaries was Irish, but given the available evidence, that would not be a rash speculation.

There are some interesting *lacunae* in the "reference works" section of pre-Carolingian Irish libraries. The most glaring omission is that of Cassiodorus' *Institutiones*. Neither of the two books of that work (circulated separately<sup>94</sup>) was known in Ireland, or for that matter, in England.<sup>95</sup>

Yet this is not altogether surprising. As C.W. Jones has pointed out, the work was not nearly so popular or influential in Europe as many humanists have thought: it lacked the immediate "vocational" advantages of Bede's textbooks, for example. The paucity of early manuscripts of either of the two books or of the whole work demonstrates Jones's point.<sup>96</sup>

Similarly, there is no good evidence for study of Boethius' technical treatises by Irishmen before the first part of the ninth century. From the second quarter of the ninth century we have a single leaf fragment of Boethius' *De Institutione Arithmetica* written in what is probably Irish script and glossed in Old Irish.<sup>97</sup> It is possible as well that there is a ninth-century commentary of Irish origin on the *Isagoge* of Porphyry in Boethius' translation.<sup>98</sup> Eriugena is credited with a life of Boethius.<sup>99</sup> It is interesting that there is nothing from Boethius in the *Collectaneum* of Sedulius.

The history of Boethius' most famous work, *De Consolatione Philosophiae*, in the British Isles is interesting.<sup>100</sup> That work was not known to Bede, but it may have been to Alcuin,<sup>101</sup> who lists "Boethius" in his catalogue. Evidence that the *Consolatio* was among his writings at York is provided by the writings of Symeon of Durham (fl. ca. 1125), who, according to Peter Hunter Blair, used "no fewer than thirteen separate quotations amounting in all to forty-six lines from the verse sections of the *Consolatio*. There is also at least one from the prose section."<sup>102</sup>

The heavy predominance of metrical quotations in Symeon is interesting in the light of the Irish evidence. We have an important ninth-century Irish grammatical collection from Corbie which includes a collection of the "metres" from the *Consolatio*: BN Lat. 13026, ff. 84<sup>v</sup> - 95<sup>r</sup>, concluding with a typically Irish macaronic subscript *faveantque musae et chelis lotoia!*<sup>103</sup> The first Irish commentary on the whole of the *Consolatio* is that of Pseudo-Johannes, which is the source of the commentary by Remigius (and not vice-versa), as E.T. Silk has now conclusively proven.<sup>104</sup> On the whole, it seems likely that the Irish got their knowledge of the *Consolatio* (the metres, at least) from their English confreres on the continent (at Tours, perhaps?). It is not inconceivable that they studied the *Arithmetica* at home before 800 as part of the curriculum of the *compus*, but definite proof eludes us.

For geographical and ethnographical sources the most important treatise for the Irish, apart from Pliny's *Natural History* and Isidore's *Etymologies*, already noted, was Orosius' *Historia adversus Paganos*. That work was known to Aethicus Ister,<sup>105</sup> possibly (or even probably) to Dicuil,<sup>106</sup> to the authors of the *Collectio Canonum Hibernensis*,<sup>107</sup> and to the compiler or compilers of the Berne Scholia (see below p.136). Orosius also played an influential role in the formation of Irish ethnological legends,<sup>108</sup> and there is a little-noticed ninth-century Irish commentary on the *Historia*.<sup>109</sup> Other authors known and used were Solinus, Hegeppus, and Iulius Honorius.<sup>110</sup>

Historical sources were meagre and rather approximated those known to Bede,<sup>111</sup> which makes one wonder if the route of those sources was not Iona - Lindisfarne - Wearmouth-Jarrow. As usual, these sources tend to be "sub-Roman" or late classical, and of course none of the major classical Latin sources was known. Columbanus knew Jerome's *De Viris Illustribus*, Eusebius' *Ecclesiastical History* (in Rufinus' translation), and Gildas' *De Excidio Britanniae*.<sup>112</sup> The Chronicles of Eusebius and Prosper and others were known to the Irish annalists.<sup>113</sup> Fredegarius seems to have been known to Virgilius Maro and Aethicus Ister,<sup>114</sup> and Hillkowitz demonstrates that Gregory of Tours was a principal source for Aethicus.<sup>115</sup> Other possible historical and pseudo-historical sources employed by Aethicus are: Cassiodorus' *Historia Tripartita*, Jordanes' *Getica*, the *Liber Historiae Francorum*, the *Historia Daretis*, and the *Continuatio* of Fredegarius.<sup>116</sup> That the *Historia Tripartita* was also known to Sedulius and probably to Aethicus points to its having been a source known to the Irish before 800. The identification of Aethicus with Virgil of Salzburg has important consequences for our reconstruction of the Iona library. If Aethicus came from Iona or studied there, it is possible that his sources reflect a part of the contents of the Iona library.<sup>117</sup> Dicuil's possible association with that foundation also affords us clues to that collection.<sup>118</sup> Given Adomnan's *demonstrated* interests in geography, ethnography, and history, one might surmise that the library there had relatively strong holdings in those subjects. And given *proof* that Bede excerpted from one geographical composition by Adomnan,<sup>119</sup> one may surely suspect that other geographical and historical texts known to Bede reached him



either directly from Iona or through Lindisfarne. The case of Aethicus remains the key to our knowledge of historical sources known to the Irish. There is, unfortunately, no consensus among scholars on that subject as yet. Perhaps a new edition of that vexed work will yield new information.<sup>120</sup>

In addition to their geographical and other scientific studies, the Irish showed a particular flair for grammar. Thanks to the indefatigable labours of Bengt Löfstedt and his collaborator Louis Holtz, many of the Carolingian and pre-Carolingian commentaries on Donatus, Priscian and Eutyches now stand in good critical editions.<sup>121</sup> The majority of these works, however, stem from the late eighth and early (and mid) ninth century and were written largely on the continent.<sup>122</sup> Our knowledge of pre-Carolingian Irish sources must be gleaned, therefore, from a very few works. In addition, some hints may be derived from grammarians listed in the catalogues of Bobbio, Reichenau, and other Irish continental centres. Although there are numerous grammatical collections made by the Irish that are still extant, only a few collections from Bobbio antedate the Carolingian period: Naples BN IV A 8 (Charisius) and Naples Viennese I and 2.<sup>123</sup>

The most important sources for our purposes are the *Ars Malsachani*, the Irish-language work *Auraicept na n'Eces*, and the *Epitomae* and *Epistolae* of Virgilius Maro Grammaticus. The last-named work may one day yield excellent information regarding grammarians read in mid-seventh-century Ireland. Unfortunately, the latest editors despaired of finding any sources.<sup>124</sup> Dr. Anders Ahlqvist has identified the Latin quotations in the *Auraicept*. Authors represented are Priscian, Donatus (*Ars Maior*), Agricola, Consentius, Isidore, Ps. Pompeius, in addition to the works of Hiberno-Latin writers such as Malsachanus.<sup>125</sup> For Malsachanus himself Löfstedt has identified Donatus (*Ars Maior* and *Ars Minor*), Probus, Diomedes, Isidore, and Priscian.<sup>126</sup> Servius (or Ps. Servius, *De Finalibus*) and Sergius are both cited by name, although it is not certain that the borrowings are direct.<sup>127</sup> The short grammatical works attributed to Servius and passages of Sergius were frequently excerpted (and occasionally confused) in Irish grammatical miscellanies.<sup>128</sup>

One grammarian who survived in a single copy of Irish origin was Charisius (in Naples IV A 8; cf. fn. 123 above). This text is older even

than the eighth-century *florilegium* of that writer adduced in Barwick's edition.<sup>129</sup> (Charisius, incidentally, was sometimes cited by the name Cominian,<sup>130</sup> just as Servius was often and wrongly referred to as Honoratius<sup>131</sup>.) The curious "Metrorius" (*De Finalibus*) may also owe his preservation to the Irish.<sup>132</sup> The enthusiasm of the Irish for copying out grammars in the early Middle Ages is proved not only by the number of extant copies, but also by lost manuscripts known from catalogues; a number of early grammatical texts are glossed in Old Irish.<sup>133</sup>

One other rare, but important, grammatical text, whose transmission is linked to Irish centres on the continent is the *De Differentiis et Societatibus Graeci Latinique Verbi* of Macrobius.<sup>134</sup> Extracts are conserved in an ancient Bobbio manuscript (now Naples Viennese 2<sup>135</sup>), in Laon 444 (which was a teaching book employed by Martinus Hiberniensis<sup>136</sup>), and in Paris Lat. 7186, thought by some to be a *florilegium* made by Eriugena.<sup>137</sup> Macrobius' work was also used by Sedulius in his commentary on Eutyches.<sup>138</sup> (In passing we note that Macrobius' works in general were favoured, perhaps even preserved, by the Irish. We have seen that Bede in all probability got his copy of the *Saturnalia* from the Irish. Sedulius knew the *Commentary on the Dream of Scipio*, a work little known in the pre-Carolingian or early Carolingian period.<sup>139</sup> The English apparently did not know that work until the tenth century, having obtained it probably from Abbo of Fleury.<sup>140</sup>)

Macrobius' *Saturnalia* gives us a suitable entry to our last topic: knowledge by the Irish of commentaries on the works of Vergil and perhaps other pagan poets. As we have seen, the evidence for the direct knowledge of Vergil in pre-Carolingian Ireland or even Irish continental centres is very weak. One might be tempted to conclude *a priori* that if the primary works were not used, the same must hold for the secondary. It seems, however, that the Irish of the Dark Ages had a fairly good assortment of classical commentaries which they plundered, not to learn about authors which they did not read first-hand, but to inform themselves on the subjects which interested them, namely, grammar, geography, the natural sciences.<sup>141</sup> Furthermore, the long summaries of numerous classical myths which Servius so handily gives would be interesting, even entertaining, in themselves.<sup>142</sup>

What works, besides the *Saturnalia*, did the Irish have at their disposal? Beeson thinks that the text-history of the *Interpretationes*

Vergilianae of Tiberius Claudius Donatus points clearly to an insular tradition, and in all probability to an Irish one.<sup>143</sup> Two of the three manuscripts can be assigned to the late eighth century.<sup>144</sup>

Two sets of scholia (over which there has been much controversy) are the Berne Scholia and the *Explanatio Iunilii Philargyrii* (or Filagrii), both of which go back to a common "Sylloge," according to G. Funaioli.<sup>145</sup> Most scholars agree that the chief sources of this collection are Servius and Philargyrius. Two other frequently named sources in the material may be bogus: "Gaudentius" has been found to be almost entirely composed of Servius; "Gallus," of Servius Auctus.<sup>146</sup> Later sources have, of course, been added: in the Berne Scholia, for example, both Orosius and Isidore are used and cited by name; Christian allegorical interpretations are also injected. Two observations are interesting for our purposes: (1) two of the manuscripts of the *Explanatio* are glossed in Old Irish of considerable antiquity;<sup>147</sup> (2) a certain "Adananus" is given in the same two manuscripts as the source of at least one gloss, namely *De Maevio nihil repperi (ut Adananus ait)* at *Eclogues* III, 90. This "Adananus" need not be the compiler of the entire corpus of scholia,<sup>148</sup> nor need he be identified with Adomnan of Iona, although that identification remains an attractive supposition given the absence of other learned candidates of that name.<sup>149</sup> What seems indisputable is that the Irish of the late seventh or early eighth century were involved in the collection of scholia to Vergil. It is also beyond doubt that the scholia of Philargyrius would not have survived were it not for Irish activity.

As the foregoing shows, the Irish had access to both Servius and Servius Auctus disguised respectively as Gaudentius and Gallus. A full Irish text of Servius does not appear until the end of the ninth or beginning of the tenth century (Berne 363), but the Old Irish notes in the margins indicate that Servius had been closely studied by the Irish.<sup>150</sup> Traces of the Servian commentary also appear in the margins of the manuscripts of Malsachanus, but these are later than the text itself.<sup>151</sup> Another text probably preserved due to the Irish is the *Brevis Expositio Georgicorum*.<sup>152</sup> As for commentaries on other authors, there is evidence for an insular tradition in the commentaries on Terence and on Juvenal, but nothing conclusively shows that they were specifically Irish.<sup>153</sup>

There is some evidence that the Irish knew something of the "Sylloge Virgiliana" prior to the late seventh century. The line of parody of *Ecl.* III, 92 cited by Virgil the Grammarian (see above, p. 124) must surely derive from some lost commentary on Vergil. Curiously, in the borrowed line it is Maeuius who is addressed and who, along with Bavius, receives considerable attention in both the Berne Scholia and, more especially, in the *Explanatio*, where an elegaic distich on the two poets by a certain Domitius in *Cicuta* is cited.<sup>154</sup> Did Virgil the Grammarian have a fuller version of the scholia on the *Eclogues* than is transmitted in the two extant recensions? The Irish, at any rate, had some scholia on the *Eclogues* by circa 650.

The question of the transmission of handbooks and commentaries from the continent to Ireland is a thorny one, because it is often impossible to tell whether a work went directly to Ireland or was first known and used in an Irish continental foundation such as Bobbio. Nonetheless, there is now general agreement that the works of Isidore came to Ireland directly from Spain at a very early period.<sup>155</sup> Working from that hypothesis, would it not seem a possibility that some of Isidore's sources were transmitted along the same route? One could surmise at least that the *Historia adversus Paganos* of the Spaniard Orosius was thus conveyed. Some recent research has come forward on the question of Isidore's knowledge of Philargyrius.<sup>156</sup> One passage at *Etym.* 8.11 can be said with reasonable certainty to be based on that scholiast.<sup>157</sup> If this is so, then Isidore is the only writer for whom evidence exists for the use of Philargyrius prior to the Irish recensions of the seventh and eighth centuries. Is it not probable then that Philargyrius also travelled from Spain to Ireland?

The foregoing shows that the Irish "humanistic achievement" was not remarkable. In some ways, Ireland appears to reflect the cultural situation that obtained generally on the continent (with the possible exception of Visigothic Spain) after circa 600: heavy reliance on handbooks, commentaries, and grammars; marked decline in the first-hand study of ancient authors; absence of or deficiency in metrical training. The Irish situation compares unfavourably with that of England in the age of Aldhelm and Bede. On the other hand, the evidence shows that Ireland was

remarkably rich in the area of "secondary materials" and that Irish scholars can be credited with the preservation of some of these works, notably, the scholia of Philargyrius (and perhaps some others), the text of Charisius, and excerpts of Macrobius' *De Differentiis et Societatibus Graeci Latinique Verbi*. The curious *Appendix Probi* also owes its preservation to a Bobbio scribe, thought to be Irish.<sup>158</sup> It must also be recognized that the "Renaissance" that took place in early eighth-century Northumbria was due, in large part, to the transmission of books to that region from Ireland and outlying regions, notably Iona.

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#### APPENDIX

A provisional list by category of classical and secular sources known to the Irish before ca. 800.

Those texts for which the evidence for earlier knowledge derives from the ninth century or from writers whose careers were spent largely on the continent are marked with a query.

##### 1. *Classical Poets and Literary Texts*

No source known directly; intermediate sources comprise the *Letters* of Jerome, Augustine's *De Civitate Dei*, and the grammarians.

##### 2. *General Encyclopedic Works*

Isidore of Seville, *Etymologies*

?Martianus Capella, *De Nuptiis Mercurii et Philologiae*

Pliny the Elder, *Natural History*

##### 3. *Scientific and Cosmological Works (excluding computistical works):*

Isidore, *De Natura Rerum*

?Macrobius, *Commentary on the Dream of Scipio*

4. *Other Technical Works*

?Boethius, *De Arithmetica*  
 Vegetius, *De Re Militari* (and Frontinus??)

5. *Geographical and Ethnographical Works*

"Hegesippus" (Josephus), *Historiae*  
 Jerome, *De Situ et Nominibus Locorum Hebraicorum, Onomasticon*  
 ?Julius Honorius, *Cosmographia*  
 Orosius, *Historiae adversus Paganos*  
 Solinus, *Collectanea*  
 ?"Theodosius", *Mensuratio Orbis*

6. *Historical Works*

?Cassiodorus, *Historia Tripartita*  
 Eusebius, *Ecclesiastical History* (tr. Rufinus)  
 Eusebius, *Chronicle* (tr. Jerome)  
 ?Fredegarius and the *Continuatio*  
 Gildas, *De Excidio Britanniae*  
 ?Gregory of Tours, *Historia Francorum*  
 Isidore, *Chronicle* and *Historia Gothorum*  
 Jordanes, *Getica*  
 Jerome, *De Viris Illustribus* (with Gennadius)  
 ?*Liber Historiae Francorum*  
*Liber Pontificalis*  
 Prosper, *Chronicle*  
 Sulpicius Severus, *Chronicon*  
 Julius Valerius, *Historia Alexandri*

7. *Grammatical Works*

Agroecius, *De Orthographia*  
 Charisius, *Ars Grammatica*  
 Consentius, *De Nomine et Verbo*  
 Diomedes, *Ars Grammatica*  
 Donatus, *Ars Maior, Ars Minor*  
 Eutyches, *Ars de Verbo*  
 Isidore, *De Differentiis Verborum*

Macrobius, *De Differentiis et Societatibus Graeci Latinique Verbi*  
 Remmius Palaemon, *Ars*  
 Pompeius, *Commentum Artis Donati*  
 Ps. Pompeius  
 Priscian, *Institutiones Grammaticae*  
 Probus, *Instituta Artium*  
 Ps. Probus, *Appendix, De Nomine, De Ultimis Syllabis*  
 Sergius, *Explanationes in Donatum*  
 ?Servius, *De Centum Metris*  
 Ps. (?) Servius, *De Finalibus*  
 Maximus Victorinus, *De Ratione Metrorum*

8. *Commentaries on Classical Works*

*Brevis Expositio Georgicorum*  
 Aelius Donatus, *Life of Vergil and Introduction to Eclogues*  
 Macrobius, *Saturnalia*  
 Priscian, *Partitiones XII Versuum Aeneidos*  
 Philargyrius, *Commentary on Vergil (extracts?)*  
 ?Porphyrius's Scholia to Horace  
 Servius, *Commentary on Vergil*  
 Servius Auctus (extracts?)

Possibly also Scholia to Juvenal and to Terence.

NOTES

<sup>1</sup> This paper is a revision, in rather expanded form, of a talk given on January 24, 1980, at Scarborough College's Third Annual Colloquium on Mediaeval Civilization, organized by Professors Michael Gervers and Michael Cummings. The original title of the talk was "Ireland and the Classics: the Evidence." I have expanded the topic to take account of the evidence for Irish acquaintance with non-classical (i.e. late classical

and "sub Roman") literature of a secular character.

A survey of the literature on this question would take up much space without serving a very useful function. The following is a list of a few fundamental guides to the study of Irish acquaintance with classical and secular Latin texts before ca. 800. The *sine qua non* of our investigation remains the monumental work of J.F. Kenney, *The Sources for the Early History of Ireland : Ecclesiastical* (repr. with some corrections by L. Bieler, New York 1966). This work has recently been reprinted with no further revision by Pádraig Ó Táillúir (Dublin 1979). Kenney's book is in need of massive revision, but his detailed guide to Hiberno-Latin texts and unedited manuscripts is indispensable. Particularly valuable for the *Fortleben* of numerous classical and late classical works is M. Manitius, *Geschichte der lateinischen Literatur des Mittelalters*, esp. vol. I (Munich 1911). Next there is the series of Hiberno-Latin texts founded by L. Bieler: the *Scriptores Latini Hiberniae*, published by the Dublin Institute for Advanced Studies. Many good critical editions of Hiberno-Latin texts are now to be found in the *Corpus Christianorum: Continuatio Mediaevalis*. Students of manuscripts must of course consult the indispensable tool created by E.A. Lowe, *Codices Latini Antiquiores*, 11 vols. (Oxford 1934-1966). Two modern monographs (covering different aspects of our question) are: W.B. Stanford, "Towards a History of Classical Influences in Ireland," *Proceedings of the Royal Irish Academy* (hereafter given as *PRIA*) 70, C, 3 (Dublin 1970) 13-91; T.J. Brown, "An Historical Introduction to the Use of Classical Latin Authors in the British Isles from the Fifth to the Eleventh Century," *Settimane di studio del Centro Italiano di studi sull'alto medioevo* (Spoleto 1975) 237-99. Apart from these there is much of value in the collected papers of Traube, Lehmann, and Bischoff (cited *passim*).

<sup>2</sup> I recognize, of course, that much of great value to this question is contained in patristic works such as Augustine's *City of God* and Jerome's *Letters*. Similarly, patristic writers devoted whole works to "secular topics." Therefore, the question whether a given author was a Christian or a pagan is of little import for this study; what matters is the content.

<sup>3</sup> Two fairly recent studies of the canon of the liberal arts in the



Dark Ages are: B. Bischoff, "Eine verschollene Einteilung der Wissenschaften" in *Mittelalterliche Studien: Ausgewählte Aufsätze zur Schriftkunde und Literaturgeschichte I* (Stuttgart 1966) 273-87; M. Díaz y Díaz, "Les arts libéraux d'après les écrivains espagnols et insulaires aux VIIe et VIIIe siècles" in *Arts libéraux et philosophie au moyen âge: Actes du quatrième congrès international de philosophie médiévale, Université de Montréal, 27 août - 2 septembre, 1967* (Paris/Montréal 1969) 37-46.

<sup>4</sup> See M.L.W. Laistner, *Thought and Letters in Western Europe: A.D. 500 to 900* (rev. ed., Ithaca, N.Y. 1957) 157-58.

<sup>5</sup> Almost no serious scholar in this century has attempted to argue that classical Greek texts were studied in Ireland. On the other hand, there is general agreement that Dark Age Ireland enjoyed some elementary knowledge of Greek; the debate now is over the extent of that knowledge. See M. Esposito, "The Knowledge of Greek in Ireland in the Middle Ages," *Studies* 1, 665-83; B. Bischoff, "Das griechische Element in der abendländischen Bildung des Mittelalters," *Mittelalterliche Studien II* (Stuttgart 1967) 246-75, esp. 247-51; W. Berschin, "Abendland und Byzanz" in *Reallexikon der Byzantinistik I* (Amsterdam 1971), 253-70; W.B. Stanford (at n. 1) 22-27; K.M. Lynch, *Evidences of a Knowledge of Greek in England and Ireland during the Age of Bede* (diss. Ann Arbor, Mich. 1977); B.M. Kaczynski, *Greek Learning in the Medieval West: a Study of St. Gall 816-1022* (diss. Yale Univ. 1975); Edouard Jeuneau, "Jean Scot Erigène et le Grec," *Archivum Latinitatis Mediae Aetatis* (hereafter given as *ALMA*) 41 (1979) 5-50.

<sup>6</sup> F.J.E. Raby, *A History of Secular Latin Poetry in the Middle Ages I* (2nd ed., Oxford 1957) 162.

<sup>7</sup> "The Classics in Celtic Ireland" in R.R. Bolgar, ed., *Classical Influences on European Culture A.D. 500-1500* (Cambridge 1971) 48.

<sup>8</sup> "La cultura irlandese precarolingia: Miracolo o mito?" *Studi Medievali* 3 ser. 8,1 (1967) 264-69.

<sup>9</sup> E.G. Ceadda (*H.E.* IV, 3); Witbert (*H.E.* V, 9); Edilhun and Ecgbert (*H.E.* III, 27).

<sup>10</sup> *H.E.* III, 27. See L. Bieler, "Ireland's Contribution to Northumbrian Culture" in G. Bonner, ed., *Famulus Christi: Essays in Commemoration of the Thirteenth Centenary of the Venerable Bede* (London 1976) (hereafter given as *FC*) 215.

<sup>11</sup> See *Letter 5*, to Heahfrith, in R. Ehwald, ed., *Aldhelmi Opera* in *MGH, Auctores Antiquissimi* 15 (Berlin 1919) 486-97; also the discussion and English translation of the letter by M. Herren in M. Lapidge and M. Herren, trs., *Aldhelm: the Prose Works* (Cambridge 1979) (hereafter given as *APW*) 143-46 and 160-64.

<sup>12</sup> Especially at the end of the letter cited above.

<sup>13</sup> N.E.S.A. Hamilton, ed., *Gesta Pontificum* (London 1870) V, 191.

<sup>14</sup> The references to the course of study in Ireland are in the *Letter to Heahfrith*; allusions to Irish interest in classical mythology are in the *Letter to Wihthfrith* (no. 3), Ehwald, ed., pp. 479-80; *APW*, pp. 139-40, 154-55. Aldhelm's Irish contacts included Cellanus of Péronne; see *Letters 9 and 10*, Ehwald, ed., pp. 498-99; *APW*, p. 149, p. 167; also an anonymous student, Ehwald, ed., p. 494; *APW*, pp. 146-47, 164. Furthermore, I now see no reason to doubt William's evidence that Aldhelm studied at some period under an Irish teacher (*APW*, pp. 6-7), given the corroboration of *Letter 6*. His name need not have been Máeldub; we know from Bede (*H.E. V*, 18) only that Aldhelm was abbot of an *Urbs Maildufi*. Furthermore, traces of an Irish literary education remain, despite the preponderance of continental influences in his prose style. (See M. Winterbottom in *Anglo-Saxon England* 6, 39-76 and J. Marenbon in *ALMA* 41 [1979] 75-90). I hope to discuss this question in greater detail in the future.

<sup>15</sup> In *Letter 5*, *ibid.*

<sup>16</sup> *APW*, p. 154.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>18</sup> For the various bits of evidence for Agilbert's peripatetic career, consult the index in C. Plummer, ed., *Bedae Opera Historica* (Oxford 1896) 404.

<sup>19</sup> *H.E.* III, 7.

<sup>20</sup> P. Riché, *Education and Culture in the Barbarian West*, tr. J.J. Contreni (Columbia, S.C. 1976) 334-35; F. McGrath, *Education in Ancient and Medieval Ireland* (Dublin 1979) 104.

<sup>21</sup> Riché *ibid.* 334; *Vita Geretrudis* in *MGH, Scriptores Rerum Merovingicarum* II, 458.

<sup>22</sup> B. Krusch, ed., *Vitae Columbani Abbatis Discipulorum Eius Libri II* in *MGH, Scriptores Rerum Merovingicarum* IV (Hannover-Leipzig 1902) 155.

<sup>23</sup> Krusch, ed., (at n. 22) p. 156.

<sup>24</sup> Dicuil's *Liber de Mensura Orbis Terrae*, SLH 6 (Dublin 1967) is probably a good example of Irish geo-metria: hence, geometry is a branch of *computus*. See C.W. Jones, "Bede's Place in Medieval Schools," FC p. 267.

<sup>25</sup> For a catalogue and detailed discussion of Irish exegetical works, see B. Bischoff, "Wendepunkte in der Geschichte der lateinischen Exegese im Frühmittelalter," MS I, 205-72.

<sup>26</sup> For scientific training in Ireland, see C.W. Jones, ed., *Bedae Opera de Temporibus* (Cambridge, Mass. 1943) 78-113; W.M. Stevens, "Scientific Instruction in Early Insular Schools" in M. Herren, ed., *Latin Texts and Manuscripts of the British Isles 550-1066* (forthcoming in the press of PIMS, Toronto, 1981.)

<sup>27</sup> K. Hughes, "The Distribution of Irish Scriptoria and Centres of Learning from 730 to 1111" in N.K. Chadwick, ed., *Studies in the Early British Church* (Cambridge 1958) 243-72.

<sup>28</sup> Brown (at n. 1) 277.

<sup>29</sup> Latin was the standard medium of expression in all written genres in seventh-century Ireland. Evidence for the existence of written Irish material from the seventh century is slight.

<sup>30</sup> Aethicus has been identified with Virgil of Salzburg (d. ca. 785) by H. Löwe: "Ein literarischer Widersacher des Bonifatius: Virgil von Salzburg und die Kosmographie des Aethicus Ister," *Abhandlungen der Akademie der Wissenschaften Mainz, geistes- und sozialwissenschaftliche Klasse*, 1951, no. 111 (1952) 901-88; also "Salzburg als Zentrum literarischen Schaffens im 8. Jahrhundert," *Mitteilungen der Gesellschaft für Salzburger Landeskunde*, 115 (1975) 99-143. Sceptics of this identification are: Maartje Draak, "Virgil of Salzburg versus Aethicus Ister," *Dancwerc opstellen aangeboden aan D. Th. Enklaar* (Groningen 1959) 33-42; F. Brunhölzl, "Zur Kosmographie des Aethicus Ister," *Festschrift für Max Spindler* (Munich 1969) 75-89; Coccia (at n. 8) 395-97.

<sup>31</sup> *Cosmographia* II, 2, ed. d'Avézac, in *Memoirs présentés par divers savants à l'Académie des inscriptions et belles lettres*, I, série II (Paris 1852) 469; translation of passage by L. Bieler in *Ireland Harbinger of the Middle Ages* (Oxford 1963) 117.

<sup>32</sup> Bieler (at n. 7) 47.

<sup>33</sup> For a description of this codex and for bibliography to 1929, see Kenney (at n. 1) 672: also W.M. Lindsay, *Early Welsh Script* (Oxford 1912) 16-18. Juvencus was known in Iona by the late seventh century, as Adamnan cites him by name (see D. Meehan's edition of the *De Locis Sanctis*, SLH III [Dublin 1958] 116). Caelius Sedulius' *Carmen Paschale* was known to Muirchú (see L. Bieler, *The Patrician Texts in the Book of Armagh*, SLH X [Dublin 1979] 118). For an Irish rhythmical paraphrase of the *Carmen Paschale* see Kenney (at n. 1) 281. Aethicus Ister cites Avitus by the name Alcimus at *Cosmog.* I.2.4, but direct acquaintance with that author cannot be inferred.

<sup>34</sup> See Kenney (at n. 1) 559-60. Recently M. Ferrari has argued that the compilation of this collection was due to the activity of an Irish colony in northern Italy in the ninth century: "Centri di trasmissione: Monza, Pavia, Milano, Bobbio," *Settimane di studio: Centro Italiano di studio sull' alto medioevo* 22,1 (1974 [Spoleto 1975]) 303-20, esp. 312-13.

<sup>35</sup> Kenney (at n. 1) 566-68. The fundamental study of the *Collectaneum* and its sources is that of S. Hellmann, *Sedulius Scottus* (Munich 1906) 92-146, which is based upon the earlier study of Traube, "O Roma Nobilis," *Abhandlungen der Münchener Akademie I. Klasse*, 19,2 (1891) 364 ff., which establishes Sedulius' activity as compiler of the selections and extracts in Cues Hospitals-Bibliothek C14 (now 37). Among the ancient and late antique works excerpted in the collection are: Vegetius' *De Arte Bellica*, Orosius' *Historia adversus Paganos*, Valerius Maximus, Macrobius' *In Somnium Scipionis*, fragments of several of Cicero's orations, selections from the *De Inventione* and the *Rhetorica ad Herennium*, Frontinus, and the *Scriptores Historiae Augustae* (for details, see Hellmann, op. cit. 96 ff.). Given independent evidence for seventh- and eighth-century Irish knowledge of Vegetius, Orosius, and some of the works of Macrobius (see p. 135), it is likely that Sedulius excerpted these works from Irish copies. But Hellmann, pp. 103 f., argues (I think rightly) that Sedulius did not derive his knowledge of Cicero from his countrymen.

<sup>36</sup> The *De Inventione* was known to Alcuin, and it forms a high proportion of his own *Rhetorica*: see W.S. Howell, *The Rhetoric of Alcuin and Charlemagne* (New York 1965) 22-33. The very few quotations of Cicero's

orations in Bede and Aldhelm are doubtless derived from grammarians. (See the *index nominum* and relevant passages in Ehwald's edition.) See Manitius, (at n. 1) I, 481-82. For possible Irish acquaintance with the *Topica* ca. 800, see Bischoff (at n. 3) pp. 280-82.

<sup>37</sup> These fragments are among the earliest *Zeugnisse* for these writers.

<sup>38</sup> "La tradición textual de Petronio," *Euphrosyne* n.s. I (1967) 71-106, esp. 87-93.

<sup>39</sup> Indeed, it has been frequently asserted that he was the only writer since late antiquity to know that part of the work. See E.T. Sage's edition of that work, pp. xxiv and 198; also J.T. Stuckey, *The Reputation and Influence of Petronius among English Men of Letters* (diss. Yale Univ. 1966) 8.

<sup>40</sup> M.L. Colker, *Analecta Dublinensia: Three Medieval Latin Texts in the Library of Trinity College Dublin* (Cambridge, Mass. 1975) 181-235.

<sup>41</sup> Colker, (at n. 40) 7-8.

<sup>42</sup> B. Boyer, "Traces of an Insular Tradition in the Ancient Scholia of Juvenal," *Classical Philology* 29 (1934) 240-50.

<sup>43</sup> Stanford (at n. 1) 28-42. J. Carney, *Studies in Irish Literature and History* (Dublin 1955) esp. 305-23. For Carney's dating of some of the Irish adaptations of classical tales, see Stanford p. 33, n. 69.

<sup>44</sup> D. Ó'hAodha, "The Irish Version of Statius' *Achilleid*," *PRIA* 79, C,4 (Dublin 1979) 83-137, esp. 83-89.

<sup>45</sup> On the other hand, the eminent Irish literary historian James Carney holds the view that only a knowledge of Homer can explain the precise use of certain motifs in Mediaeval Irish literature. Carney underlined this view in a paper given at the Fifth International Celtic Congress held in Galway, July 6-13, 1979: "The History of Early Irish Literature: the State of Research" (to be published in the Proceedings of the conference).

<sup>46</sup> A number of these tales (adaptations and translations) are listed with their editions and manuscripts in: R.I. Best, *Bibliography of Irish Philology* (Dublin 1942, rpt. 1969) 90-91. For the details of individual manuscripts, see R.J. Hayes, *Manuscript Sources for the History of Irish Civilization*, 11 vols. (Boston 1965).

47 At least to Aldhelm; see the long list in Ehwald's edition, p. 554. As far as I know, Aldhelm's knowledge of Vergil has not been challenged. Bede's has (see the discussion below). This indicates once again that there was little literary contact between Southumbria and Northumbria in Bede's time. See my remarks, APW 140-41, and R.B. Palmer, "Bede as a Textbook Writer, a Study of his *De Arte Metrica*," *Speculum* 34 (1959) 573-84, esp. 575, n. 13. Cf. n. 53 below.

48 M.L.W. Laistner, "The Library of the Venerable Bede" in A.H. Thompson, ed., *Bede: His Life, Times and Writings* (Oxford 1935) 237-66, esp. 242.

49 The parallels were put forward by G. Brüning in "Adamnans Vita Columbae und ihre Ableitungen," *Zeitschrift für celtische Philologie* 11, 241. These were accepted by the Andersons in their *Adomnan's Life of Columba* (London 1961) and by numerous other scholars including Kenney (at n. 1) 433. D. Bullough, "Columba, Adomnan and the Achievements of Iona" (2), *Scottish Historical Review* 44 (1965) 24, accepts the *Aeneid* as known to Adomnan, but not Vergil's other works. The only verbally convincing parallel, in my view, is VC III, 23: *trisulcarum linguarum*, and *Aen.* II, 475 (and *Georg.* III, 439): *Linguis . . . trisulcis*. But according to Lewis and Short this phrase also occurred in Pliny's *Natural History*, which definitely was known to the Irish.

50 *Hisperica Famina* I (Toronto 1974) 24-26.

51 M. Herren, "Some New Light on the Life of Virgilius Maro Grammaticus," *PRIA* 79,C,2 (Dublin 1979) 27-71, esp. 42-47.

52 Bieler (at n. 33) 118.

53 "From Bede to Alcuin," *FC* 243-47. This writer argues that, in contrast to Bede, Alcuin certainly knew his Vergil first hand (250-52). Cf. n. 47 above.

54 "Die Verbreitung der Werke Isidors von Sevilla," *M.S.* I, 182; and art. cit. (at n. 3) 288.

55 Herren, (at n. 51) 47-69.

56 I am not as sure as some other scholars that "Cicero," "Flaccus," "Terrentius," "Aeneas," "Donatus," and company are wholly bogus authorities. Evidence independent of Virgilius exists for a seventh- or eighth-century "Ovidius Grammaticus" and for a "Sergius" or "Sergilius." For

"Ovidius," see W. Heraeus, "Drei Fragmente eines Grammatikers Ovidius Naso," *Rheinisches Museum* 79 (1930) 391-405. For "Sergilius," see the forthcoming edition and study of his work by V. Law in *Journal of Celtic Studies*. Sergilius describes himself as *discipulo Virgilii*. Separate witness also exists for a "Terrentius" Grammaticus in Sedulius' Commentary on the *Ars Euticii* (ed. B. Löfstedt, *CC Cont. Med.* 40,C, 87).

<sup>57</sup> W. Meyer, "Ueber die lateinischen Rythmen" in *Gesammelte Abhandlungen zur mittellateinischen Rythmik* I (1905) 170-203; P. Lejay, "Le grammairien Virgile et les rythmes latins," *Revue de philologie* 19 (1895) 45-64; Raby (at n. 6) I, 155-57.

<sup>58</sup> The earliest certain examples of genuine Hiberno-Latin verse *in extenso* are the works of "Hibernicus Exul" and Joseph Scottus, which emanate from Charlemagne's circle at the end of the eighth century. They are edited in E. Dümmler, *Poetae Latini Aevi Carolini* I (Berlin 1881) 149-59 and 393-412.

<sup>59</sup> See M. Lapidge, "Some Remnants of Bede's lost 'Liber Epigrammatum'," *English Historical Review* 90 (1975) 798-820, esp. 805; Coccia (at n. 8) 320-23.

<sup>60</sup> For a recent review of the problems surrounding this poem, see B. Bischoff, "Bannita: I Syllaba, 2. Littera" in J.J. O'Meara and B. Naumann, eds., *Latin Script and Letters A.D. 400-900: Festschrift Presented to Ludwig Bieler on the Occasion of his 70th Birthday* (Leiden 1976) 210-11. I am not convinced by Manitius' argument (op. cit. [at n. 1] I, 191-2) that the poem belongs to the seventh century.

<sup>61</sup> Specifically the *Versus Columbani ad Hunaldum*, *Versus Columbani ad Sethum*, and *Columbanus Fidoлио Fratri Suo* in the edition by G.S.M. Walker, *SLH* II (Dublin 1957) 184-90; 192-96.

<sup>62</sup> *Studies on the Language and Style of Columba the Younger* (diss. Amsterdam 1971) 167-208.

<sup>63</sup> *Ibid.* 209-49.

<sup>64</sup> "Adversaria zu Anthologia Latina 676 mit einem Anhang über die Columbanus Gedichte" in R. Hanslik, A. Lesky, H. Schwabl, eds., *Antidosis: Festschrift für Walter Kraus zum 70. Geburtstag* (Vienna 1972) 41-48.

<sup>65</sup> "The Authorship of the Adonic Verses 'ad Fidoлио' Attributed to Columbanus," *Studi Medievali* 3 serie, 18,2 (1977) 249-314. The opening

pages of this article give an overview of the debate on the problem.

<sup>66</sup> "Sammelhandschrift Diez. B Sant. 66," *Codices Selecti* 42: (*Grammatici Latini et Catalogus Librorum*) (Graz 1973) esp. 22-23.

<sup>67</sup> Edited with discussion by Dümmler, *Poetae Latini* I, 434-36.

<sup>68</sup> Kenney (at n. 1) 531, n. 97, doubted the manuscript ascription to Columbanus of St. Trond: likewise Bischoff, "Theodulf und der Ire Cadac-Andreas," *M.S.* II, 25.

<sup>69</sup> See Krusch's edition, pp. 152-53 and 224-28. The first set uses hexameter endings (some of which are correct) and some whole lines are modelled on hexameter patterns; in fact, these might be labelled "false hexameters."

<sup>70</sup> See n. 14.

<sup>71</sup> This is the *De Metris et Enigmatibus ac Pedum Regulis* which forms part of the larger *Epistula ad Acircium* (Ehwald, ed., pp. 61-204). This work deserves more study; but see the introductory remarks by Manitius (at n. 1) I, 136-38, and the bibliography on Aldhelm in W.F. Bolton, *A History of Anglo-Latin Literature 597-740* (Princeton 1967) 262.

<sup>72</sup> Letters I and II, Ehwald, ed., pp. 475-78; APW pp. 152-54 and discussion, pp. 136-39.

<sup>73</sup> W.P. Levison, *England and the Continent in the Dark Ages* (Oxford 1946) 1-44.

<sup>74</sup> Herren (at n. 51) 39, 42-43.

<sup>75</sup> Discussed by Kenney (at n. 1) 142-43.

<sup>76</sup> In *Early Monasteries in Cornwall* (diss. University of Toronto 1980) B. Lynette Olson argues persuasively that the monastic movement did not reach any part of the British Isles much before ca. 500.

<sup>77</sup> *Handelsverbindungen Westgalliens mit Irland im Altertum und frühen Mittelalter* IV: "Der Gascogner Virgilius Maro Grammaticus in Irland," *Sitzungsberichte der königlichen preussischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, philologische-historische Klasse* (Berlin 1910) 1031-98.

<sup>78</sup> Herren (at n. 51) 68.

<sup>79</sup> For example, not all scholars agree that even Isidore knew Vergil directly, or else have expressed hesitations on the subject; see J. Fontaine, *Isidore de Séville et la culture classique dans l'Espagne wisigothique* II (Paris 1959) 759.



<sup>80</sup> Two recent international conferences have been dedicated to the question of relations between Ireland and the continent in the early Middle Ages. The first, held in Dublin, May 11-14, 1977, was entitled "Ireland and the Continent 500-750," and the proceedings are expected shortly under the editorship of Mary Brennan. The second was held in Tübingen, Sept. 24-28, 1979, under the sponsorship of the Europa Zentrum. The title of this conference was: "Die Iren und Europa im früheren Mittelalter." Forthcoming proceedings will be under the editorship of Heinz Löwe. Much of interest is also found in the important collection of papers from Laon: *Jean Scot et l'histoire de la philosophie (Colloques internationaux du C.N.R.S., Paris 1977)*.

<sup>81</sup> See the two papers by J.N. Hillgarth: "The East, Visigothic Spain and the Irish," *Studia Patristica* IV (1961) 442-56; "Visigothic Spain and Early Christian Ireland," *PRIA* 62,C (1962) 167-93.

<sup>82</sup> See M. Sheehy, *Pontificia Hibernica: Medieval Papal Chancery Documents Concerning Ireland I* (Dublin 1962) 3-4 (no. I). See also Columbanus' papal correspondence (*Letters I, III, V* in Walker's edition): also the correspondence between Boniface and Pope Zachary regarding Virgil of Salzburg (Tangl-Levison-Rau, nos. 68 and 80).

<sup>83</sup> See W.M. Stevens, "Compotistica et Astronomica in the Fulda School" in M.H. King and W.M. Stevens, eds., *Saints, Scholars and Heroes: Studies in Medieval Culture in Honour of Charles W. Jones II* (Collegeville, Minn. 1979) 27-63.

<sup>84</sup> On Dicuil's reported journeys through the islands north of Ireland and Britain in the latter part of the eighth century, see Tierney, ed., p. 12; for Aethicus, see Löwe (at n. 30) 129-39.

<sup>85</sup> Bischoff (at n. 54) 180-87; Herren, "On the Earliest Irish Acquaintance with Isidore of Seville" in E. James, ed., *Visigothic Spain: New Approaches* (Oxford 1980), 243-50.

<sup>86</sup> *Hisperica Famina* I, 134, s.v. *tollus*. Also indicative is the "hisperic" colophon to the text in *CLM* 396, to be edited in *Hisperica Famina* II.

<sup>87</sup> Jones, *Beda Opera* (at n. 26) 110. According to this writer, Pliny's *Natural History* travelled from Ireland to England, where it was used by Bede. Northumbria got, besides Pliny, Martianus Capella, Macrobius

(the *Saturnalia*) and probably Vegetius from the Irish (p. 111). The same route holds for the transmission of Isidore's *Etymologies* and *De Natura Rerum*. Cf. n. 90.

<sup>88</sup> "Scientific Instruction," forthcoming.

<sup>89</sup> Jones, loc. cit. (at n. 26).

<sup>90</sup> Jones (at n. 26) 351 acknowledges that evidence for Bede's use of Martianus is not strong. Manitius (at n. 1) I, 77, likewise offers no good evidence for Bede's knowledge of that writer. Ehwald has no entries for Aldhelm.

<sup>91</sup> These are the commentaries attributed to Dunchad and to Eriugena; see the editions by Cora E. Lutz: *Dunchad Glossae in Martianum* (Lancaster, Pa. 1944) and *Johannes Scotti Annotationes in Marcianum* (Cambridge, Mass. 1939). Lutz (*Dunchad*, p. vii) posits a common ancestor for the two commentaries. The authorship of both these writers has been challenged, but there can be no doubt that the commentaries are by Irishmen. See M.L.W. Laistner, "Martianus Capella and his Ninth Century Commentators," *Bulletin of the John Rylands Library* 9, 1 (Jan. 1925) 130-38; L. Labowsky in *Mediaeval and Renaissance Studies* 1 (1943) 187-93; H. Liebeshütz, "The Place of the Martianus' *Glossae* in the Development of Eriugena's Thought" in J.J. O'Meara and L. Bieler, eds., *The Mind of Eriugena* (Dublin 1973) 49-58; C. Leonardi, "Glosse Eriugeniane a Marziano Capella in un codice Leidense" in *Jean Scot* (at n. 80) 171-82. Specifically on the problem of Dunchad: J. Préaux, "Le commentaire de Martin de Laon sur l'oeuvre de Martianus Capella," *Latomus* 12 (1953) 437-59; M. Esposito, "Sur le prétendu commentaire de Dunchad sur Martianus Capella," *Didaskaleion* 3 (1944) 181.

<sup>92</sup> See J.J. Contreni, *The Cathedral School of Laon from 859 to 930: Its Manuscripts and Masters* (Munich 1978) 67 and 95; also id., "Three Carolingian Texts Attributed to Laon: Reconsiderations," *Studi Medievali*, ser. 3, xvii (1976) 797-813.

<sup>93</sup> Manitius (at n. 1) I, 513-15.

<sup>94</sup> For the manuscript tradition, see L.W. Jones, *An Introduction to Divine and Human Readings by Cassiodorus Senator* (New York 1966) 58-63. Of the very long list of MSS given, only three extant (plus three lost but known) contain both Book I and Book II.

<sup>95</sup> For Aldhelm there is no entry in Ehwald's edition. As to Bede, only the *Commentary on the Psalms* and the *Historia Tripartita* are known, corresponding probably to Irish acquaintance (see Laistner's list, art. cit. [at n. 48] 264). Alcuin might have known the *De Orthographia* (Mani-tius [at n. 1] I, 282).

<sup>96</sup> C.W. Jones, "Bede's Place in Medieval Schools," *FC* 261-85, esp. 265.

<sup>97</sup> See Maartje Draak, "A Leyden Boethius-Fragment with Old-Irish Glosses," *Mededelingen der koninklijke, nederlandse Akademie van Wetenschappen, afd. Letterkunde, nieuwe Reeks, Deel 11, No. 3* (Amsterdam 1948) 1-13.

<sup>98</sup> Kenney (at n. 1) 574. This commentary is found in Paris BN 12949.

<sup>99</sup> Kenney, *ibid.* 585.

<sup>100</sup> See now the detailed study by D. Bolton, "The Study of the Con-solation of Philosophy in Anglo-Saxon England," *Archives d'histoire doctrinale et littéraire du moyen âge* 44 (1977) 33-78.

<sup>101</sup> So Bolton, *ibid.* 34, who asserts that Alcuin used the *Consolatio* in his *De Grammatica*.

<sup>102</sup> P. Hunter Blair (at n. 53) 253-54.

<sup>103</sup> From a personal inspection made in November 1980.

<sup>104</sup> "Was pseudo-Johannes Scottus or Remigius of Auxerre a Plagiarist?" in *op. cit.* (at n. 83) II, 127-40.

<sup>105</sup> For Aethicus' use of Orosius, see K. Hillkowitz, *Zur Kosmographie des Aethicus I* (Köln 1934) 47-48; for the diffusion of Orosius' work generally, see the index of Zangemeister's edition, p. 701.

<sup>106</sup> J. Tierney (ed., p. 31-2) suggests that Orosius was known to Dicuil through the medium of Solinus. But that is clearly impossible, since all accounts place Solinus about a century earlier than Orosius. This raises the possibility that Orosius was known to Dicuil directly, and, given other evidence for the widespread use of Orosius in Ireland, even a likelihood.

<sup>107</sup> Kenney (at n. 1) 249.

<sup>108</sup> Kenney, *ibid.* 141-42; E. MacNeill, *Phases of Irish History* (Dublin 1919) 92-95; O'Rahilly, *Mythology*, 4, 195, 198, 504.

<sup>109</sup> See the important paper of P. Lehmann, "Reste und Spuren Antiker Gelehrsamkeit in mittelalterlichen Texten" in *Erforschung des Mittelalters* 2 (Stuttgart 1959) 29-37.

<sup>110</sup> For Hegesippus in Adomnan's *De Locis Sanctis*, see Meehan's edition, *SLH* III, 13-14; for Iulius Honorius see Tierney's edition, p. 27. (Other geographical sources are also mentioned.)

<sup>111</sup> Compare Laistner's list (see n. 95) generally with the list below; for overlap between Irish and English hagiographical sources, consult Bullough (at n. 49).

<sup>112</sup> See the *Letters* in Walker's edition, *passim*.

<sup>113</sup> See O'Rahilly, *Mythology*, 249 ff. Isidore's *Chronicle* was also used in the *Irish Annals*. The *Chronicon* of Sulpicius Severus was known to Adomnan. (See Meehan, ed., p. 13 and esp. n. 8, where it is noted that this work was little known outside Ireland in the early Middle Ages.)

<sup>114</sup> For Fredegar in Aethicus, see Hillkowitz, (at n. 105) 53. The evidence for Virgilius is more obscure; see Herren, (at n. 51) 37 and n. 70.

<sup>115</sup> Hillkowitz (at n. 105) 51-53.

<sup>116</sup> *Ibid.* 50-51; 54-58. Manuscript evidence of an early date for Irish knowledge of Jordanes' *Getica* is given by Bischoff (at n. 137) 48.

<sup>117</sup> The connection of Aethicus/Virgil to Iona was denied by P. Grosjean, "Virgile de Salzburg in Irlande," *Analecta Bollandiana* 78 (1960) 92-123. But Löwe (at n. 30) 100 offers good manuscript evidence for eighth-century connections between Iona and Salzburg.

<sup>118</sup> The evidence for Dicuil's connection to Iona is somewhat tenuous. Its main basis is that Dicuil was a student of a Suibne. This Suibne has been identified with the Abbot of Iona who died in 772 (Kenney [at n. 1] 545). But as Kenney points out, Suibne is a quite common Irish name. A second argument has to do with a constellation of sources. Dicuil, as far as I know, was the first writer to cite Aethicus Ister; cf. Tierney's ed., p. 97. Given established connections between Iona and Salzburg, it is by no means impossible that Dicuil read the *Cosmography* in Iona. (Note that Adomnan's *De Locis Sanctis* is found in an early Salzburg manuscript: Löwe, loc. cit. at n. 117.)

<sup>119</sup> Tierney, ed., 3-6.

120 I hope to turn eventually to this task myself.

121 See especially B. Löfstedt, *Der hibernolateinische Grammatiker Malsachanus* (Uppsala 1965); B. Löfstedt and L. Holtz, *Muretach, In Donati Artem Maiorem* (Cont. Med. 40, 1977); *Ars Lauresheimensis* (40A, 1977); *Sedulii Scotti in Donati Artem Maiorem* (40B, 1977); *Sedulii Scotti in Donati Artem Minorem, in Priscianum, in Eutychem* (40C, 1977).

122 Sedulius and Muretach wrote around the middle of the ninth century; Clemens Scottus was active in the first quarter of the ninth century; Cruindmel belongs somewhere in the eighth or ninth (Bede is his latest source). One of our very earliest sources, the *Anonymous ad Cuimnanum* is not yet edited (Professor Bischoff is preparing an edition). For Muretach's dates, see Bischoff, "Muridac doctissimus plebis, ein irischer Grammatiker des IX. Jahrhunderts," *MS II*, 51-56; for Clemens and Cruindmel, see Manitius (at n. 1) I, 456-58; 523-25. The Anonymus is "early," as it is one of Malsachanus' sources (Löfstedt [at.n. 121] 24).

123 See Ferrari (at n. 34).

124 See G. Polara e L. Caruso, *Virgilio Marone grammatico, Epitomi ed Epistole* (Naples 1979) together with my forthcoming review in *Studi Medievali* 1981.

125 These are considered in detail in an unpublished paper by Dr. Anders Ahlqvist, which the author has kindly lent me.

126 Löfstedt (at n. 121) 43-80.

127 Ibid. 48.

128 Notably in the Berne Codices 207 and 432, Nancy 317 (354), Paris Lat. 13025, Naples IV.A.34. For the *De Centum Metris* we have evidence from the ninth century. Sedulius cites the line *Pauper poeta nescit ant(h)ra musarum* (GL IV,458,24) in his commentary to Priscian (see Lehmann [at n. 109] 37). Curiously, this line is paraphrased in vv.14-15 of the Irish Hisperic poem *Rubisca*: see Jenkinson's ed. (Cambridge 1908) p. 55. (This poem will be re-edited with translation and notes in my forthcoming *Hisperica Famina II*.)

129 *Flavii Sosipatri Charisii Artis Grammaticae Libri V* (Leipzig 1964) v-xxviii.

130 Manitius (at n. 1) I, 457.

131 Löfstedt (at n. 121) 48.

132 In the Nancy and Naples MSS listed above. See C.H. Beeson, "The Manuscripts of Bede," *Classical Philology* 42,2 (April 1947) 86. Was "Metrororius" a *Deckname* invented by the Irish?

133 Beeson, *ibid.* 85-86. A substantial number of the Irish glosses to early grammatical manuscripts are edited in the second volume of *Paleothesaurus Hibernicus*, cited at n. 142. See also Bischoff (at n. 137) *passim*.

134 For this work see Schanz-Hosius, *Geschichte der römischen Literatur* IV, 2, 196.

135 See n. 123.

136 Contreni (at n. 92) 38-49; Kenney (at n. 1) 589-90.

137 Kenney, *ibid.* 574; Jeauneau (at n. 5) 34 n. 153. Some new evidence on the old question of Jean's authorship of this *florilegium* is given by B. Bischoff, "Irische Schreiber im Karolingerreich" in *Jean Scot Erigène et l'histoire de la philosophie (Colloques internationaux du C. N.R.S. no. 561, Paris 1977)* 54 n. 3.

138 Löfstedt, ed., pp. 90-91.

139 The earliest citations of this work appear to be those of Dungal in the early ninth century (see Manitius [at n. 1] 371 and Register) and Sedulius.

140 Regarding Byrhtferth's (10th c.) knowledge of this text, see C.S. Jones, *Beda's Pseudepigrapha: Scientific Writings Falsely Attributed to Bede* (Ithaca, N.Y. 1939) 10 and 35. That the work was probably transmitted to England through Abbo of Fleury is shown by Jones, *ibid.*

141 A good example is afforded by Dicuil's use of Priscian's *De Partitionibus XII Versuum Aeneidos Principalium* in his *De Mensura Orbis*. For a curious blend of grammatical doctrine and geography, see the quotation at 8, 31 (Tierney, ed., pp. 96-8), which follows upon the extract from Aethicus' *Cosmography*.

142 Still there is evidence that the Irish could find Christian morals in pagan myths. In fol. 131b of the Berne Servius (no. 363) we find the story of how Apollo promised the Sybil a long life provided she leave the island of Erethria and never see it again. A comment in the margin reads "ut mac Ciallain," almost certainly a reference to the peregrination of an Irish monk. (See W. Stokes and J. Strachan, *Paleothesaurus*

*Hibernicus* II (rpt. Dublin 1975) 135.

<sup>143</sup> C.H. Beeson, "Insular Symptoms in the Commentaries on Vergil," *Studi Medievali*, n.s. 5 (1932) 81-100, esp. 81-86.

<sup>144</sup> Ibid.

<sup>145</sup> G. Funaioli, "Scolii Filargiriani," *Rheinisches Museum*, n.F. 70 (1915) 56-106, esp. 56. See also id., *Esegesi Virgiliana* (Milan 1930).

<sup>146</sup> The content of "Gaudentius" was identified by Hagen in his edition of the Berne Scholia: *Scholia Bernensia ad Vergilii Bucolica atque Georgica* (rpt. Hildesheim 1967) 29-33. Hagen, pp. 28-29, took Gallus to be an older commentator; but Funaioli [at n. 145] 97), following Mommsen, recognized Gallus as an epitomizer of Servius Auctus (Servius Danielis). Hence, the entire "Sylloge" (i.e. the Berne Scholia plus the *Explanatio*) goes back to a common mass of scholia comprising Servius, Servius Auctus and Philargyrius. On this account, the separate editions of the two recensions by Hagen represent an "anachronism," according to Funaioli. A new edition of these scholia ought to be undertaken.

<sup>147</sup> Kenney (at n. 1) 287; the glosses are printed in *Thes. Pal.* II, 46-48, 360-63.

<sup>148</sup> See Lehmann (at n. 109) 32. But against this more sceptical position can be adduced proof that the compiler of one recension, the Berne Scholia, was a single individual. At the beginning of the *Georgics* in both the Berne MSS stand the words: "Haec omnia de commentariis Romanorum congregavi, id est Titi Galli et Gaudentii et maxime Iunilii Flagrii" (Hagen [at n. 146] 26-27 and text, p. 169). The name *Adananus* does not appear in the Berne recension, but rather in two MSS of the first recension of the *Explanatio* at *Eclogues* III, 90: *De Maevio nihil reperi, ut Adananus ait*. On the other hand, in the Berne MSS only the words *De Maevio nihil reperi* occur. Is the compiler of the *Explanatio* quoting the Berne Scholia? If so, are the words *De Maevio nihil reperi* the only scholium attributable to Adananus? The answer to the latter question seems to be negative. This is a first-person gloss inserted into a mass of scholia whose authors are frequently, if not always, identified. This gloss (and a few other first-person insertions) are probably therefore by the same person, i.e. the compiler.

<sup>149</sup> A certain Adamnanus of Coldingham (Bede, *H.E.* IV) was confused

with Adamnanus of Iona by the *Annals of the Four Masters* (see Plummer, ed. notes, pp. 137 and 258). But this Adamnanus had no reputation for learning.

150 The glosses and Irish names are published in *Thes. Pal.* II, 235.

151 Löfstedt (at n. 121) 48.

152 Beeson (at n. 143) 86.

153 Cf. n. 42. For scholia to Terence, see C.H. Beeson, "The Text Tradition of Donatus' Commentary on Terence," *Classical Philology* 17 (1922) 283-305. One typically Irish symptom, however, noted by Boyer in the Juvenal Scholia (p. 244), is the confusion of *s* and *ss*. But the same confusion is practically as frequent in Welsh MSS (see W.M. Lindsay, *Early Welsh Script, passim*), and there are some examples in English manuscripts. Without a full list of spelling mistakes in the MSS it is hard to decide between Irish and English. For typical Hibernian spellings, see L. Bieker, *The Irish Penitentials, SLH* 7 (Dublin 1963) 27-30; Löfstedt (at n. 121) 86-107; my "Sprachliche Eigentümlichkeiten in den hibernolateinischen Texten des VII. und VIII. Jahrhunderts," forthcoming in the Tübingen Proceedings noted in n. 80. Further progress in deciding between an English and an Irish exemplar will depend upon extensive orthographical studies of representative manuscripts.

154 See Hagen's edition of the *Explanatio* in the Appendix to G. Thilo's edition of Servius, III (Leipzig 1902) 65.

155 See n. 85.

156 K.N. MacFarlane, "Isidore of Seville on the Pagan Gods," *Transactions of the American Philosophical Society* 70, 3 (June, 1980) 1-40.

157 MacFarlane, *ibid.* 8.

158 Ferrari (at n. 34) 315-16; C.A. Robson, "L'Appendix Probi et la philologie latine," *Le Moyen Age* 69 (1963) 37-54.