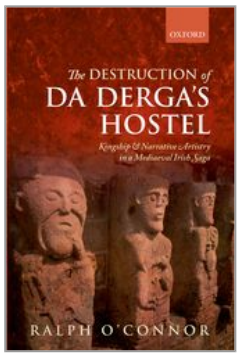

The Destruction of Da Derga's Hostel: Kingship and Narrative Artistry in a Mediaeval Irish Saga
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Conaire, Saul, and Sacred Kingship

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Abstract and Keywords

This chapter proposes that the composition of the *Togail* is likely to have been shaped in part by its author's acquaintance with the book of 1 Samuel, the Bible's darkest and most tragic kingship-tale. Its narrative of the rise and fall of Saul displays not only a common theme (a failed king hounded to death by his supernatural patrons) but, more importantly, signs of a common structure and similarly ambivalent stance towards its protagonist and towards sacred kingship. The author asesses the possibilities and limitations of this parallel, and then sets out why an Irish saga-author might have wished to draw on 1 Samuel, setting this parallel in the wider context of 1 Samuel's popularity as a resource for the ecclesiastical architects of new ideologies of kingship in early mediaeval Europe (including Ireland) and examining Irish mirrors for princes such as *Audacht Morainn* within this Christian Latin context.

Keywords: kingship, Bible, Saul, Samuel, 'mirrors for princes', tecosca, Audacht Morainn, Adomnán, Hibernensis, Carolingian

The Old Testament books of Samuel and Kings present a connected history of how kingship was first established in Israel under divine guidance. They weave together the story of the irascible prophet Samuel—the reluctant 'facilitator' of the new political arrangement—with those of his two royal protégés, the ill-starred Saul who became the first king and his more fortunate successor David.[1] Like the *Togail*, this narrative is not just an enumeration of historical events; it is a searching, complex, and dramatic exploration of the possibilities and limitations of sacred kingship. This makes it a prime candidate for consideration as a text which may have contributed to the composition of the extant *Togail*.

What makes 1 Samuel even more appropriate for this purpose is the fact that its chief figures were repeatedly invoked, from the seventh century onwards, in a prominent strand of Irish ecclesiastical discourse on the proper duties of a king and on the king's relationship to the divine. This use of Old Testament kingship typology was part of a wider Western European redefinition of kingship, visible most clearly among the Frankish kings of the eighth and ninth centuries. Insular scholars and scholarship helped to drive these developments on the Continent and contributed, in this context, to the revival of the ancient didactic genre of the 'mirror for princes' (*speculum principis*).

Meanwhile, the vernacular Irish branch of this same genre—the *tecosca rígh* or 'instructions for a king'—has long been seen as central to a proper understanding of the conception of kingship enshrined in the *Togail*. The kingly values promoted by vernacular mirrors for princes, above all *Audacht Morainn* ('The Testament of Morann', usually held to be the oldest example of the genre), are routinely illustrated and contextualized by pointing to the *Togail*, whose own values are in turn illustrated by *Audacht Morainn*.[2] But such comparisons typically treat the parallels purely in terms of the traditional imagery of sovereignty, seen in terms of 'pagan survivals' or 'sacral kingship', without exploring the functions of both texts (p.251) and their heathen imagery in early mediaeval discussions of Christian kingship ideology. Even the increasing body of recent scholarship which emphasizes the integration

of supposedly heathen ideologies with ecclesiastical interests in a text like *Audacht Morainn* has not gone very far towards exploring what the point of such texts might have been for their users in early Christian Ireland.

In the next two chapters, then, I propose to revisit this relationship. First of all setting out the parallels with 1 Samuel, I will then place the *Togail* and the oldest Irish mirrors for princes within the wider environment of debates about Christian kingship ideology current during the periods in which their extant texts and immediate sources were written, namely the eighth to eleventh century. The importance of ecclesiastical contexts for the *Togail* has been recognized by some recent scholars, especially in relation to the saga's attitude towards *díberg*;[3] but in relation to kingship ideology the work has barely begun. Edel Bhreathnach's cryptic remark that the *Togail* 'incorporates elements of biblical and archaic kingship', Ó Cathasaigh's suggestion that study of the canon laws might illuminate the *Togail*, and Tom Sjöblom's assertion that the *Togail* displays 'Christian adaptation and reinterpretation even on the level of structure' all raise important questions but offer no further comment or explanation.[4]

Even those studies of the *Togail* which do sketch out possible Christian contexts for its composition tend to stop short at the Old Irish period during which its main sources were written.[5] I share the view of these scholars that ideologies developed during the Old Irish period (in, for instance, *Audacht Morainn*) were vitally important to the shaping of the extant *Togail*, and the historical context examined in the present chapter will dwell chiefly on this period; but it is also important to extend such contextualization into the period in which the extant *Togail* was composed, especially since the tensions which it explores became particularly apparent during the Middle Irish period. The next chapter will focus on the saga's immediate Middle Irish context in order to explain why the biblical book of 1 Samuel may have been used by the author of the *Togail* in a way which sets it apart from the didactic and hortatory texts examined in the present chapter. First, however, the biblical parallels themselves need to be set out.

The *Togail* and the Old Testament

Like its classical counterpart, biblical influence on saga literature is almost impossible to prove with any degree of certainty. I nevertheless hope to show that it is a distinct possibility in the case of the *Togail*. If my conclusion is accepted, some of (p.252) the suggestions made by Kim McCone and others concerning specific biblical allusions in the *Togail*, mentioned at the end of the previous chapter, will require further consideration in their own right. But even if it is not accepted, the comparison between the two texts will be seen to be revealing in other ways, in the light of our subsequent examination of the *Togail* in relation to the mirror for princes tradition and early mediaeval kingship ideology. Whether or not it influenced the *Togail* directly, 1 Samuel helps us to understand its ideological stance.

The story of 1 Samuel runs as follows. It begins with the folkloric story of Samuel's miraculous conception and his rise to a position of supernatural authority as Israel's pre-eminent prophet (1 Sam 1–7). The people of Israel, ruled by corrupt warlords known as ‘judges’ (who happen to be Samuel's sons) and beset by Philistine invasions, ask for a king to rule over them, but Samuel tries to dissuade them by describing the oppression of tyrants and usurpers (1 Sam 8). God instructs Samuel to confer kingship upon Saul, and Samuel does so (1 Sam 9–10). After being elected by lot at a semi-public ceremony, he wins a military victory over the Philistines, and his kingship is confirmed by all the people (1 Sam 10–11); but on this occasion Samuel vents his resentment of Israel's implicit rejection of his own special authority, effectively branding as sinful their request for a king (1 Sam 12). After an unspecified lapse of time, Saul slips up, disobeying a sacral injunction laid on him by Samuel at his anointing; Samuel is furious and tells him that God will reject him (1 Sam 13). After another military victory, Saul's decline begins to manifest itself when he delivers an unjust judgement concerning his son Jonathan (1 Sam 14), which his people prevent him from carrying out; and when he disobeys Samuel a second time by refusing to massacre the Amalekites wholesale, Samuel tells him that God has rejected him absolutely, refusing to respond

to Saul's desperate pleas for forgiveness (1 Sam 15). The doomed state of Saul's kingship is now revealed in a divinely inflicted madness: *spiritus autem Domini recessit a Saul et exagitabat eum spiritus nequam a Domino* (‘but the spirit of God turned away from Saul and a bad spirit from God harassed him’, 1 Sam 16:14).

These fits of terror are relieved only by the harp-playing of the young David, who has already been secretly anointed by Samuel as Saul's successor (1 Sam 16:11–23). Samuel has since died. When David's victory over Goliath causes the people's favour, as well as God's, to turn to David rather than Saul (1 Sam 17–18:9), the evil spirit from God kindles a murderous jealousy in Saul (1 Sam 18:10–16). From this point until Saul's death, David is intermittently on the run from the increasingly unstable Saul; in his intervals of lucidity, Saul is stricken with grief at his situation and his own ill-treatment of David, whom he acknowledges to be the better man and his own legitimate successor (1 Sam 18:17–28:2). The night before his final battle with the Amalekites, desperate for reassurance, Saul violates his own anti-sorcery law by secretly consulting a seeress, at whose bidding the ghost of Samuel rises up and pronounces Saul's imminent destruction (1 Sam 28:3–19). On the following day, his army routed and his sons dead, Saul falls upon his sword; the Amalekites then cut off his head (1 Sam 31). The kingship now passes to David and his dynasty, and 2 Samuel and the first chapters of 1 Kings explore David's reign in detail and with an increasingly darkening tone.

(p.253) The literary artistry of the two books of Samuel has long been acknowledged, and their portrayals of Samuel, Saul, and David are executed with a remarkable combination of psychological insight and ideological ambivalence.[6] Indeed, Old Testament scholars (and not only those of a literary-critical bent) routinely observe that the Saul strand is the Bible's foremost example of ‘tragic’ narrative: as Gerhard von Rad put it, ‘Israel never again gave birth to a poetic production which in certain of its features has such close affinity with the spirit of Greek tragedy’ (recalling Gerard Murphy's assessment of the *Togail*).[7] Even those biblical

scholars who robustly contest the application of the concept of ‘tragedy’ to the story of Saul concede that the doomed king is depicted with a powerful sense of pathos.[8] The Bible is of course full of stories of kings who disobey God or his prophets and suffer fatal divine retribution, such as Abimelech, Ahaz, and Ahab (the latter is cursed by no fewer than four prophets). But all these kings, like their foreign counterparts Belshazzar and Rameses II, are portrayed without redeeming features, so that their punishments are accepted by the reader without a second thought. Saul is presented with far more sympathy and complexity, and his worst deeds are seen to be done against his own will.[9] Like Conaire, he finds himself hastening his own doom with every step he takes.

The parallels with the *Togail*, however, go beyond this rather vague thematic correspondence. First, Saul's and Conaire's divine elections to the kingship share a common structure. Both accounts involve a prophet receiving supernatural guidance concerning the identity of the new king, who then providentially arrives where the prophet is (*Togail*, lines 148–58; 1 Sam 9–10). The prophet's choice of king is not at first greeted with unanimous popular acclaim (lines 162–4; 1 Sam 10:27); to win over the doubters, both Saul and Conaire have to demonstrate their fitness for the kingship. In 1 Samuel the grumblers doubt Saul's military promise, so Saul's victory over the Ammonites at Jabesh-gilead reassures them (1 Sam 11); in *Togail Bruidne Da Derga*, they are concerned about Conaire's inexperience and youth, so his display of wisdom proves to them that he is the right man (lines 162–7).

In both accounts, the conferral of kingship is presented as a threefold procedure: divine designation (Nemglan, God), recognition by wise men (the elders on the road to Tara, Samuel), and popular acceptance.[10] Both accounts also emphasize (p.254) the injunctions and prohibitions which are imposed on the new king. Nemglan tells Conaire about his *geis* against killing birds, and imposes his royal *gessi* (lines 145–7, 168–9); these *gessi* appear in the saga to cast their shadow over the jubilant inauguration scene, whether they are envisaged as being read out at the ceremony or (as I have argued) framed as an internal flashback (lines 170–81).[11]

Samuel imposes an injunction on the newly-anointed Saul to wait seven days for him at Gilgal at some unspecified future point (1 Sam 10:8–9); and after Saul's kingship has been publicly proclaimed, the *lex regni* (‘law of kingship’) is read out before the people by Samuel and written in a book (1 Sam 10:25).[12] Saul's subservience to the divine law is dramatically reiterated when the people then accept Saul as king: at this, Samuel summons up a thunderstorm and threatens them all with destruction if they do not obey God with absolute devotion (1 Sam 12). Saul and Conaire are, at this stage, puppets in the hands of Samuel and Nemglan, who control and foresee their every move. Nemglan knows in advance what the dreamer at Tara has seen in his prophetic dream, and he gives Conaire detailed instructions about where to go and what to do in order to bring about his public acceptance as king (lines 148–52, 168–9). Samuel likewise knows in advance the movements of Saul's kinsmen and the prophets in Gibeath-Elohim: he gives Saul detailed instructions about where to go and what to do before the election by lot takes place (1 Sam 10:2–8).

At this point it might be objected that these parallels all centre around a kingship myth of threefold election with parallels in India, the Near East, and Europe—including several parallels in mediaeval Ireland itself.[13] I am certainly not proposing that all the ideas about kingship rituals reflected in the *Togail* are derived from 1 Samuel. What seems noteworthy, however, is the fact that both narratives give this threefold conferral such structural prominence, but then leap ahead almost immediately to narrate the king's first mistake and subsequent fall from grace, without any intervening episodes of successful rule (barring a short, generalized, and static narratorial eulogy in the *Togail*). Most of the story, in both cases, is taken up with narrating the king's fall in dramatic detail. These structural parallels are worth investigating further.

First, let us examine the way in which the king's fatal error fits into this structure. In chapter 2 it was shown how Conaire's error unites both social and sacred orders of transgression. First, on the purely social level, he refuses to check his foster-brothers’ thieving; second, in so doing he violates the

Otherworldly (and socially necessary) *geis* against plundering; third, he delivers a false judgement regarding the plunderers, violating his sacred *fír flathemon* on the social level; fourth, he then breaks all his other *gessi*, in some cases in order to satisfy even more pressing social obligations (hospitality, peacemaking) and in many cases against his own will. The saga does not exonerate Conaire, but it does provide a context for his errors, (p.255) underlining the affection and sense of personal obligation between him and his foster-brothers which makes him unwilling to intervene in their thieving, and even more reluctant to have them killed. It also presents some of his errors as being forced on him by a now-malevolent Otherworld.

Saul, too, is not exempt from blame;[14] but his three mistakes are likewise presented as understandable given the pressure under which he finds himself on the occasions in question. On the first occasion, he has mustered an apprehensive Israelite army to pre-empt massive Philistine retribution, but the troops cannot proceed until a sacrifice has been made. Long before, Samuel has laid an injunction on Saul to wait seven days for him to arrive and make the sacrifice. Saul duly waits, *dilapsusque est populus ab eo* (‘and the people began slipping away from him’, 1 Sam 13:8). When Samuel fails to arrive at the specified time, Saul offers the sacrifice himself—at which point Samuel immediately appears, enraged, and prophesies Saul's rejection by God (1 Sam 13:9–15).[15] Samuel seems to be enraged by Saul's usurpation of his cultic authority, but Saul's chief crime before God here is his failure to obey the letter of a rather arbitrary injunction. Like Conaire settling the dispute in North Munster and thereby violating a *geis*, Saul understandably but fatally privileges his social responsibilities over his sacred duties.

Saul's second mistake is of precisely the opposite kind (1 Sam 14:24–46). After his son Jonathan's heroic initiative has enabled the Israelites to defeat the Philistines, Saul unwisely issues a solemn edict that nobody should eat until the Philistines have been completely routed. This strategy is successful in military terms, and the Philistines are routed; but the troops are by then so hungry that they devour the

livestock without first draining the blood. Saul's edict thus causes the violation of blood-taboo, a situation which is then remedied by sacrifice. But the edict has further and graver repercussions. Jonathan had not heard the original edict and had eaten some honey, and this violation of his father's edict results in God refusing to communicate with the oracle. Saul then vows to execute whoever is guilty. When Jonathan emerges as the culprit, Saul orders his execution—a would-be kin-slaying which foreshadows the imminent destruction of his dynasty[16]—but his men consider this to be a false judgement and protect Jonathan. As in the *Togail*, a false judgement coincides with kin-slaying narrowly averted. The episode concludes with equilibrium restored, but the reader senses the people's favour swinging from Saul to his son. Saul's mistake here is to privilege the letter of sacred vows over basic social and practical responsibilities, namely feeding an active army, honouring the man responsible for their victory, and not killing his son.

(p.256) Saul is so anxious not to make his previous mistake again that on the third occasion he errs in the opposite direction (1 Sam 15:3–31). This time he compromises disastrously, disobeying Samuel's express injunction to *percute Amalech et demolire universa eius* (‘massacre Amalek and destroy everything he has’) and instead sparing the best of the cattle and King Agag, but massacring the rest of the Amalekites. Apparently it seems a waste to the armies to destroy everything, and Saul excuses himself to Samuel on the grounds that he acted *timens populum et oboediens voci eorum* (‘fearing the people and obeying their voice’). In the dramatic confrontation which follows, Samuel refuses to excuse Saul: he tells him before the people that *scidit Dominus regnum Israhel a te hodie* (‘God has torn the kingship of Israel from you today’), and then refuses to sacrifice with him, thus openly dishonouring him. The ensuing episode emphasizes Saul's doom by recounting Samuel's clandestine anointing of David (1 Sam 16:1–13); the next time we see Saul he is being tormented by the evil spirit from God (1 Sam 16:14).

Like the Irish saga, then, 1 Samuel places the king in a multiple dilemma, and his failure to fulfil both his social and

his sacred obligations dooms him to destruction. But there is an important difference. In the *Togail*, Conaire's social and sacred transgressions are intimately linked in the same complex of actions. Conaire's inevitable failure on one level is part and parcel of his inevitable failure on the other: he offends both Otherworld and society by privileging his personal affection towards his foster-brothers. Only after this twofold failure does the Otherworld finally turn on Conaire, forcing him into further dilemmas where sacral responsibilities collide with both personal *and* social obligations. 1 Samuel, on the other hand, sets Saul's social and personal responsibilities against his sacral obligations from the very outset. Waiting for Samuel at Gilgal entails losing his army; honouring his fasting edict and vow entails neglecting his troops and ordering his son's death; and annihilating every single Amalekite beast entails displeasing his people. Saul has been elected king by divine and popular consent, so it is incumbent on him to satisfy both Samuel and the people; when he finds himself unable to do this consistently, he swerves between one and the other. In so doing he loses the support of both parties, above all Samuel's. The thorniness of his dilemmas may reflect the fact that the people's wish for a king is presented in the early chapters of 1 Samuel as inherently sinful (if, again, understandable given their situation). Saul becomes, in a sense, the scapegoat for the Israelites' collective sin in wanting to be like their heathen neighbours.

Both the *Togail* and 1 Samuel subsequently present the divine forces which raised the king up in a demonic light, as they turn on him and torment him. After Saul has broken the second sacral injunction, God rejects him and *spiritus malus* ('an evil spirit') torments and terrifies him (1 Sam 16:14–16). In this passage he loses his royal charisma and has to seek explanation from his people. A servant has to explain the significance of his torments, and he is ruled by other servants' advice (1 Sam 16:15–18). They recommend that he find someone to play the lyre to calm him, but ironically the man they choose (David) ultimately serves only to hasten Saul's doom by aggravating his jealousy and making him still more afraid. Similarly, as soon as Conaire breaks his second *geis* in North Munster, the Otherworld sends (p.257) spectres to

bewilder him so that the land seems apocalyptically to be *nem thened* (‘a sky of fire’, lines 236–41). His charisma, too, leaves him for a time, and his men have to explain to the bewildered king the significance of these apparitions: *isi in cháin ro mebaid and in tan ro gabad for loscad in tíre*’ (‘it is the law that has shattered there, since they have taken to burning the land’, lines 243–4). They advise Conaire to turn northeast, which entails breaking another *geis*. The process is then repeated. After the fateful sentence *is é rí insin loingsige siabrai din bith* (‘he is the king whom spectres exiled from the world’, line 250), we are told that *imus-rola in t-omon* (‘fear overtook him’, line 251); he asks his men what to do and is ruled by their advice (lines 56–63). The Otherworld is by now compelling Conaire to break various *gessi* against his will, just as Saul is compelled to ill-treat David by the evil spirit from God which brings fear and a jealous rage on him.

The role of fear in both kings’ downfall is worth emphasizing, since 1 Samuel shares with the *Togail* an archaic concept of what this fear is. It is not simply a state of mind, but a tangible external phenomenon which overcomes its victims as if from without. It is also closely linked with prophecy. After his anointing, Saul had been possessed with prophetic inspiration of an affirmative, celebratory kind, *propterea versum est in proverbium ‘num et Saul inter prophetas*’ (‘therefore it became a proverb, “Is Saul, too, among the prophets?”’, 1 Sam 10:12). Soon afterwards, however, prophecy and divine possession have become harbingers of doom: *invasit spiritus Dei malus Saul et prophetabat in medio domus suae* (‘an evil spirit of God entered Saul, and he went into a prophetic frenzy within his house’, 1 Sam 18:10), and the same passage mentions his terror twice (1 Sam 18:12, 18:15). Later still, Saul is possessed again: *prophetavit cum ceteris coram Samuhel* (‘he prophesied with the rest before Samuel’, 1 Sam 19:24). In an ironic symmetry, this delirious ecstasy reflects back on his anointing, since the same aetiological tag is added here as before: *unde et exivit proverbium, num et Saul inter prophetas* (‘and thus came the proverb, “Is Saul, too, among the prophets?”’, 1 Sam 19:24).

The mounting fear experienced by Conaire and his men is also often presented in association with foreknowledge, not simply anxiety; it, too, is represented as something external which forces itself upon the men, rather than an emotion inside them. The grim prophecies of the red horsemen and the seeress Cailb cause fear and foreboding to seize or overcome the men, and after the horsemen have left Conaire exclaims, *Rom-gobsa mo gesa ule anocht* (‘All my *gessi* have seized me tonight’, line 339). Like the spectres themselves, the men's fear has a malign life of its own, and nobody knows where it comes from (line 579)—which, according to the conventions of Irish saga, is a clear sign that, like the spectres, it comes from the Otherworld.[17] These aspects of fear are united in the prophetic *rosc* which the terror-struck Conaire utters while in the Hostel, narrating his own destruction under the influence of a malevolent Otherworld watching him through Ingcél's baleful eye. Conaire's increasing awareness of his rejected state recalls that of Saul, who tearfully admits to David his faults and his impending doom. He even prophesies tearfully to (p.258) David that the latter will become king (1 Sam 24:17–22, 26:21–5) and another passage suggests that he has admitted as much to Jonathan (1 Sam 23:17). The pathos of this self-awareness, and of the enmity which develops between Saul and David and between Conaire and his foster-brothers despite their love for each other, is fully exploited in both texts.

The roles played by David and Conaire's foster-brothers in their respective stories are of course completely different in the main, but as participants in the central tragedy of the rejected king they present some interesting parallels. Like the sons of Donn Désa, David finds himself outlawed from the king's presence; he ends up joining the Philistines, sworn enemies of Israel who bring about Saul's final defeat, while the Irishmen join the British prince Ingcél who leads the final attack on Conaire. Also like the sons of Donn Désa, David does not desire the death of the king; indeed, he spares Saul's life on the two occasions when he has the chance to kill him, and this is what leads to Saul's expressions of remorse just mentioned. David also utters a beautiful eulogistic lament for Saul and Jonathan after their deaths (2 Sam 1:19–27). In the

Togail, as was shown in previous chapters, the plunderers' approach to the Hostel is punctuated by expressions of reluctance and procrastination from Conaire's foster-brothers. The latter are not in a position to lament Conaire's death formally, since they die in the battle, but the equivalent tone is struck by Fer Rogain's two extended and powerfully elegiac eulogies of Conaire in rhythmical prose (lines 597–611, 1069–1101).

One parallel is especially striking. At one poignant moment when they realize beyond all possible doubt that they are going to have to kill the king, the sons of Donn Désa refer to Conaire as their foster-father, echoing his reference to them as foster-sons at the moment when he wishes to avoid having to execute them (lines 667, 214). Similarly, on the two occasions when Saul expresses his remorse to David for unjustly seeking to kill him, the scene's pathos is heightened by Saul's first words—*numquid vox haec tua est fili mi David* ('Is this your voice, my son, David?', 1 Sam 24:17, repeated in 1 Sam 26:17)—and by David addressing Saul as *pater mi* ('my father', 1 Sam 24:12).[18] Saul is by this stage David's father-in-law, but the pair do not address each other as 'father' and 'son' at any other point in the story, only here where a kin-slaying is narrowly avoided.

The climactic moment of fear for Conaire's retinue is their encounter with the seeress Cailb (lines 535–79). Likewise, Saul's fear reaches its climax when he goes in secret to visit the seeress of En-dor (1 Sam 28). In several respects these two episodes are structurally and functionally equivalent. Both take place during the night before the battle in which the king is to be killed. Both involve the breaking of one last sacred injunction: in Conaire's case, his *geis* against letting in a single woman at night (lines 566–7); in Saul's case, his own law against necromancy (1 Sam 28:3). In both episodes, the king's imminent destruction is pronounced most forcefully of all by a supernatural being who represents, even more emphatically than previous apparitions, the powers that raised him up in the first place. (p.259) Cailb, as we have seen, embodies in her horrible physical form the malign aspect of the Otherworld and the obverse of Étaín, the Otherworldly woman of

sovereignty. The seeress of En-dor summons up the ghost of Samuel, the kingmaker, who likewise seems corporeally identified with the divine powers he represents, looking like *deos* […] *ascendentes de terra* (‘a god[19] rising from the earth’, 1 Sam 28:13). The prophecies both figures deliver are devastating: each king is told that the kingship is about to pass away from them, and that in a very short time they will be destroyed (lines 546–8, 572–5; 1 Sam 28:16–19). They react with terror: *gráin már* (‘a great fear’) overcomes Conaire and his men *dia accallaim na mná* (‘because of the conversation with the woman’, lines 578–9); *statimque Saul cecidit porrectus in terram extimuerat enim verba Samuhel* (‘and at once Saul fell stretched out on the ground, for he was terrified by Samuel's words’, 1 Sam 28:20). In both texts, immediately after this episode the narrative focus switches to the invading enemy, as if to emphasize that the last word has been spoken on the king's fate.

Explaining the Parallels

What are we to make of these parallels? Given the worldwide occurrence of myths in which a king commits a sin against supernatural powers and/or his people, and dies to expiate this sin (sometimes quasi-sacrificially), it seems very likely that some such myth underlies both texts independently of any literary influence.[20] But this seems inadequate as a sufficient explanation for some of the structural parallels just outlined, which have more to do with the literary execution of the myth in the extant texts. Individual mythological devices such as the threefold kingship-conferral, necromancy,[21] taboo-violation, and divine retribution are all widely attested in both Semitic and Indo-European cultures, but the way in which they have been combined in these texts stands out: the foregrounding of the doomed king's suffering and his impossible dilemmas, his enemies’ expressions of grief (and the drama of the placing of father–son forms of address), the often cruelly ironic treatment of prophecy and encounters with seeresses, all framed within a structure which sets affirmative and troubling images of kingship in counterpoint with each other without providing resolution.

Some analogues to the narrative structure found in these two texts are present in other mediaeval Irish sagas. The closest are in late Middle Irish sagas which postdate the extant *Togail* in their extant forms, such as *Bruiden Da Choca* (‘Da Choca's Hostel’), for which Gregory Toner has demonstrated clear textual influence from (p.260) the *Togail*.[22] Other partial analogues are found in the death-tales of Diarmait mac Cerbaill and Muirchertach Mac Erca, which contain versions of the ‘threefold death’ motif and whose extant literary structures suggest the influence of the *Togail*.[23] In the case of *Aided Diarmata*, further allusions to the Samuel–Saul story have also been incorporated into the saga.[24] But even if it (or a source containing the biblical allusion) predates the *Togail*, this merely shifts the question of biblical influence onto other sagas.

It is also worth noting that other Irish treatments of the common mythological pattern ‘failed king becomes doomed’ differ greatly in structure and story from that in the *Togail*. Tomás Ó Cathasaigh, for instance, has compared Conaire with the half-Fomorian king Bres in the extant Middle Irish recension of *Cath Maige Tuired* (‘The Battle of Mag Tuired’): Bres is welcomed as king by the Túatha Dé Danann, but he turns oppressor and is satirized for his lack of generosity, after which point his kingship declines and he is forced into exile. Ó Cathasaigh has suggested that ‘the tragic history of Conaire Mór’ is ‘a replication of the ill-fated reign of Bres’.[25] This may be partly true, but if so it applies only to the underlying myth, since the narrative working-out of this myth is fundamentally different in the two sagas: Bres's fatal lack of generosity contrasts strongly with Conaire's perhaps excessive generosity;[26] Bres does not die at the end; he faces no dilemmas or sacral injunctions; and above all the narrative evokes no sympathy or pathos for his position.

The *Togail* may owe much to native stories about failed kings built around a common mythological kernel, but the parallels with 1 Samuel go beyond these thematic resemblances. The same is true of the legendary or folkloric heroic-biography pattern. Ó Cathasaigh has expertly shown the relevance of this pattern to the cluster of Irish sagas surrounding Cormac mac

Airt, but other scholars' attempts to map this pattern onto the *Togail* as if it were a 'heroic biography' of Conaire are less convincing.[27] Certainly, some episodes within the *Togail* may be identified as components of a 'heroic biography', such as his *compert* or 'birth-tale' and his *aided* or 'death-tale'; but the absence from the *Togail* of the 'testing of the hero in his youth', the 'hero's winning of a maiden', the 'Otherworld quest', the 'hero's victorious return', and many other possible components of Ó Cathasaigh's scheme suggests that, even if lost earlier sources about Conaire reproduced this legendary (p.261) pattern, the author of the extant *Togail* has subverted it beyond recognition—possibly by combining it with patterns drawn from 1 Samuel.

1 Samuel itself, admittedly, also contains many features which do not resemble the *Togail* in the slightest. Its parallel focus on the rising fortunes of David as a foil to the decline of Saul is not replicated in the *Togail*, except insofar as Conaire himself represents both ideal king and failed king: David and Saul rolled into one. There are marked differences of conception between the divine power upholding Conaire's reign and that upholding Saul's, and the prophet Samuel is a very different figure from the multiple Otherworldly personages in the *Togail*. Many other aspects of the stories' social, religious, and political settings are also widely divergent. Moreover, compared to 1 Samuel, the *Togail* relies on a different repertoire of narrative devices to dramatize its story, even if some of these devices may be paralleled elsewhere in the Bible.

This combination of a network of analogues unparalleled elsewhere with large-scale differences of form and content suggests that the *Togail* was not modelled in its entirety on 1 Samuel, but that the biblical text may have inspired the shaping of some aspects of the *Togail*. The Irish author was not attempting to provide a native rewriting of the biblical story, still less an allegory, but rather (I suggest) used selected elements of the biblical text to help him structure and deepen his portrayal of Conaire. There is not enough evidence to suggest that the saga was modelled *exclusively* on a biblical pattern, but nor is there enough evidence in the other

direction to suggest that it was modelled exclusively on a native legend. As with the question of classical influence discussed in chapter 8, an either/or answer is unlikely to be forthcoming; a creative fusion of native and ecclesiastical narratives seems a more plausible scenario. Hence it is not impossible (*pace* Patrick Sims-Williams's critique of Kim McCone's procedure) that the author of the extant *Togail* noticed resemblances between the biblical story of Saul and earlier versions of the Conaire legend, and chose to exploit these resemblances further by using 1 Samuel as a partial model for his retelling of Conaire's story. But whichever model of influence or appropriation seems most appropriate, Middle Irish saga-authors had good reasons to nod to 1 Samuel when writing a saga about a doomed pre-Christian king, as I will argue in the second half of this chapter.

In picking and choosing from 1 Samuel, the saga-author applied a creative freedom similar to that which Brent Miles has ascribed to the author of the first recension of the *Táin*, drawing on classical epics at appropriate points in the story (albeit with less flitting between different source-texts than what Miles has found in the *Táin*).[28] This creative approach may be illustrated by some further parallels between 1 Samuel and the *Togail*, less compelling by themselves but worthy of attention in the light of the analysis above. Some elements of Conaire's portrayal in the *Togail*, especially in his rise to over-kingship, seem to have been borrowed from the portrayals of other characters as well as Saul. Like many kings and heroes in Irish sagas, Conaire is given a heroic birth-tale full of supernatural elements; but no (p.262) Old Testament king is presented in this way, and Saul's birth is not narrated at all. Samuel, however, is provided with a heroic birth-tale in 1 Samuel, elements of which closely parallel Conaire's career before his false judgement. Samuel's birth, like Conaire's, is the result of divine intervention in the case of a childless woman (1 Sam 1:19–20). As with Conaire, a taboo is imposed on Samuel before he is born: he is not to have his hair cut (1 Sam 1:11), reflecting his dedication to God as Conaire's taboo against killing birds reflects his duties to his Otherworldly kin.

These are all common heroic motifs found in birth-tales the world over, and it is possible that many of these parallels between the young Samuel and the young Conaire derive independently from folk tradition. As heroes, both Conaire and Samuel are destined to mediate between man and God, world and Otherworld. Nevertheless, given the parallels already observed between the *Togail* and 1 Samuel, it seems unlikely that independent evolution is the sole explanation here. There is, incidentally, some evidence that the heroic birth-tale elements in the story of Samuel were attached to Saul himself in earlier versions of the Hebrew story. In the extant text, Samuel's mother names her son Samuel ‘for from God I asked for him’, and her dedication of Samuel to God plays on the Hebrew verb meaning ‘ask for’ or ‘lend’ (1 Sam 1:20, 27–8); but the Hebrew for ‘he who is asked for’ or ‘he who is lent’ is not שמואל (*shmu’el* = Samuel), but שאול (*sha’ul* = Saul).[29] Several Hebraists have therefore argued that in some older pro-Saul source, Saul was the long-hoped-for saviour of the Israelites, a role which was then partly taken over by Samuel in the extant version (with its more ambivalent stance towards Saul); the effect of the alteration is to enhance priestly authority and to bring Saul down a peg or two.[30] There is no evidence that Irish saga-authors knew Hebrew well enough to spot the resulting false etymology themselves, but the example goes to show how easily a birth-tale pattern may be transferred from one hero to another in the course of re-composition. It is intriguing to think that the Irish author, plundering 1 Samuel for narrative motifs in order to provide Conaire with an appropriately Irish heroic pedigree, unwittingly restored the biblical birth-tale to its kingly source.

The possibility of borrowing is further enhanced by two parallels between Conaire and the later career of Samuel. The first may be coincidental: a bull is slaughtered to mark both Samuel's journey to the temple and confirmation as a man of God (1 Sam 1:25) and Conaire's journey to Tara and achievement of the kingship (lines 148–58). The second is less likely to be coincidental and centres on Samuel's status as spiritual leader of his people: his failure to check his unruly sons’ injustice to the people (1 Sam 8:1–3) inevitably calls to mind Conaire's failure to check his foster-brothers’ thieving.

Just as Samuel's failure is the root cause of the Israelites' sinful wish for a king and thus ultimately leads to the tragic dilemmas of Saul, so Conaire's failure causes his foster-brothers to turn to plundering, sparking off the violation of *gessi* and creating the conditions for Conaire's own tragic dilemmas.

(p.263) The final parallel worth noting in this context is that observed by Monette (p. 249 above), this time centring on David rather than Saul or Samuel. The obituary-catalogue of David's warriors and their exploits at the end of 2 Samuel (23:14–17) contains an anecdote about three brave warriors:

> Desideravit igitur David et ait, 'Si quis mihi daret potum aquae de cisterna quae est in Bethleem iuxta portam?' Inruperunt ergo tres fortes castra Philisthinorum et hauserunt aquam de cisterna Bethleem […] et adtulerunt ad David.
>
> So David had a craving and said: "Who will give me water to drink from the well which is by the gate in Bethlehem?" For this reason, three brave men broke through the Philistine camp and drew water from the well of Bethlehem […] and brought it to David.

As Monette points out, the king's craving and request recall the behaviour of Conaire in the last battle, and the warriors' feat in breaking through the ranks of the invading enemies to fetch water parallels Mac Cécht's similar feat in the *Togail*. Furthermore, both stories end slightly unexpectedly, and in a manner which momentarily leaves the warriors' achievement rather than the king at the centre of the narrative's attention. Mac Cécht returns with the water too late to save the king from death, but he gives his severed head its drink and is thanked at the end of the scene for performing a valorous *échd* ('feat'). David (apparently regretting his request) refuses to drink the water and instead offers it to God as a libation, saying that his warriors have risked their lives in fetching it; the anecdote ends with the words *haec fecerunt tres robustissimi* ('these things did the three very strong men do').

In this last example, the case for direct influence is weaker than in the others discussed above. The motif of the king's thirst is fully integrated within the structure of the *Togail* and helps frame the king's death, whereas in the biblical text the motif is of no more than incidental importance to the larger story of David's career (reflected by its framing as an anecdote about three warriors, displaced from its proper chronological context). It also relates to a later phase in the Saul–David–Samuel story than those parts of the biblical text which present all the other parallels so far discussed. Yet if it is accepted that the saga-author(s) used this part of the Bible as a source and reference-point in an eclectic and creative manner, it is possible that the episode of Conaire's thirst was indeed remodelled with David in mind.

When we are considering all these parallels, some of which are more striking than others, one factor which strengthens the case for biblical influence is the evidence suggesting that 1 Samuel was not only familiar to mediaeval Irish authors but was also very important to them. The evidence for this is more extensive and often less ambiguous than the evidence for their knowledge of classical epic. For example, David was traditionally known as the author of many of the Psalms. Many early mediaeval Irish scholars took a particular interest in the literal sense of the Psalms, rather than focusing purely on the allegorical and moral senses of Scripture: a number of surviving commentaries and glosses in both Latin and Old Irish show them grappling with the historical circumstances of the Psalms' composition, often alluding to Saul's pursuit of David. The Psalter occupied a central position in monastic liturgy and education; it was the most intensively studied and frequently (p.264) copied book of the Old Testament in Gaeldom.[31] The story of Saul and David (as seen from David's viewpoint) would therefore have formed an important part of monastic authors' historical knowledge in the early mediaeval Gaelic world. The currency of stories about David and Saul is also seen in more than fifty separate pictorial representations in illuminated psalters and on high-crosses throughout the Gaelic world. Some high-crosses represent Samuel anointing either David or Saul with a horn of oil: David is usually represented as a young lad holding a harp in these scenes, but

some show the anointing of a tall upright man who is probably Saul.[32] As the first king in Israel, Saul occupied a pivotal place in sacred history: according to the six-age scheme developed by late-antique chronologers and frequently written about in mediaeval Ireland, Saul's death on Mount Gilboa brought the Third Age of the world to an end (suggesting a possible parallel with Conaire's death, which ushered in the Pentarchy).[33]

Evidence of closer study of 1 Samuel itself, also from a primarily historical viewpoint, is found in other texts. *Saltair na Rann*, the Middle Irish verse retelling of the whole of sacred history, spends more than a thousand lines—one eighth of the entire narrative—on the reign of Saul (lines 5541–6556).[34] As one would expect, David is the main centre of interest; indeed, in one significant departure from the narrative order in 1 Samuel, David is introduced into *Saltair na Rann* by means of a long genealogy (lines 5689–5712), both to meet vernacular narrative expectations and to underline his centrality to the story. Saul's primary role in this retelling, as in the Psalter-commentaries, seems to be to act as a foil for David. Yet it is no less true that early mediaeval Irish interest in David was primarily focused on his career during the reign of Saul, including his interactions with Saul. We see this in the Psalter-commentaries, in other devotional texts such as the early ninth-century *Félire Oenguso*, and in the distribution of episodes selected for pictorial depiction in manuscript illuminations and high-crosses.[35] In the Bible, the whole (p.265) of 2 Samuel and the opening chapters of 1 Kings are devoted to David's reign after the death of Saul, but *Saltair na Rann* skims over David's reign relatively swiftly (440 lines). The bulk of the David-narrative in this text focuses on his earlier adventures as Saul's champion, harpist and victim of the king's injustice (lines 5713–6472). Saul himself is the primary focus of interest in the 147-line passage describing his career before the arrival of David (5541–5688), and in the poignant 83-line sequence which describes his tragic death (lines 6473–6556).[36]

Mediaeval Irish scholars also had access to, and themselves wrote, exegetical texts on the books of Samuel and Kings.

Augustine's allegorical interpretations of Saul's kingship in *De civitate Dei* (‘The City of God’) were well known to Irish scholars,[37] as was the more literal, historical approach of Jerome in his commentary on Samuel.[38] Historical analysis is to the fore in the unpublished eighth-century commentary on the whole Bible known as *Das Bibelwerk* or ‘The Reference Bible’, identified by some scholars as a Hiberno-Latin production, which drew extensively on patristic commentaries. Its sections on Samuel and Kings are substantial: the episode concerning Saul's visit to the seeress of En-dor is given particular attention, with Isidore's and Augustine's views on the spirit of Samuel quoted at length.[39] The same episode is touched on (to illustrate the formation of a spectral illusion from the surrounding air) in an earlier Hiberno-Latin treatise, *De mirabilibus sacrae Scripturae* (‘Of the Marvels of Holy Scripture’), which was written in the seventh century and influenced later exegesis in both Ireland and England, and beyond.[40]

That this episode was not unknown to the authors of vernacular sagas is further suggested by a passage in one version of the ninth- or tenth-century kingship-saga (p.266) *Airne Fíngein* (‘Fíngen's Vigil’), in which the antediluvian Fintan mac Bóchra is given the power of eloquence by the apparition and forceful intervention of *spirut Samuéil* (‘the spirit of Samuel’).[41] This passage also contains intriguing similarities to the passage in the *Togail* where Conaire wakes up from his sleep and utters a prophetic *rosc*. In both passages the prophecy is uttered through the agency of an *óclach* or *maethóclach* (‘youth, young warrior’); in both cases the speaker suddenly wakes up during the night of Samain and becomes supernaturally invested with the power to reveal hidden knowledge, which is described in terms of *senchus 7 coimgne* (‘tradition and history’).[42] The parallel may be coincidental, but it is noteworthy that the supernatural power which confers this semi-prophetic gift, imagined as purely Otherworldly in the *Togail*, derives in this version of *Airne Fíngein* from the prophet Samuel.

Christian kingship and the Old Testament: Ireland and the Franks

Far more relevant to the *Togail* and its putative sources, however, are Irish texts which use 1 Samuel's account of the origins of Israelite kingship in discussions of Christian kingship. Some influential and widely disseminated Hiberno-Latin ecclesiastical texts written between the seventh and ninth centuries allude to or quote 1 Samuel specifically in order to underline the king's accountability before a higher, divine law, and the consequences of failure. Here we may begin to see why authors writing sagas about Conaire might have wanted to make use of 1 Samuel.

First, the seventh-century abbot and statesman Adomnán of Iona (like several other prominent ecclesiastical statesmen in seventh-century Europe) promoted a form of Christian kingship in which the king acknowledged his dependence on divine providence as mediated through the church, and the church in return supported the king.[43] As Michael Enright has shown in detail, some episodes in Adomnán's *Vita Columbae* (*Life of Columba*) represent St Columba himself as a prophetic kingmaker in the stamp of Samuel.[44] In the most detailed allusion, in (p.267) Book III, chapter 5, Columba is commanded by an angel of God to ‘ordain’ Áedán mac Gabráin as king of Dalriada. He is at first reluctant to obey this command, since he favours Áedán's brother Éoganán. Enright has pointed out that Columba's initial reluctance is reminiscent of Samuel's disgruntled response to the Israelites’ initial request for a king, requiring further divine prodding before he obeys the people's voice (1 Sam 8).[45] Columba's reasons for reluctance, however, differ from those of Samuel, and in this aspect they recall a later passage (1 Sam 16) in which the prophet is told by God to anoint one of the sons of Jesse, but at first favours the wrong son, David's brother Eliab; once again God has to put the prophet straight. Columba, like Samuel, ultimately obeys, ordaining Áedán as king and prophesying the future of his dynasty.

Adomnán's typological point is reinforced in some manuscripts of the *Vita* by an appended epilogue to chapter 5 (attributed to

Cumméne Find) which illustrates the dangers of disregarding the holy man's commands. Here Columba solemnly warns Áedán that his dynasty's reign will last only as long as he and his descendants continue to respect Columba and his successors. The epilogue ends by recounting that Áedán's grandson forfeited the kingship for himself and his descendants by laying waste the territory of a kinsman of Columba.[46] A similar warning against disobeying the saint's injunctions—in this case on a matter of general conduct rather than the saint's proprietary interests—is found in Book 1, chapter 14. Here Columba tells Áed Sláine, son of King Diarmait mac Cerbaill, that he has been chosen by God as king of all Ireland, but that if he commits *fingal* or kin-slaying he will forfeit most of his realm and keep his own territory for only a short time. Áed Sláine subsequently commits this crime and suffers the consequences predicted. As Saul finds in 1 Samuel, the consequences of disobeying the holy man are seen to be severe.

An earlier chapter in the *Vita* (I.ix) further reinforces Adomnán's biblical model for Christian kingship by recounting how it was Columba who revealed which of Áedán's sons God had chosen to become king after him. This passage alludes once again to the episode in 1 Sam 16 where the sons of Jesse are presented to the prophet Samuel. As in the biblical account, the future king is not found among the sons presented to the prophet at first; in both passages, the holy man asks for any other, younger sons to be brought forward.[47] Adomnán's alteration of the biblical (p.268) model is telling: whereas Samuel just waits for the (single) youngest son to arrive, Columba predicts that whichever of Áedán's (several) younger sons runs directly to his arms is the one chosen by God as king. So, while David does little in this scene but strike everyone present with his good looks (1 Sam 16:12), Eochaid Buide embraces the saint. Adomnán's treatment of the biblical model dramatically underlines the message that the true king will always show devotion to the Church which sustains his kingship.

The *Vita* also contains one passage which echoes the Bible's representation of the king ordained by God as physically

inviolable, not to be harmed by any of his subjects. Once again, Saul is the biblical prototype: in 1 Sam 24 Saul's status as the ‘Lord's Anointed’ stayed David's hand from harming Saul when he had the king at his mercy, despite the fact that Saul sought to kill David. In a later chapter of the *Vita* (I.xxxvi), Columba hears that Áed Dub has killed Diarmait mac Cerbaill, *totius Scotiae regnatorem deo auctore ordinatum* ‘ordained by God's will as ruler of all Gaeldom’. He therefore passes judgement on Áed Dub, prophesying that he will die a riddling ‘threefold’ death combining the agency of iron, wood, and water; the prophecy subsequently comes true. The appearance of Diarmait in this divinely authorized role is at first sight surprising—as is Columba's fury at his death—since Diarmait is represented in other (later) sources as the last heathen king of Tara, himself doomed by saints to a threefold death for serious violations of ecclesiastical authority.[48] But this apparent disparity only reinforces Adomnán's message. His use of the superficially unpromising example of Diarmait (just as 1 Samuel uses the unpromising example of Saul) emphasizes his point that violence done to the king ordained by God is always wrong, no matter how much in the wrong the king may himself be. Furthermore, the fact that Adomnán makes such a point at all at a time when the killing of kings in general was hardly unusual underlines, for us, the fact that he was drawing on 1 Samuel.[49]

That 1 Samuel was such a vital point of reference in Adomnán's representation of the king's relationship with the church does not, incidentally, exclude the possibility that other biblical precedents may also lie behind the same passages in the *Vita*. Thomas Charles-Edwards has examined the passage about Aedán's ordination as king in the context of disputes about inheritance law, and has proposed that behind Adomnán's account lie the stories in Genesis of Isaac and Jacob giving their blessings to younger offspring rather than to their first-born (Genesis 27 and 48).[50] This may well have been in Adomnán's mind, but so too were the concerns about royal inviolability and the proper relationship between king and holy man for which 1 Samuel was such an appropriate reference-point. Charles-Edwards has denied the relevance of 1 Samuel to this passage, prompting Enright to respond by

denying the relevance of Genesis,[51] but this either/or approach misses the (p.269) intertextual nature of biblical typology, which operates on two levels here.[52] First, the episode of the anointing of David in 1 Samuel is itself already engaged in a pointed dialogue with Genesis's treatment of the subversion of primogeniture, thus adding further layers of meaning to both books of the Bible.[53] Second, even if we leave aside this last point, a churchman as learned and imaginative as Adomnán was surely capable of alluding to more than one biblical passage at the same time in his purposeful remouldings of biblical precedents. Saints' lives may represent their central protagonists in a more straightforwardly praiseworthy manner than do sagas, but even as propaganda they could be understood on a number of levels.

Like the contrasting narratives of Saul's and David's kingship in 1 Samuel on which they draw, these episodes in the *Life of Columba* emphasize the king's dependence on divine providence in both a hortatory and a cautionary vein. They dramatize both the benefits of cooperating with the Church and the dangers of disregarding it. Other Hiberno-Latin texts represent sacred kingship using the same biblical typology, but enumerate general principles and biblical precedents rather than 'depicting' the lesson in narrative form. Adomnán's ideas about kingship are developed with more explicit reference to 1 Samuel in another text with connections to Iona, the early eighth-century systematic compilation of Irish canon laws and other tracts, *Collectio canonum Hibernensis*.[54] In five chapters in the book on kingship (*De regno*, Book 24) and two chapters in the book on headship (*De principatu*, Book 36) Saul is upheld as the original *christus Domini* or 'Lord's Anointed', the ideal king whose person is inviolable, as well as representing the original *rex iniquus* or 'unjust king' whose failure to honour God and keep the peace loses him the kingship. Saul's double significance is used to explore some difficult areas of the relationship between kingly status and royal injustice or failure, for instance pointing out that even after the spirit of God had departed from Saul, he remained every inch a king.[55]

Saul's role as the original *rex iniquus* is emphasized in an earlier Hiberno-Latin text, the seventh-century didactic tract *De duodecim abusivis* (‘Of the twelve abuses’). In a manner similar to later mirrors for princes, the sections on the *rex iniquus* and the *dominus sine virtute* (‘lord without virtue’) outline the severe penalties which result from a leader's injustice or impiety and the blessings which (p.270) attend the reign of a righteous king.[56] The *dominus sine virtute* is exemplified here by the impiety of Saul, and one widely circulating version of the passage about royal injustice—a passage quoted at length in the *Hibernensis* itself—brings the warnings to an end by citing Saul's sacrilege as the first example of *rex iniquus*.[57] This link may have been encouraged by a certain similarity in tone between Samuel's own tirade against royal tyranny (1 Sam 8:11–18) and the warnings in *De duodecim abusivis*.[58] The second recension of the *Hibernensis* makes this link complete by presenting Saul as a tyrant or usurper (*tyrannus*) as well as impious. It directly (and rather unfairly) applies Samuel's generic list of kingly tyrannies to Saul's own subsequent career: *Inde Saul, qui hęc omnia fecit, in bello cum filio cecidit* (‘on account of which Saul, who did all those things, fell in battle with his son’).[59]

These three texts circulated widely and were much cited in Old and Middle Irish ecclesiastical literature.[60] They show that 1 Samuel was not only well known to authors in the early mediaeval Gaelic world, but that it was put to considerable programmatic use by churchmen. The latter may not all have shared the original authors’ specific political concerns, but they maintained a similar habit of relating royal justice to Old Testament precedents when this suited their purposes. The same texts also circulated on the Continent. The Irish canon laws and Adomnán's *Vita* were widely disseminated in Western Europe,[61] while *De duodecim abusivis* survives in more than two hundred mediaeval manuscripts: its reflections on kingship in particular were drawn on in synods, councils, canon laws, and royal instruction from the eighth century onwards.[62]

All three texts thus participated in a wider remoulding of kingship ideology in Latin Christendom in which the Samuel–

Saul–David typology provided an (p.271) important basic ingredient. Between the seventh and ninth centuries this project found influential adherents not only in Ireland and Iona, but also among the more prominent churchmen of Visigothic Spain, Carolingian Francia, Ottonian Germany, and Anglo-Saxon England, who were likewise attempting to recast and codify the king's proper relationship with God, the Church, the law, and the people.

Behind the differing expressions of this ideology lay an emphasis on strong, active, and morally responsible rulership. This found influential expression early in the seventh century in the *Etymologies* and other texts by Isidore of Seville, who brought together Patristic and classical reflections on kingship in a new synthesis. Isidore drew on Augustine's representation of ideal kingship in *The City of God* (in which David figured supreme), but he put Augustine's idealizing representation to pragmatic use, encouraging kings to work closely with the Church as vigorous agents of God's justice in this world.[63] This was an image of kingship which seemed particularly suitable in the turbulent social and political climate of Western Europe in the second half of the first millennium, Ireland included.[64]

For Isidore, the proper behaviour of kings comes down to a question of definition. Enlarging on Augustine, he relates the word *rex* (‘king’) to *rectus* (‘right, correct’) and *corrigere* (‘to correct’), deriving *rex* from *recte agendo* or *recte faciendo* (‘acting/doing correctly’):[65] a king should have the strength to correct both himself and others. A king who fails to act correctly is not a king at all, and Isidore cites the proverb *rex eris, si recte facias: si non facias, non eris* (‘you are king if you do right; if you do not, you are not’).[66] An unjust or impious king is thus liable to have his kingship taken away from him, whether by death or defeat, or even deposition by his own people.[67]

Saul was an obvious cautionary example in this connection, and in general the Isidorean conception of royal accountability drew substantially on the typology of Israelite kingship as represented in 1 Samuel. We have already seen this at work in Adomnán's *Life of Columba*; the biblical typology was taken

still further in the kingship reforms of eighth- and ninth-century Francia, in which a significant role was played by expatriate and peripatetic Insular scholars and the texts they copied and composed.[68] In the eighth century, the Northumbrian scholar Alcuin (famous for his role in the literary and cultural revival known as the Carolingian Renaissance) presided (p.272) over the construction of a morally exemplary image for Charlemagne as a latter-day King David, a strong ruler who supported the Church and the liberal arts.[69]

By the mid-ninth century, Carolingian ‘sacred kingship’ had developed into a charged composite image based on a potent amalgam of ecclesiesiastical and indigenous kingship ideals. This image was promoted in letters, sermons, didactic tracts, elegies, and coronation liturgies which regularly invoked the figures of Samuel, Saul, David, and (to a lesser extent) Solomon in order to remind the king and the people that their new relationship with each other was overseen and judged by God himself, as in the first decades of Israel's own kingship.[70] The Samuel–Saul–David model fitted well with existing typological analogies between the Israelites and present-day ‘chosen peoples’, whether Christendom as a whole or individual peoples such as the Franks.[71] Although by no means the only factor at work in the construction of mediaeval sacred kingship,[72] it was important enough to remain inscribed within Christian Germanic theologies of kingship well into the second millennium AD.[73]

Isidore's concise formulation *recte agendo* raised the question of what exactly constituted ‘correct’ action, and the most detailed answers to this question were provided by Latin texts from the ninth century onwards which revived the ancient didactic genre of the *speculum principis*, ‘mirror for princes’, written by such churchmen as Smaragdus of Saint-Mihiel, Jonas of Orléans, and Hincmar of Rheims.[74] This genre, in its mediaeval Latin incarnation, was intimately associated with the typology (p.273) of Israelite kingship, frequently employing David and Saul as case-studies of the good and bad king respectively.[75] Some of the oldest examples of the genre were written by Irishmen, whether in Irish or Latin, some of

them almost certainly predating the authors already mentioned: this may reflect the early and wide-ranging access to Isidore's works enjoyed by Irish scholars.[76] Two Hiberno-Latin examples made particular use of the first kings of Israel as type-cases: first, the genre's most important precursor, *De duodecim abusivis*, as already discussed; second, one of the most celebrated examples of the genre in its heyday, the prosimetrum *De rectoribus christianis* (‘Of Christian Rulers’) which Sedulius Scottus wrote for either Lothar II or Charles the Bald in the mid-ninth century.[77] The vernacular Irish examples do not employ Old Testament typology in this overt manner, and the reasons for this will be discussed more fully below.

Perhaps the most dramatic manifestation of the typology of biblical kingship in early and central mediaeval culture was the anointing ritual performed at royal inaugurations. Royal unction had already been adopted in Visigothic Spain in the seventh century and (temporarily) in Carolingian Francia in the eighth; the parallel with Samuel's anointing of Saul and David was presumably in the background, given the popularity of David as a model for royal excellence. However, the ritual's scriptural resonances were transformed decisively in late Carolingian Francia.[78] Its typological underpinnings are clearly visible in the elaborately scripted consecration of Charles the Bald by Archibishop Hincmar of Rheims at Metz in 869, which provided the precedent for all subsequent Western coronation rituals, for instance those of Anglo-Saxon England and East Francia.[79]

(p.274) In its redefined form, this ritual had three important implications for the king. First, it enhanced his royal charisma in an impressive public spectacle. Second, as the ‘Lord's Anointed’ (like Saul), his person was made inviolable.[80] Third, the ritual formalized the king's agreement to respect and obey the Church, and the Church embodied God's sovereign power to give and take away kingship (as with Saul). As Janet Nelson has shown, the rite drew substantially on the existing ceremony of post-baptismal unction (itself already typologically associated with the royal investitures described in the Old Testament): like the new Christian, the new king, in

being anointed by the bishop, symbolically submitted to the guidance of the Church and its law. In this context, royal unction embodied Augustine's distinction between the king's person and the office of kingship.[81] Kingship now depended not on any supernatural quality residing within the king himself, as in pre-Christian ‘sacral’ kingship, but on the king's keeping to his side of a contract with both his people and his Church beneath a common law, and following the Isidorean imperatives of active justice, wisdom, probity, and piety.[82]

The resulting resonances with 1 Samuel were twofold. First, the rite's public setting underlined the element of popular support and election which was also a vital part of Saul's coronation in the Bible.[83] Second, the anointing bishop stood in relation to the king much as the prophet Samuel had stood in relation to Saul and David, building a close cooperation between Church and kingdom into the liturgy of kingship, and indeed extending the purchase of ecclesiastical power (in theory) into the highest reaches of secular government. Hincmar wrote himself into the ceremony at Metz quite explicitly as a latter-day Samuel, with corresponding powers to judge the king should he fail to keep his contract.[84]

The resemblance of this ideology to that presented in Adomnán's *Life of Columba* is suggestive. It has even been argued by Enright that the Frankish anointing ritual itself derived ultimately from an Irish model which was developed around the turn of the eighth century among Adomnán's circle.[85] Building on his own argument that (p.275) Adomnán's *Life of Columba* drew on 1 Samuel to promote a form of sacred kingship presided over by the Church (portraying Columba as a kingmaker in the stamp of Samuel), Enright further suggests that the *ordinatio* represented by Adomnán specifically signified anointing with oil as in 1 Samuel, and that Adomnán and his circle wished to introduce anointing into Gaelic royal inaugurations.[86] More controversially, he goes on to argue that these ideas could have been transmitted to the court of the eighth-century Frankish king Pepin III via manuscripts of the *Hibernensis*, where he suggests they had a formative influence on Pepin's ordination as king at Soissons in 751.[87] On both these points Enright's conclusions have not been

widely accepted, although historians have taken on board his more general point about Adomnán's promotion of a biblical model of kingship.[88]

These various examples—whether Irish, Frankish, or combinations of the two—usefully point up the ideological force which the Samuel–Saul–David typology could exert in discussions of kingship in early mediaeval Ireland and elsewhere in Europe. In very general terms, these examples point to the fact that a significant strand within the early mediaeval reception of the story of Saul centred on its lessons for rulers, and that the typology of 1 Samuel was commonly alluded to in a range of texts (especially Latin ones) which sought to define the proper behaviour of kings and their relationship with the supernatural.

Christian Kingship and the Heathen Past: the Vernacular *Tecosca*

It might be objected at this point that the *Togail* is a story about a pre-Christian Irish king, not a Continental Christian king, and that its primary ideological context is not the revival of Old Testament kingship-typology in early Christian Europe but rather the vestiges of pre-Christian sacral kingship which some scholars see reflected in, for example, the earliest vernacular Irish mirrors for princes. It might further be objected that there are as many, if not more, differences as similarities between Frankish and Irish ideologies of Christian kingship, and that Irish kingship practice remained determinedly secular by comparison with its Continental equivalent. For instance, there is no evidence that royal anointing caught on in Ireland as it did in Francia, Spain, and England. Sporadic instances of *ordinatio* occurred from the late eighth century onwards, as suggested by the unique nickname of the king Áed Oirdnide (‘the Ordained’), but these did not necessarily involve anointing with oil as some have suggested.[89] As Charles-Edwards has (p.276) pointed out, in Irish and Hiberno-Latin usage kings could be ‘ordained’ in many other senses, including the casting of lots and even—according to one early law-text, *Críth Gablach* (‘The Forked Purchase’)—a contract between king and people with no

mention of ecclesiastical involvement at all.[90] Some chronicles specifically mention ecclesiastics in connection with royal *ordinatio*, and churchmen certainly played an important part in local politics;[91] but their role as kingmakers in the Frankish sense cannot be assumed from the mere use of the word *ordinatio* or the Irish verb *oirdnid*. Overall, the evidence suggests that ecclesiastical control over kingship in early mediaeval Gaeldom was not as strong as some churchmen would have liked it to be. This may be due to fundamental organizational differences between the leading churches in Ireland and those in Francia, Spain, and England, as Nelson has suggested.[92]

These differences may explain why didactic texts aimed at kings in early mediaeval Ireland made a more muted use of biblical typology than those aimed at kings in early mediaeval Francia, even if some of the latter texts were written by Irishmen. Sedulius Scottus's *De rectoribus christianis*, for instance, draws partly on vernacular Irish sources, yet its overt use of 1 Samuel and other biblical texts finds no counterpart in vernacular Irish mirrors for princes. *De rectoribus* exemplifies the tendency of Carolingian scholars to apply images of Old Testament kingship directly to contemporary rulers, in a hortatory vein. By contrast, in Ireland—and especially in vernacular texts—such images tended to be confined to portrayals of kings in the more or less distant past, rather than being used directly in the inaugurations of contemporary kings.[93] Even Adomnán's use of 1 Samuel, again employing biblical comparisons to depict the careers of past kings rather than those of his own time, is distinctly veiled by comparison with the Frankish examples.

However, this soft-pedalling of biblical typology in home-grown Gaelic material does not mean that the biblical context was irrelevant to the depiction of kings in the pre-Christian past, or that the resemblances of the *Togail* to the story of Saul are superficial or coincidental. The vernacular mirrors for princes or *tecosca rígh* (‘instructions for kings’) do indeed provide the most natural context in which to examine this saga's ideological stance, not primarily because they contain vestiges of pre-Christian sacral kingship (although they

probably do), but because they encapsulate the way in which pre-Christian kingship ideology was re-imagined and dovetailed (p.277) with Christian theologies of kingship. They, like the *Togail*, contributed towards the reconstruction of the heathen past as historical memory from a perspective informed by Christian salvation history.

The first point to make is that the earliest Irish texts on kingship do not reflect as sharp an opposition between 'secular' and 'biblical' models of kingship as does modern scholarship on the subject. After all, one reason why the Samuel–Saul–David typology was so useful to the Franks was its flexibility and its capacity to bridge the gap between old and new models of kingship. As Hincmar's stage-management shows, it could be used to combine the king's election by the people or aristocracy (which was central to pre-Christian Germanic kingship) with election by God (mediated by the Church), in part because Saul's inauguration in 1 Samuel itself combined these two forms of election.[94] This flexibility is worth bearing in mind when considering the Irish evidence. Charles-Edwards, for instance, distinguishes sharply between the inauguration of Saul and David 'by divine authority' and other forms of *ordinatio* such as 'the casting of lots […] imposition of hands, designation by a predecessor, [or] election by a people';[95] but all these forms of election are present in 1 Samuel too. As the *Hibernensis* itself spells out, Saul was called to the kingship by both prophet and people, and he was both anointed with oil and chosen by lot.[96] The compilers of the *Hibernensis* exploited the multivalence of 1 Samuel to emphasize the point that a king cannot be ordained unless he has the support of both his people and the Church; while the emphasis on popular support in *Críth Gablach* might usefully be compared to contemporary Continental theories of kingship which argued (perhaps drawing again on 1 Samuel) that the support of the people was a 'manifestation of the divine will'.[97]

I certainly do not wish to suggest that a veiled biblical agenda necessarily lies behind every mediaeval Irish text on kingship, but I do wish to emphasize the potential compatibility of secular Irish texts on kingship (here including the *Togail* and

its putative sources) with more overtly ecclesiastical ideologies.[98] With kingship as with other areas of Irish legal and political life, allusions to or alignments (p.278) with Old Testament patterns could function as bridges between ecclesiastical culture and native inheritance.[99] The success with which such bridging could be managed is nowhere more evident than in the vernacular Irish *tecosca ríg*, in which the image of the Irish king is idealized and defined in detail.[100]

The best-known and oldest text of this kind is *Audacht Morainn* (‘The Testament of Morann’), extant in an Old Irish recension dated by Fergus Kelly to *c*.700 and a later recension with more Middle Irish elements.[101] *Audacht Morainn* presents the advice of the legendary first-century judge and virtuous heathen Morann for the benefit of the new king Feradach Find Fechtnach. Later Old Irish and early Middle Irish examples of the genre present variations on this theme, often stepping beyond kingship to offer advice on matters relevant to less exalted members of society, somewhat like the wisdom texts attributed to the biblical king Solomon (Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Wisdom). Examples include *Tecosca Cormaic* (‘The Instructions of Cormac’), in which the legendary king Cormac mac Airt—who is compared with Solomon in later Middle Irish texts—offers advice to his son Cairbre Lifechair; it begins with advice about kingship but subsequently covers many other matters besides.[102] *Bríatharthecosc Con Culaind* (‘The Instructions of Cú Chulainn’) presents advice offered by Cú Chulainn to his foster-son Lugaid Riab nDerg on hearing that the latter had been chosen as king of Ireland, and its narrative framework may have drawn on the *Togail* itself.[103] Other *tecosca* are attributed to Cormac's chief judge Fíthal, Cú Chulainn's comrade Conall Cernach, and the scholar-king Aldfrith of Northumbria, among others.[104]

(p.279) Much attention has been given, in recent decades, to the question of how much these *tecosca* reflect pre-Christian beliefs and practices. This debate has centred chiefly on the older recension of *Audacht Morainn*, described by its editor Fergus Kelly as largely ‘untouched by Christian influences’ (recalling Sharpe's subsequent assessment of the

Togail). Kelly has pointed to the extreme paucity of Latin loanwords or 'specifically Christian sentiments' in the extant text.[105] It does contain a reference to the Creator (*ad-mestar dúili dúilemon*, 'let him estimate the creations of the creator', §32); but Kelly here notes Daniel Binchy's suggestion that this concept was available to the pre-Christian Irish and does not necessarily reflect Christian influence. (The same could indeed be said of the invocations of *Dia*, 'God', in the *Togail*.) *Tecosca Cormaic* and the later recension of *Audacht Morainn* contain slightly more obvious references to the Christian God (and in the latter case, even to the Church), but these references can always be treated as Christian interpolations: Kelly has raised the possibility that the reference to the Creator in *Audacht Morainn* 'was inserted to provide a Christian introduction to the pagan tradition contained in the *Admestar* series'.[106]

However, this procedure of stripping off 'specifically Christian' elements—namely, elements which appear anachronistic in a pre-Christian setting—does not leave us with a pristine heathen residue. If we are dealing with layers of text originating in different belief-systems, these layers have melted into each other to a considerable degree. As McCone has pointed out, *Audacht Morainn* promotes a view of appropriate royal behaviour whose basic principles—justice, mercy, moderation, wisdom, firmness—find echoes both in the Old Testament and in the overtly ecclesiastical mirrors for princes produced in Continental Europe. The link between royal justice and fine weather, fertility, and peace is likewise to be found in both the Bible and Continental kingship tracts.[107] An emphasis on definition provides another way in which *Audacht Morainn* meshes easily with Isidorean ideology: after listing various appropriate royal actions Morann states that *Ní flaith mani follnathar na gnímu-so…ní fírḟlaith nad níamat bí bendachtnaib* ('He is not a ruler unless he performs these deeds […] He whom the living do not glorify with blessings is not a true ruler', §§57 and 59), recalling Isidore's insistence that a bad king was not a king at all.[108] As for the notion that the injunction to 'estimate the creations of the Creator' is either pre-Christian or an interpolation, McCone derives this passage from the Pauline principle that Gentiles

are able to intuit the presence of God from the evidence of the visible Creation around them.[109]

(p.280) These continuities between Christian ideology and that presented in *Audacht Morainn* does not by itself indicate a purely ecclesiastical origin for these passages, as McCone sometimes claims;[110] nor does it discount the possibility that parts of the text preserve relics of pre-Christian ideologies. But it does suggest that *Audacht Morainn* may have played a more active role than that of a cultural fossil for those who wrote and used it in its extant form. For Irishmen of the early Christian period it mediated between lay and learned society, and possibly even between polytheism and monotheism.[111] It certainly mediated between native and ecclesiastical views of kingship: it presented an ideology of social order which suited the learned orders (including the Church) and recommended this ideology to the lay nobility, recasting traditional conceptions in a manner which suited both kings and churchmen.[112] Medieval Irish kingship ideology has often been called conservative;[113] if so, it was a conservatism of a highly creative and dynamic kind, as John Carey has shown in other contexts.[114]

In these early *tecosca*, the mediating function between native and ecclesiastical ideologies was performed not by overt reference to the Old Testament (as in the Continental examples), but by placing precepts compatible with Christian values into the mouths of figures from the pre-Christian past. The strategy resembles that used in the prologue to the second recension of *Senchas Már*, except that the theological rationalization is left largely implicit.[115] The fact that this bridging function was perceived by the users of these texts, at least in the Middle Irish period, is suggested by the more explicit representations of the same figures in Middle Irish narratives as honorary Christians *avant la lettre*. Cú Chulainn was said to have foretold and/or prefigured the coming of Christianity, while Cormac mac Airt and the judges Morann and Fíthal accessed divine truth by following the 'law of nature' or *recht aicnid* referred to in the prologue of the *Senchas Már* (and possibly also in *Audacht Morainn* itself);[116] Middle Irish texts about Cormac went so far as to compare

him directly with the biblical Solomon.[117] But such references were not included in the *tecosca* themselves. Here the pre-Christian setting enabled elements of the Isidorean theology of kingship to be tacitly embedded within native (p.281) expectations of royal behaviour. In this context we would expect overt references to the Church and Bible to be left out, or at least kept to a minimum; the result is that pre-Christian and Christian elements become very hard to distinguish from each other. In this sense we may view *Audacht Morainn* as a syncretic text, whether in fact or in appearance.

The success and subtlety of this syncretism may be seen when we examine its representation of *fír flathemon*. The primary intellectual driver behind the scholarly view that the content of *Audacht Morainn* is essentially pre-Christian is the wealth of detail it offers to theories of sacral kingship from the perspective of comparative religion. According to this view, which goes back to Frazer, the text reflects a widely attested ideology of sacral kingship in which the king's truth or *fír flathemon* has a numinous power in its own right, flowing out from the king to benefit the land and people, in contrast to the Christian model in which these benefits flow from God.[118] The following passage from *Audacht Morainn* (§§14–19) is routinely cited in this connection:

> Is tre ḟír flathemon fo- síd sámi sube soad sádili -sláini.[119] […]
>
> Is tre ḟ. fl. cech comarbe con a chlí ina chainorbu clanda.
>
> Is tre ḟ. fl. ad- manna mármeso márḟedo -mlasetar.
>
> Is tre ḟ. fl. ad- mlechti márbóis -moínigter.
>
> Is tre ḟ. fl. ro-bbí cech etho ardósil imbeth.
>
> It is through the ruler's truth that he secures peace, tranquillity, joy, ease, comfort.[120] […]
>
> It is through the ruler's truth that every heir plants his house-post in his fair inheritance.

> It is through the ruler's truth that abundances of great tree-fruit of the great wood are tasted.
>
> It is through the ruler's truth that milk-yields of great cattle are maintained.
>
> It is through the ruler's truth that there is abundance of every high, tall corn.

(p.282) Kelly has emphasized the contrast with Christian ideologies of kingship: had *Audacht Morainn* been written by an ecclesiastic, he claims, ‘one would surely expect him to attribute the prosperity of the territory not only to the king's justice (*fír flathemon*) but also to divine favour’.[121]

Complicating this contrast is the fact that some kingship texts of demonstrably ecclesiastical authorship also represent the king's justice as a semi-independent force. In the extract from *De duodecim abusivis* incorporated into the *Hibernensis* (and thus ecclesiastically authored at two levels) we find the following very similar, if more laconic, list of the consequences of royal justice, which likewise omits to mention God and presents *iustitia* as a power in its own right:

> Iustitia regis pax populorum est, […] gaudium hominum, temperies aeris, serenitas maris, terre fecunditas, […] segetum habundantia, arborum fecunditas.[122]
>
> The king's justice is the people's peace, […] the joy of men, the temperance of weather, the serenity of the sea, the fertility of the land, […] abundance of crops, fecundity of trees.

Some have argued that passages like this suggest the dependence of ecclesiastically authored mirrors for princes on pre-Christian conceptions of royal justice.[123] But the evidence could be read in either direction: *De duodecim abusivis* is older than *Audacht Morainn* in their extant forms, and in any case the authors of some Continental texts on kingship were able to cite parts of the Old Testament to argue for a direct link between royal justice and natural bounty.[124] That was the whole point of expressing the ideology in this cryptic, allusive manner: the reason why *De duodecim abusivis* was so useful to

Frankish kings and churchmen was that it expressed in a pithy and quotable manner ideas they already subscribed to, both as Christians and as heirs to traditional ideologies.[125]

Furthermore, if we look again at the quotation from *Audacht Morainn*, we find that it is in fact less direct than the Hiberno-Latin text in its linkage between royal justice and the well-being of the realm (and even more indirect if the emendations suggested by P. L. Henry are taken into account).[126] In *Audacht Morainn*, contrary to what most scholars have written about it, the king's *fír flathemon* is not (p.283) represented as the direct source of the benefits listed. The preposition *tre* (‘through’) brings about an important difference of emphasis: natural benefits happen *through* the king's justice, but as in the passage from *De duodecim abusivis* their ultimate source is not named. Some later mirrors for princes are less reticent: *Tecosca Cormaic* fills the theological gap by closing a list of similar injunctions and benefits with the statement that *is tria fír flaitheman dobeir Día in sin uile* (‘it is through his [the king's] *fír flathemon* that God gives all that’).[127] Readers of *Audacht Morainn* in the Old and Middle Irish periods would need to read this ultimate divine (or Otherworldly) source between the lines. It is tempting to draw a parallel with Morann himself who, according to St Paul's rationalization of the virtuous heathen, would have discerned the ways of God not through revelation but by observing the evidence of his power in the natural phenomena around him.

The formula *Is tre fír flathemon* has important Indo-European parallels on which much has been written;[128] but from the perspective of those who produced the extant texts of these mirrors for princes, the theology behind this formula is Isidorean. The king is the vigorous agent of God's justice, the channel through which God works in this world, whether or not His presence is perceived. Indeed, the Isidorean thrust is arguably made even stronger in those texts which do not mention God (*Audacht Morainn* and *De duodecim abusivis*): this absence focuses the reader's attention on *this world* as the arena over which the king has vital responsibilities, and which will suffer or enjoy tangible consequences depending on his success or failure. This serves as a salutary reminder that the

mirror for princes genre as a whole—whether vernacular or Latin, overtly Christian or tight-lipped on final causes—is fundamentally secular, rooted in the need to encourage active kingship; the fact that it is 'Christian' does not take away from its 'secular' emphasis, for all that these two words are often loosely employed as opposites in discussions of early mediaeval Irish culture.

The compatibility of *Audacht Morainn* and other early *tecosca rígh* with the Isidorean theology of kingship helps to explain the scattered references, found in other texts, to the use of *tecosc*-type utterances in royal inaugurations.[129] Such references are usually listed to support scholarly claims about the use of *tecosca* at pre-Christian inauguration ceremonies, as part of the 'pagan liturgy of sovereignty';[130] but descriptions of such heathen liturgies are notably lacking in the narrative literature before the late Middle Irish period.[131] By contrast, several texts explicitly associate the recital of *tecosca* with the new religion brought by St Patrick. (p.284) One early, if somewhat ambivalent, example is the largely Old Irish story of the foundation and Christianization of the royal centre at Cashel, in which two swineherds are given prophetic dreams about the kingship of Cashel by an angel. The dreams' content includes an obscure passage in which an unnamed speaker lists various blessings on the king's reign, partly drawing on a text related to *Audacht Morainn*, after which the king responds *Rob fír fírthar, rob bríg brígther* ('May it be a truth which is confirmed, may it be a power which is enforced') and the people respond *Amen*.[132] As F. J. Byrne suggested, this dream may preserve elements of a traditional inauguration-ritual, although the framing is too fragmentary for us to be certain; but, in any case, several aspects of the dream's framing combine to emphasize the Christian associations of such a practice (the word *Amen*, the dream's angelic origin and explicitly monotheistic content, and above all the tale's climax at Patrick's Christianization of Cashel).[133] The verse *dindṡenchas* of Carmun likewise associates the recital of *tecosca* specifically with Patrick, and this association seems to be echoed in later histories.[134] These references chime with Katharine Simms's observation of a rise in explicitly

ecclesiastical advice-texts for kings produced from the Middle Irish period onwards, reflecting what she sees as churchmen's desire to play a greater role in kingmaking.[135]

I must again emphasize that these suggestions as to the bridging function of the *tecosca*, and more generally on their compatibility with Christian theologies of kingship, do not by themselves reduce the likelihood that these texts preserve elements of genuine pre-Christian kingship ideology.[136] To call *Audacht Morainn* 'pseudo-paganized'[137] oversimplifies the matter by implying that all the 'pagan' material present in these texts has been fabricated, implying a lack of continuity between old and new when the whole point of these texts was to perform such a continuity. If pre-Christian elements are present, however, they have been so ingeniously dovetailed with Christian thought as to make it very difficult to tell the two apart.

Unlike their Continental contemporaries, then, early mediaeval Irish kings may not have been anointed at inauguration ceremonies or been regularly harangued with Old Testament *exempla*. Nevertheless, similar underlying messages of royal (p.285) accountability and the worldly consequences of success or failure were conveyed to kings and nobles by Irish churchmen using the subtler means of presenting such ideology as the wisdom of the ancients. Such representations were doubtless informed by Irish scholars' knowledge of the Old Testament (especially as a source of historical precedents), for which they were renowned on the Continent: the Old Testament, after all, had an important 'bridging' function of its own. In the narrative literature, however, any such biblical allusions are more often internalized than left on the surface of the text—hence the need for careful exegesis when we attempt to reconstruct the contemporary significance of this literature.

Conclusion

In this culture of creative syncretism, the various aspects of kingship ideology which were rooted in earlier mythology and possibly rituals—*fír flathemon*, *gessi*, the king's union with the woman of sovereignty—were transmuted so as to

communicate new meanings and serve new purposes in an Ireland which had been officially Christian for several centuries.[138] In vernacular literature, such purposes might be fairly local and limited, such as validating a specific dynasty by tracing it back to pre-Christian times, as we see in some of the shorter narrative texts;[139] or they might be more generally applicable, exploring aspects of kingship and society which were felt to be important at the time, as seen in some of the *tecosca*.

The *Togail*, as a longer, more complex production, operates on both levels: it is a saga about a particular dynasty, but it is also (perhaps more importantly) an exploration of questions of much more general importance to Irish kings, ecclesiastics, and society. Like *Audacht Morainn*, many aspects of the representation of kingship in the *Togail* open the door to the drawing of Christian analogies by contemporary audiences while avoiding flagrant anachronism. Like many a Christian king, Conaire is seen to owe his sovereignty to a combination of hereditary right (admittedly including descent from supernatural beings as well as from kings), popular consent, divine assistance, and above all a form of contract which underlines his accountability before both his people and his God. The anxieties about royal succession which bedevilled Irish royal politics find resonances in the grief expressed at the perilous situation of Conaire's sons,[140] and possibly also (as Enright has hinted) in the depiction of the *tarbḟeis* ritual by which Conaire himself is chosen as king.[141] As many critics have noted, the saga's description of the (p.286) natural and social benefits of royal justice answers directly to that presented in the *tecosca* and the Latin mirrors for princes, as does its dramatization of the consequences of a breakdown in *fír flathemon* in terms of social chaos and a catastrophic end to the king's reign (including an element of divine retribution which matches the warnings of *De duodecim abusivis* and the Latin mirrors for princes). As in *Audacht Morainn*, the Isidorean demand for strong, just rulership turns out to be inscribed within the pre-Christian past.

If these features open the door for Christian interpretations of the *Togail*, they do not compel such interpretations. One way

of nudging audiences a little more pointedly to view the saga in terms of Christian kingship ideology, without indulging in outright anachronism or preaching, would be to pattern important aspects of the saga as a whole on the biblical books of Samuel and Kings which contained the typological kernel of this very ideology. Such a patterning may be seen, for example, in the late Middle Irish *Tesmolad Cormaic* ('The Panegyric of Cormac'), which compares Cormac with the biblical king Solomon and also states that in his reign Ireland became *tír tairrngiri* ('a Land of Promise'), a phrase often used in mediaeval Ireland to translate the biblical *terra repromissionis* ('Land of Promise').[142] Could the *Togail*, therefore, be seen as a large-scale narrative expression of the same kingship ideology, but from an opposite and complementary angle to the texts about Cormac: a cautionary tale illustrating the consequences of royal injustice and impiety and drawing on the story of Saul—the original *rex iniquus* cited in *De duodecim abusivis* and other texts—to emphasize the application of its message to Christian kingship?

To answer this question means exploring how sagas produced meaning for their own audiences. The suggestion that the *Togail* is a cautionary tale makes sense of the saga's connection with 1 Samuel, but it does not account for the very different use made of the biblical template in the *Togail*, compared with the use made of the same template by the prescriptive texts examined in this chapter. The underlying ideology may be broadly similar, but in dramatizing that ideology, drawing on 1 Samuel as a narrative whole rather than just as a store of powerful precedents, the saga places that ideology in a very different perspective. Its structure enabled it to uncover and exploit tensions within that ideology, and between the theory and practice of kingship, which were emerging with particular force in the Middle Irish period when it was composed, even in prescriptive texts such as the *tecosca*. As we shall see, these tensions may be traced right back to 1 Samuel itself: this biblical source-text was fertile in images of good and bad kings, but the way in which it assembled those images into a narrative brought difficult questions to the surface which the authors of mirrors for

princes ignored at their peril. As the *Togail* itself shows, such questions were themselves best dealt with in narrative form.

Notes:

([1]) All biblical references are to the Vulgate: Robert Weber, ed., *Biblia sacra iuxta vulgatam versionem*, 2nd edn., 2 vols. (Stuttgart: Württembergische Bibelanstalt, 1975), I, 376–417. The best modern translation of the Hebrew original is Robert Alter, trans., *The David Story* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1999), with its insightful commentary.

([2]) See McCone, *Pagan Past*, 121–3; Sjöblom, 'Advice from a Birdman', 243–4; O Daly, '*Togail Bruidne Da Derga*', 114–15; and (most sensitively) O'Leary, 'A Foreseeing Driver'. For some perceptive general remarks on the treatment of these two genres see Charles-Edwards, *Early Christian Ireland*, pp. 138–44.

([3]) McCone, 'Werewolves'; West, 'Aspects of *díberg*'.

([4]) Edel Bhreathnach, 'Perceptions of Kingship', p. 22; Ó Cathasaigh, '*Gat* and *Díberg*', p. 213; Sjöblom, 'Advice from a Birdman', p. 234. However, West's unpublished paper 'Images of Ideal Kingship' (currently undergoing revision for publication: see Introduction, note 58), presented when this book was undergoing final revisions, does place the *Togail* in a Christian Latin context.

([5]) West, 'Aspects of *díberg*'; Charles-Edwards, '*Geis*'.

([6]) See Joel Rosenberg, '1 and 2 Samuel', in Alter and Kermode, *Literary Guide*, pp. 122–45.

([7]) Gerhard von Rad, *Old Testament Theology Vol. 1: The Theology of Israel's Historical Traditions*, trans. D. M. G. Stalker (Edinburgh: Oliver & Boyd, 1962), p. 325. For other examples see Hans Wilhelm Hertzberg, *I & II Samuel: A Commentary*, trans. J. S. Bowden (London: SCM Press, 1964), pp. 156 and 220; W. Lee Humphreys, *The Tragic Vision and the Hebrew Tradition* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1985), pp. 23–66; J. Cheryl Exum, *Tragedy and Biblical Narrative: Arrows*

of the Almighty (Cambridge University Press, 1992), pp. 16–17.

([8]) P. J. Williams, ‘Is God Moral? On the Saul Narratives as Tragedy’, in R. P. Gordon, ed., *The God of Israel* (Cambridge University Press, 2007), pp. 175–89.

([9]) This contrast is emphasized by Yairah Amit, ‘The Delicate Balance in the Image of Saul and Its Place in the Deuteronomistic History’, in Carl S. Ehrlich and Marsha C. White, eds., *Saul in Story and Tradition* (Tübingen: Mohr, 2006), pp. 71–9.

([10]) Ó Cathasaigh (‘The Concept of the Hero’, pp. 84–5) relates this threefold process in the *Togail* to Dumézil's analysis of the threefold election of the legendary Hindu king Pṛthu. The existence of the same structure in I Samuel cautions us against assuming ‘Indo-European’ origins, although a common mythological underpinning for Irish, Semitic, *and* Indic stories is by no means unlikely.

([11]) See chapter 2.

([12]) Alter (*The David Story*, p. 59) suggests that this ‘law’ consists of injunctions against oppressive behaviour similar to Samuel's earlier list of royal malpractices with which he had tried to dissuade the Israelites from taking a king (1 Sam 8:11–8:18).

([13]) See A. R. Johnson, *Sacral Kingship in Ancient Israel*, 2nd edn. (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 1967).

([14]) This is P. J. Williams's chief reason (in ‘Is God Moral?’) for suggesting that the Saul story is not ‘tragic’, although his argument relies on the view that tragedy must necessarily involve an innocent protagonist. Most Greek tragedies are not constructed in this way; we should not expect it of biblical examples either.

([15]) Robert Polzin has observed that when Samuel issues this injunction to wait seven days at Gilgal, he also paradoxically tells Saul that he may do whatever seems fit to him now that God is with him. See Robert Polzin, *Samuel and the*

Deuteronomist: A Literary Study of the Deuteronomistic History. Part Two: 1 Samuel (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1993), pp. 126–31.

([16]) Alter, *The David Story*, p. 85.

([17]) Other examples are documented above in chapter 5, note 52.

([18]) See Alter, *The David Story*, pp. 150–1 and 166–7.

([19]) The plural *deos* reflects the Hebrew אלהים (*elohim*), the plural form denoting ‘God’ or ‘a god’. On the potential for ambiguity, see Alter, *The David Story*, pp. 174–5.

([20]) Some Indic, Iranian, and Germanic parallels were discussed (with no reference to the *Togail*) by Georges Dumézil, *The Destiny of a King*, trans. Alf Hiltebeitel (University of Chicago Press, 1973); this pattern has in turn been used by Ó Cathasaigh, ‘The Concept of the Hero’.

([21]) See Theodor H. Gaster, *Myth, Legend and Custom in the Old Testament: A Comparative Study, with Chapters from Sir James G. Frazer's* Folklore in the Old Testament (New York: Harper & Row, 1969), pp. 462–75.

([22]) Toner, *Bruiden Da Choca*, pp. 30–6.

([23]) On some of the parallels between these texts see Radner, ‘The Significance’; Mark Williams, ‘“Lady Vengeance”’, pp. 6–9 and 22; Rekdal, ‘From Wine in a Goblet’; and the discussion below, pp. 306–8 and 331–2.

([24]) The debt of *Aided Diarmata* to a Davidic concept of kingship has been noted by Wiley (‘An Edition’, pp. 19–22). More specific parallels with 1 Samuel are discussed in chapter 10 below.

([25]) Ó Cathasaigh, ‘*Cath Maige Tuired*’, p. 14. Compare Kim McCone, ‘A Tale of Two Ditties’, p. 138, who has suggested that Bres may be modelled on the biblical ‘failed king’ Abimelech (son of Gideon). For the tale itself, see Gray, *Cath Maige Tuired*.

([26]) Edel Bhreathnach's suggestion that Conaire breaks ‘fundamental rules relating to […] hospitality’ (‘Perceptions of Kingship’, p. 22) is not borne out by the *Togail* itself and may derive from the common scholarly association of Conaire with Bres.

([27]) Ó Cathasaigh, *The Heroic Biography*; applied to the *Togail* by West, ‘An Edition’, pp. 50–78, and Sjöblom, *Early Irish Taboos*, pp. 154–6.

([28]) Miles, *Heroic Saga*, pp. 145–244.

([29]) See Francis Brown et al., eds., *A Hebrew and English Lexicon of the Old Testament*, new edn. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1951), s.v. לוּאשׁ. I am grateful to Dr Andrew Mackintosh for drawing my attention to this crux.

([30]) Hertzberg, *I & II Samuel*, pp. 25–6.

([31]) On Irish exegetes’ attachment to the literal sense of the Psalms see Martin McNamara, ‘Tradition and Creativity in Early Irish Psalter Study’, in Ní Chatháin and Richter, eds., *Irland und Europa: Die Kirche im Frühmittelalter*, pp. 328–89, pp. 342–6; Pádraig Ó Néill, ‘Irish Transmission of Late Antique Learning: The Case of Theodore of Mopsuestia's Commentary on the Psalms’, in Próinséas Ní Chatháin and Michael Richter, eds., *Ireland and Europe: Texts and Transmission* (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2000), pp. 68–77; Ó Néill, *Biblical Study*, pp. 8–9 and 28–9. For examples of the Saul–David story in Irish glosses see Whitley Stokes and John Strachan, eds., *Thesaurus Palaeohibernicus*, 2 vols. (Cambridge University Press, 1901–3), I, 63–4, 101–2, 178–81, 184, 454. See also Martin McNamara, *The Psalms in the Early Irish Church* (Sheffield Academic Press, 2000).

([32]) Peter Harbison, *The High Crosses of Ireland: An Iconographical and Photographic Survey*, 3 vols. (Bonn: Rudolf Habelt, 1992), I, 209–22 and associated figures (see pp. 209–12 on anointings); Helen M. Roe, ‘The “David Cycle” in Early Irish Art’, *Journal of the Royal Society of Antiquaries of Ireland*, 79 (1949), 39–59, especially p. 41, Fig. 3 (images 3 and 4).

([33]) See, for example, Dáibhí Ó Cróinín, ed. and trans., *The Irish* Sex Aetates Mundi (Dublin Institute for Advanced Studies, 1983), p. 86 [§49]. Briefer notices of Saul in Irish chronicles include Freeman, 'The Annals', p. 308 [1924].

([34]) Line numbers are taken from Stokes, *Saltair na Rann*.

([35]) See Whitley Stokes, ed. and trans., *Félire Oengusso Céli Dé: The Martyrology of Oengus the Culdee* (London: privately printed, 1905), p. 285; Carey, *King of Mysteries*, pp. 225–6. Depictions of David on high-crosses and in manuscript-illuminations are dominated by his slaying of Goliath, his anointing as king, and his (biblically unattested) fight with a lion which he reports to Saul. See Roe, 'The "David Cycle"'; Harbison, *The High Crosses*, I, 210–20.

([36]) The later prose version *Epistil Matusalem* unfortunately has a lacuna where the Saul–David episodes would occur: see Myles Dillon, ed., '*Scél Saltrach na Rann*', *Celtica*, 4 (1958), 1–43.

([37]) Augustine, *The City of God against the Pagans*, ed. and trans. George E. McCracken et al., 7 vols. (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1967–72), V, 112 [XVI.xxiv], 200–2 [XVI.xliii], 208 [XVII.i], 222–4 [XVII.iv], 264–76 [XVII.vi–vii], 292 [XVII.x]. On Augustine's interpretation of the Saul-narrative, see pp. 301–2 below. See also Joseph F. Kelly, 'Augustine in Hiberno-Latin Literature', *Augustinian Studies*, 8 (1977), 139–49, pp. 147–8.

([38]) Joseph F. Kelly, 'Hiberno-Latin Theology', p. 562. The eighth-century Irish canon-law collection, *Collectio canonum Hibernensis*, discusses Saul's rejection by God using excerpts from commentaries by Jerome and Augustine: see Hermann Wasserschleben, ed., *Die irische Kanonensammlung*, 2nd edn. (Leipzig: Tauchnitz, 1885), p. 139. My discussion and citations of the *Hibernensis* are based on Roy Flechner, ed. and trans., *The* Hibernensis: *A Study, Edition, and Translation, with Notes* (Dublin Institute for Advanced Studies, in press), shortly to be published. I am grateful to Roy for allowing me to see the page-proofs and for permission to cite them. References to

Flechner's edition are to book and section numbers, which are slightly different to Wasserschleben's: for the passage mentioned here see Book 36 §33.

([39]) See Bernhard Bischoff, ‘Wendepunkte in der Geschichte der lateinischen Exegese im Frühmittelalter’, *Sacris Erudiri*, 6 (1954), 189–279; Martin McNamara, ‘Plan and Source Analysis of *Das Bibelwerk*, Old Testament’, in Ní Chatháin and Richter, *Irland und die Christenheit*, pp. 84–112, pp. 99–100 (especially pp. 111–12). The Irish origin of this commentary (among others) is under debate: see Michael Gorman, ‘A Critique of Bischoff's Theory of Irish Exegesis: The Commentary on Genesis in Munich Clm 6302 (Wendepunkte 2)’, *Journal of Medieval Latin*, 7 (1996), 178–233.

([40]) J.-P. Migne, ed., *Patrologia latina cursus completus*, 221 vols (Paris, 1844–65), XXXV, 2149–2202. For a translation of the relevant passage see Carey, *King of Mysteries*, p. 71. On this text, see Ó Néill, *Biblical Study*, pp. 10–11 and 25; Marina Smyth, *Understanding the Universe in Seventh-century Ireland* (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 1996), especially pp. 66–7.

([41]) Joseph Vendryes, ed., *Airne Fíngein* (Dublin Institute for Advanced Studies, 1953), line 82; see also McCone, *Pagan Past*, p. 75. These words are in the branch of the textual tradition represented by manuscripts A and B in Vendryes's edition; the other branch, represented by D and L, has the ‘spirit’ qualified by the adjective *saineamail* (‘excellent’) instead of the noun *Samuéil*. It is not clear to me which reading is closer to the archetype of these versions.

([42]) Vendryes, *Airne Fíngein*, lines 67–88. The meanings of both *senchas* and *comgne*, both indicating historical knowledge and/or its narrative form, are complex see Mac Airt, ‘*Filidecht* and *Coimgne*’, and the discussion in chapter 6 above, p. 188. As noted there, Conaire uses the word *comgne* in his *rosc* (line 1055), and is described immediately before as possessing *comairle senchad* (lines 996–7).

([43]) Adomnán, *Life of St Columba*, trans. Sharpe, pp. 60–1; Doherty, ‘Kingship’, pp. 28–31.

([44]) References are to the Latin text in Adomnán, *Life of Columba*, ed. and trans. Anderson and Anderson. My translations replicate or closely follow those in Adomnán, *Life of St Columba*, trans. Sharpe. The allusions to 1 Samuel are analysed by Michael J. Enright, *Iona, Tara and Soissons: The Origin of the Royal Anointing Ritual* (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1985), pp. 10, 16–23, 42 and 60; *idem*, 'Royal Succession and Abbatial Prerogative in Adomnán's *Vita Columbae*', *Peritia*, 4 (1985), 83–103; and, with some adjustments to the analysis, *idem*, 'Further Reflections on Royal Ordinations in the *Vita Columbae*', in Richter and Picard, *Ogma*, pp. 20–35. Enright suggests many more allusions to 1 Samuel in these episodes of the *Vita* than I am happy with; I here mention only those which seem most convincing to me.

([45]) Enright, 'Further Reflections', pp. 24–5.

([46]) Enright, 'Further Reflections', pp. 26–7. Enright's basic point about Old Testament allusions in the *Vita*'s Áedán material is upheld by Richard Sharpe in Adomnán, *Life of St Columba*, trans. Sharpe, pp. 60–1 and 356; Miho Tanaka, 'Iona and the Kingship of Dál Riata in Adomnán's *Vita Columbae*', *Peritia*, 17–18 (2003–4), 199–214, pp. 205–6; and Doherty, 'Kingship', p. 28 (although all three express reservations concerning some of Enright's wider conclusions, and both Sharpe and Tanaka advance more cautious and convincing interpretations of Adomnán's agenda). On the text-historical implications of the Cumméne Find extract, and for discussion of the *Vita*, see Máire Herbert, *Iona, Kells, and Derry: The History and Hagiography of the Monastic* familia *of Columba* (Oxford University Press, 1988), pp. 134–50.

([47]) Enright, *Iona, Tara and Soissons*, pp. 15–17; *idem*, 'Further Reflections', p. 32.

([48]) See Adomnán, *Life of St Columba*, trans. Sharpe, pp. 60–1. On sagas about Diarmait's death, see Wiley, 'An Edition'.

([49]) For this last point see Enright, 'Further Reflections', pp. 28–9; Adomnán, *Life of St Columba*, trans. Sharpe, pp. 296–7.

([50]) Charles-Edwards, ‘A Contract’, p. 109 n. 9.

([51]) Charles-Edwards, ‘A Contract’; Enright, ‘Further Reflections’, pp. 23–4.

([52]) On the ramifying quality of typological thought, see Mary Garrison, ‘The Franks as the New Israel? Education for an Identity from Pippin to Charlemagne’, in Yitzhak Hen and Matthew Innes, eds., *The Uses of the Past in the Early Middle Ages* (Cambridge University Press, 2000), pp. 114–61, p. 122.

([53]) Alter, *The David Story*, p. 96.

([54]) On the compilation's Gaelic origins see Maurice Sheehy, ‘The *Collectio Canonum Hibernensis*: A Celtic Phenomenon’, in Löwe, *Die Iren*, I, 525–35. On its Iona connections see David N. Dumville, ‘Ireland, Brittany, and England: Transmission and Use of *Collectio canonum Hibernensis*’, in Catherine Laurent and Helen Davis, eds., *Irlande et Bretagne: vingt siècles d’histoire* (Rennes: Terre de Brume, 1994), pp. 85–95; Etchingham, *Church Organisation in Ireland*, pp. 47–8. On its quotations from 1 Samuel: see McNamara, ‘The Text of the Latin Bible’, p. 35.

([55]) Flechner, *Hibernensis*, 24.1, 24.2, 24.3, 24.8 and (in the slightly later second recension) 24.12; 36.20 and 36.33. For Wasserschleben's edition (*Die irische Kanonensammlung*) see the equivalent chapters in books 26 and 37.

([56]) Pseudo-Cyprianus, *De XII abusivis saeculi*, ed. Siegmund Hellmann (Leipzig: J. C. Hinrichs, 1909), pp. 51–63; Aidan Breen, ‘*De XII abusiuis*: Text and Transmission’, in Ní Chatháin and Richter, *Ireland and Europe: Texts and Transmission*, pp. 78–94. On its date see Hans Hubert Anton, ‘Pseudo-Cyprian: *De duodecim abusivis saeculi* und sein Einfluß auf den Kontinent, inbesondere auf die karolingischen Fürstenspiegel’, in Löwe, *Die Iren*, II, 568–617, pp. 568–73; on its Gaelic origins see Breen, ‘*De XII abusiuis*’, pp. 81–5.

([57]) Pseudo-Cyprianus, *De XII abusivis*, p. 45; Flechner, *Hibernensis*, 24.3.

([58]) Pseudo-Cyprianus, *De XII abusivis*, pp. 44–5 (this version cites Solomon rather than Saul as the first example).

([59]) Flechner, *Hibernensis*, 24.12, quoted with the editor's permission. On the differences between Samuel's tirade and the passage in *De duodecim abusivis* see Anton, 'Pseudo-Cyprian', p. 590.

([60]) For evidence that the ideology of Old Testament kingship in *De duodecim abusivis* was appropriated in appropriation in later mediaeval Irish texts, see the bilingual sermon to kings in Robert Atkinson, ed. and trans., *The Passions and the Homilies from Leabhar Breac* (Dublin: RIA, 1887), pp. 151–62 and 401–18, and discussion by Breen, '*De XII Abusiuis*', pp. 90–1. This sermon contains several *exempla* from the careers of Saul, David, and Solomon.

([61]) On the Irish canons' European influence, see Sheehy, 'The *Collectio*'; Roger Reynolds, 'Unity and Diversity in Carolingian Canon Law Collections: The Case of the *Collectio Hibernensis* and Its Derivatives', in U.-R. Blumenthal, ed., *Carolingian Essays: Andrew P. Mellon Lectures in Early Christian Studies* (Washington, DC: Catholic University of America Press, 1983), pp. 99–135; Dumville, 'Ireland, Brittany, and England'.

([62]) On its European attestation, see Breen, '*De XII Abusiuis*', pp. 89–93. On its influence on kingship ideology, see Anton, 'Pseudo-Cyprian'; Michael Edward Moore, 'La Monarchie carolingienne et les anciens modèles irlandais', *Annales (histoire, sciences sociales)*, 51 (1996), 307–24, pp. 309–12, 321–2. See also the citations at the Council of Paris of 829 in Albert Werminghoff, ed., *Concilia Ævi Karolini*, 2 vols. (Hannover: Hahn, 1906–8), II, 650.

([63]) Augustine, *The City of God*, Book V chapters xxiv–xxvi (on royal behaviour), XVI.xliii and XVII.xx (on David as the exemplar of such behaviour).

([64]) On Irish expressions of this ideology, see Donnchadh Ó Corráin, 'Nationality and Kingship in Pre-Norman Ireland', in T. W. Moody, ed., *Nationality and the Pursuit of National*

Independence (Belfast: Appletree Press, 1978; = *Historical Studies*, 11), pp. 1–35, pp. 16–18.

([65]) Isidore, *Sententiae* III.xlviii.7 (in Migne, *Patrologia Latina*, LXXXIII, 748); Isidore, *Etymologiarum*, IX.iii.4. The passage from the *Etymologies* heads the book on kingship in the second recension of the *Hibernensis*: see Flechner, *Hibernensis*, 24, paragraph-title *De nomine regni*.

([66]) Isidore, *Etymologiarum*, IX.iii.4.

([67]) Moore, 'La Monarchie carolingienne', pp. 319–20; Janet L. Nelson, 'Bad Kingship in the Earlier Middle Ages', *Haskins Society Journal*, 8 (1999), 1–26.

([68]) For the Carolingian period, see Mary Garrison, 'The English and the Irish at the Court of Charlemagne', in Paul Leo Butzer et al., eds., *Charlemagne and His Heritage: 1200 Years of Civilization and Science in Europe*, 2 vols. (Turnhout: Brepols, 1997), I, 97–123. More generally, see the essays in Löwe, *Die Iren*; Ní Chatháin and Richter, *Irland und Europa*; *eidem*, *Irland und die Christenheit*; *eidem*, *Ireland and Europe: Texts and Transmission*.

([69]) On the cultivation of Davidic imagery around Charlemagne see Garrison, 'The Franks as the New Israel?', pp. 152–6; Mary Garrison, 'The Social World of Alcuin: Nicknames at York and at the Carolingian Court', in L. A. J. R. Houwen and A. A. MacDonald, eds., *Alcuin of York: Scholar at the Carolingian Court* (Groningen: Egbert Forsten, 1998), pp. 59–79. See also Yitzhak Hen, 'The Uses of the Bible and the Perception of Kingship in Merovingian Gaul', *Early Medieval Europe*, 7 (1998), 277–90.

([70]) See, for example, Alfred Boretius and Victor Krause, eds., *Capitularia Regum Francorum*, 2 vols. (Hannover: Hahn, 1883–97), II, 338, 340–1, 439, 461. See also Ermoldus's elegy for Pippin in Ernst Dümmler et al., ed., *Poetae Latini Ævi Carolini*, 4 vols. (Berlin: Weidmann 1881–1923), II, 89. Further references are provided by Walter Ullmann, *The Carolingian*

Renaissance and the Idea of Kingship (London: Methuen, 1969), pp. 71–5, 85, 89–91, 98, 113–14.

([71]) For the national analogy, see Janet L. Nelson, ‘Inauguration Rituals’, in P. H. Sawyer and I. N. Wood, eds., *Early Medieval Kingship* (Leeds: School of History, University of Leeds, 1977), pp. 50–71, p. 58; Garrison, ‘The Franks as the New Israel?’. For the analogy with Christendom, see Moore, ‘La Monarchie carolingienne’, p. 309.

([72]) Janet L. Nelson, ‘National Synods, Kingship as Office, and Royal Anointing: An Early Medieval Syndrome’, *Studies in Church History*, 7 (1971), 41–59, pp. 51–2.

([73]) Further examples are given by Anton, ‘Pseudo-Cyprian’, p. 607. Nelson observes that the eighth century's preferred model king, David, was often replaced by his son Solomon in ninth-century Wessex and Francia, ‘perhaps because ecclesiastical theorists laid too much stress on David's humility in the face of prophetic chastisement for his failings’. See Janet L. Nelson, ‘Kingship and Royal Government’, in Rosamond McKitterick, ed., *The New Cambridge Medieval History, II: c.700–c.900* (Cambridge University Press, 1995), pp. 383–430, pp. 427–8. However, Samuel and Saul took on additional typological significance during the eleventh and twelfth centuries, especially during the Investiture Controversy: see Josef Funkenstein, ‘Samuel und Saul in der Staatslehre des Mittelalters’, *Archiv für Rechts- und Sozialphilosophie*, 40 (1952–3), 129–40.

([74]) On Isidore's importance for this genre, see Patricia J. Eberle, ‘Mirror of Princes’, in Strayer, *Dictionary of the Middle Ages*, VIII, 434–6, p. 434, and Enright, *Iona, Tara and Soissons*, pp. 86–7. The best overview of the mirror-for-princes genre is Hans Hubert Anton, *Fürstenspiegel und Herrscherethos in der Karolingerzeit* (Bonn: Ludwig Röhrscheid, 1968). Its typical themes are listed on p. 89, n. 64. For a convenient collection of some of these texts, see Hans Hubert Anton, ed. and trans., *Fürstenspiegel des frühen und höhen Mittelalters* (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 2006).

([75]) See, for example, Smaragdus, *Via regia*, in Migne, *Patrologia Latina*, cii, 934, 956–7. For more examples see Anton, *Fürstenspiegel und Herrscherethos*, pp. 195, 267, 276, 301, 419–36, and the discussion on pp. 80–1. In the early mediaeval visual arts, too, David typically represented the exemplary king and exemplary poet. For Irish examples see Harbison, *High Crosses*, I, 213; for Continental examples see Hugo Steger, *David Rex et Propheta: König David als vorbildliche Verkörperung des Herrschers und Dichters im Mittelalter, nach Bilddarstellungen des achten bis zwölften Jahrhunderts* (Nürnberg: H. Carl, 1961).

([76]) See J. N. Hillgarth, 'Visigothic Spain and Early Christian Ireland', *Proceedings of the Royal Irish Academy*, 62C (1962), 167–94; Michael Herren, 'On the Earliest Irish Acquaintance with Isidore of Seville', in Edward James, ed., *Visigothic Spain: New Approaches* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1980), pp. 243–50. Marina Smyth, however, cautions against assuming that Isidore was widely read in Ireland before the end of the seventh century: see her 'Isidore of Seville and Early Irish Cosmography', *Cambridge Medieval Celtic Studies*, 14 (Winter 1987), 69–102.

([77]) Sedulius Scottus, *Liber de rectoribus christianis*, ed. Siegmund Hellmann (Munich: Beck, 1906); for references to Saul, David, and Solomon see ibid., pp. 22–32, 60, 79 [chapters 1–4, 13, 17]. This text is translated as Sedulius Scottus, *On Christian Rulers and the Poems*, trans. Edward Gerard Doyle (Binghamton: Center for Medieval and Renaissance Studies, State University of New York, 1983). For a study of its Irish and Continental contexts see Luned M. Davies, 'Sedulius Scottus: *Liber de Rectoribus Christianis*, a Carolingian or Hibernian Mirror for Princes?', *Studia Celtica*, 26/27 (1991–2), 34–50.

([78]) For overviews see Cornelius A. Bouman, *Sacring and Crowning: The Development of the Latin Ritual for the Anointing of Kings and the Coronation of an Emperor before the Eleventh Century* (Groningen: J. B. Wolters, 1957); Kottje, *Studien zum Einfluss*, pp. 94–105; Nelson, 'Inauguration

Rituals'; Richard A. Jackson, 'Kingship, Rituals of', in Strayer, *Dictionary of the Middle Ages*, VII, 256–9. Useful cautionary remarks on the scriptural resonances of the ritual before and after its ninth-century reinvention are made by Nelson, 'National Synods', pp. 51–2.

([79]) On Hincmar's importance here see Ullmann, *Carolingian Renaissance*, pp. 111–24.

([80]) The representation of the Frankish ruler as the 'Lord's Anointed' was not in itself new, since it appears in the letters of Alcuin a century earlier.

([81]) Nelson, 'National Synods', pp. 52–6.

([82]) On this element of (written) contract in the new liturgy see Wilfrid Parsons, 'The Mediaeval Theory of the Tyrant', *The Review of Politics*, 4 (1942), 129–43, pp. 134–5; Janet L. Nelson, 'Kingship, Law and Liturgy in the Political Thought of Hincmar of Rheims', *English Historical Review*, 92 (1977), 241–79, pp. 257–60. On the relationship between pre-Christian 'sacral' and Christian 'sacred' kingship see David Harry Miller, 'Sacral Kingship, Biblical Kingship, and the Elevation of Pepin the Short', in Thomas F. X. Noble and John J. Contreni, eds., *Religion, Culture, and Society in the Early Middle Ages* (Kalamazoo, MI: Medieval Institute Publications, 1987), pp. 131–54.

([83]) On the king's accountability to both Church and people, see Janet Nelson, 'Royal Saints and Early Medieval Kingship', *Studies in Church History*, 10 (1973), 39–44, pp. 42–3. On the sacral aspects of popular acclamation and election in mediaeval kingship more generally see Bertelli, *The King's Body*.

([84]) On the implied ecclesiastical jurisdiction over the king, see, in particular, Nelson, 'Kingship, Law and Liturgy', especially pp. 246–7 n. 4 and 273 for a list of comparisons of anointing bishops with Samuel (and sometimes with other biblical prophets such as Nathan). See also Nelson, 'National Synods', pp. 53–6.

([85]) This suggestion is not entirely new (compare the hints by Kottje, *Studien zum Einfluss*, pp. 99–104), although Enright's treatment is by far the fullest. For further references, see Enright, *Iona, Tara and Soissons*, pp. 1–2 and 79.

([86]) Enright, *Iona, Tara and Soissons*, pp. 75–7. Enright has also observed (ibid., pp. 24–5) that the second recension of the *Hibernensis* shows clear influence from Adomnán's circle.

([87]) Enright, *Iona, Tara and Soissons*, pp. 79–106.

([88]) Charles-Edwards, ‘A Contract’, pp. 109–11; Adomnán, *Life of St Columba*, trans. Sharpe, pp. 355–6; Bart Jaski, *Early Irish Kingship and Succession* (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2000), p. 62; Tanaka, ‘Iona’, pp. 205–6.

([89]) Katharine Simms, *From Kings to Warlords: The Changing Political Structure of Gaelic Ireland in the Later Middle Ages* (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 1987), pp. 25–6; compare Byrne's more cautious view (*Irish Kings*, p. 159) and Jaski's sceptical view (*Early Irish Kingship*, pp. 60–1).

([90]) Charles-Edwards, ‘A Contract’, pp. 109–10.

([91]) See Donncha Ó Corráin, *Ireland Before the Normans* (Dublin: Gill & Macmillan, 1972), pp. 33–4; Jaski, *Early Irish Kingship*, p. 61.

([92]) See Nelson, ‘National Synods’, pp. 247–57, linking the establishment of royal ordination in Spain, Francia, and England with a high frequency of national synods in each case, compared to their lower frequency in Ireland. On synods in Ireland see David N. Dumville, *Councils and Synods of the Gaelic Early and Central Middle Ages* (Cambridge: Department of Anglo-Saxon, Norse and Celtic, University of Cambridge, 1997); Etchingham, *Church Organization*. Bart Jaski has explained these differences with reference to what he sees as the distinctively secular character of Irish kingship: see his ‘Early Medieval Irish Kingship and the Old Testament’, *Early Medieval Europe*, 7 (1998), 329–44. Enright (*Iona, Tara and Soissons*, 77–8) points out that, whereas the Carolingians retained their alliance with the churchmen who had instituted

unction in the first place, the Uí Néill's alliance with Iona was weakened before the new ideas could be put into practice.

([93]) See Jaski, ‘Early Medieval Irish Kingship’, especially p. 340.

([94]) Historians differ as to how harmonious this Church–aristocracy combination was. Ullmann (*Carolingian Renaissance*, pp. 71–134) treats it in detail and concludes that the combination of ecclesiastical and aristocratic interests reflects an ‘unresolved tension’ between Church and aristocracy (ibid., pp. 96–7). Janet L. Nelson concludes that for Louis the Pious, when anointed by Hincmar, ‘*vox populi* and *vox Dei*’ were ‘perfectly consonant, and the [inauguration] rituals, inside and outside the church […] expressed unanimity’: see her ‘Carolingian Royal Ritual’, in David Cannadine and Simon Price, eds., *Rituals of Royalty: Power and Ceremonial in Traditional Societies* (Cambridge University Press, 1987), pp. 137–80, p. 119.

([95]) Charles-Edwards, ‘A Contract’, pp. 109–10.

([96]) Flechner, *Hibernensis*, 24.1, 24.2, and 36.20. To this one might add that David was designated as Saul's successor by both Samuel and Saul, and that Samuel both laid hands on Saul and anointed him.

([97]) The words are Nelson's (‘Kingship, Law and Liturgy’, p. 261). For further analysis see Edward Peters, ‘*Vox populi, vox Dei*’, in Edward B. King and Susan J. Ridyard, eds., *Law in Medieval Life and Thought* (Sewanee, TN: Sewanee Mediaeval Colloquium, 1990), pp. 91–120, and the cautionary remarks in Nelson, ‘Bad Kingship’, pp. 11–12.

([98]) This view was proposed by Patrick Wormald in his ‘Celtic and Anglo-Saxon Kingship: Some Further Thoughts’, in Paul E. Szarmach, ed., *Sources of Anglo-Saxon Culture* (Kalamazoo, MI: Medieval Institute Publications, 1986), pp. 151–83, pp. 158–62, and has since been developed in more detail by other scholars.

([99]) Jaski, ‘Early Medieval Irish Kingship’, pp. 342–4.

([100]) For a dated but still useful survey, see Roland Mitchell Smith, ‘The *Speculum Principum* in Early Irish Literature’, *Speculum*, 2 (1927), 411–45. Further relevant texts are listed by Hans Hubert Anton, ‘Königsvorstellungen bei Iren und Franken im Vergleich’, in Franz-Reiner Erkens, ed., *Das frühmittelalterliche Königtum: Ideelle und religiöse Grundlagen* (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2005), pp. 270–330, pp. 274–7.

([101]) The older recension (confusingly labelled B by scholars) has been edited by Fergus Kelly, *Audacht Morainn* (on the date see p. xiv), and by Anders Ahlqvist, ‘Le Testament de Morann’, *Études celtiques*, 21 (1984), 151–70, with some different readings to Kelly's. The younger recension (A) has been edited by Rudolf Thurneysen, ed., ‘Morands Fürstenspiegel’, *Zeitschrift für celtische Philologie*, 11 (1916–17), 56–106, and a new edition is in preparation by Maxim Fomin.

([102]) Kuno Meyer, ed. and trans., *The Instructions of King Cormac Mac Airt* (Dublin: Royal Irish Academy, 1909); see also Maxim Fomin, ‘A Newly Discovered Fragment of the Early Irish Wisdom-Text *Tecosca Cormaic* in TCD MS 1298 (H.2.7)’, in Maxim Fomin et al., eds., *Dimensions and Categories of Celticity: Studies in Literature and Culture* (Łódź University Press, 2010), pp. 159–70. On the analogy with Solomon, see Edward Gwynn, ed. and trans., *The Metrical Dindsenchas Part I* (Dublin: Royal Irish Academy, 1903), pp. 70–4.

([103]) Myles Dillon, ed., *Serglige Con Culainn* (Dublin Institute for Advanced Studies, 1953), lines 254–310; Maxim Fomin, ‘*Bríatharthecosc Con Culainn* in the Context of Early Irish Wisdom-Literature’, in Ó hÚiginn and Ó Catháin, *Ulidia 2*, pp. 140–72 (including an edition and translation). The possible links with the *Togail* are discussed below, p. 000.

([104]) Roland Mitchell Smith, ed., ‘Senbríathra Fíthail’, *Revue Celtique*, 47 (1930), 30–8; 48 (1931), 325–31; R. I. Best, ed. and trans., ‘The Battle of Airtech’, *Ériu*, 8 (1915–16), 170–90, pp. 172–3; Colin A. Ireland, ed. and trans., *Old Irish Wisdom Attributed to Aldfrith of Northumbria: An Edition of Bríathra*

Flainn Fhína maic Ossu (Tempe, AZ: Arizona Center for Medieval and Renaissance Studies, 1999).

([105]) Fergus Kelly, *Audacht Morainn*, pp. xiv–xv, 43. All references and translations are from this edition. See also D. A. Binchy, *Celtic and Anglo-Saxon Kingship* (Oxford University Press, 1970), p. 48 n. 18 (‘no trace of Christian influence’); Byrne, *Irish Kings*, p. 24 (‘purely pagan in outlook’); Ó Corráin, *Ireland Before the Normans*, p. 36 (‘practically no Christian influence’); and Simms, *From Kings to Warlords*, p. 24 (‘notable for its lack of christian allusions’).

([106]) Fergus Kelly, *Audacht Morainn*, p. 43.

([107]) McCone, *Pagan Past*, pp. 140–5.

([108]) Fergus Kelly, *Audacht Morainn*, p. 18.

([109]) McCone, *Pagan Past*, p. 141. Carey has observed that *dúilem* is ‘a name repeatedly used for God in the early literature’ (*King of Mysteries*, p. 22).

([110]) For example McCone, *Pagan Past*, p. 141: ‘essentially biblical’, ‘a product of learned ecclesiastical sophistry’. Elsewhere, however, McCone implies that much of this content was adopted by Christian writers from pre-Christian tradition, albeit edited to suit their purposes (e.g. pp. 142–3).

([111]) On this last point, see John Carey, ‘From David to Labraid: Sacral Kingship and the Emergence of Monotheism in Israel and Ireland’, in Ritari and Bergholm, *Approaches to Mythology*, pp. 2–27, pp. 11–12.

([112]) Charles-Edwards, *Early Christian Ireland*, p. 140.

([113]) Ó Corráin, *Ireland Before the Normans*, pp. 32–3.

([114]) Carey's article ‘From David to Labraid’ is particularly insightful in this connection, examining the dovetailing of monotheism with kingship in two archaic panegyrics to Labraid Loingsech and comparing their strategy with that of the Psalms.

([115]) On the *Senchas Már* see above, pp. 246–7.

([116]) Charles Donahue, '*Beowulf*, Ireland, and the Natural Good'; McCone, *Pagan Past*, p. 142.

([117]) See the *dindṡenchas* 'Temair IV' in Edward Gwynn, *The Metrical Dindsenchas Part I*, p. 36 and (for other examples) pp. 70–4; see also *Tesmolad Cormaic* ('The Panegyric of Cormac') in O'Grady, *Silva Gadelica*, I, 89–92, and for commentary Byrne, *Irish Kings*, p. 65; Ó Cathasaigh, *Heroic Biography*, pp. 85–6.

([118]) James George Frazer, *The Magic Art and the Evolution of Kings*, 2 vols., 3rd edn. (London: Macmillan, 1911). *Audacht Morainn* was examined from a specifically Frazerian perspective (but without forcing it to conform absolutely to Frazer's model) by Binchy, *Celtic and Anglo-Saxon Kingship*, pp. 8–15. Other thoughtful reflections on Irish 'sacral kingship' include Maartje Draak, 'Some Aspects of Kingship in Pagan Ireland', in C. J. Bleeker, ed., *The Sacral Kingship/La Regalità Sacra: Contributions to the Central Theme of the VIIIth International Congress for the History of Religions* (Leiden: Brill, 1959), pp. 651–63; Morten Warmind, 'Sacred Kingship among the Celts', *Proceedings of the Harvard Celtic Colloquium*, 12 (1992), 196–206; McCone, 'Fírinne agus Torthúlacht'; N. B. Aitchison, 'Kingship, Society, and Sacrality: Rank, Power, and Ideology in Early Medieval Ireland', *Traditio*, 49 (1994), 45–75.

([119]) The reading of the main verb as *fo*-[…]*sláini* ('he secures') is not found in any of the manuscript-texts of the older (B) recension of *Audacht Morainn*, but in the later (A) recension and in text R, which is not a text of *Audacht Morainn* itself but a *rosc* containing extracts seemingly drawn from *Audacht Morainn*. As Fergus Kelly points out (*Audacht Morainn*, p. xiv), the R-text is 'very corrupt'. Instead of the particle *fo*-, the manuscripts of the oldest recension all have variants on *foss* ('rest'). This has accordingly been proposed by P. L. Henry as a better reading. The B-texts also concur in finishing this sentence with the noun *sláine* instead of the verbal element *sláini*. See Henry's review of Kelly's *Audacht Morainn*, *Studia*

Hibernica, 17–18 (1977–8), 202–10, p. 208. Ahlqvist, however, follows Kelly's interpretation (‘Le Testament’, pp. 156, 164).

([120]) Following Henry's reading (see previous note), this would read: ‘It is through the ruler's truth that rest, peace, tranquillity, joy, ease, comfort [and] health are secured.’

([121]) Fergus Kelly, *Early Irish Law*, p. 236.

([122]) Flechner, *Hibernensis*, 24.4. My translation is taken from Flechner, and it and the text are quoted with his permission. A very similar text is provided in other versions of *De duodecim abusivis*: see Pseudo-Cyprianus, *De XII abusivis*, p. 53.

([123]) Anton, *Fürstenspiegel und Herrscherethos*, p. 69; Fergus Kelly, *Audacht Morainn*, p. xv (who does not sugges, however, that either text is likely to have influenced the other directly). In terms of date, the manuscript priority of *De duodecim abusivis* over the extant *Audacht Morainn* is almost always ignored, and the Latin text is usually seen as having ‘borrowed’ the older concepts embodied in *Audacht Morainn*: see Dáibhí Ó Cróinín, *Early Medieval Ireland 400–1200* (London: Longman, 1995), pp. 77–8.

([124]) The ninth-century writer Smaragdus of St-Mihiel cited texts from Leviticus and Deuteronomy on this point in his mirror for princes (which contains no reference to *De duodecim abusivis*): see his *Via regia*, in Migne, *Patrologia latina*, CII, 938–9.

([125]) Anton, ‘Pseudo-Cyprian’, 608–9; Rob Meens, ‘Politics, Mirrors of Princes and the Bible: Sins, Kings and the Well-Being of the Realm’, *Early Medieval Europe*, 7 (1998), 345–57, pp. 356–7.

([126]) Henry, review of *Audacht Morainn*, p. 208; see notes 119–20 above.

([127]) Meyer, *Instructions of King Cormac*, p. 4 (§1).

([128]) Some especially insightful remarks are offered by Calvert Watkins, ‘*Is tre fír flathemon*: Marginalia to *Audacht Morainn*’,

Ériu, 30 (1979), 181–96, pp. 183–93; P. L. Henry, ‘The Cruces of *Audacht Morainn*’, *Zeitschrift für celtische Philologie*, 39 (1982), 33–53, pp. 32–8.

([129]) On the creative blend of tradition and innovation in the inauguration rituals themselves, see Clancy, ‘King-Making’.

([130]) Proinsias Mac Cana, ‘*Regnum* and *Sacerdotium*: Notes on Irish Tradition’, *Proceedings of the British Academy*, 65 (1979), 443–79, pp. 448, 452, 456. Some of these references are discussed in Fergus Kelly, *Audacht Morainn*, p. xiv. See also Dillon, ‘The Consecration’, especially p. 3.

([131]) The most notable example being the account of Conaire's *gessi* in the third recension of the *Togail*: see above, chapter 3, note 122.

([132]) Myles Dillon, ed. and partial trans., ‘The Story of the Finding of Cashel’, *Ériu*, 16 (1952), 61–73, pp. 65–6. For the parallels with *Audacht Morainn* see the text printed by Fergus Kelly, *Audacht Morainn*, Appendix II (pp. 72–4).

([133]) Byrne, *Irish Kings*, pp. 186–9. Byrne compared the concept of royal justice represented in this inauguration ritual with the language of the Psalms, although he treated the biblical and Patrician overlay as relatively easy to prise off the surface of the text; a mythological interpretation has also been advanced by Ní Chatháin, ‘Swineherds’. By contrast, Clancy (‘King-Making’, pp. 97–9) has emphasized the ‘manifestly Christian’ character of the liturgy of kingship depicted here.

([134]) Edward Gwynn, *The Metrical Dindsenchas Part III*, pp. 18–22; Geoffrey Keating / Seathrún Céitinn, *The History of Ireland / Foras Feasa ar Éirinn*, ed. David Comyn and Patrick S. Dinneen, 4 vols. (London: Irish Texts Society, 1902–14), III, 10. Compare also Charles-Edwards, ‘*Geis*’, p. 47 n. 55. I will discuss the connection between *tecosca* and royal inauguration more fully in a forthcoming publication.

([135]) Simms, *From Kings to Warlords*, p. 24; see also Wormald, ‘Celtic and Anglo-Saxon Kingship’, pp. 159–62, and FitzPatrick, *Royal Inauguration*, pp. 174–5.

([136]) For a discussion of the harmony between ostensible pre-Christian ideologies and Christian purposes and formats, see Jaski, *Early Irish Kingship*, pp. 57–88.

([137]) Breen, '*De XII abusiuis*', p. 83.

([138]) McCone, *Pagan Past*, pp. 142–3; Jaski, 'Early Medieval Irish Kingship', p. 330; Jaski, *Early Irish Kingship*, p. 87.

([139]) On this and other 'metamythic' usages of the 'sovereignty goddess', see Herbert, 'Goddess and King', and Ó Corráin, 'Historical Need and Literary Narrative', pp. 144–58.

([140]) On royal succession, see Charles-Edwards, *Early Irish and Welsh Kinship*; Jaski, *Early Irish Kingship*, pp. 236–47; Megan McGowan, 'Royal Succession in Earlier Medieval Ireland: The Fiction of Tanistry', *Peritia*, 17–18 (2003–4), 357–81.

([141]) Enright (*Iona, Tara and Soissons*, pp. 37–8) suggests a comparison between the *tarbḟeis* and the lot-casting recommended by the *Hibernensis* after the example of Saul, and also cites the Samuel-inspired dream of Columba in Adomnán's *Vita Columbae*. Enright does not offer any further comment as to the significance of the connection or the direction of influence (for him, the *Togail* is a 'ninth century' source). The fact that the dreamer sees Conaire in the iconically Davidic form of a young man carrying a stone in his sling (lines 131–2) may add weight to the possibility of a biblical parallel, but I would not wish to press this point.

([142]) O'Grady, *Silva Gadelica*, p. 90; see Ó Cathasaigh, *Heroic Biography*, p. 24.