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The good, the bad and the lovely: the transmission of kingship in *Esnada Tige Buchet* and the *Odyssey*, and medieval Irish reflexes of Proto-Indo-European sovereignty myths

Zusammenfassung

Die Untersuchung der im Titel erwähnten frühirischen Erzählung besteht aus zwei Abschnitten: Ia *beschäftigt sich mit der Beziehung der verschiedenen handschriftlich belegten Fassungen zueinander, um die nötige Grundlage für* Ib *zu schaffen. Die Hauptaufgabe von* Ib *ist die Erschließung der ideologischen und politischen Botschaft des wohl im 8. oder 9. Jhdt. n. Chr. verfassten Urtexts, vor allem, was die Vermittlung und Übertragung des Königtums betrifft, anhand zeitgenössischer irischer Zielsetzungen, Umstände und Erzählkonventionen. Obwohl diese Abhandlung* (Ia/b) *als selbstständig gelten kann, wird anschließend* (II) *auf gewisse Ähnlichkeiten mit der Odyssee aufmerksam gemacht, d. h. die Bedrängung des Wohnsitzes einer Königstochter bzw. -frau durch ungeladene junge Männer und die bestimmende Rolle von drei verschiedenen Altersstufen im Schicksal des Königtums. Diese Übereinstimmungen und einige vorwiegend auf Lévi-Strauss basierende methodologische Erwägungen leiten eine vergleichende Untersuchung* (III–VII) *ein, die die Rekonstruktion von drei urindogermanischen Mythen* (III, VI und VII) *bezweckt, und zwar im Rahmen eines auf drei Hauptaltersstufen beruhenden Sozialsystems* (IV) *und eines mit der rituellen Ehe von König und Göttin verbundenen dreiteiligen Sakralkönigtums* (V). *Diese Sozialstruktur und die darauf bezogene Ideologie unterscheiden sich wesentlich vom „dreifunktionellen" Dumézil'schen Modell. In allen dreien verschiedenartig auf Könige und (3 bzw. 12 bzw. 5) Königssöhne gerichteten Mythen leistet eine Göttin bzw. Königstochter einen entscheidenden Beitrag zum Fortbestand der Herrschaft und zur Wahl eines künftigen bzw. Wiedereinsetzung eines ehemaligen Königs. Demzufolge scheint der Versuch* (VIII) *angebracht, die dadurch implizierte uridg. Herrschaftsgöttin möglichst genau zu identifizieren.*

[*] The first parts (I and II) of this article are based upon a lecture entitled 'Königtum und Erbschaft in der frühirischen Geschichte von Buchets Haus (*Esnada Tige Buchet*) und der Odyssee' delivered in January 2016 in the University of Würzburg at the kind invitation of my former PhD student, Professor Karin Stüber. I am grateful to Patrick Stiles for periodically prodding me out of the *dolce vita* of retirement into working it up for publication, after I had sent him a copy of the lecture in response to his mention of similarities between *Esnada Tige Buchet* and the *Odyssey* during a convivial conversation in a *tech n-oíged* beside the Thames. I am also grateful

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Introduction

The first part of this article presents a textual analysis (Ia) and contextual (in the light of its contemporary early medieval Irish setting) interpretation (Ib) of a relatively short but rather intricate tale in which a woman symbolising sovereignty passes from one major dynasty to another. Although this opening section (Ia/b) is expressly self-contained, the identification of parallels between prominent aspects of *Esnada Tige Buchet* and the central issue of the Ithacan royal succession in the *Odyssey* (II) leads into a broader comparative study. This (III–VII) augments these with an array of further material in Old/Middle Irish, Sanskrit (notably three narratives from the epic *Mahābhārata*) and other early Indo-European languages with a view to reconstructing key features of a Proto-Indo-European ideology, sociology and mythology of sovereignty. The evidence considered indicates a fundamental PIE doctrine that a people's prosperity flowed from the "sacred marriage" of a goddess (or her human surrogate) to its king, who was regarded not only as an essential mediator between the divine and the human but also as the integrating embodiment of three main age-grades into which the society ruled over by him was divided. This construct of three functionally overlapping social stages bound together from above by a "three-in-one" sovereignty differs significantly from the "tripartition" into three compartmentalised abstract "functions" with a bipartite (magico-juridical) "first" or "sovereign" one at their head (as opposed to over them) advocated by Dumézil.[1] That said, a PIE kernel for the later development of quasi-Dumézilian systems among some IE peoples can be seen in the sacral king's religious function combined with his overall responsibility for his people's wellbeing under three main headings of warfare (age-grades 1 and 2), material provision (2 and 3) and justice (3). Since the hypothesis of a PIE "sacred marriage" entails a goddess responsible for transmitting sovereignty, an attempt to identify her and some of her attributes seems to be called for and is attempted in the final section (VIII), which is followed by some 'conclusions'.

Ia. Esnada Tige Buchet*: textual issues and stemma*

The manuscript transmission of *Esnada Tige Buchet* 'The sounds of Buchet's house' (*ETB*) is not without problems, chiefly on account of a considerable number of variant readings, mostly quite trivial but sometimes rather serious.

to him, the editors of *ZcP* and an anonymous referee for helpful suggestions and references, while absolving them of responsibility for remaining inadequacies or the views expressed below.

[1] Cf. Schlerath 1996: 52, after citing the passage in question: 'Polomé's own statements thus show quite clearly that the Germanic king was trifunctional. Polomé is so enthralled by Dum.'s doctrine that he blindly follows the alleged scheme [of sovereignty with a religious/legal bifurcation]. Trifunctionality, i.e. the king's connection with all areas of his people's life, has little to contribute to Dum.'s doctrine'.

Since several of these have a bearing on the text's original message, any attempt to uncover this must be preceded by some perforce technical discussion of textual matters relevant to establishing a basic stemma.

Three main recensions of *ETB* are found in two of the three earliest extant Irish manuscripts containing a significant amount of vernacular narrative, namely the 12th-century Rawlinson B 502 (R^1) and Book of Leinster (LL). The former contains the sole surviving copies of a prose (**R**) and a metrical (**M**) version, but the latter's prosimetrum version with two alliterative "rhetorics" (**L**) is also found in three other manuscripts,[2] notwithstanding mostly minor differences between them. The two basically prose recensions display appreciable divergences in wording, and **L**'s substantial "rhetorical" dialogue between the king and Buchet is missing in **R**.

M, which 'obviously derives from the prose' (Greene 1955: 27), was dated by Hayden (1912: 261) to the 11th century on the strength of a plausible identification of the Eochaid Eolach named as the poem's author in its final stanza and some metrically guaranteed Middle Irish forms. Stokes (1904: 19) and Dillon (1946: 25) dated the tale to the 10th century but Greene (1955: 27) demurred: 'This seems somewhat too late to me, for the rhetorical passages are certainly old, and the prose may well have been written in the OIr. period'. Carney (1969: 168) agreed that 'the story of Buchet was probably written in the eighth or ninth century'. Byrnes (2008: 98 and 95) suggests 'a mid- to late ninth-century date' for **R** and so places the split between **R** and **L** 'sometime before the ninth century'. However, as its 12th-century witness demonstrates extensive Middle Irish redaction of **R** by then, the split may rather have been the result of two separate recensions made in the 10th or 11th centuries. If so, a number of Middle Irish forms attested in all mss. may have crept into an originally Old Irish text before that split. In what follows, translations from primary sources (including the *Odyssey*) are my own unless otherwise indicated, as are English translations from secondary sources in German, French or Italian unless the bibliography references a published English translation (e.g. Burkert 1983). References to the editions of *ETB* by Byrnes (2008) and Greene (1955: 28–31) as well as other published texts are primarily for the reader's convenience and do not necessarily indicate direct reproduction of their version. Such

[2] **R** (prose only): introduction, text and translation Byrnes 2008. **M** (rhymed syllabic poem): ed. and trans. Hayden 1912, text Greene 1955: 32–41. In these two cases distinction between recension (notably **R)** and solitary ms. version (strictly, R^1) is generally unnecessary and reference to the recension will be the default. **L** (prose + rhetoric): Book of Leinster (mainly 12th cent., LL), Yellow Book of Lecan/YBL (in a part dated 14th cent., Y), Rawlinson B 512 (in a part possibly dated 15th cent., R^2, which omits the rhetorical section apart from its first and last line; also a separate fragment R^{2f} that ends halfway through the first rhetoric and is discussed by Byrnes 2008: 91), and H.2.17 (1319) (in a part possibly dated 15–16th cent., H); ed. Greene 1955: 27–44. **R** and **L** also ed. and trans. Stokes 1904. Synopsis in Dillon 1946: 25–7. See Greene 1955: 27 for the foliations.

modifications are typically minor and editorially straightforward expansions (e.g. of ⁊ to *ocus*), insertions of spacing, punctuation, an indicator (·) of deuterotonic stress patterns, and marks of length (e.g. *rí* for original *ri* or compromise editorial *rī*) including normalisation of diphthongs (e.g. *áe* for *ae* or *æ*). Since there is usually agreement about their division into books, chapters etc. or (if poetry) lines, it is not customary to cite a particular edition of a classical text.

Notwithstanding cumulatively considerable discrepancies in wording, agreement between **R** and **L** is too far-reaching for their descent from a single archetype (**A**) to be reasonably doubted. The usual assumption that **R** and **L** (taken to underlie LL, Y, R^2, R^{2f} and H: see note 2) represent separate lines of descent from **A** is plausible but not proven. Where there are notable divergences, the innovator is clearly or probably **R** in some cases. For instance, since the language of **L**'s two rhetorics is clearly Old Irish[3] and they advance the plot, they must have been in **A**. **R** paraphrased their last sentence only, but that hardly proves its divergence from **L** as a whole rather than one of its branches.[4] **R**'s *a thri héigmi* (Byrnes 2008: 100, ll. 1–2) 'his three cries' has replaced the OIr. fem. form of the numeral seen in **L**'s *a theora éigme* (l. 562 of Greene's 1955 edition), but the issue is often less clear-cut or even a "toss-up": e.g. **R** *Cormacc* (Byrnes 2008: 99, l. 18) versus **L** *Cormac hua Cuind* (Greene 1955: l. 555) or **R** *ba bec lín a immerge .i. .vii. mbáe ocus tarb, hé féin ocus a ben ocus a dalta .i. ingen Catháer* (Byrnes 2008: 99, ll. 15–16), 'small was the number of his migrant band, i.e. seven cows and a bull, himself and his wife and his fosterling, i.e. Catháer's daughter', versus **L** *ba bec ind immirge rucad and .i. .vii. mbaí ocus tarb ocus se-sseom ocus a chaillech ocus ind ingen .i. Eithne ingen Chathaír* (Greene 1955: ll. 507–9), 'small was the migrant band that was taken there, i.e. 7 cows and a bull and himself and his old woman and the girl, i.e. Eithne daughter of Catháer' (omissions, additions and substitutions about equally possible). Similarly **R** *fothugud do ríg formo chuit forbbae ocus feraind do grés* (Byrnes 2008: 100, ll. 4–5), 'settling by a king on my portion of inheritance and land permanently' versus **L** *fothugud do ríg Érenn form thír ocus form thalmain co bráth* (Greene 1955: ll. 564–5) 'settling by the King of Ireland on my territory

[3] E.g. 2sg. deponent imperative *fallsigthe* (l. 486 of Greene's 1955 edition), regularly retained *s*-subjunctives such as 3pl. *-rosset* (l. 494; *ro:saig*), and three augmented present indicatives with potential sense (ll. 499–501; *EIV* 108 and 184).

[4] One might argue for omission of all but the rhetorics' start (down to *ad comsi .*⁊*c.*, R^2) and finish (*ní-m:thá-sa cumang duit, a Buchet, acht a(s) aithe*) at a node shared by **R** and R^2 (see note 2), the former then omitting the start and paraphrasing (with MidIr. *ocum* for OIr. possessive *ní-m:thá*) the essential outcome of Buchet's and Catháer's exchange (*ní:cumgaim ní duit, a Buchait, acht a galar ocum nammá*) and the latter making a unique addition (*ní-m thá-sa cumang duit, a Buichet, ol Cathair, acht as aithe cach delg ass ó. As tír duit*; cf. Greene 1955: 29, n. 2, and 43, note on l. 505). However, this is not a strong argument, since the omission of all but a brief tag of a rhetoric plus ⁊*rl* 'etc.' is sufficiently common (e.g. McCone 1986a: 1–2, and 30, n. i) for independent reductions in **R** and R^2 to be quite possible.

and on my land forever' (omission or addition of *Érenn* seems possible *a priori* and, while one version of the rest is a paraphrase of the other, it is unclear which).

A fundamental split between **R** and **L** would follow from readings clearly derived from **A** and retained in **R** but showing virtually the same significant modification in the other witnesses. It is again something of a toss-up as to whether or not the wording of **A** is better preserved by **R**'s *co-mba daidbir díšelbaid Buchet ó maccaib Cathaír fo deoid na:fargabsat acht [.uii.] mbú 7 óentarb airm i:mbátar .uii. n-áirge 7 .uii. tige la cach n-áirge* (Byrnes 2008: 99, ll. 8–10)[5] 'until Buchet was poor and propertiless through Catháer's sons finally, who had only left [seven] cows and a single bull where there were seven herds and seven houses with each herd', or by **L**'s basic *co-ro:fásaigset maic Cathaír fo deoid conna:fargabsat leis acht .uii. mbaí 7 tarb bale i:rrabatar na .uii. n-áirge* (ll. 480–1), 'until Catháer's sons had laid (him) waste finally, until they had only left seven cows and a bull with him where the seven herds had been'. **R**'s language here is generally compatible with Old Irish but **L**'s is less so: *-fásaigset* has a normal active rather than the deponent ending (*-etar*) typical of the 3pl. conj. of *-(a)ig-* verbs in Old Irish (*EIV* 74–5 and 216), and OIr. nom. pl. *baí* (LL, Y, H; ModIr. *ba*, R$^{2/2f}$) is used as acc. pl. instead of OIr. *bú* (*GOI* 216–7; McCone 1991: 38–9) in **R** and doubtless **A** too. Other examples of an OIr. form in **R** presumably retained from **A** versus a later MidIr. form in the **L**-manuscripts are simple narrative preterite *égis Odrán* 'Odrán cried out' (**R**) versus perfect *ro:éigseom* 'he cried out' (LL, Y, H; omitted in R^2) and OIr. deuterotonic historical present with class A 3sg. fem. infixed pronoun *(im)m-us:comairc* 'asked her' (**R**) versus MidIr. narrative perfect simple verb with *s*-pret. stem (for OIr. compound with *t*-pret.) *ro:íarfaig* 'asked' (LL, *ro:f(h)íarfaid(h)*, Y, H; *a-t:chí* 'sees', R^2).[6]

At the end of the Odrán episode ('Act II, Scene 1' below),[7] compensation for the site of Tara offered by Cormac to the aggrieved Odrán 'Brownie' includes a suitable plot of land nearby. He replies that 'there are two good places facing us (from the South there, **L**)'.

R: *'Cía a n-anmann?' ar Cormac. 'Odra Temra' ar sé. 'Bí-siu intib' ar Cormac. Is dé atá int odur eter hudru* (cf. Byrnes 2008: 100, ll. 15–17). '"What are their names?" said Cormac. "The Browns of Tara," said he. "Be in them", said Cormac. From that there is "the brown one between/amidst brown ones"'.

L (basically LL with bracketed variants): *'Cía* (*a* R^2) *n-ainm* [*hainm* Y/H]*?' or Cormac. 'Odra Temrach' or sé. 'Bí-siu and danó* [*dano* omitted R^2; *didiu* Y/H]*' or Cormac. Is dé atá Odor eter Odraib*, but *Odra itir Odraib. Is de atá Odra* R^2 and

[5] Marks of length here as often elsewhere are editorial but straightforward. Loss of *secht* or *.uii.* '7' by scribal omission (after *s̄* for *acht*, ms.) is clear from nasalisation of *bú*. **R**'s *na* may either be for *co-na* seen in **L** or relative (OIr. *nad*): cf. *GOI* 539–40.

[6] Cf. Byrnes 2008: 100, l. 6 / Greene 1955: l. 566; 100, l. 23 / l. 516. See *EIV* 184–8 and 209–12. R^2 *a-t:chí* is connected with its omission of *a-tas:cíd* or the like found a little earlier in the other mss.

[7] Greene 1955: 31, ll. 555–80, and Byrnes 2008: 99 [last paragraph]–100, l. 17.

[with *Temrach* added] Y/H (cf. Greene 1955: 577–80). '"What is their name?" said Cormac. "The Browns of Tara", he said. "Be there, then", said Cormac. From that there is "Brown between/amidst Browns"'.

M: *Odrán a mMaig Breg in búair / eter Odru Temra thúaid, / hé sein in fogur día fail / int odor eter Odraib* (cf. Hayden 1912: 266, §32). 'Odrán in Mag mBreg of the cattle between the Browns of Tara in the North, that is the report from which there is "the brown one between/amidst Browns/brown ones"'.

Reference to *Odra Temra(ch)* is consistently plural ('their names' and 'in them') in **R** but not in **L** ('their name' and '[in it,] there'). After being told of 'two good places', Cormac's request for their names (*anmann*) in **R** is natural but **L**'s 'name (*ainm*)' is less so, as he has not yet been told that they share the same (plural) name. **R**'s *intib* 'in them' seems more likely to have been replaced by **L**'s *and* 'there' than *vice versa.* OIr. nom.-acc. pl. *anmann* remained commoner than innovatory *anmanna* in Middle Irish, and MidIr. dat. pl. *intib* for OIr. *indib* (acc. pl. *intiu*) is trivial.[8] So far, then, a stemmatic split **R**/**L** is very probable but not yet certain.

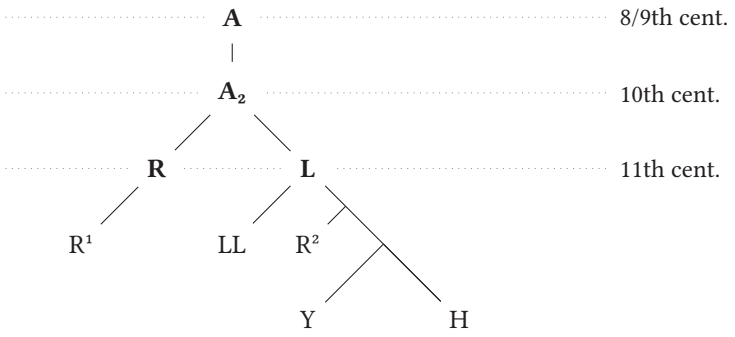
R's *int odur eter udru* is straight Old Irish (McCone 2015: 121) with unambiguously masc. acc. pl. *udru* (*GOI* 223, esp. §351(2)) incompatible with fem. or neut. nom./acc. pl. *Odra.* Since *eter* governed the accusative in Old Irish, dat. pl. *odraib* (masc., fem. or neut.) in **L** (all mss.) and **M** reflects Middle Irish usage (McCone 2005: 188). It is also compatible with *Odra* or *udru*, clearly the original form in **A** preserved in **R** but replaced by *odraib* in **L** (and **M**) no earlier than the 10th century. M.A. O'Brien long ago suggested that **M**'s *int odor eter odraib* 'seems to be an old saying which had become unintelligible' and 'can hardly refer to the two place names *Odran* and *Odru* and possibly means "the otter among the otters"' (Ó Briain 1923). Whether etymologically inferred 'otter' or the regular sense 'brown'[9] is preferred, **A**/**R**'s *int odur eter udru* may once have meant something like 'birds of a feather flock together'. Whatever its meaning, Odrán's relocation provided an aetiology of the expres-

[8] See Strachan 1905: 235–6 on *anmann(a)*, and McCone 2005: 188–9 on 3pl. pronominal prepositions.

[9] Thurneysen (*GOI* 74) suggests that *odur* 'probably designates the colour of the otter (ON. *otr*, Lith. *údra*, *údras*, etc.; cp. Gk. ὕδρος, ὕδρα "water snake")'. See *NIL* 706–11 (esp. nn. 20, 25 and 28) on PIE **udr-o-*, which basically meant 'pertaining to water' as a zero-grade thematization of **u̯od-r̥* but probably also designated the animal. Thurneysen reconstructs **udaro-* because he posits (except in compounds!) **dr* > **ddr* on the strength of *ro·fitir* 'knows' and *cretar* 'relic', but this makes it necessary to invoke analogy to account for forms like *uidir*, *udru.* If analogy can readily account for the /d/ of *-fitir* (see McCone 1994: 171) and *cretar* (influence of *cret-* 'believe'), **udro/ā-* is perfectly viable and now regular outcomes such as *uidir* could have triggered analogical *buidir* etc. to *bodar* 'deaf' (< **budaro/ā-* on the evidence of W *byddar* etc,. but perhaps reshaped to **bud-ro/ā-* in Goedelic by substituting a common suffix for a rarer one). The poem's *Odran* is to be read as *Odrán* referring to a person and not, as O'Brien thought, a place.

sion. Modification to *int odor eter odraib* (**M**) not only supplied a rhyme but also facilitated interpretation of *eter Odraib* as the place-name and *int odor* as Odrán himself. Omission of the article then gave *Odor eter Odraib* (**L**),[10] with what looked like a non-diminutive form of his name. This was retained in LL but turned into an unmistakable aetiology of the place-name *Odra* in the other mss. by adding 'i.e.' and a postscript: *i. Odor eter Odraib. Is de atá Odra* (R^2 and, with added *Temrach* 'of Tara', Y/H). However, Odrán had already given the two places' name as *Odra Temrach* before Cormac sanctioned his move thither.

Retention of **A**'s *int odur eter udru* in **R** versus its Middle Irish modification to *odor eter odraib* in **L** clinches the case for a fundamental divide between them in the transmission of *ETB* and indicates the following provisional stemma of the complete ms. witnesses to the (chiefly or solely) prose version(s). An intervening node $\mathbf{A_2}$ is tentatively included as a convenient but hardly indispensable way of accounting for Middle Irish forms common to **R** and all or most of **L** and so arguably introduced into an almost certainly Old Irish original between **A** and the split between **R** and **L** (e.g. notes 12, 20, 23 and 26).



A priori this gives equal weight to **R** on the one hand and all of **L** on the other in reconstructing the archetype (**A**), while agreement between **R** and just one witness within **L** creates a presumption that their reading derives from **A** (or $\mathbf{A_2}$) through **L**. Consequently, **R** is relevant to the reconstruction of **L**, as the final words of the Odrán episode demonstrate. Dismissing **R** as 'generally too divergent to be of any assistance' in editing the base of LL, R^2, Y and H, Greene (1955, 28) preferred the last three over LL and adopted *Odor eter Odraib. Is de a·tá Odra Temrach* (l. 579–80). However, once **R** is taken into account, LL's reading (*Is de ata Odor et*ar *Odraib*, *LL* l. 35398) is most likely to continue **L** here. A critical edition of *Esnada Tige Buchet* is a desideratum.[11]

[10] If **M**'s *int odor eter odraib* had been taken from **L**, this would imply the article's retention there. However, since *int* is lacking in all four witnesses to **L**, it seems more likely that **M** drew upon R's *int odur eter udru* (perhaps reflected in **M**'s spelling *Odru Temra*) and substituted dat. *odraib* (rhyming with *fail*) *metri causa*.

[11] A useful start upon one had been made by Dagmar Haunold when supervision of her

Several agreements between R² and **R** against LL, Y and H pose a potential problem, notably:

(1) *fer díb* (**R**/R²/R^{2f}) 'one of them' versus *fer* (LL), *in fer* (Y, omitted in H) in the last sentence of (Act) I$^{((Scene)1)}$ below (cf. Byrnes 2008: 99, l. 7; Greene 1955: l. 479);
(2) **R** *co:ruacht*, R² *co:riacht* 'until he reached' versus *co:mbaí i/oc* 'until he was in/at' (LL/Y, *co:raibi oc* H) *Cenannas* 'Kells' in I$^{(3)}$ (cf. Byrnes 2008: 99, l. 14; Greene 1955: l. 507);
(3) **R**, R² *árus* versus *domsod* (Y/H) / *domsom* (LL) 'residence' *na ríg* 'of the kings' in II$^{(1)}$ (cf. Byrnes 2008: 99, l. 20; Greene 1955: l. 558);
(4) **R** *cía íarum dia:tabar in cádu-sa? ar Cormac*, R² *cía dia:tabrai in cátai[d] móir sin? or Cormac* versus *cía dia:tabar ind airmitiu* 'to whom is the honour given?' (LL and similarly Y/H) in II$^{(2)}$ (cf. Byrnes 2008: 100, l. 30; Greene 1955: l. 526–7).

In (3) *domsod* looks like the *lectio difficilior*[12] replaced by a more obvious word for 'residence' in **R** and R², quite possibly separately. However, in (2) it seems more likely that **R** and R² continue **A** *-roacht* with a slight modification to *-riacht* in the latter (and **L**?) under the influence of deuterotonic *ro:siacht* (*EIV* 55–6). In (4) too *cátu* or the like in **R** and R² has a better claim than *airmitiu* to descend from the archetype, and the agreement between all except R² ('to whom do you give that great honour?') regarding passive *-tabar* indicates **A** (and **L**) *cía (íarum) dia:tabar(r) in cátu(-so)?* 'to whom (, then,) is the(/this) honour given?'. These and a couple of less straightforward cases[13] could be adduced in favour of grouping LL with Y/H to the exclusion of R², but replacement of *-roacht* by the

PhD thesis passed to my successor, David Stifter, after my retirement a decade ago. Sadly, it has not come to fruition but I have made grateful use of the transcriptions and photographs of the extant texts in the mss. given to me by Dagmar.

[12] Although a possible corruption of *domsod* by dittography, LL *domsom* may point to **A** *ba dom-som (in)na rríg didiu Cenannas* 'it, then, was the home of the kings, (namely) Kells' (cf. OIr. *is día-som* 'he is God' etc.; *GOI* 253) remodelled to *ba hé domsom na rríg* (**A$_2$**) before a 10/11th-century split between **R** and **L**. In that case, now obscure *domsom* was modified to *árus* by **R** and R² separately and to *domsod* by Y/H.

[13] The most practical starting point in I$^{(3)}$ (cf. Greene 1955: ll. 506–7; Byrnes 2008: 99, 14–15) seems to be **A**/**L** *asa tír .i. fut n-aidche i ngait co:roacht Cenannas na ríg* (+ *atúaid* **L**) 'from their [Cathéer and sons] land, i.e. the length of/throughout a night in stealth until he reached Kells of the Kings (in the North)' tidied up in **R** to *fut n-aidchi asa thír* ['his', i.e. Buchet's] *i ngait co:ruacht Cenannas na ríg* and in R² to *asa tír uile* ['out of all their land'] *fot aidchi co:riacht Cenandus na rígh a ngoit* (displaced and replacing *atúaid*) but essentially retained in LL and Y/H apart from "correcting" *asa* with assumed article to *asin* and expanding *naidche* to *na haidche* 'throughout the night' (+ *co matin* 'till morning' in **L** only), both changes sufficiently natural to have occurred at two separate nodes. It is hard to evaluate the stemmatic significance of various differences between the manuscripts in the precise wording surrounding 'Medb Lethderg of Leinster' in II$^{(1)}$. See also notes 26–27 below.

substantive verb plus preposition (*i* in LL but *oc* in Y/H) or of *cátu* by *airmitiu*, which appears twice or thrice in the immediately preceding sentences, seems too well-motivated for separate occurrence in LL and Y/H to be excluded.[14]

In II$^{(2)}$ (cf. Byrnes 2008: 100, ll. 23–5; Greene 1955: ll. 516–19), the enquiry addressed to Eithne (**R** *immus:comairc*, **L** *ro:íarfaig* discussed above) by Cormac was indirect *coich ba sí* 'whose she was' in **R** but direct *cía:taí, a ingen? ol/r Cormac* '"who are you, maid?" said Cormac' in the other four manuscripts, R^2 adding *7 coich thú* "and who(se) are you?" after *or Cormac*. Her reply *ingen bachlaig thrúaig sund ucut*[15] (**L**; **R** *… fail hi sunna*) 'the maid of a wretched churl (who is) here yonder' would fit *coich* 'whose?', a form too uncommon for its appearance in **R** and R^2 to be coincidental. If **R**'s reading essentially continues **A**'s (perhaps *coich boí-si*; cf. *GOI* 287–8), **L** presumably expanded this to '*cía:taí, a ingen?' ol Cormac '7 coich thú?'*, basically retained in R^2 but shortened by omitting *7 coich thú* in LL/Y/H. This might group them together without R^2, but separate omission of a now inessential further question in LL and Y/H seems quite thinkable, especially in view of MidIr. *coich* 'who?' making *7 coich thú* look tautologous. R^{2f}, which seems to occupy a position between R^2 and Y/H in the stemma,[16] is available in (1), where all mss. but R^2 (with clearly innovatory *… 7 in fer eile … 7 fer eili …*) follow the phrase containing *(in) fer (díb)* with two others containing *a chéile* 'his companion, the other' and *araile* 'another' respectively. The presence of *díb* 'of them' in **R**/R^2/R^{2f} supports *fer díb* as the reading of **A** and **L**, but omission of inessential *díb* at two nodes (LL and Y/H[17]) seems perfectly plausible.

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[14] All mss. basically have immediately preceding *'is dóchu a fagbáil duit' ol Cormac*, and *ol/or/ar X* 'X said' normally indicates a change of speaker in Cormac's dialogues with Odrán and Buchet. Its repetition in **R** and R^2 without such a shift after his further question would be natural enough to occur twice: cf. *'Is anfír do śárugud' ol Cormac. 'Níba messe do:géna' (ol Cormac)* '"It is untruth to violate you", said Cormac. "It shall not be me who does so" (said Cormac)' in II$^{(1)}$ (cf. Byrnes 2008: 100, l. 10; Greene 1955: l. 571), where the second *ol Cormac* is confined to Y and so clearly innovatory. If the second 'said Cormac' of **R**/R^2 was in **A**, it could have been omitted in LL and Y/H independently as unnecessary. Either way, it has no diagnostic value for the stemma.

[15] Whether omitted by **R** or added by **L**, OIr. *ucut* (R^2, H) has been replaced by MidIr. *út* (LL, Y) at what must have been two separate points.

[16] Since it is only a fragment, the evidence is perforce meagre but it also agrees with R^2 (as well as LL and **R**) in awarding Catháer twelve sons against Y/H's thirty-two. On the other hand, after Buchet has been named at the beginning of *ETB* the designation 'guesthouse of the men of Ireland' is applied to *a thech* 'his house' in **R** (and also **A**?) but to *a thech in Buchet* 'his, Buchet's, house' in LL and R^2 (hence in **L** too and perhaps also **A**), which is further expanded to *a thech in Buchet sin* 'his, that Buchet's, house' in R^{2f} along with Y and H.

[17] Y's article is obviously innovatory and H's corrupt text here suggests that its omission of *(in) fer* was due to scribal oversight.

Significant agreements between R² and Y/H against LL and R are not, moreover, confined to *is de atá Odra (Temrach).* Odrán's request for the *Odra Temrach* is directly preceded by Cormac's offering him (II(1); cf. Byrnes 2008: 100, ll. 12–13; Greene 1955: ll. 573–4) ⁊ *tír bas chumma/chutrumma/commaith* (**R**/LL/R²,Y,H) *fri(t) tír i tóeb* (**R** adds *nó in airchind* 'or at the end') *in tíri se fri tathigid chucum-sa* 'and land which be like/equal to/as good as your land at the side of this land for visiting me' (R²,Y, H add *sund* 'here'; **R** adds ⁊ *fri tairec do chísa* 'and for obtaining your due'). Whether the two extra phrases were added by **R** or omitted by **L**, it looks as if **R** retains **A**'s reading *chummae*, which was probably preserved in **L** but then slightly modified to *chutrumma(e)* (LL) and *commaith* (R²/Y/H, with a telltale lack of original lenition after relative *bas* in all three), the latter group adding an inconsequential *sund* missing in **R**/LL.

Apart from *fecht (n-)and* 'once' in **L** but not **R**, there is general agreement indicating that II(2) below opens with *boí Cormac mata(i)n moch (fecht (n-)and) i Cenannas íar ngabáil rígi* (cf. Byrnes 2008: 100, l. 18; Greene 1955: ll. 511–12), 'Cormac was in Kells early in the morning (once) after taking kingship'. Immediately after this R², Y and H alone have versions of *oc uréirgi cona t(h)imthacht sróill imbe*, which must be taken as 'while getting up with his silk/satin garment around him' or construed with *boí* as 'Cormac was getting up …'. Both constructions are quite strained and make for a cumbersome sentence.[18] Since this elaboration cannot possibly have been made independently in R² and Y/H, it must have either been (a) a feature of **A** (and **L**) separately omitted by **R** and LL or (b) an addition of **L**'s subsequently omitted by LL to produce a fortuitous agreement with **R** or (c) an innovation at a node shared by R², Y and H to the exclusion of **R** and LL. The third hypothesis is clearly the most economical.

In the next sentence Cormac espies Eithne *oc blegon na mbó* 'milking the cows'. **R** follows this with *is ed do:bered in cétblegun hi lestur fo leith ⁊ in ṁblegun ṅdédenach hi lestur n-aile* 'that is, she would put the first milking into a vessel separately and the final milking into another vessel', whereas LL starts with *a cétblegon i llestar for leith, a ṅdeadblegon i llestar n-aile* 'the(ir) first milking into a vessel apart, the(ir) end-milking into another vessel'. Y and H agree with LL in the first half, as does R²'s ***in*** *cédbleghan a lestar* ***fó*** *leith* apart from two trivial points of agreement (in boldface) with **R**.[19] However, all three omit the second *blegon* and basically have *a deod i lestar n-aile* 'its [presumably the first milking's] end into another vessel'. It is not certain that *o*-stem *mlegon* (> MIr. *blegon*; McCone 2005: 177) was neuter (*GOI* 454) rather

[18] Which is presumably why Y modified it to *íar ngabáil ríghi ocu ⁊ ar n-érgeo cona thimthocht sróill imme* 'after taking of the kingship by him and after rising with his silk/satin garment around him'.

[19] A well-known Middle Irish tendency to replace moribund neuter with masculine forms means that masc. *in* could easily have replaced neut. *a* (McCone 2005: 179) independently in **R** and R², while the semantic and formal distinction between *for* and *fo leith* is so slight that innovation at two separate points (whether *fo* for *for* in **R** and R² or the reverse in LL and Y/H) is quite conceivable.

than masculine in Old Irish and LL's nasalising *a* could be a 3pl. possessive, but it is most naturally taken as a neut. sg. article. Whether **A** had *a mlegon ndédenach* similar to **R** or *a ndeadmlegon* like LL, the second *blegon* in both strongly indicates that this was also in **A** and **L** (the latter with *a ndeadblegon* like LL) and that its omission along with nasalisation after *a* occurred at a node common to R^2, Y and H. If **A** had simply had *a cétmlegon i lestur fo(r) leith, a mlegon ndédenach i (l)lestur n-aill*,[20] **R** seems likely have substituted masc. *in* for *a* and then taken the latter (as well as *in cétblegon*) as acc. *in mblegon ndédenach* calling for a transitive verb, duly supplied as *do:bered*.

Probability thus still favours the respective positions of LL and R^2 in the stemma above,[21] but it is worth stressing that this issue does not materially affect Cathaer's original status in the tale as the King of Ireland and father of twelve sons, as will be explained below in Ib.

Ib. Esnada Tige Buchet: translation, analysis and interpretation

The Odrán episode ('Act II, Scene 1' of the translation below) was marginalised by Greene (1955: 27): 'These three versions [**R**, **L** and **M**] agree in showing the clumsy interpolation of the *dinnṡenchus* of Odra, which is not only irrelevant to the main story but contradicts it as to the time at which Cormac became king. I have felt justified, therefore, in removing it from the text and printing it as Appendix A'. Carney (1969: 166) tacitly concurred by replacing the Odrán episode with three dots in his translation of *ETB*. Referring to Greene's opinion, Ó Cathasaigh (1977: 74) relegates it from his analysis and summary of *ETB*'s plot to a brief discussion of *Cnucha Cnoc os cionn Life* and its 'affinity with the *dinnṡenchas* of Odra inserted into ETB' (77). A dissenting voice saw the episode as 'a crucial part of *Esnada Tige Buchet* mistakenly removed against all the manuscripts to an "Appendix A" as a "clumsy interpolation" by its editor' (McCone 1990: 159). For Byrnes (2008: 95), 'that DO is an interpolation is not really in doubt' but it 'was part of ETB prior to the period when the two independent recensions of RB502 and LL split … Thus, DO quite clearly has a place in the tale, and was considered an important part of the tale by its medieval compilers. Like ETB, DO shows Cormac as a provider of justice and

[20] OIr. *lestur* by the '*odur*' rule (McCone 2015: 121). As a neuter it should have *n-aill* in OIr. but all the mss. have MidIr. *aile* (R^2 *eile*), which may have been introduced independently in **R** and **L** or have been the reading of an arguable $\mathbf{A_2}$ in the above stemma.

[21] An easy (but arbitrary and intellectually lazy) blanket solution to agreements common to **R** and R^2 would be to posit sporadic and haphazard "contamination" of the latter by the former (contamination of **R** by R^2 being impossible, and that of LL by **R** or *vice versa* very improbable, chronologically). Needless to say, this approach would have no significant impact on the stemma proposed.

explains why the Déissi Maige Breg serve as vassals to the Uí Néill'. Kelly (2016: 53–4) has also argued against interpolation: 'More telling as a justification for the presence of the Odrán material at this point in ETB is the fact that Cormac's exceptional generosity to a subaltern whom he has almost wronged has resonances in the rest of the text. It contrasts with the depletion of Buchet's substance by the sons of Catháer Már in the early scene (McCone 2005, 156), and Catháer's failure to offer redress (McCone 1990, 253) … Unlike the Leinster king, Cormac heeds Odrán's complaint—if only belatedly—and recompenses him richly … This also prefigures Cormac's actions in regard to Buchet in the final section … Seen in this light, the Odrán passage has strong thematic links to what precedes and what follows. It forms the central panel of a triptych which, through the devices of contrast and parallelism, explores the issue of abundance and generosity as a *sine qua non* of a just king'.

'*Dindṡenchas* of Odra' is a misnomer as the places are referred to as *Odra Temrach* before Odrán is granted them. Since the episode is found in all extant copies of all three recensions of *ETB* and was integral to its message, it must already have been present in both **A** (unless introduced between **A** and arguable $\mathbf{A_2}$) and **L**. Viewed as an interpolation, it implies an early unattested version of the tale (written or oral, according to taste) into which a vignette involving Cormac and Odrán was later inserted. Given the lack of evidence for *ETB* without Odrán or *vice versa*, **A** can be envisaged as a fresh composition combining both into a coherent whole by manipulating certain traditional personages, patterns and other elements.

Esnada Tige Buchet is presented below as a "drama" in two three-scene "acts" plus an epilogue. Buchet and Cormac are the central linking figures in the first and second "acts" respectively. The translation and any citations of the original text below basically follow LL, apart from evident additions confined to it (e.g. *mac Ḟeidlimthe* after *ingen do Chathaír Mór*; Greene 1955: l. 474) and with further reference to other readings (ignoring trivial variants thereof) on occasion. Boldface is used to highlight words and phrases of particular relevance to the subsequent analysis and argument. Fortunately, the differences between **R** and **L** or within **L** barely affect the overall narrative. The first scene pithily presents the Leinster protagonists, their relationship to each other and the cause of Buchet's ruin. The second consists of two rhetorics depicting King Catháer's helplessness in the face of Buchet's desperate plea for help. The third briefly recounts the impoverished Buchet's flight with his household from Leinster to Kells.

'Act I' (Greene 1955: ll. 472–510)

'Scene 1' (ll. 472–81):

There was a cauldron of **generosity** (*coire **féile***) **among the Leinstermen** (***la Laigniu***), Buchet his name. Buchet's house (was) a guesthouse (*tech n-oíged*) **of the men of Ireland** (***fer nÉrenn***). The fire under his cauldron had not been extinguished since he took up householding (*trebad*). A daughter of Catháer the

Great, **King of Ireland/Leinster** (***do ríg Érenn*** **R**, LL/***do ríg Laigen*** R^2, R^{2f}, Y, H) (was) (+ ***ar altram*** **'in fosterage' R**) **in his bosom** (***ina hucht***), i.e. Eithne daughter of Catháer. Catháer had **twelve/thirty-two sons** (***da mac deac*** '12' **R**, LL, R^2, R^{2f}; + *ar ḟichit* 'plus 20' Y, H; + *cen fuithchius cen forbba* 'without wife, without inheritance' **R**). These used to come for hospitality (*oígidecht*) and to talk to their sister. They used to consume offerings of hospitality (*oígidechta*) **in twenties and thirties** (***fichtib 7 trichtaib;*** **R** *et* ***co fichtib láech*** *no:thictis* 'and it is **with scores of warriors** they used to come'). They deemed that too little until they took presents (variants of *ascidi*). Frequent, moreover, was the demand for and number of these. If they did not get enough, they would create disorder (*míchostud*). One of them would carry off (*no·bered* **L**, *no·fúaitched* 'would seize/steal' **R**) horses and the other the yoke and another a herd of the cattle, until the sons of Catháer finally laid him [Buchet] waste and only left seven cows and a bull with him where there had been the seven herds.

'Scene 2' (ll. 481–505):

He then went to complain about this to Catháer. The latter was a **worn-out** old man (*senóir* ***dímilte***) at that time. And Buchet said 'O my righteous/proper Catháer, how has fell destruction befallen **the land of Ireland** (***Hérenn íath***)? You are fit/able (to take/demand) my stock from your fair sons. Without true faults make the good manifest, for my **hospitallership** was worth every **hospitallership** with its **hospitaller**'s practices (*Cen chinta fíra fallsigthe fó, ar ba fíu mo* ***brugas****-[s]a cach m****brugas*** *cona bésaib* ***brugad***; see Greene 1955: 42, note on l. 487, on obscure following *anbít* or Y/H *anbith*). My ruin will be a great **blemish** to Catháer's territory (*Bid* ***anim*** *mór mo díth do Cathaír crích*). Catháer's sons have overthrown my **hospitallership** (and) cattle (*mo* ***brugas*** *búar*). Buchet will not be as he was before, until he reaches another kingdom that the grandsons of fair Feidlimid may not reach'.

Then Catháer replied, saying '**True** (***fír***), Buchet, you were a **hospitaller** of feeding companies/retinues (*basa* ***brugaid*** *bíata dám*). A triumph (were) your **valour**, your **generosity/hospitality**, your **prowess**, your smile of joy/welcome to everyone in your great **feasting hall** (*Búaid do* ***gal****, do* ***gart****, do* ***gaisced****, do gen fáilte fri cach n-óen it* ***midchúairt*** *már*). If I could control my sons, they would not cause your heart's torment. I cannot perform (acts of) strength, I cannot run a running, I cannot leap a leaping, vision we may not perceive far. I have **consumed** kingship for 50 long years (*Ríge* ***do:rumalt-sa***[22]

[22] *Dímilte* 'spent, worn out' (**R**; *dímiltne* LL, *dímelta* Y/H/R^{2f}, *díblide* R^2) and *do:ru-malt* 'spent, consumed' above are past participle (passive) and 3sg. augm. pret. respectively of *do:meil* 'consumes, spends, exhausts'. Finite prototonic forms such as 2sg. ipv. *tom(a)il* constitute firm evidence for a compound with preverb *to*, but *dímilte* (< **dī-μliθe* by regular syncope and delenition; R^2 *dí-blide* is due to restoration of pple. *mlithe* from simple *meilid* 'grinds') points to a further compound with preverb *dī*, the deuterotonic forms of which would likewise have become OIr. *do:meil*, with an

.l. mblíadan mbúan). If I could, I would lead his cattle (back) to Buchet. I have no power for you, Buchet, but the disgrace/blemish of it (*acht a aithi(s)*[23])'.

'Scene 3' (ll. 506-10):

Buchet went in flight from them out of their land (see note 13), i.e. throughout a night (until morning LL) in stealth until he reached Kells of the kings (*Cenannas na ríg*) (in the North LL, Y/H). And small was the migrant band that was taken there, i.e. seven cows and a bull and himself and his (old) woman (**R** *a ben*, **L** *a chaillech*) and the girl (*ind ingen* = **R** ***a dalta* 'his fosterling')**, i.e. Eithne daughter of Catháer. They were in a little hut to the north with the girl serving them.

The opening description of Buchet as a 'cauldron of generosity' and reference to his 'guesthouse' indicates his status as a *briugu* or hospitaller, a commoner who earned high rank by using his abundant stock to dispense fitting hospitality to all visitors. His industry, marked by the constant fire under the cauldron used for boiling his guests' viands, is asserted by Buchet and confirmed by Catháer in their rhetorical conversation. Such was the king's esteem for Buchet that he had entrusted his daughter Eithne to 'his bosom', explicitly as a foster-daughter in **R** (*ar altram* and *a dalta*). The manuscripts agree that Buchet lived 'among the Leinstermen' but had a guesthouse for 'the men of Ireland', but disagree as to whether Catháer was 'King of the Leinstermen' (4 mss.) or 'King of Ireland' (**R** and LL). Greene adopts the former on the strength of all but one of **L**'s mss. (and **M**). However, **A**/**L** *do ríg Érenn* follows from agreement between **R** and LL in the light of the stemma proposed above. Moreover, even if the positions of R^2 and LL there were reversed to make 'King of Ireland' (**R**, LL) versus 'King of Leinster' (the other 4 mss.) a "toss-up" (with one or the other introduced independently at two points in the stemma), the scales are still tipped firmly in favour of the former reading in **A**/**L** by the manuscripts' unanimity that Catháer's *briugu* served the 'men of Ireland' and by Buchet's complaint in his rhetoric that ruin had befallen 'the land of Ireland'.

Catháer had many sons, but how many? Greene's 'thirty-two' (Y/H; also **M**) seems to match **L**'s visits 'in twenties and thirties', but 'twelve' in four witnesses straddling the **R**/**L** divide leaves no room for doubt (regardless of the relative position of LL and R^2) that this was the total in **L** and **A**. The three manuscripts (LL/Y/H) with the rhetorics in full follow Buchet's claim that 'Catháer's sons have overthrown my hospitallership (and) cattle' with a list (presumably already in **L** at least) naming just seven: *.i. Rus Rúadbullech, Crimthand Cétguinech, Dáre*

occasionally found meaning 'exhausts, wears out'. Confusion was almost inevitable and conclusive finite prototonic forms of *dī-mel-* seem not to be attested.

[23] LL *acht a aithe* (*acht as aithi* Y; *acht is aithi* H; *acht as aithe* R^2) with a possessive supported as **L**'s and **A**'s reading by **R** *acht a galar* 'its pain/distress', which would be a better match for Greene's (1955: 43, note on l. 505) suggestion *áithe* 'sharpness', if this could also mean 'pain'. Perhaps $\mathbf{A_2}$ *aithi*, **A** *aithis* 'disgrace, blemish'.

Trebanda, Lóscán Án, Echaid Airegda, Bressal Enechglas, Fíacha Foltlebor for-t-bia cách. These fluctuations seem to relate to genealogically significant and insignificant progeny: 'Catháer the Great, moreover, had thirty-three sons, as the learned say. All of their lines were extinguished, however, except for only ten sons' (*Corp. Gen.* 42 = [Rawl. B. 502] 120b51–2; cf. 44 = 121a19–27), whose names include the seven listed in *ETB*. Catháer also addresses ten sons by name in his 'testament', *Timnae Chathaír Máir*, which 'may have been composed as early as the eighth century' according to its editor (Dillon 1962: 148) and so roughly contemporary with *ETB*'s composition. Despite a tendency to discard the supposed ancestors of extinct or obscure segments, the doctrine of an original thirty-three persisted. Wherever *ETB*'s *da mac deac* 'twelve sons' came from, Y/H later added *ar fichit* 'plus 20' to approximate to thirty-three and visits 'in twenties and thirties'. If, however, these were not the sons themselves but their accompanying retinues, as indicated by **R**'s 'with scores of warriors', they are quite compatible with twelve sons.

Kelly (2016: 54–8) has identified certain legal concerns in *ETB*. This may be another instance, given Irish legal rules on the size of proper public retinue (*dám*) 'ranging from one man for the † *ócaire* (115) to thirty for the *rí rurech* (478)' (*CG* 82). That is the highest grade of king in *Críth Gablach*, which prescribes 'half the (honour-)payment (*leth díri*) of every secular grade for his wife and his son and his daughter' (*CG* 5, ll. 125–6) and 'half-(sick-)maintenance (*lethḟolog*) of every grade to his lawful son, to his wife' (19, ll. 481–2). As to the latter, 'where the invalid is of noble rank, he is entitled to receive a visit at regular intervals from a party of friends (again equal in number to his † *dám*), for whose "refection" (*fossugud* 351, 380, 394) the injurer is also responsible' (*CG* 92). This suggests that a son in good standing should go visiting with half the retinue (*dám*) due to his father, i.e. fifteen if the latter was a great king like Catháer. A score or more would be characteristically excessive and the burden on Buchet much greater than twenty or thirty king's sons alone.

The wealth indispensable to the 'hundredfold'[24] Buchet's function and status was being severely depleted by the incessant demands of Catháer's sons and their men, but he could not refuse them without forfeiting his standing as a *briugu*. As the law-tract *Uraicecht Bec* puts it, 'a hospitaller (*briugu*) has equal status to a lord/ruler (*flaith*) if he have twice as much land and household/

[24] **M**: *ar Buichet na slúag sétach* / *ar in mbriugaid* ***mbó-chétach*** 'to wealthy Buchet of the hosts, to the **cow-hundredfold** hospitaller**'** (cf. Greene 1955: 33, l. 613–14). Buchet's actual name has been derived from **bu-kanto-s* 'having a hundred cows' (McCone 1991: 40–4). Since this would have produced **buxɪd* (cf. Middle Welsh *kerbyt* 'chariot' borrowed from PrimIr. **karbɪd* < **karbento-*; OIr. *carb*/*pat*) and then **buχəd* with non-palatal *χ* by the "*do:lug(a)i*" rule (McCone 1996a: 116), the regular outcome would have been sometimes attested *Buchat*. Presumably, the commoner spelling *Buchet* and less frequent *Buichet* reflect an accommodation to *cét* 'hundred' seen clearly in *bóchétach*. Incidentally, when Buchet names himself at the end of his rhetorical protest to Catháer in I$^{(2)}$, LL has *Buchat*, Y *Buchet* and H *Buichet*.

property (*trebad*) in addition as each grade (the grade in question) … He is not a hospitaller who is not **hundredfold** (*níbi briugu nadbi **cétach***). He does not bar any condition (of person) (*nícon:urscair fri cach richt*). **He does not refuse** any **company/retinue** (***nícon:eitig** nach n**dáim***). He does not count it against anyone, **though it be often he come** (*níco(n):áirmi fri nach **cíaba menic tí***). That is the hospitaller (*briugu*) who has equal honour-price (*com-díre*) with a petty king (*rí túaithe*)' (cf. *CIH* 1608, ll. 8–10, 14, 19–22). In short, *briugu cách **co eitech*** (*Tecosca Cormaic* §31, 9) 'everyone is a hospitaller **until refusal**'.

Buchet, his wife and Eithne having absconded to Kells, 'Act II' begins with Cormac's residence there and acquisition of the site and kingship of Tara. In the second scene he visits Kells and meets Eithne. In the last scene she bears Cormac a son and then marries him, her foster-father Buchet staying on with his wealth restored by a huge bride-price from Cormac.

'Act II' (Greene 1955: ll. 555–80 'Appendix A', and 511–44)

'Scene 1' (ll. 555–80):

Cormac grandson of Conn, moreover, was then in Kells **before he could take the kingship (of Tara/Ireland)** (***ríasiu no:gabad ríge*** LL/Y: **R** adds ***Temra***; R^2 and H add ***nÉrenn***), for Medb Lethderg did not let him into Tara after the death of his father, i.e. Medb Lethderg of Leinster had been **at Art's side (*i fail Airt*)** and she enjoyed the kingship after Art's death. **Kells, then, was the residence of the kings**. So it is **after the taking of kingship by Cormac *(íar ngabáil rígi do Chormac)*** that Tara was dug by him, i.e. that was the land of Odrán, i.e. a **churl** (***bachlach*** LL/Y/H/R^2: ***cocartte .i. comaithich*** **R**) of the Déisi Breg. When they were digging the Rampart of Tara at Cormac's instigation,[25] he (Odrán) raised his three cries. 'What do you cry?' said Cormac. 'A cry of oppression', said he '(at) the settling by **a king (of Ireland)** (***do rígR***: LL/Y/R^2/H add ***Érenn***) on my territory and land in perpetuity'. When they were fixing (the posts of) the house, he cried out again. On Cormac's going into it as an omen, Odrán put his back against the door-valve. 'What is that?' said Cormac. 'Do not violate me', said Odrán. 'It is **untruth** (***anfír***) to violate you', said Cormac. 'It shall not be me who does so, unless I am not allowed in for recompense, i.e. your weight in (gold and **R**) silver and the portions due to nine men every evening as long as I am alive and territory equal to your territory beside my territory for visiting me'. 'Good', said Odrán. 'There are two good places facing us (to the south there **L**)', said Odrán. 'What are their names?' said Cormac. 'The Browns of Tara', said he. 'Be there, then,' said Cormac. From that there is 'the brown one among brown ones'.

[25] **R** refers to the digging of the 'Rampart of Tara (*Ráth Temrach*)' and then to the 'digging of Tara (*claide na Temrach*)' (Byrnes 2008: 99, l. 21, and 100, l. 1).

'Scene 2' (ll. 511–32):

On one occasion *(fecht and)* Cormac was in Kells *(i Cenannas)* early in the morning **after taking kingship *(íar ngabáil rígi)***. He saw the girl milking the cows. Their first milking into a vessel on one side, their last milking into another vessel. He watched her,[26] moreover, when cutting the rushes, with her putting the middle of the tuft in a bundle to one side. Moreover, taking the water from the stream's edge[27] into the one vessel and the rest from its middle into the other vessel. One time, Cormac enquired of the girl. 'Who are you, maiden?' said Cormac. 'The maid of that unfortunate **churl (*bachlach*)** there', said she. 'Why do you make division of the water, the rushes and the milk?' 'It is a man who was previously (held) in esteem (*i n-airmitin*)', she said, 'to whom the middle of the rushes and the after-milking is carried and the rest to me so that he may not, then, be without esteem (*cen airmitin*) from anything that I get. If I were to get a greater honour (*airmitin*), he would have it'. 'It is more likely that you will get it', said Cormac. 'To whom is the honour (*airmitiu* LL/Y/H: *cátu* **R**/R^2) given?' 'Buchet (is) his name', said she. 'Is that Buchet of Leinster?' said Cormac. 'It is he', she said. 'Are you Eithne Longside/Tóebḟota?' said Cormac. 'Presumably', she said.

'Scene 3' (ll. 533–44):

Then envoys went to Buchet to ask for her. He did not give her for it was not his (right) to give her but her father's. They say, then, that she was taken to him forcibly by night and only slept with him that night and absconded from him and that night she conceived Caipre Liphechair son of Cormac, i.e. he loved Liphe and it is in Liphechair that he was fostered between his maternal and paternal kin. And Cormac did not take (*ní:raga(i)b*) the boy until the

[26] **R** *for-das:cíd* 'he watched/was watching her' from uncommon *for:cí* 'watches, looks at' is clearly the *lectio difficilior* compared with LL *atas:ciid* (Y/H *adas:cíd*, om. R^2) from common *ad:cí* 'sees', especially in view of introductory *co n-accae in n-ingin* 'he saw the girl' just before. The imperfect is, moreover, unproblematical with durative *for:cí* but odd with punctual *ad:cí*. The MidIr. 3sg. f. class B infixed pronoun *-t/das (EIV* 171) could easily have replaced OIr. *-t/da* in **R** and **L** separately but may alternatively have been introduced at putative $\mathbf{A_2}$. Presumably **A** had *for-da:cíd*.

[27] **L** *oc tabairt ind usci danó* (LL; *didiu* R^2, Y/H*) asa ur* (LL; + *int ṡrotha* R^2; H *a fur*, Y *au ur*) *is(s)indara lestar*, **R** *for-das:cíd danó hic tabairt usci ⁊ no:línad indara lestar a hur int ṡrotha.* The most economical solution seems to be: **A**/**L** *asa ur int ṡrotha* 'out of its, the stream's, edge' retained in R^2; modified in **R** to *a (h)ur int ṡrotha* 'out of the stream's edge' along with a split into two phrases, each introduced by a verb (ipf. *no:línad* firmly supporting ipf. *for-das:cíd* in the previous note); simplification to *asa ur* 'from its (*usce*) edge' in LL and to Y/H *a fur* 'its (*usce*) edge' (> Y *au ur*) matching following *a n-aill* 'the rest' (perhaps by straightforward corruption of *asaur* to *afaur* and then interpretation as "prosthetic" *f*, anyway unpronounced here after masc. *a* 'its'; cf. *EIV* 199–200). Omission of superfluous-looking *int ṡrotha* at two separate nodes seems plausible.

Leinstermen swore that he was his, and it is she (Eithne) who was **queen at Cormac's side** (***rígain i fail Chormaic***). Moreover, she did not take him (*ní:raga(i)b*; *+ -si* **R**/R²) without her bride-price (*a tindscra*) to Buchet. Cormac gave him what his sight could reach from the wall of Kells – both cow, man, gold, silver [both metals omitted in LL alone], ox and horse – until the end of a week.[28] Buchet refused to take the property that he had received southwards across the (River) Rye back to the territory of the Laigin/Leinstermen.

'Epilogue' (Greene 1955: ll. 545–54)

The sound (*esnad*) of Buchet's house to the companies (*dona dámaib*), i.e. his laughing smile to the companies. 'Welcome to you. You will do well by us. May we do well by you'. The sound of the fifty warriors with their purple clothes and their equipment for playing when they were drunk. Then the sound of the fifty maidens on the floor of the house in their purple cloaks with their golden yellow tresses over their clothes as their sound entertained the host. After that the sound of the fifty harpers until morning soothing the host. From that comes The sounds of Buchet's house (*Esnada Tige Buchet*).

The first serious literary study of *Esnada Tige Buchet* (Carney 1969: 167–9) was in a short article for the general reader. Questioning O'Rahilly's (1952) far-fetched and textually unjustified "mythological" interpretation (cf. McCone 1990: 54–5), Carney argued (168) that 'it incorporates a genealogical doctrine taught in the native Irish schools, or in some of them' and did not call for 'any severe process of "derationalizing"'. Viewed thus, 'it is not a story told merely for entertainment, but has deep political implications' in relation to the 'dominant Uí Néill kindred ... of whom Cormac and Cairpre Lifechair were ancestors, either real or reputed. This kin claimed special rights over Leinster. The political doctrine implicit in the tale, and its impact at the period in question, would thus be something like this. The greatest kindred in Ireland is descended from Cormac and Cairpre Lifechair. The princes of Leinster are descended from the sons of Cathaer Már who were "a bad lot" ... The only good member of the family of the great Cathaer was his daughter. She, in contrast with her brothers, was an exemplification of all the virtues; she is an ancestress of the

[28] LL (followed by Greene 1955: ll. 542–4) makes *co cenn sechtmaine* the beginning of the sentence about Buchet's failure to get his stock back over the river, whereas **R** (Byrnes 2008: 101, ll. 1–3), H and, by omitting the next sentence, R² link it to the previous sentence (Y does not punctuate or capitalise here and so is ambiguous). The stemma thus supports the second option giving Buchet a week to acquire whatever came into view from his vantage point during that time, which anyway seems more likely (particularly in view of the preterite rather than imperfect tense of the verb) than a week trying but failing to get his property across the river. Presumably, then, he deliberately decided to stay with Cormac and not to take his possessions back to Laigin territory.

Uí Néill, who, through her, have received the blood of Cathaer Már. Such an interpretation gives the tale a contemporary significance'.

Identifying Eithne as 'a version of the so-called goddess of sovereignty', Ó Cathasaigh (1977: 75–6) proposes an avowedly 'allegorical' interpretation corroborated by another text known as 'Cormac's dream': 'The Villains of the tale (Cathaír's sons) deprive Buchet of his wealth, thereby depriving themselves (and their land) of the kingship (Ethne) and fecundity (Buchet). Cormac takes the kingship by force, but loses it again. After some time, Cormac once more assumes the kingship, on this occasion at the behest of the Lagin. Fecundity is restored: Cormac proves himself a worthy king … It seems that ETB embodies a tradition that the kingship of Tara was a Laginian institution before it was taken by the Dál Cuinn, here represented by Cormac mac Airt'. Moreover, 'perhaps we are to understand that the Laginian princes are rivals for the kingship who by their depredations remove the fertility of the land, thus proving themselves unworthy aspirants' (78).

The basic tenor of both interpretations is persuasive in view of the key positions of Catháer and Conn, Cormac's grandfather, as apical ancestors of the royal lineages of Leinster and the Northern Half of Ireland respectively in the genealogical schemes elaborated by early Irish men of letters in response to significant political relationships (e.g. McCone 1990: 238–40). For instance, 'at Conn of the Hundred Battles, then, are divided the free lineages of the Northern Half (*sóer-chlanna Lethe Cuinn*, lit. 'of Conn's Half') and they are dependent peoples of Conn's Line (*for-túatha Síl Cuind*) apart from that. At Catháer the Great son of Feidlimid are divided the free lineages of Leinster (*sóer-chlanna Laigen*) and they are dependent peoples apart from that. At Ailill Ólomm are divided the free lineages of Munster (*sóer-chlanna Muman*) and they are dependent peoples apart from that' (*Corp. Gen.* 137, at 140a52). When the original version (**A**) of *Esnada Tige Buchet* was produced, the Tara high-kingship was in the hands of certain dynasties of the Uí Néill who traced their descent through Níall of the Nine Hostages straight back five generations to Cormac son of Art son of Conn. Consequently, Cormac often served as a proxy for the Uí Néill and their claims, while Catháer played a similar role in relation to Leinster's main dynasties through a considerable number of sons.

As already argued, the designation of Catháer as 'King of Ireland' near the beginning of the tale in **R** and LL must have been inherited from the archetype (**A**) and the node (**L**) shared by LL and the other witnesses. His demotion to 'King of Leinster' in the latter (R^2, Y, H and the fragment R^{2f}) presumably occurred at the node of the above stemma shared by them only. The length of Catháer's reign specified in his rhetoric as 'for fifty long years' conforms to a view also expressed in genealogical tracts and king-lists. For instance, 'the Catháer the Great, then, whose sons we have counted spent fifty years in the kingship of Ireland in Tara … Catháer and Conn of the Hundred Battles were contemporary – Catháer in Tara and Conn in Kells without battle, without war between them on both sides' (*Corp. Gen.* 70, at 124a22). A list entitled *Ríg*

Érenn 'Kings of Ireland' gives the following sequence (Conn's line in boldface, others in italics): **Feidelmid (**9 years) → *Catháer the Great* son of Feidelmid Fer Aurglas (3 years – or 50 *ut alii putant*) → **Conn of the Hundred Battles** son of Feidelmid (20 years) → *Conaire* son-in-law of Conn (7 years) → **Art son of Conn** (30 years) → *Lugaid mac Con* (30 years) → *Fergus Blackteeth* (1year) → **Cormac son of Art** (40 years) → *Echu Gunnat* (1 year) → **Cairpre Liphechair son of Cormac** (26 years) (*Corp. Gen.* 121 = 136a54–136b12).

The first passage contradicts Dillon's claim (1946: 26, n. 3) that Cormac's move from Kells to Tara in *ETB* 'conflicts with all established tradition. Cormac's father, Art, and his grandfather, Conn of the Hundred Battles, dwelt at Tara, and Tuathal Techtmar long before them'. It presumably reflects a Laginian view, Byrne (1973: 142) noting that 'the archaic Leinster poems are specific in their claim that the Laigin were entitled to be kings of Tara'. The king-list, by contrast, interweaves Conn's line with representatives of others from various parts of Ireland in a sequence interposing nearly ninety years between the end of Catháer's reign and the beginning of Cormac's, which are juxtaposed in *ETB*. Catháer's reign of three years in the list instead of the standard fifty acknowledged as an alternative presumably reflects an evolving Uí Néill position. The non-**R**/LL segment of *ETB*'s transmission took the further step of confining his fifty-year reign to Leinster by simply altering *do ríg Érenn* to *do ríg Laigen*.

Lugaid mac Con defeats Art in battle and usurps the Tara kingship until a poor judgment of his is corrected by Cormac in both main versions of his birth-tale,[29] but *ETB* omits him and makes Medb Lethderg of Leinster the interloper after her husband Art's death. The probably Laginian scheme cited above recurs at the start of *Fotha Catha Cnucha* 'The cause of the battle of Cnucha': 'When Catháer the Great … was in the kingship of Tara (*i rrígi Temrach*) and Conn of the Hundred Battles in Kells (*hi Cenandos*) in the estate of the heir apparent (*hi ferand rígdomna*) …' (*LU* 3136–7). In keeping with a bias towards the Síl Cuinn and the Uí Néill, *ETB* applies it to Art/Medb and Cormac instead, locates Catháer and his offspring in Leinster, and makes Kells the royal residence (of the Síl Cuinn, presumably) until Cormac fortifies Tara. His move and deal with Odrán may have been inspired by David's shift of royal seat from Hebron to Jerusalem and agreed acquisition of Araunah the Jebusite's threshing floor as part of his building plans (2 Sam. 5:4–9 and 24:18–25; McCone 1990: 159–60).

Medb's usurpation is also attested in *Cnucha cnoc os cionn Liphe* (*CC*), mostly 'a recital of the reigns of the kings of Ireland from Conn … to the three Collas' in the words of its editor (Power 1916: 39). Verses 25–30 state that Cormac's forty-year reign at Tara after Mac Con's death was interrupted at the outset by a Laginian insurgency under Medb Lethderg, who ruled there for fourteen months and had Medb's Rampart (*Ráith Medba*) dug before 'the Leinstermen of the spears gave the kingship to the son of the king of Ireland – until Medb had slept with the son, Cormac was not king of Ireland.' In *ETB* 'Medb Redside

[29] *Genemuin Chormaic*, and *Scéla Éogain 7 Cormaic* (ed. Ó Cathasaigh 1977: 107–33).

of Leinster' is similarly obstructive but then ignored: there is no mention of a Leinster coup or sex with Cormac, who is made responsible for the rampart's digging and mates with Eithne Thóebḟota.

Ó Máille (1927: 137–8) cited the following passage (*LL* 380a63): 'Medb Lethderg daughter of Conan Cualann, the Leinster queen … slept with the king of Ireland, Feidlimid son of Túathal Techtmar … and it is she who was wife to Feidlimid. Great, then, was the might and power of that Medb over the men of Ireland. For it is she who would not let a king into Tara without herself being his wife and it is by her that the royal rampart (*ríg-ráith*) on the side of Tara was built, i.e. Medb's Rampart (*Ráith Meidbe*)'. Along with the relevant parts of *ETB* and *CC*, 'this makes the significance of Medb pretty clear … it means nothing else than the *sovereignty of Ireland*' (Ó Máille 1927: 139). This pioneering work, Mac Cana's (1955/8) major study, and parallel accounts of Cormac's accession in *CC* and *ETB* led Ó Cathasaigh (1977: 77) to argue 'that Medb Lethderg is the Laginian equivalent of Medb Crúachan, in her role as goddess of kingship … the Laginian Medb Lethderg ("Red-side") is equivalent to the Laginian Ethne Thóebfota ("Long-side"), and indeed the statement in CC that Cormac was not king of Ireland until Medb slept with him is a classic expression of the theme of king and goddess'.

The label "goddess" or "sovereignty goddess" often attached to female conduits of kingship in medieval Irish literature reflects their presumed origins in a pagan sacral kingship centring upon a ruler's *hieros gamos* or 'sacred marriage' to a goddess. However, despite sometimes displaying supernatural or unreal attributes such as Medb Lethderg's pairings with Feidlimid, his grandson Art and great-grandson Cormac, they are frequently represented as the human wives and daughters of legendary rulers and as such may be separately associated with individual kingships like Medb ('Redside') of Tara(/Ireland), Medb of Crúachu(/Connacht) or Eithne ('Longside') of Leinster(/Ireland). The euhemerisation[30] of deities and transposition of mythical prototypes into historical or, in modern terms, legendary figures and configurations in epic and other narratives is well attested and has, for instance, been made the object of an extensive study by Dumézil (1968/71/73). Once established in a narrative tradition, such elements and patterns could retain their basic function outside an original religious matrix. The role of legendary ancient Greek and Indian royal daughters or wives in their consorts' acquisition, loss or recovery of sovereignty will be considered below. On the whole, "lady of sovereignty" seems a better designation of the usual status and role of such women not only in early Greek and Indic literature but also in medieval Irish material emanating from a monastic milieu.

[30] It may be noted that the doctrine of Euhemerus (and his followers) that god(esse)s originated as (wo)men of distinction is properly termed "euhemerism", whereas "euhemerisation" typically refers to its consequences, namely the humanisation and historicisation of deities.

The narrative conventions clarified by Ó Máille and others above would readily identify Eithne, the King of Ireland's daughter residing with the hospitaller to the men of Ireland in *ETB*, as the embodiment of kingship over Ireland. According to a recurring theme in medieval Irish literature, a people's wellbeing under such headings as security, harmony, prosperity, fair weather, plentiful livestock, flourishing crops and nature's bounty was vouchsafed by a properly qualified and functioning 'true' king but liable to be destroyed by a flawed ruler and replaced by strife, famine and the like.[31] Buchet was a fitting embodiment of peace and plenty by virtue of the *briugu*'s use of his great wealth to provide generous hospitality on his king's behalf, and his 'relationship with Ethne … is one of mutual dependence': 'Buchet symbolizes … fecundity in the broadest sense; Cormac's union with Ethne represents the enlisting of the personification of fecundity by the representative of sacral kingship, and his restoration of Buchet's wealth is an expression of the fecundating role of the just king' (Ó Cathasaigh 1977: 79).

The dynastic symbolism of *Esnada Tige Buchet* has already been sketched. The first two scenes of 'Act I' depict the dire disfunction of the ancestral family of Leinster's main dynasties. The old king's sons appear quite unworthy of the succession potentially in store for one of them: they spectacularly abuse Buchet's hospitality, commit mayhem and cap it all by rustling his horses and cattle.[32] Their father makes his entry in a dialogue with his hard-pressed hospitaller. Buchet insists that he has performed his duties impeccably and that his ruin (*díth*) would be a great blemish (*anim*) to Catháer's territory by forcing him to flee to another kingdom (*ailethúath*) beyond the reach of the king's parasitic sons. His metaphorical use of *anim* 'blemish' is loaded because it typically denoted a disfigurement prone to disqualify a king and trigger his abdication. For instance, *Senchas na Relec* 'Lore of the graveyards' notes with regard to Cormac's loss of an eye that 'a king with a blemish was not fitting in Tara' (*níbá hada rí co n-anim hi Temraig*; *LU* 4056) and Congal Cáech lost the Tara kingship after being blinded in one eye by a bee according to *Bechbretha* 'Bee-judgements' (§§31–2). The youthful Conaire also employs *anim* as a metaphor in response to doubts about his fitness to be made king of Tara: *ní hainim rí óc eslobar* (*TBDD* ll. 162–3) 'a generous young king is not a blemish'. Replying to Buchet, Catháer immediately concedes the 'truth' (*fír*) of his assertions but fails to act upon it, declaring himself too feeble to enforce the impoverished Buchet's just claim by making his incorrigible sons restore the

[31] See the chapters on 'Kingship and society' and 'Sovereignty and the Church' in McCone 1990: 107–37 and 138–60 for a discussion of the various aspects referred to in the previous two paragraphs.

[32] The text (I$^{(1)}$) distinguishes unmistakably between the hospitality (*oígidecht*) and extra presents (*ascidi*) sought (however importunately) and given (however unwillingly) on the one hand and the taking of Buchet's stock on the other. The latter action's designation as *míchostud* 'disorder, misbehaviour' clearly implies that it was performed without permission and so constituted theft (as made quite explicit in **R)**.

stolen livestock. This inability to act in defence of truth is a kingly failure on a par with the false judgement responsible for Mac Con's dethronement in Cormac's birth-tales. Catháer mentions Buchet's 'valour' (*gal*), 'generosity' (*gart*), 'prowess' (*gaisced*) and welcoming smile for visitors to his 'great feasting hall' (*midchúairt már*). *Gart* suits a *briugu* but the martial orientation of *gal* and *gaisced* jars with the fact that 'unlike a king or lord, the *briugu* has no military rôle' (Kelly 1988: 36). Significantly, all three terms figure as desirable traits for a king (McCone 1990: 121–4). Moreover, Buchet has a *briugu*'s typical *tech n-oíged* 'guesthouse' at the beginning of *ETB*, whereas a *tech mid-chúarta* 'house of mead-circling' is equally typical of a king. A law-tract mentions a *rí midchúarta* (*CG* 18, l. 462) 'king of a feasting house/hall' and, according to a note beneath the diagram of such a venue on page 29a of the Book of Leinster (*LL* 3676–7), 'the arrangement of a house of feasting (*tech midchúarda*) – it is not every king that has one today as they did originally'. The clear implication is that, however excellent his reign hitherto, the enfeebled Catháer is unduly dependent upon his *briugu* and no longer fit or able to rule, a point underlined if his final words were originally *acht a aithis* 'but (I have) the disgrace/blemish of it' (note 23). In effect, Leinster is in a state of anarchy towards the end of Catháer's fifty-year reign over Ireland.

Buchet is left with no choice but to abandon the province in the company of Eithne, his wife and few remaining cattle. As Ó Cathasaigh observed above, his ruin and flight symbolise the loss of prosperity resulting from kingly failure to uphold truth and justice. Eithne, the female embodiment of the high-kingship of Ireland, accompanies him to Kells in territory ruled over at the time of *ETB*'s composition by Uí Néill kings of Tara, who claimed the high-kingship of Ireland and direct descent from Cormac mac Airt.

'Act II' places Cormac in Kells and his father Art in Tara. Here too a period of virtual anarchy ensues, in the form of a usurpation by Art's widow, until rightful kingship over Tara is reasserted by Cormac. The new king overcomes Odrán's resistance to occupation of his land by rejecting *anfír* 'untruth' and generously offering him his weight in silver, a nearby estate of his choice and daily hospitality for himself plus a company of eight befitting a noble of high rank.[33] This contrasts with Buchet's treatment by Leinster's potential claimants to their father's kingship of Ireland: they are greedy but Cormac is generous; their demands force Buchet to flee but his grants keep Odrán nearby; they constantly abuse Buchet's hospitality but he allows Odrán lifelong hospitality; they cause Buchet's impoverishment and demotion from exalted *briugu* to lowly *bachlach* but he brings about Odrán's enrichment and promotion from *bachlach* (or **R**'s apparently similar *cocartte*) to man of rank. In short, Cormac is as fit for kingship as Catháer's sons are unfit. Indeed, he will later treat Buchet even more generously than Odrán.

[33] The high-ranking *aire túise* 'noble of precedence' is entitled to a *dám* 'retinue' of eight in his own *túath* according to *CG* 16, ll. 392–3.

The stage is set for Cormac's encounter with Eithne in 'Scene 2' while on a visit to Kells after taking the kingship of Tara. He infers from her evident devotion to the sadly reduced Buchet that she is Eithne Thóebḟota. In 'Scene 3', her guardian scrupulously refuses the king's request for her hand on the grounds that this is her father's to grant. Cormac then abducts and beds her, but she escapes after conceiving his successor, Cairpre Lifechair. As Ó Cathasaigh (1977: 73–8) has argued, this separation corresponds to traditions, given narrative expression in various ways,[34] that Cormac temporarily lost the high-kingship. In *ETB* his union with Eithne was made permanent when the Laigin swore that her child was his. Buchet received a huge bride-price but omitted to bring it over the River Rye into Leinster. Having been restored from a *bachlach*'s lowliness to his former pomp as wealthy *briugu* to the King of Ireland (now Cormac after his marriage to Eithne),[35] he stayed put in the happy circumstances described in the Epilogue.

Esnada Tige Buchet, including the indispensable Odrán episode, drew upon characters with readily recognisable connotations in order to inculcate a political message supporting Uí Néill against Laigin claims: the kingship of Ireland (personified by the old high-king's daughter Eithne) and the levels of prosperity (personified and measured by Buchet and his fluctuating circumstances) dependent upon its holder's character and behaviour had passed from unfit ancestral dynasts of the Laigin (the now decrepit King Catháer and his dozen shameless sons) to a royal line based upon Kells and Tara (personified by the exemplary Cormac) with beneficial results (notably for Eithne and Buchet as symbols of sovereignty and the wellbeing vouchsafed by its proper exercise). The contemporary near-monopoly of a high-kingship based upon Tara by Cormac's alleged direct descendants, the Uí Néill, was thereby justified.

In *ETB* Catháer was king of Leinster and Ireland for fifty years until succeeded in the latter role by Cormac, the recently installed king of Tara. It follows that Cormac's father, Art, was king of Tara only. Art and his father Conn reigned over Ireland for a combined total of fifty years straight after Catháer according to *Ríg Érenn* above, but an alternative view made Catháer and Conn contemporaries, the former as King of Ireland in Tara and the latter in nearby

[34] E.g. 'Cormac's Dream' (see Carney 1940: 190–5: 192, §§5, 6): 'Cormac was asleep … it seemed to him that Echu Gunnat came to Tara … He sees his own wife, i.e. Eithne Thóebfoda, sleeping with Echu Gunnat and fornicating repeatedly with him and coming (back) to him himself (Cormac) afterwards … His druids and wise men are brought to him … " … your wife's sleeping with him, what it signifies is your kingship which will sleep with him and he will only be one year in the sovereignty (*flaithius*) of Tara" …'.

[35] This obvious implication is confirmed elsewhere: 'Odras … was a mighty female hospitaller (*ban-briugaid*) … fair wife with shapeliness to stout cattle-owning Buchat. Buchat was worshipful Cormac's keeper of cows (*bó-aire*) with might' (cf. Gwynn 1924: 196–7 (*Odras*)). In view of Cormac's similar generosity in *ETB* towards Buchet and Odrán, the latter may have been given a name based on that of the former's wife.

Kells. The author of *ETB* may well have regarded Conn too as a king of Tara but not of the whole island. This would be midway between a pro-Laigin claim that Catháer was King of Tara and Ireland for fifty years, while Conn and Art merely occupied nearby Kells, and pro-Uí Néill tendencies to make the latter pair Catháer's successors in both kingships and even shorten his reign over Ireland to just three years or eliminate it by reducing him to king of Leinster only. Ó Cathasaigh (1977: 75) contends that 'Cormac's wedding to Ethne is a validation of his claim to the kingship rather than his first assumption of it' because 'in terms of the myth of king and goddess this would signify that Cormac becomes king' but 'we are told that Cormac is already king when he first meets Ethne'. This is not impossible *per se*, but there is an alternative. Medb Lethderg's role was much reduced in *ETB* in comparison with *CC* and other texts underpinning Ó Máille's case that Medb symbolised the sovereignty of Ireland typically obtained along with the Tara kingship by mating with her. Since the kingships of Tara and Ireland are not inseparable in *ETB*, it may be that Eithne Thóebḟota, as the Laginian King of Ireland's daughter, personified Ireland's sovereignty and Medb Lethderg Tara's alone in its archetype. As seen by Carney above, Cormac's marriage endowed his descendants (notably the Uí Néill) with a Síl Cuinn pedigree on his side and a Laginian one on his wife's, a combination well attuned to Uí Néill claims over Leinster (cf. Byrne 1973: 143–8).

This hypothesis of Medb/Tara and Eithne/Ireland is incompatible with Greene's (1955: 31) reading *riasu no:gabad ríge nÉrenn* 'before he could take the kingship of Ireland' at ll. 555–6 near the beginning of the Odrán episode, where Cormac is in Kells because Medb would not allow him into Tara after his father's death. However, 'of Ireland' is found only in R^2 and H, in both of which Catháer is only king of Leinster. Consequently, it cannot have been in **A** or even **L**. LL and Y simply have *ríge* 'kingship', while **R** has *rígi Temra* 'kingship of Tara'. The stemma above makes it likely that **R** has retained **A**'s reading and that *Temra* was omitted at **L**, paving the way for the addition of *nÉrenn*[36] in R^2 and H, once Catháer had been deprived of his status as king of Ireland at the node shared by them and Y. Alternatively, unqualified *ríge* in **A** could have been specified by *Temra* in **R**. Either way, *ETB*'s chronology implies that, when Medb Lethderg was 'at Art's side' (*i fail Airt*), he was king of Tara but not yet of Ireland, since the latter position was filled by Catháer of Leinster. It follows that the sovereignty embodied by Medb in *ETB* was over Tara alone and not all Ireland, an inference uncontradicted by the original wording of the relevant passage. Significantly, the woman described as being 'at Cormac's side' (*i fail Chormaic*) was Eithne after his acknowledgment ($II^{(3)}$) of their son

[36] The retention of nasalisation after *ríge* (neuter in OIr., but acc. here in any case) is not unduly surprising in a set phrase like this. In Middle Irish, a masc. noun could still nasalise in the acc. sg., and old masc. nouns sometimes even hypercorrectly nasalised in the nom. sg. See McCone 2005: 179.

and his successor, Cairbe Lifechair, after wresting the 'kingship' (of Tara) from Medb (II$^{(1)}$). That being so, the contrast in the Odrán episode (II$^{(1)}$) between **R**'s *fothugud do ríg* and unanimous *fothugud do ríg Érenn* on **L**'s side of the stemma looks like a further instance where **R** alone has preserved **A**'s reading unchanged. **L**'s added 'of Ireland' here, even if initially meant as no more than Odrán's premonition, was almost bound to suggest that Cormac became King of Tara and Ireland simultaneously and trigger further changes in that direction at different points on **L**'s side of the stemma.

Notwithstanding such responses to divergent and evolving views of the holders of and relationship between the kingships of Ireland, Tara and Leinster, the textual indications are that *ETB* originally split Cormac's kingly progress into two stages. Firstly, he became King of Tara by overcoming Medb's opposition, the means being passed over in discreet silence. Secondly, he became King of Ireland by marrying Eithne and recognising her child as his son and heir. This scheme places the Tara kingship (*ríge Temra*) in the hands of the Síl Cuinn since the time of its eponymous ancestor, Conn Cétchathach, but makes his grandson Cormac the first of the line to combine it with the kingship of Ireland (*ríge nÉrenn*) claimed by his supposed Uí Néill descendants at the time of *ETB*'s composition.

II. The Odyssey

Analysis has so far been confined to *Esnada Tige Buchet* in the light of relevant early medieval Irish aspirations, circumstances and narrative conventions. Since the results explicate its contemporary message satisfactorily, this would be a reasonable point to stop. That said, an avenue of further comparison is opened by parallels, hitherto unnoticed in print (note *), with the *Odyssey*. There Ithaca appears as a realm where the effective lack of a king has emboldened high-born but licentious young men to pay constant visits to the home of the woman charged with selecting the next ruler, thereby seriously depleting its wealth by excessive demands for hospitality.

Catháer's impotence was due to the frailty of old age. Odysseus was still in the prime of life but had been away from his kingdom for twenty years, missing in unknown parts since his departure for home ten years previously after the fall of Troy. Catháer's weakness had left his twelve sons free to inflict repeated unruly visits, excessive demands and depredations upon the household of their sister's guardian. After seventeen years, Odysseus' presumed death had burdened the royal palace with a dozen Ithacan ἄριστοι 'nobles' and ninety-six (8x12) κοῦροι (κεκριμένοι) '(choice) youths' from neighbouring islands as suitors of his apparent widow, Penelope, who was to choose one of them as her second husband and Ithaca's next king (*Od.* xvi, 247–51). As Vidal-Naquet (1986: 25) puts it, 'the three generations of the royal family are represented by an old man (whose exclusion from the throne becomes slightly mysterious

when we compare him with Nestor), a woman, and an adolescent youth, who is portrayed as slightly backward. A society upside down, a society in a crisis symbolized by the revolt of the *kouroi*, the young aristocrats, and waiting for the reestablishment of order'.

The suitors' outrageous behaviour and constant slaughter of stock for daily feasts are a recurrent theme. For instance, at the first Ithacan assembly held since Odysseus' departure, his son Telemachus bemoaned 'the twofold evil that has befallen my house (οἶκος). First, I lost a good father, who once reigned (βασίλευε) among you here and was kind as a father, but now (there is) a much greater one that **will soon utterly ruin the house(hold) (οἶκος) and will completely destroy its substance (βίοτος)**. **Suitors** have importuned my mother against her will, the dear sons of the men who are the best/noblest (ἄριστοι) here, who have shrunk from going off to the house of her father Icarius, so that he might betroth his daughter and give her to whomsoever he wishes and finds pleasing. These, **coming to our house daily and slaughtering cattle, sheep and fat goats, revel and drink sparkling wine recklessly**. Many things are used up – **for there remains no one such as Odysseus was to ward ruin off from the house(hold)**' (*Od.* ii, 45–59). Odysseus' kingly excellence is a repeated counterpoint to the suitors' depravity, as when Mentor contrasts his kind and considerate rule with their violent and greedy behaviour (*Od.* ii, 230–8). Penelope similarly grieves for her 'good lion-hearted husband surpassingly endowed with manifold excellences/virtues (ἀρεταί)' (*Od.* iv, 724–5) after upbraiding her suitors as '(you) who gather frequently and consume much substance, the property of sensible Telemachus, and did not formerly hear as children from your fathers what Odysseus was like with your parents, never having done or said anything im-proper (ἐξ-αίσιον) to anyone among the people. It is the wont of divine kings (that) they hate one man and may love another, but he absolutely never did a man wrong (ἀτάσθαλον). However, your disposition and unseemly deeds are manifest and there is no gratitude for good deeds afterwards' (*Od.* iv, 686–95). The steadily maturing Telemachus' keen sense of propriety sets him apart from the suitors, as when his concern for the hospitality due to a visiting stranger (ξεῖνος, the goddess Athena in disguise) contrasts with their selfish indifference in the first Ithacan scene (*Od.* i, 102–319).

Like Eithne's importunate brothers, Penelope's inconsiderate suitors show themselves quite unfit for the over-kingship to which they aspire. The ruin inflicted by an enfeebled old king's sons drives Buchet and the king's daughter, Eithne, away into the arms of the virtuous Cormac. In the Odyssey, two male paragons of virtue belong to Ithaca's royal house, but the dissolute young aristocrats pressing their unwanted suit upon Penelope do not, as Telemachus makes clear: 'all the best/noblest people (ἄριστοι) who have power on the islands of Dulichium, Same and woody Zacynthus and who hold sway amidst rugged Ithaca are wooing my mother and wasting the household (οἶκος). She, however, neither rejects a detestable marriage nor brings herself to conclude

one. Meanwhile they eat me out of house and home and will soon destroy me myself' (*Od.* i, 245–51). Returning home after a very long and a short absence abroad, Odysseus and his son combine to avert their house's ruin by slaying the wanton suitors, the former regaining his wife and the over-kingship of Ithaca.

ETB and the *Odyssey* share: a female bestower of sovereignty (Eithne/Penelope) connected (daughter/wife) to the king (Catháer/Odysseus); a good claimant (Cormac/Odysseus) destined to succeed, contrasting with many bad ones (Eithne's brothers/Penelope's suitors) doomed to fail; a son (Cairbre/Telemachus) vital to his father's (Cormac/Odysseus) recovery of the kingship; and periods spent away from home by two principals (Buchet and Eithne/Odysseus and Telemachus). There are major differences too. In *ETB*, the failings of a weak old king and his depraved sons force his daughter to flee with her wronged guardian, and sovereignty passes to an admirable outsider when she marries Cormac. In the *Odyssey*, by contrast, the outsiders are depraved, the virtuous lost king and his dutiful son return from abroad at about the same time, and the king's distressed wife stays home resisting another marriage until happily reunited with her husband, who regains his throne after slaying her suitors with his son's help.

As long as their father was still alive, Catháer's sons would normally have neither inherited property[37] nor married. **R**'s comment, lacking in **L** (and **M**), that they were 'without wife, without inheritance' might derive from the archetype but seems more likely[38] to have been an obvious inference made by a later redactor. Either way, their legal status would be that of a *fer midbad* aged 'from fourteen years to the twentieth, to encircling beard (*cúairt-ulchai(d)*; *sic leg.*)' and equated with an *óen-chiniud* 'sole kin(sman)', who is defined as 'a man (*fer*) who does not cultivate property or land for himself' (*CG* 3, ll. 66–7 and 72–3). Attainment of this minimum age and an adequate inheritance were twin requirements for progress to full legal competence, which could not take place 'though it be that he have assumed cow-freemanship (*bó-airechas*) before he be encircling-bearded (*cúairdd-ulchach*)' or conversely 'though he be without acquisition of inheritance (*orbae*) until old age (*críne*)' (*CG* 3, ll. 67–70; cf. McCone 1990: 203–5). The *fer midbad* or *óenchiniud* was unmarried as a rule, to judge from the non-mention of a wife in the long section about him (*CG* 2–4, ll. 39–46 and 63–86), unlike those covering the succeeding propertied grades of *óc-aire* 'young freeman', *aithech ara·threba a deich* 'commoner who cultivates his ten' and *bó-aire* 'cow-freeman' (*CG* 4–5, esp. l. 124; 5–6, esp. l. 144; 7–8, esp.

[37] 'On a man's death the general rule is that his property passes automatically to his dutiful sons' but the behaviour of Catháer's sons would jeopardise this insofar as 'criminal or unfilial behaviour also deprives a son of his right of inheritance' (Kelly 1988: 122 and 103).

[38] R's *cen fuithchius cen forbba* (with "prosthetic" *f*; cf. note 27) = *cen aithchis cen orbae*, the former a rare and rather late feminine derivative of *aithech*; cf. the married *aithech ara·threba a deich* mentioned just below.

ll. 199–200). *Óenchinidi* appear as a band of naked beserk-type warriors in the saga *Táin Bó Flidais* (McCone 1990: 205) and, whether a survival or an inference from **A**, **R**'s allusion to the scores of warriors (*láech*) accompanying Catháer's sons links them with warbands. The old king's unruly male offspring are, then, implicitly or explicitly identified as propertiless and unmarried aristocrats: precisely the constituency for recruitment as youths into a *fían* or hunting and raiding sodality, where they remained until an inheritance, typically from a father upon his death, gave them the means to leave, settle down and marry (McCone 1990: 205–20). Despite differences in wording, **R** and **L** (and hence **A**) agree on the repeated theft of Buchet's stock by Catháer's sons, an activity fully in keeping with the profile of *fían*-members or *féinnidi*.

As unbridled exponents of a youthful unmarried lifestyle, Catháer's sons are the diametric opposite of their old father near the end of a half-century reign over Ireland. Cormac, the outsider destined to succeed him, stands between these extremes. A relatively young adult,[39] he has just secured and enhanced his recently deceased father's estate, including the Tara kingship, by displaying the desirable kingly qualities of forcefulness and fairness to overcome the resistance of Medb[40] and Odrán. He goes on to acquire the kingship of Ireland by marrying Eithne after fathering his own successor upon her. The royal protagonists in *Esnada Tige Buchet* thus represent three stages in a full aristocratic career: (1) propertiless bachelor (Catháer's sons), (2) married man of property (Cormac), (3) old man (Catháer). In structuralist terms (see below), the new king occupies the middle ground between binary opposites (1 and 3) and is himself a transitional figure who moves into the mediating slot (2) by securing possession of Tara against Medb, his father's widow, ($\Pi^{(1)}$) and then rule over Ireland through marriage to Eithne, the old king's daughter ($\Pi^{(3)}$).

In the *Odyssey*, not only are the same three phases represented by (1) the suitors/Telemachus, (2) Odysseus and (3) Laertes, his retired father, but Odysseus and his son also make transitions between them (see below). Jeanmaire (1939: 1–111) has shown that three Greek and Trojan age-grades are recognised in the Iliad, namely children (παῖδες), active fighting men (νέοι, κοῦροι, λαοί or collective λαός[41]) and retired old men (γέροντες), and that a κοῦρος was not only 'a warrior or a young warrior' but also an 'aristocratic warrior' (29). The middle grade includes married men and young bachelors (νέοι, κοῦροι etc.). These may be more clearly distinguished elsewhere,[42] but the mainspring of the

[39] According to his birth-tales (note 29), his mother conceived him from Art just before the latter's death in battle against Mac Con, who was directly succeeded by Cormac after giving a false judgment. Mac Con reigned for thirty years according to the king-list *Ríg Érenn* cited above in section Ib but is ignored in *ETB*.

[40] A military engagement is implied by the relevant stanzas (25–30) of *CC* (Power 1916: 42–3) cited earlier in section Ib.

[41] See Benveniste 1969: vol. 2, 90–5, on *laós*, *laoí*.

[42] See, for instance, Michell 1964: 135–46 and 165–74, on Sparta, and Strabo (x, 4, 20–2) on Crete.

Iliad's plot is a conflict between their chief representatives, (2) Agamemnon and (1) Achilles. When this flares up in the first book of the Iliad, it is (3) old King Nestor who attempts to defuse it, albeit in vain.

Νέοι ὑπερηνοέοντες 'overweening young men' is a stock description of Penelope's suitors (e.g. *Od.* ii, 324 and 331, xvii, 482), and the above passage (*Od.* xvi, 247–51) puts their total at one hundred and eight κοῦροι who are 'all (πάντες) ἄριστοι'. Penelope addresses them as κοῦροι, ἐμοὶ μνηστῆρες 'youths, my suitors' (*Od.* ii, 96, and xxiv, 131) and Odysseus refers to the local contingent as 'much the best/noblest of the youths (μέγ' ἄριστοι κούρων) in Ithaca' (*Od.* xxiii, 121–2). They were obviously unmarried, and the activities expected of such a band emerge from the question put by Agamemnon's spirit to a guest-friend (ξεῖνος; *Od.* xxiv, 104 and 114) of his among the dead suitors' ghosts: 'Amphimedon, after what experience have you (pl.) descended into the dark earth, all being choice (κεκριμένοι) and of the same age (ὁμήλικες)? For not without purpose would one select and pick out the best men (ἄνδρες ἄριστοι) throughout a city. Did Poseidon overwhelm you in ships after stirring up woeful winds and long waves? Or did hostile men fighting for their city or their women destroy you on land as you were rustling cattle or beautiful herds of sheep?' (*Od.* xxiv, 106–13). Penelope's suitors resemble Eithne's siblings in being 'the dear sons (φίλοι υἷες) of those men (ἄνδρες) who are best/noblest here' (*Od.* ii, 51). Their fathers were evidently still alive and one of them, Eupeithes, spearheaded the move to avenge their deaths (*Od.* xxiv, 422–37). Having yet to inherit estates of their own, Penelope's wooers and Eithne's brothers were tempted to latch onto the resources of others. In the Odyssey, unlike *ETB*, the unruly bachelors are represented as youths of the same age who are eager to marry. According to Strabo (x, 4, 20) a joint wedding was enjoined in ancient Crete upon those departing together from an ἀγέλη 'drove, herd', a band of older boys recruited for purposes such as hunting, racing and fighting away from home and fed at public expense.

The last slot (3) belongs to Odysseus' father and predecessor, Laertes, as an old man in strict retirement. Since old age did not prevent Nestor from ruling Pylos in harmony at the head of a royal family consisting of a wife, daughters and six surviving sons (e.g. *Od.* iii, 405–78), Laertes' failure to resume rule over Ithaca during Odysseus' absence has understandably puzzled scholars such as Vidal-Naquet above and Finley (1967: 59; cf. Heubeck, West & Hainsworth 1988: 100–1). For whatever reason, the 'hero' Laertes avoided the town and tended his estate (*Od.* i, 188–93) in wretched 'old age' (γῆρας) as a widower grieving for his missing son (*Od.* xi, 187–203), who found him 'oppressed by old age (γῆρας)' and addressed him as 'old man (γέρων)' (*Od.* xxiv, 232–3 and 244).

Odysseus himself is firmly placed in the intermediate slot (2) by references to his status as king (e.g. *Od.* ii, 46–7), his recent marriage to Penelope (*Od.* xi, 446–8) and their new-born son (*Od.* iv, 112 and 144, and xi, 448–9) when he set off twenty years earlier for Troy. After ten years there, his return home was

postponed for a further decade by Poseidon in revenge for the blinding of his son, the man-eating cyclops Polyphemus (*Od.* i, 68–75).

Plato (*Rep.* 565d) and Pausanias (viii, 2, 6; cf. vi, 8, 2) record that Arcadian youths who tasted human flesh at a sacrifice to Lycaean or 'Wolfish' Zeus had to spend nine years in the wilds as 'wolves' (Burkert 1983: 84–93). Moreover, 'the structure of Odysseus' "sufferings" obviously corresponds to the werewolf pattern … Odysseus' life reaches a turning point when he witnesses that "unspeakable" cannibalistic meal in the cave, far from human civilization … Odysseus escapes … and like the Arcadian werewolf, he must linger in unknown lands for nine years before being able to return home' (Burkert 1983: 133). Odysseus' wanderings were triggered by events in the mountain cave of a wild one-eyed cannibal, from which he and his surviving men escaped under the bellies of woolly rams (*Od.* ix, 425–66). After seven years on an island with the nymph Calypso, Odysseus was finally allowed to build a boat and leave. When this was wrecked, he stripped off his clothes (*Od.* v, 372), plunged into the sea and made land after a three-day swim. He thus returned exhausted and denuded to civilisation. Awakened after a night's sleep in a thicket (v, 475–93) by the cries of the princess Nausicaa and her handmaidens, Odysseus emerged naked (γυμνός) apart from a leafy branch covering his genitals (vi, 127–36). He was then clothed (vi, 214 and 228) before visiting the city. Burkert (1983: 90) observes that 'stripping off one's clothes and swimming across a lake are clearly rites of passage' with reference to another Arcadian ritual: 'Someone from the kindred of a certain Anthus chosen by lot … is led to a certain pond in that region and, having hung his clothing on an oak, swims across and goes away into the wilderness and is changed into a wolf and joins a pack with the others of the same kind for nine years … If he abstain from human flesh in that time, he returns to the same lake and, when he has swum across, recovers his appearance with the addition of nine years' ageing … [and] gets back the same garment' (Pliny, *Nat. hist.* viii, 81). The parallel with Odysseus is evident, both swimmers exemplifying Lévi-Strauss' tenet that, as Csapo (2005: 228) puts it, 'clothing is a mediator between culture and nature: naked we are all children of nature; clothed we are fully products of culture'.

Odysseus' travels trace a regression, initiated by a cannibalistic encounter in the wilds, from king and married man of property to propertiless wanderer cut off from home and family. This was terminated by a naked swim to land and presentation with clothes, food and drink (*Od.* vi, 246–50) before admission into the Phaeacians' highly civilised urban environment. There King Alcinous offered him his nubile daughter Nausicaa's hand in marriage, should he be willing to remain (vii, 311–16), even before he had finally revealed his true identity (ix, 19–21) and narrated his travels (ix–xii). Having received hospitality and gifts, Odysseus sailed home in a Phaeacian ship, the young crew of which put their sleeping passenger ashore in Ithaca and stowed his goods in a safe place before leaving (*Od.* xiii, 70–125). Restoration to his proper state (2) was short-lived and Odysseus was now disguised by Athena as a shabby beggar with

the physique of an old man (γέρων) belonging to phase 3 (xiii, 429–38). After a brief revelation of his true self to Telemachus (xvi, 172–9), he was turned back (xvi, 456–7) into a scruffy old man (γέρων), entering the royal palace as a beggar and maintaining this guise until he had won the archery contest. Then, casting off his rags, he stripped naked (γυμνώθη) (*Od.* xxii, 1) and fought furiously, like the *óenchinidi* in *Táin Bó Flidais* above. He had identified himself to the suitors before slaying them all, and his transformation was then completed: he was bathed and clothed by the housekeeper (xxiii, 153–5), restored to his previous physique with some enhancement by Athena (xxiii, 156–63), recognised by the initially incredulous Penelope and reunited with her in their old marriage-bed (164–301). The sequence passed through by Odysseus in the twenty years since leaving the palace (basically 2⟶1⟶3) was thus swiftly reversed after his reappearance there (3⟶1⟶2) on the way to recovery of the throne.

The council of gods at the start of the Odyssey ends with Athena announcing a visit to Ithaca in order to get Telemachus to call an assembly, reject the profligate suitors, and visit Sparta and Pylos for news of his father and gaining 'good repute (κλέος) among men' (*Od.* i, 88–95). Telemachus' encounter with Athena in the guise of Mentes (i, 113–324) is a watershed roughly coinciding with his reaching twenty.[43] In the course of it he voices despair regarding his father's fate and the future of his house but, on leaving, she 'put strength (μένος) and courage (θάρσος) in his spirit (θυμός)' (i, 320–1). The surprise at his subsequent assertiveness suggests that it was uncharacteristic. He began by contradicting his mother and ordering her back to her quarters with the admonition that 'talk shall occupy men as a whole but especially me, to whom power (κράτος) in the house belongs', whereupon she withdrew 'astonished (θαμβήσασα)' (i, 358–60). The implication that she had hitherto been in charge of the household is confirmed elsewhere.[44] More consternation was caused by Telemachus' declared intention of holding an assembly and urging the suitors to leave his home and property alone, as also by his resolve that, whoever became king (βασιλεύς) of Ithaca, 'I shall be the ruler (ἄναξ) of our house' (i, 365–98). The next day, Telemachus excited admiration at the first assembly for twenty years but did not prevail against the suitors or secure a ship and 'twenty companions (ἑταῖροι)' (*Od.* ii, 212) for a trip to Sparta and Pylos. Athena answered his prayer and, in Mentor's form, acquired a crew and vessel, in which they all slipped away by night at the end of the book.

Questioned by the suitors, the provider of the ship calls Telemachus' followers 'κοῦροι who are best/noblest among the people (δῆμος) after us' (*Od.* iv,

[43] He was a baby at his mother's breast when his father left for Troy (*Od.* iv, 112 and 144, and xi, 448–9).

[44] Penelope had not, for instance, allowed him to give orders to the female slaves (*Od.* xxii, 426–7), and had continued to run the household rather than marrying and leaving home 'as long as my child was still immature (νήπιος) and irresponsible' (*Od.* xix, 524–31).

652) and, after arrival in Pylos, Mentor/Athena says to Nestor: 'I shall go to the black ship to encourage the companions and tell them everything. For I claim to be the older one (γεραίτερος) among them and the others follow through affection (φιλότης) (being) younger men (νεώτεροι ἄνδρες), all of the same age (ὁμηλικίη) as great-hearted Telemachus' (iii, 360–4). The human participants in this peaceful expedition are young κοῦροι of the same age like the suitors, whose ghosts were taken for a raiding party by Agamemnon's wraith above. Whereas Telemachus seems never to have been away from home before, his father still bore a scar from a boar that he had killed on a hunt with his uncles during a visit paid, on reaching puberty (ἡβήσας), to his maternal grandsire, Autolycus 'Werewolf', in order to obtain the splendid gifts promised to him as a child (*Od.* xix, 386–475). Although Telemachus is still capable of declaring 'I myself am young (νέος) and do not yet trust in (the strength of) my hands to ward off a(n adult) man (ἀνήρ), when someone first gets angry' (xvi, 71–2; cf. xxi, 132–3), his return from his trip is followed by the first references to an evidently new beard (xviii, 175–6 and 269, cited below). His beard and age recall *Críth Gablach*'s statement above that one remains an unmarried *fer midbad* 'to the twentieth [year], to encircling beard' and Pindar's (*Olympian* i, 67–9) account of the young Pelops' thoughts turning to marriage when hair covers his chin. Telemachus' attainment of manhood was precisely what Antinous, the suitors' vicious ringleader, wished to prevent by ambushing him on the way home. Hence his imprecation (*Od.* iv, 667–8) 'but let Zeus destroy his very life before he reaches the (full) measure of youth (ἥβης μέτρον)', a coming of age explicitly associated with marriage in the *Iliad*.[45] Penelope recalls Odysseus' injunction, if he should not return from Troy, that 'when you see that our child (παῖς) has got a beard (γενειήσας), marry whoever you wish after leaving your home' (*Od.* xviii, 269–70). She soon acknowledges that it is time for her son to take over and for her to move on: 'my parents strongly urge me to marry, and my child (πάϊς) is vexed to see them [the suitors] consuming his livelihood – for he is already a man (ἀνήρ) eminently fitted to take care of the house' (xix, 158–61). She explains to the still disguised Odysseus that 'my spirit is torn asunder this way and that, (as to) whether I should stay with my child (παῖς) and keep everything steady – my property, the slave-women and the great high-roofed house – respecting my husband's marriage-bed and public opinion, or should now follow the best of the Achaeans to woo me in the palace, providing countless bridal gifts. For as long as my child (παῖς) was still immature (νήπιος) and irresponsible, he would not let me marry after leaving my husband's house. But now that he is big (μέγας) and approaching the (full) measure of youth (ἥβης μέτρον), he beseeches me to withdraw from the palace, being distressed on account of the property that the Achaeans devour' (xix, 524–31).

[45] xi, 225–6: Iphidamas was fostered by his maternal grandfather, who 'when he reached the (full) measure of glorious youth (ἐπεί ῥ' ἥβης ἐρικυδέος ἵκετο μέτρον), kept him at home and gave him his daughter'.

The surviving male members of Ithaca's royal family thus belong to three different generations: (1) a recently bearded youth on the verge of manhood but not yet married or in real charge of a household, (2) a militarily active married man of property, and (3) an old man in retirement. The Odyssey ends at Laertes' estate, where he and his son and grandson, supported by just nine retainers, confront Eupeithes at the head of the many disaffected Ithacans remaining after over half of the citizens had been deterred from action by a warning that Odysseus enjoyed divine support (*Od.* xxiv, 413–71). Athena arrived in Mentor's form and 'breathed great might (μένος μέγα)' into old Laertes, who slew Eupeithes with a cast of his spear. Odysseus and Telemachus then attacked the enemy and would have killed them all, had the goddess not intervened (xxiv, 502–32). The prophet Teiresias' ghost (*Od.* xi, 121–37) had predicted that Odysseus would die in old age amidst his 'happy/prosperous people' (λαοὶ ὄλβιοι), and the epic ends (xxiv, 546–8) with Athena/Mentor carrying out Zeus' command: 'since godlike Odysseus has taken vengeance upon the suitors, let them ratify trusty oaths (ὅρκια πιστά) and let him reign permanently, while we instil forgetfulness of the killing of sons and brothers, and let them love each other as before and let there be wealth (πλοῦτος) and peace (εἰρήνη) aplenty' (xxiv, 482–6).

In her detailed and perceptive analysis of the epic, de Jong (2001: 466) effectively sees its ideological heart in Odysseus' enumeration of the benefits of a just king's rule (*Od.* xix, 107–14, cited in V below) insofar as it 'points to what the Odyssey is about: Odysseus' homecoming and the re-establishment of his rule, which will restore stability and peace on Ithaca'. Odysseus' glowing description leads Benveniste (1969: vol. 2, 26) to concede that 'in the Homeric concept of kingship there survive representations that reappear in some fashion in other Indo-European societies', although he had previously argued (9–26) that inherited notions of kingship are best preserved at the eastern and western extremities of the Indo-European world in the only IE branches (Indic, Italic and Celtic) to inherit reflexes of the (Proto-)Indo-European "*rex*" word for 'king' (9–15) and that significant institutional and conceptual modifications are betokened by the introduction of new terms elsewhere, not least in Greek with its 'two names for king, *basileús* (βασιλεύς) and *wánaks* (wάναξ)' (23) derived via Mycenaean from a patently non-IE source. Evidence will be presented below that, notwithstanding palpable changes in terminology,[46] there was greater continuity between Homeric and PIE concepts and representations of kingship

[46] For example, Myc. *wa-na-ka* /wanaks/ could have been taken over from a pre-Greek population along with an institutional admixture ranging anywhere from slight to extensive or just adopted as a prestigious term without significantly affecting the native Greek institution. Even if Mycenaean kingship were primarily indebted to external influences, the shift from Myc. *qa-si-re-u* /g^{w}asileus/ denoting a mere local official (e.g. Benveniste 1969: vol. 2, 24–5) to Hom. and Class. Gk. βασιλεύς 'king' presumably reflects changed circumstances after the collapse of Mycenaean civilisation, perhaps including the diffusion of a more localised type of "petty" kingship

than Benveniste thought. Moreover, his procedure in this particular case is not only questionable on account of the lack of an inherent connection between linguistic form and meaning but also at odds with his own methodological manifesto: 'we have not sought at all to remake an inventory of Indo-European realities insofar as they are defined by major lexical correspondences. On the contrary, most of the facts that we discuss do not belong to the common vocabulary. They are specific as terms for institutions, but in particular languages, and it is their origin and their Indo-European connection that we analyse' (Benveniste 1969: vol. 1, 9).

At all events, the restoration of Ithaca's peace and prosperity followed from the reconstitution of its kingship, with divine sanction (from Zeus) and support (from Athena), by the combined efforts of three successive generations of the royal house. The restored king (Odysseus) was not only flanked by representatives (Telemachus and Laertes respectively) of the younger and the older generation but had also shown his own transgenerational credentials as a wanderer abroad and an old beggar. In *Esnada Tige Buchet*, the royal protagonists – (1) Cathaer's sons, (2) Cormac and (3) Cathaer – likewise belong to three sequential age-grades but Cathaer's line is from Leinster and Cormac belongs to the Síl Cuinn. In this case, a properly endowed new king of Ireland (2) emerges from the latter after Leinster's generations 1 and 3 have proved unfit. Buchet is the barometer of Ireland's condition: ruin befalls him and Ireland[47] because Cathaer cannot check his sons' outrages, but his wealth and happiness[48] are restored by Cormac's marriage to Eithne. The (re)gaining of a wife and sovereignty by Cormac and Odysseus greatly improves the fortunes of their respective kingdoms.

Given that borrowing is excluded by the Homeric epics' unavailability in early medieval Western Europe and by the lack of a plausible alternative source, the substantial similarities between the *Odyssey* and *ETB* documented above are presumably due to coincidence/convergence (the latter, if typologically motivated) or shared (IE) inheritance, or to a combination of both. Since diffusion by borrowing, coincidence/convergence and common inheritance are not mutually exclusive *a priori*, a decision between them in any given instance perforce depends upon the nature of the evidence, and 'the comparative method remains the best means of establishing the presumption of a given feature's prehistoric provenance' in IE terms despite 'its far less efficient applicability to culture and

with IE roots in the wake of West Greek immigration. The basic point is that, in themselves, the survival of an old word for 'king' or the introduction of new ones do not permit reliable inferences about the conservative or innovatory nature of the institution itself and should not be automatically privileged over textual evidence, as Benveniste recognised in the case of Odysseus' description above.

[47] Note his question 'how has fell destruction befallen the land of Ireland?' at the beginning of the rhetoric addressed by him to Cathaer.

[48] Cf. the reference to his *gen gáre* 'laughing smile' (Greene 1955: l. 545) in the epilogue echoing his *gen fáilte* 'smile of joy/welcome' (l. 497) according to Cathaer in the second rhetoric.

semantics than to linguistic forms' (McCone 1990: 257). Accordingly, the remainder of this study will compare and consider material in Medieval Irish and other early Indo-European languages deemed relevant to the reconstruction of a particular set of Proto-Indo-European myths treating different facets of the transmission of sovereignty within a broader social and ideological framework. This undertaking calls for some prefatory remarks on basic methodological assumptions.

The "functionalist" thesis of an intimate relationship between a people's myths, rites and social order[49] is not only demonstrably valid *per se*, at least as an observable tendency, but also provides a framework for supporting mythical reconstructions with ritual and societal parallels in a mutually corroborative nexus. The preeminent exponent of a "structuralist" approach to anthropology and mythology has introduced a crucial qualification: 'this correspondence is not necessarily an exact reproduction; it can also appear as a logical transformation. If the problem is presented in straight terms … the overt content of the myth, the plot, can borrow its elements from social life itself' but 'the relationship is of a dialectic kind, and the institutions described in the myths can be the very opposite of the real institutions', notably 'when the myth is trying to express a negative truth' (Lévi-Strauss 1978: 204 and 172).[50] For instance, in the story of Asdiwal recorded from the Tshimshian, who combine a matrilineal kinship with a patrilocal marriage pattern,[51] 'it is not a question of an accurate documentary picture of the reality of native life, but a sort of counterpoint

[49] Enunciated in a study by a major formative influence, Malinowski (1926: 11): 'The thesis of the present work is that an intimate connection exists between the word, the mythos, the sacred tales of a tribe on the one hand, and their ritual acts, their moral deeds, their social organization, and even their practical activities on the other'. See Kirk 1970: 8–31 for a discussion of 'myth, religion and ritual' that rightly rejects the circularity of 'trying to confine the term "myth" to tales associated in some way with sacred rituals' (29).

[50] The following articles in this collection (which gives individual publication details) are particularly germane here (pagination in the collection and date of original publication in brackets): 'Structure and form: reflections on a work by Vladimir Propp' (115–45; 1960), 'The story of Asdiwal' (146–97; 1958), 'Four Winnebago myths' (198–210; 1960), 'Relations of symmetry between rituals and myths of neighboring peoples' (238–55; 1971) and 'How myths die' (256–68; 1971). His analysis of the permutations differentiating the Winnebago myths leads Lévi-Strauss to identify three positive versions and a negative one (see 1978: 210 for a tabular summary, and McCone 1984 on a similar relationship between two medieval Irish tales and a third one). The discussion here concentrates upon issues deemed relevant to the comparison and reconstruction of myths rather than upon the overall theoretical approaches of Lévi-Strauss and others to myth, concise treatments of which may readily be found elsewhere: e.g. Vernant 1980: 207–42, McCone 1990: 55–62, Segal 2004, and Csapo 2005.

[51] Hence Tshimshian 'children, although they belong to their mother's clan, are brought up in their father's home and not in that of their maternal kin', and there was 'a

which seems sometimes to be in harmony with this reality, and sometimes to part from it in order to rejoin it again' (Lévi-Strauss 1978: 155). The tale opens with an all-female ménage formed by a widowed mother and her daughter, who meet and live together midway between their deceased husbands' respective settlements, and ends with its all-male inverse when Asdiwal leaves his wife to live in his childhood home with their son before being trapped on a mountain's summit while hunting and turned to stone there, midway between earth and heaven. Lévi-Strauss (1978: 163–4) identifies the following 'sociological schema' centring upon switches between (socially normal) patrilocal and (socially abnormal) matrilocal marriage: 'to start with, the patrilocal residence [of the two women before widowhood] prevails. It gives way progressively to the matrilocal residence (Hatsenas' marriage [to the daughter, the result being Asdiwal]), which becomes deadly (Asdiwal's marriage in heaven), then merely hostile (the marriage in the land of the People of the Firs), before weakening and finally reversing (marriage among the People of the Channel) to allow a return to patrilocal residence'.

Propp's "formalist" analysis of folktales in terms of linear sequences selected from a total of 31 basic "functions" (each with a number of different but equivalent possible surface realisations) was largely neglected outside Russia for some thirty years until an English translation (Propp 1958)[52] made it more accessible. Lévi-Strauss (1978: 126–7) welcomed the idea of a "horizontal" axis of linear plot intersected at key points by "vertical" axes of interchangeable content (sometimes termed the "syntagm(atic)" and "paradigm(atic)" dimensions; e.g. Ó Cathasaigh 1977: 14–17) but noted a problem: 'Before formalism, we were certainly unaware of what these tales had in common. Since formalism, we have been deprived of any means of understanding how they differ' (Lévi-Strauss 1978: 133). This was due to the 'formalist dichotomy' between 'a form … and an arbitrary content' and its solution lay in recognising that 'content draws its reality from its structure' (Lévi-Strauss 1978: 131) as defined by binary oppositions and their mediations.[53] Although paradigmatic permutations were thus rendered significant, a myth's message was to be sought less

preference for marriage with the mother's brother's daughter' since 'boys grew up in their fathers' homes, but sooner or later they had to go over to their maternal uncle when they inherited his titles, prerogatives and hunting grounds' (Lévi-Strauss 1978: 155 and 168).

[52] See Hollo 2005: 19–27 for a convenient summary and application to several medieval Irish narratives. Unfortunately, the term "function" has been used quite differently by Propp, "functionalist" anthropologists and Dumézil (see note 80).

[53] E.g. Lévi-Strauss 1978: 135: 'In the myths and tales of North and South America, the same actions are attributed—depending on the tales—to different animals. To simplify, let us consider birds: … the eagle and the owl together are put in opposition to the raven, as predators to scavenger, while they are opposed to each other on the level of day and night … Thus, a "universe of the tale" will be … analyzable in pairs of oppositions, diversely combined within each character who—far from constituting

in its surface content and syntagmatic linear 'sequences' than in inferential 'schemata' articulated in various 'codes' (Lévi-Strauss 1978: 161–5; summary McCone 1990: 62): cf. the argument above that the age-grade schemes quite straightforwardly encoded in, and inferred from, the status and relationships of the male protagonists of *Esnada Tige Buchet* and the *Odyssey* make an essential contribution to the messages of both texts.

Thanks to the "dialectic" dynamic posited by structuralism and the socio-political catalysts allowed by functionalism, 'myths transform themselves' and 'these transformations—from one variant to another of the same myth, from one myth to another, from one society to another for the same myth or different myths—bear sometimes on the framework, sometimes on the code, sometimes on the message of the myth' (Lévi-Strauss 1978: 256). The scope for change appears daunting, but Lévi-Strauss has applied his methods of analysis and comparison to a wide range of myths from the Americas especially.[54] A key tool is the identification of *homology*, namely a single underlying set of relationships with two or more differing surface realisations (conditioned by switches of code etc.). A given homology may be replicated in divergent surface forms across different spheres (e.g. myth, ritual and social custom or institution), across different myths or versions of a myth (whether confined to one people or also found elsewhere), and/or between different levels (sequences and schemata) and segments (not necessarily contiguous) of a single myth. Since it transcends variations in code and content, a homology can survive *permutations* of these, whatever their effect on a myth's message. For instance, a homologous set concerned with the nature/culture dichotomy may prove impervious to changes of content accompanying a switch from a culinary (raw/cooked) to a sartorial (naked/clothed) code or *vice versa*. Even permutation by *inversion* does not necessarily disrupt homology. Its "global" application at key points can generate a myth's mirror image (in effect, a homologue in reverse) but retain its basic message in cautionary negative terms, while "local" inversions of number (5 youths/1 goddess versus 1 man/5 goddesses) or (im)mortality (5 king's sons/disguised goddess versus 5 lookalikes [4 disguised gods + 1 king]/king's daughter) do not fundamentally affect the encounter between mortal(s) and disguised immortal(s) prior to a sexual coupling discussed in VII below. A cautionary negative schema/sequence and its positive inverse are seen in III below, where a single sovereignty undergoes or risks impairment by a three-way split in an Iranian and an Irish narrative and a horse is divided into three in an Indian royal sacrifice. An underlying (negative) homologous schema is expressed in

a single entity—is a bundle of differential elements in the manner of the phoneme as conceived by Roman Jakobson'. It is assumed 'that two opposite terms with no intermediary always tend to be replaced by two equivalent terms which admit of a third one as a mediator', e.g. 'Coyote (a carrion-eater) is intermediary between the herbivorous and carnivorous just as mist between Sky and Earth … as garments between "nature" and "culture"' (Lévi-Strauss 1963: 220 and 222).

[54] Notably in his monumental four-volume *Mythologiques* (Lévi-Strauss 1964–71).

"ornithological" code as a radiance and three birds in the first, in "familial" code as a father and his three sons in the second, and in ritual equine form in the third. Its (positive) inversion entails the beneficial merger of three into one: the three doomed brothers jointly father upon their sister a son destined to be the next king in the Irish narrative, in a historicised Roman counterpart three differently endowed kings pave the way for a comprehensively endowed fourth, and in the Indian ritual the separate actions of three royal wives upon each of the dead horse's three parts combine to produce general prosperity.

Lévi-Strauss (1963: 213–14) rejects 'the quest for the *true* version, or the *earlier* one' and adopts the deliberately non-committal definition of a myth 'as consisting of all its versions'—in theory, but not always in practice. For instance, a study of 'the death of myths, not in time, but in space' (Lévi-Strauss 1978: 256) concludes that 'a myth of Salish origin' underwent a range of transformations on crossing various cultural and linguistic boundaries: inversion in Athapascan, recasting as 'a romantic tale' among the Carrier, and adaptation by the Tshimshian to 'legendary tradition, as a means of founding certain modalities of an ancestral system' (Lévi-Strauss 1978: 266; cf. the dynastic concerns of many medieval Irish narratives such as *ETB* in Ib above and others in III, VI and VII below). This scenario perforce entails chronological priority for the (Salish) prototype and a temporal as well as a spatial dimension to its subsequent diffusion. The formal criteria and analytical techniques developed and honed by Lévi-Strauss constitute a flexible means of identifying and interpreting structural correspondences and divergences between myths or versions of myths. Notwithstanding his explicit espousal of an ahistorical and non-genetic framework, this raises the prospect of their profitable application to comparative Indo-European mythology despite the intrinsic historical and genetic orientation of its aim to reconstruct original features and combinations from spatially and temporally diverse sources. For instance, the issue of whether the inverse patterns 1⟶3 and 3⟶1 in the previous paragraph originally belonged together as in the Irish version or were separate as in the Iranian and Roman ones would be quite immaterial in strict Lévi-Straussian terms but unavoidable for the purposes of reconstruction.

Since coincidence tends to become easier to exclude along a scale from the more abstract to the more concrete, surface correspondences have an important practical role to play as a means of corroborating cultural reconstructions, particularly if they are of a circumstantial nature owing to factors such as linkage to specific reconstructed linguistic forms, a lack of any discernible function in the source(s), or the manifestation of what Puhvel (1970: 163) calls 'specific accordances of the curious type that tends to exclude chance'.

III. A PIE sovereignty myth: three royal brothers and a king's daughter

The trigenerational patterns identified above in *ETB* and the *Odyssey* recall Dumézil's dictum that an IE king 'transcends the social divisions' (1966: 31) of his well-known tripartite system[55] of (i) *priests/rulers*, (ii) *warriors*, (iii) *farmers/producers* corresponding to the three highest Indian castes (*varṇa*) of (i) *brahman*, (ii) *kṣatriya*, (iii) *vaiśya* in descending order. These are related to three ideological "functions", namely [with associated ancient Indian gods] (i) *sovereignty* with twinned (a) magical [Varuṇa] and (b) contractual [Mitra] aspects [cf. the Vedic pairing Mitrā-Varuṇā], (ii) *warfare* [Indra], and (iii) *fecundity/prosperity* [the twin Aśvins aka Nāsatyas]. Lincoln (1981: 79) adds that 'to the Indo-Europeans, the king represented the complete man, containing within his body the essence of all three social classes', noting the giant primeval man Puruṣa's dismemberment: 'The priest (*brāhmaṇá*) was his mouth. The warrior (*rājanyà = -í(y)a*) was made from his arms. His thighs were the commoner (*váiśya*) and the untouchable (*śūdrá*) was born from his feet' (*RV* x, 90, 12). This is not only 'one of the very latest hymns of the Rigveda' but also mentions the four castes 'for the first and only time in the Rigveda' (Macdonell 1917: 195). The physical tripartition of an actual king would be more germane, and an Irish example is available: 'Lugaid Réo nDerg, i.e. of the red stripes, i.e. two red stripes (*sríab*) were across him, i.e. a belt (*cris*) under his throat and a belt (*cris*) across his middle. His head resembled Nár, his breast Bres, from his belt (*cris*) downwards he resembled Lothar' (*Cóir Anmann* §106; see Arbuthnot 2007: 29 and 104–5). Similarly, the *Iliad* describes King Agamemnon as 'like thunderbolt-rejoicing Zeus in eyes and head, but like Ares in midriff (ζώνη 'belt') and like Poseidon in chest'.[56]

Asymmetry is not the only problem bedevilling Dumézil's (1968: 261–84) alignment of Rome's "pre-Etruscan" first four kings with the chief priests (*flamines maiores*) of Jupiter, Mars and Quirinus: (i)(a) Romulus + (b) Numa = *fl. Dialis*, (ii) Tullus = *fl. Martialis*, (iii) Ancus = *fl. Quirinalis*. Campanile (1990: 73–4) imposes symmetry by ignoring Ancus and shifting Romulus to III, chiefly because of his identification with the supposedly third-function Quirinus. Schlerath's (1996: 37–50) criticism is particularly, and justifiably, sharp (37–40) with regard to the arbitrary and textually unsupported nature of Dumézil's ascription of Romulus and Ancus to functions (i)(a) and (iii) respectively.

Ancient sources[57] not only repeatedly link Romulus with bands of bellicose youths (typically *iuvenes* or 'swift' *celeres* in Livy's account) throughout his

[55] See brief summaries by Dumézil himself (e.g. 1966: 154–80; 1968: 42–52) and/or Littleton's (1973) comprehensive and fully referenced survey.

[56] ὄμματα καὶ κεφαλὴν ἴκελος Διὶ τερπικεραύνῳ, Ἄρεϊ δὲ ζώνην, στέρνον δὲ Ποσειδάωνι (ii, 478–9).

[57] Notably Livy (i, 3–16), Dionysius of Halicarnassus (i, 76–ii, 56) and Plutarch (*Romu-*

turbulent career but also record his deification as Quirinus, whose later obscurity has not erased good evidence for his original status as a war-god.[58] Romulus, then, was unmistakably linked to the combative and predominantly youthful age-grade 1 and to the *flamen Quirinalis.* He was said to have founded Rome when only eighteen years old, acquired a Sabine wife by abduction and died when fifty-five, without children and so not as a full *pater familias.* His immediate successor could hardly have been more different: Numa was about forty when he became king, had a substantial family and was eighty-three when his death ended a reign consistently characterised in the sources[59] by law and order, religious devotion and uninterrupted peace. He was thus associated with age-grade 3 as an embodiment of the mature *pater familias* and wise non-combatant elder (*senex*). Moreover, Livy[60] explicitly links him with and excludes Romulus from the sphere of the *flamen Dialis.* Rome's third king, Tullus, was depicted by Dionysius (iii, 1–36) and Livy (i, 22–31) as a wealthy and warlike *pater familias* with a procedural approach to warfare quite different from Romulus' rough and ready methods. Cicero (*Rep.* ii, 17) stresses Tullus' 'outstanding glory in military affairs (*in re militari*)', his demarcation and construction of an assembly place and senate house (*comitium et curiam*), and his concern for the declaration of just war sanctioned by fetial ritual (*fetiali religione*). He evidently typified age-grade 2, the *populus* of married adult soldier-farmers/landowners constituting the state's backbone, Dionysius (iii, 1) noting that his personal property was sufficient for him to transfer the royal demesne to the people. Correlation with the remaining *flamen Martialis* is indicated by

lus). His deification after appearing to Iulius Proculus is recounted by Dionysius (ii, 63), Plutarch (*Rom.* 28, 1–3), Cicero (*De re publica* ii, 10), Ovid (*Fasti* ii, 475–532) and Livy (i, 16), who alone fails to specify Quirinus.

[58] This includes identification with the Greek war god Enyalius by Dionysius (ii, 48, 2) and Augustus' *Res gestae* (13), the invocation of Ares and Enyalius (obvious Greek renderings of Mars and Quirinus) in Polybius' versions of very early Roman treaties with Carthage (iii, 25, 6), and the mention of *arma Quirini* 'weapons of Quirinus' by Vergil (*Georgics* iii, 27) and Festus (L 238.9). See Alföldi 1974: 189 and McCone 1987: 132–3.

[59] Notably, Livy (i, 18–21), Dionysius, (ii, 57–76), Plutarch (*Numa*) and Cicero (*Rep.* ii, 13–14).

[60] i, 20, 1–2: 'Then he [Numa] turned his attention to the creation of priests, although he himself used to perform most rites, particularly those which now attach to the *flamen Dialis.* However, because he thought that in a warlike state there would be more kings like Romulus than like Numa …, he created a *flamen* as a constant priest for Jupiter and adorned him with distinguished garb and a royal curule seat. To him he added two *flamines*, one for Mars and the other for Quirinus'. According to Festus (L 71 and 294) and Pliny (*Nat. Hist.* xviii, 119, and xxviii, 146), the taboos of the *flamen Dialis* included beholding an army, mounting a horse and mentioning or touching a dog or goat, the very animals sacrificed at the Lupercalia commemorating Romulus and Remus (Plutarch, *Rom.* 21).

Mars' combination of a military with a domestic and agrarian role seen in early sources such as the *Carmen Arvale* and hymns cited by Cato.[61]

The evidence relates Rome's three first kings and *flamines maiores* to three key components of the body politic rooted in the ascending age-grades of (1) *iuventus*, (2) *populus* and (3) *senatus*. The sequence (1) Romulus (*fl. Quirinalis*), (3) Numa (*fl. Dialis*) and (2) Tullus (*fl. Martialis*) presents two opposites followed by and defining an intermediate third term (cf. 1 Cathàer's sons, 3 Cathàer, 2 Cormac in *ETB*). The fourth and final "pre-Etruscan" king, Ancus, was credited in the sources[62] with enlarging and enriching Rome after being driven to war despite an initial inclination to follow in his pacific maternal grandsire Numa's footsteps. Livy (i, 32, 4) tellingly states that 'there was an intermediate disposition in Ancus (*medium erat in Anco ingenium*), one mindful of Numa and Romulus' and that he thought 'the times were also more suited to a king Tullus than a Numa'. The married father's reign of twenty-four years proved him 'the equal of any of the previous kings in the arts and glory of war and peace' (*cuilibet superiorum regum belli pacisque et artibus et gloria par*, Livy i, 35, 1). Under the Republic, 'because certain public rites had been performed by the kings themselves …, they created a king of sacrifice (*rex sacrificulus*) … (and) subordinated that priesthood to the Pontifex' (Livy ii, 2, 1–2). Festus' ranking (L 198.30–5) differs: 'The Rex appears to be the greatest, then the Dialis, after him the Martialis, in fourth place the Quirinalis, in fifth the Pontifex Maximus. Accordingly, when seated, the Rex is permitted to recline above them all, the Dialis above the Martialis and Quirinalis, the Martialis above the next, all likewise above the Pontifex'. The *rex sacrificulus* or *sacrorum* clearly continued the king's sacral role[63] after the abolition of monarchy as a political institution. The seating points to his primacy over the three *flamines maiores* and relatively late subordination to the *pontifex maximus* (Cornell 1995: 234). The cumulative all-rounder Ancus' correlation with the *rex sacrorum* completes a neat match between Rome's legendary first four kings and the early Republic's quartet of chief priests.

The kingship was regenerated in the Odyssey by a combination of (1) Telemachus, (2) Odysseus and (3) Laertes. A similar process was historicised by the Romans as two kings personifying the extremes of (1) bellicose youths and (3) pacific elders, an intermediate third representing (2) adult soldier-farmer

[61] *De agricultura* 83 and 141. Mars is invoked in the *Carmen Arvale* (Ernout 1947: 107–9), a hymn of the priestly Arval brotherhood preserved on an inscription of 218 BC but probably older. Varro (*Ling. Lat.* v, 85) states that 'the Arval Brothers (are) so called because they perform public rites in order that the fields (*arva*) may bear fruits'.

[62] Notably, Livy (i, 32–4), Dionysius (iii, 36–45) and Cicero (*Rep.* ii, 18).

[63] See, for instance, Campanile 1990: 47–8, and Cornell 1995: 239–41 on the cultic importance of the *regia* 'Royal House' in the Roman Forum during the republican period.

householders, and an integrating fourth (1+2+3). A king's daughter saves sovereignty from disintegration into three and secures its reintegration in two versions of the same basic medieval Irish narrative:[64] when the 'White triplets' (*Find-emna*) Bres, Nár and Lothar rebelled against their father Echaid Feidlech, the king of Ireland, their sister Clothru slept with each in turn before the battle, which they lost along with their lives on account of the sin (*an-fír* 'un-truth') of incest. Made pregnant by them, she went on to bear the future king Lugaid, the division of whose body (by two stripes) into a top, middle and bottom each resembling one of his three fathers has been noted above.

Lugaid has a ritual homologue (in reverse; cf. p. 103 above) in the early Indian *aśva-medha*: 'Once returned, the horse is sacrificed … being assimilated to the totality of what the king and through him his subjects may expect. Just before the sacrifice the body of the living horse is divided into three sections, front, middle and rear, upon which three of the king's wives … respectively perform unctions placed under the patronage of the gods Vasu, Rudra and Ādityas and aimed to procure for the king, variously, spiritual energy (*tejas*, in front), physical force (*indriya*, in the middle), cattle (*paśu*, at the rear), these three benefits, divided between the three functions, recapitulating themselves in a fourth term, prosperity or good fortune (*śrī*)' (Dumézil 1966: 226–7). Ancus brought Rome unparallelled prosperity by excelling in the three comparable spheres of religion (Numa's speciality), warfare (Romulus and his sodalities, Tullus and his citizen army)[65] and wealth (an attribute of Tullus' emphasised by Dionysius). In an ancient Iranian account (in Avestan: Yašt 19, stanzas 34–44), the *xᵛarənah-* 'Glory' took flight 'visibly in the shape of a bird' from the legendary king Yima 'of good herds' when he was tainted by 'the false word' (33, 34) and was seized 'in the shape of a bird of prey' (35, 36, 38) by three legendary figures in succession. The first was seized by his divine brother Miθra 'of wide pastures … the Lord of all lands, whom Ahura Mazdā created as the most endowed with Glory (*xᵛarənaŋᵛhastəməm*) among the spiritual adorable ones' (35); the second by Θraētaona 'the son of the Āθβiia-clan, of the heroic family, so that he was among victorious men the most victorious, apart from Zaraθuštra' (36) and slew a fearsome dragon (37); and the third by 'manly-minded Kərəsāspa so that he was among strong men the mightiest, apart from Zaraθuštra, on account of his manly defence' (38) and slew a mighty dragon as well as a succession of other opponents (40–4) (Hintze 1994b: 21–4). This text, known as the *Zamyād Yašt*, is described as 'a web of geographical information, pre-Zarathustran myths and Mazdaic religious views' by its editor (Hintze 1994a: 15).[66] Although all

[64] The openings of *Cath Bóinde* (O'Neill 1905) and, in greater detail, *Aided Meidbe* (Hull 1938).

[65] Cf. Rudra's patronage of sodalities (e.g. McCone 1987: 120) and the link between *indriya* and Indra.

[66] Hintze 1994a is a full edition of this text with translation and commentary in German, whereas Hintze 1994b simply provides a brief introduction, the Avestan text with English translation (used above and subsequently) and a vocabulary.

three recipients of the *xᵛarənah-* were warlike figures, the first belonged to the divine sphere (Numa's speciality), the second was from a wealthy family, and the third simply a mighty warrior (like Romulus). Dumézil (1971: 284–6) gives reasons for identifying Θraētaona with his third function despite his martial role as a dragon-slayer and Yima's victorious avenger and heir. This problem simply disappears if Θraētaona is viewed as a Tullus-like representative of the propertied middle age-grade of soldier-farmers.

The *Mahābhārata* (i, 70–88; Dumézil 1971: 272–82) tells how Yayāti fathered three sons upon his wife's sister and, when discovered, was cursed by his father-in-law with sudden ageing unless one of his sons agreed to take his place. After four had refused and the illegitimate youngest accepted, Yayāti aged normally, granted him the kingship, became a forest ascetic and finally went to heaven. He was later cast out through pride and encountered the four kings Aṣṭaka, Pratardana, Vasumanas and Śibi. Five golden chariots appeared and took them up to heaven with, to Aṣṭaka's surprise, Śibi in the lead as 'the best (*śreṣṭha*)' of them for his array of kingly virtues (88, 18–19). Finally, Yayāti revealed himself as the grandfather of all four. According to a later book (*Mhb.* v, 112–21), Gālava was advised to ask King Yayāti for eight hundred wondrous cows needed as a parting gift to his guru, Viśvāmitra. Yayāti offered him his beautiful daughter, Mādhavī, with the promise that she would obtain them as her bride-price (*śulka*). After King Haryaśva had fathered Vasumanas upon her in exchange for two hundred cows, Mādhavī returned to Gālava and recovered her virginity. Repeat performances with two other kings produced Pratardana and Śibi, and finally she bore Aṣṭaka to Viśvāmitra himself as the last instalment. Returning home, she was granted *svayaṃ-vara* 'own choice (of husband)' by her father (118, 1) but, bypassing her suitors, went to live in the forest like an antelope. Yayāti went to heaven but later misbehaved and fell to earth, encountering a sacrifice being performed by his daughter's four sons, each excelling in a different field: Vasumanas in wealth and liberality; Pratardana the 'bull' in warrior lore (*kṣatriya*), law (*dharma*) and warfare (*yuddha*); Śibi in 'truth (*satya*)'; Aṣṭaka in expending his wealth on sacrifices (120, 3–14). Arriving as a doe, Mādhavī revealed that Yayāti was their maternal grandfather. Each then bestowed a gift, the last two urging him on 'by that truth (*tena satyena*)' comprising their virtues, and Yayāti rose up to heaven.

The medieval Irish tract *Audacht Morainn* 'Morann's testament' (§§58–62; Kelly 1976: 18–19) recognises four basic types of ruler along somewhat different lines, namely an ideal 'true ruler' (*fír-flaith*) and three less satisfactory types: the effective 'wily ruler' (*cíall-flaith*), the ineffective 'ruler of occupation with hosts (from outside)' (*flaith congbále co slógaib (díanechtar)*), and the contentious 'bull-ruler (*tarb-flaith*)'.

Like Clothru in the Irish tale, Mādhavī rescues her royal father by mating with several males in turn but, unlike her, bears four diversely talented sons. Three excel in typical kingly concerns also represented by the horse's three parts in the *aśvamedha*, and a fourth, Śibi, in overall *satya* 'truth'. He leads

the way to heaven in one version, to Aṣṭaka's understandable surprise in view of the brahmins' pre-eminence in the classical Indian caste system. A ruler, then, recovers or retains his position as a result of three or four sexual liaisons entered into by his daughter in two narratives from opposite ends of the IE world. A PIE prototype seems likely but a decision on significant differences between them calls for a "tie-breaker".

The *Mahābhārata*'s frame-tale, summarised and analysed by Dumézil (1968: 33–124), features the marriage of King Drupada's daughter, Draupadī, to the five Pāṇḍavas. Cursed with death if he made a woman pregnant, King Pāṇḍu arranged for his first three "sons" (Yudhiṣṭhira, Bhīma and Arjuna) to be sired at yearly intervals by three gods (Dharma, Vāyu and Indra) upon his first wife, Kuntī. She then let his second wife (Mādrī) bear twin sons, Nakula and Sahadeva, to the twin Aśvins/Nāsatyas. Although won by Arjuna in a contest after the Pāṇḍavas' emergence from their forest refuge, Draupadī ended up being shared by all five of them in a polyandrous ménage almost as outrageous as Clothru's incest. Whereas Clothru triggered her brothers' deaths in battle and bore a jointly sired son destined to become king, Draupadī bore one son each to the Pāṇḍavas in order of seniority but these five Draupadeyas were later killed together, unmarried and childless, in a night attack and so were a dynastic dead-end.

Dumézil's analysis builds upon Wikander's (1947) thesis that, as Littleton (1973: 157) puts it, 'the Pāṇḍavas … were projections of the canonical gods of the Vedas, that they reflected the same tripartite division of functions Dumézil had described for Varuna, Mitra, Indra and the Nāsatyas'. Draupadī is seen as a transposition of 'the trivalent goddess of the Indo-Iranians' appearing in the Avesta as Anāhitā and the *RigVeda* as Sarasvatī (Dumézil 1968: 103–9). As with Rome's first four kings and three chief *flamines*, there is asymmetry between the Pāṇḍavas and the Indic deities whom Dumézil (1968: 49) makes central to his model on the basis of clear correspondences to Vedic *Mitrā-Varuṇā*, *Indra* and *Nāsatyā* around the middle of the 15th century BC on cuneiform tablets from Mitanni (a Hurrian kingdom with an Indic royal dynasty). Whatever the reason for their duality, there is at least balance between the divine and mortal "third-function" twins. However, the unitary "second function" is embodied by one god (Indra) but two heroes (Bhīma, Arjuna) and, conversely, the divine patrons (Mitrā-Varuṇā) of the binary "first function" correspond to just one Pāṇḍava (Yudhiṣṭhira). Wikander is surely right to ascribe the Pāṇḍavas' distinctive traits to the divine sires actually named in the *Mahābhārata*. As a rather late deification of the social and moral term *dharma* 'law, right(eousness), custom, observance', Dharma may have replaced an older god such as the similar Mitra favoured by Dumézil but, apart from his surreptitious inclusion of Varuṇa, this hardly affects the basic pattern.

Wikander argues that Kuntī's other two mates reflect an Indo-Iranian system in which Vāyu was a distinctive war-god. Noting his argument that 'the club-wielding fighter, Kərəsāspa, was especially connected to Vayu's cult',

Dumézil (1968: 47) gives a French translation of Wikander's (1947: 34) findings: 'It is a well-known fact that, in the Avesta, Miθra is described in a manner recalling the Indra of the RigVeda more than … Mitra. That should be added to the fact that the Avestan Miθra has appropriated epithets and functions of Vayu's and supplanted him in the cult of the warrior societies. But it is equally certain that the functions of the pair Indra-Vāyu have been altered in different ways in Iranian and Indian tradition. Of these two deities, who frequently appear as a pair, it is Indra who has attracted all the mythical substance in the RigVeda: Vāyu is hardly more than a non-autonomous doublet of Indra and it is evident that, insofar as he is a war-god, Indra has annexed many traits originally belonging to Vāyu'. It follows that 'the Indo-Iranians divided the patronage of warriors between two gods, Vāyu and Indra, the former, to judge from Kərəsāspa …, covering more savage, more violent and also more isolated characters than those with whom the latter was concerned' (Dumézil 1968: 48). However, an Indo-Iranian pantheon with a second-function pair corresponding to Varuṇa and Mitra in the first function would be at odds with the early list of gods from Mitanni emphasised by Dumézil.[67]

The relationship between Rome's Quirinus and Mars posited above is not the only parallel among other IE peoples,[68] probably including the ancient Gauls in the light of the names *Teutates*, *Esus* and *Taranis* given by Lucan (*Pharsalia* i, 444–6) to three of their gods. The obvious connection of Taranus (e.g. ταρανοου 'to Taranus' on an early dedication in Gaulish; Lambert 1994: 60, 87 = 2003: 62, 89) with the Celtic word for 'thunder'[69] suggests a Jupiter-like figure. The "Berne" commentaries on Lucan equate Teutates with Mercury or

[67] See Schlerath (1995: 38), who also observes (1996: 49–50) that, were it not for unjustified equations made by Dumézil at other points in his Roman system, 'it would have been easy for him, as he has asserted for Indra and Vāyu in India, to claim Mars for the fearsome aspect and Quirinus for the friendly and disciplined aspect of the 2nd function'.

[68] McCone 1987: 133: 'The Roman pair *Quirinus*/*Mars* would accordingly correspond to Germanic **Wōdanaz*/**Tīwaz* (ON *Óðinn*/*Týr*), OInd. *Rudráḥ*/*Índraḥ* and probably OIr. *Lug*/*Núadu*. The Greek pair *Enyálios*/*Árēs* also belongs here, in all probability, since Enyalius' original connection with bands of youths is, for example, still clearly recognisable in the already discussed Spartan rite of Platanistas and the assimiliation to Ares already appearing in Homer (Ἄρης δεινὸς Ἐνυάλιος, *Il.* 17, 210–1) would be no surprise in view of the early abolition of wild bachelor bands in many parts of Greece'. Enyalius is already attested in Mycenaean as *e-nu-wa-ri-jo* (KN V 52.2), and Vāyu seems to have lost ground to the specifically Indian figure of Rudra as the god of wild warriors by the time of the *RigVeda* but Schlerath (1996: 39) refers to the arguments of a number of scholars, including Wikander, that 'in Iran Vayu "Wind" had become a storm-god, a war-god, the leader of the sodalities (*Männerbünde*), of the unmarried young men cut off from the community'.

[69] MW *taran* < **taran-u-* by PC metathesis (cf. OIr. *torainn* < **toren-i-*, presumably cognate despite its problematical vocalism, perhaps influenced by *torm* 'noise', see *DIL s.v. toirm, tairm*) of **tanar-* < **tn̥h₂-er-* (PIE root **(s)tenh₂* 'thunder': *LIV* 543/*LIV*²

Mars, but *T(e)utatis* or *To(u)tatis* 'of the tribe (**toutā*)' only appears alone or in combination with *Mars* on Latin inscriptions from Britain and the Continent (de Vries 1961: 45–6). Also found on Gallo-Latin inscriptions and equated in "Berne" with Mars or Mercury (de Vries 1961: 97–8), Esus derives from a PIE root **h₁eḱs* (e.g. Lat. *īra* 'anger', Av. *aešma* 'fury, anger', OInd. *iṣm-ín* 'impetuous' describing Rudra in *RV* v, 52, 16 and the Maruts in *RV* i, 87, 6 etc.) convincingly associated by Lincoln (1981: 128) with young warriors. de Vries (1961: 100) argues that Esus 'is best compared with Mercurius and the North Germanic Odhin', whose identification with the Roman god and bands of frenzied warriors is indisputable.[70]

The occurrence of two linked but at least partially differentiated war-gods in a number of early IE systems requires explanation. If a PIE pair is posited although neither of their names can be reconstructed, it would follow from the connection between a society's myths, rites and institutions made by "functionalism" (see p. 103 above) that it reflected a PIE social dichotomy. If their PIE status is rejected because of the complete lack of cognates among their attested names in IE languages, there remains a need for some inherited base capable of generating this divine duality at several later stages. Either way, a solution is forthcoming from evidence for successive PIE phases of male activity, each liable to attract its own divine patron: a first stage roaming the wilds in a vagrant band of mostly young skin-clad or naked bachelor "wolves" devoted to hunting and fighting, and a second stage initiated by marriage as a settled adult man of property called upon to fight as occasion demanded.

A 'brutal and bestial figure' (Littleton 1973: 124), Vāyu's son Bhīma is huge, as swift as a hurricane, and usually wields a club like Vayu's devotee Kərəsāspa in the Avesta or else fights with the strength of his hands without bow, chariot or armour (Dumézil 1968: 63). 'As a warrior, Arjuna differs from

597). Cf. Zeus' stock Homeric epithets ὑψι-βρεμέτης 'high-thunderer' (e.g. *Il.* i, 354) and τερπι-κέραυνος 'rejoicing in the thunderbolt (e.g. *Il.* i, 419).

[70] On Germanic **Wōdanaz* and his frenzied followers see, for instance, Ellis Davidson 1964: 48–72, Benveniste 1969: vol. I, 111–13 and 302–3 and McCone 1997: 100–4. Paul the Deacon (*Historia Langobardorum* i, 9) refers to 'Wotan … who is called Mercury by the Romans and is worshipped as a god by all nations of Germania', while Roman *dies Mercurii* or *Mercurii dies* 'Mercury's day' (> French *mercre-di*, Italian *mercole-dì* etc.) was rendered as 'Woden's day' by Germanic peoples (e.g. OE *Wōdnes-dæȝ* 'Wednes-day'). The native equivalent of Mars, the chief Germanic god according to Tacitus (*Hist.* iv, 64), emerges from Germanic renderings of Latin *dies Martis* or *Martis dies* 'Mars' day' (> Fr. *mar-di*, It. *marte-dì* etc.) such as Tues-day in English (OE *Tīwes-dæȝ*: OE *Tiw*, ON *Týr*). An inscription dedicated to Mars Thingsus (*Deo Marti Thingso*) by Frisian troops at Hadrian's Wall in the reign of Alexander Severus (222–235 AD) connects him with the people's assembly (ON, OE *þing*) and one of these was held in Denmark at Tislund 'Týr's land' (de Vries 1935: 171–3; Ellis Davidson 1964: 54–61), a name reminiscent of the *Campus Martius* on which Rome's centuriate assembly met (e.g. Cornell 1995: 195).

Bhīma … He is not a naked fighter but a clothed (breastplate, coat of mail) and armed combatant …: he has at his disposal one of the great bows of the epic … Neither is he a solitary or front-line fighter like Bhīma … Arjuna is a soldier. He embodies … the kṣatriya ideal reconciling strength (to which Bhīma is largely restricted) with respect for *dharma*' (Dumézil 1968: 64–5). The different divine parentage of the second and third Pāṇḍavas is matched by attributes typifying the wilder first and the more sedentary second phase represented in Roman legend by two warlike kings, namely the wolf-suckled Romulus and the wealthy Tullus. The first Pāṇḍava, Dharma's son Yudhiṣṭhira, is depicted as a paragon of kingly virtue endowed with righteousness and piety, qualities recalling the Roman Numa's defining *iustitia religio-que* (Livy i, 18, 1) as an embodiment of the pacific third phase. Significantly, Bhīma's sobriquet is a compound of *vṛka* 'wolf', while Arjuna's relates to the acquisition of wealth: 'Yudhiṣṭhira … is called "son of Dharma" (*Dharmaja*, *Dharmanandana*, *Dharmaprabhava*, *Dharmaputra*, *Dharmasūnu*, *Dharmasuta*); Bhīma is "wolf-belly" (*Vṛkodara*); Arjuna is "booty-conquering" (*Dhanañjaya*)' (Dumézil 1968: 250). Like the reigns of Rome's first three kings but inverting the first two, the births of Kuntī's sons produced successive polar opposites followed by an intermediate figure: first Yudhiṣṭhira (3), then Bhīma (1) and finally Arjuna (2).

These threads can now be drawn together. An Avestan Yašt describes the disintegration of Yima's sovereign radiance into three birds captured separately by three figures oriented (3, 2, 1) towards the three main age-grades. Conversely, Rome's kingship was supposedly integrated by a comprehensively qualified fourth king on a base of three successive reigns geared to the same age-grades. Elsewhere a key role is played by the sexual relations and male issue of a king's daughter. In the *Mahābhārata*, Mādhavī's royal father Yayāti misbehaves and is undone (like Yima), but is then restored through the joint efforts of four variously endowed sons of hers (three specialists plus the kingly Śibi) fathered by three different kings and a great brahmin in turn. Since the Pāṇḍavas naturally fall into two groups with different mothers, it seems quite possible that an original threesome was augmented by a further pair to make five royal brothers in line with another mythical paradigm (VII below) for the bestowal of sovereignty.[71] If so, Draupadī was once shared sexually by just three brothers, albeit in an enduring union untainted by the incest committed by Clothru with her sibling triplets.

Each of these narratives is evidently (or, in the Pāṇḍavas' case, by reasonable inference) geared to a trinitarian concept of kingship and society, the presence of three or four male protagonists depending upon whether or not a comprehensive kingly figure (Ancus in Roman legend, Śibi in the *Mahābhārata*) was added to the three specialists. Like Mādhavī, Clothru rescues her royal father by mating with several males. However, in her and Draupadī's case (unlike

[71] Dumézil (1968: 71–5) argues that, unlike their three senior brethren linked to the top two castes, the twin junior Pāṇḍavas were connected with the third *vaiśya*-caste.

Mādhavī's) these are brothers, a circumstantial correspondence 'of the curious type that tends to exclude chance' (end of II above) and so points to a key role for sibling lovers in a PIE sovereignty myth concerned with the rupture and reunification of a three-in-one kingship mirroring the three age-grades central to the social system. Its fulcral feature was the mating of a king's daughter with three royal brothers and the resultant birth of a future king manifesting his threefold royal nature physically (like Lugaid and Agamemnon). Since brothers of similar or identical age cannot literally belong to separate age-grades, the latter were perforce represented symbolically in "fraternal" code by attaching certain distinctive characteristics of one particular phase to each sibling individually, as in the case of Yudhiṣṭhira, Bhīma, and Arjuna.[72] The female role was otiose in the ornithomorphic Avestan version of the first half (disintegration) and in the Roman historicisation of the second half (integration). Making the girl the brothers' sister (Clothru and the White Triplets) was an obvious means of keeping kingship in the direct male (and female) line. Conversely, the logic of a socially normal exogamous royal liaison (such as Eithne's with Cormac in *Esnada Tige Buchet*) would be removal of the sovereignty embodied by her out of her family and, if accompanied by customary IE patrilocal residence, away from home.

A narrative in the Book of Leinster concerning a king's daughter[73] presents an interesting medieval Irish permutation of the "Clothru" pattern. It features not three brothers but five (cf. the arguable augmentation of the Pāṇḍavas, and the number in VII), and begins with the sharing of Ireland's kingship between the three Ulster dynasts Díthorbae, Áed Rúad and Cimbáeth in a regular seven-yearly rotation guaranteed along with 'ruler's truth' (*fír flatha*) by seven druids (*druid*), seven poets (*filid*) and seven young lords/leaders (*ócthigirn*/*toísig*). Áed was the first of the three to die, leaving no offspring but a daughter called Machae Mong-rúad 'Red-hair'. Her request to succeed her father was rejected by Díthorbae and Cimbáeth because she was a woman, but Machae defeated them in battle and spent seven years in kingship. Dithorbae lost his life, leaving five fine sons. Machae, insisting that they too fight for the kingship, defeated and exiled them. Having taken Cimbáeth as her husband and the leader of her troops, she disguised herself as a leper, went in search of Díthorbae's sons, and found them roasting a wild boar. They gave her food at the fire and one of them said: 'The old woman's eyes are beautiful (*is álaind rosc na calligi*, *LL* 2543–4) – let us sleep with her'. He took her to the wood, where she forcibly bound and left him. Returning to the fire, she explained that he had been ashamed to rejoin his brothers after sleeping with a leper. They each took her to the wood in turn

[72] There is no information regarding the Findemna beyond tentative suggestions (McCone 1990: 119) based upon possible meanings of their three names.

[73] This and two other short tales about women called Machae are translated and briefly analysed by Dumézil (1968: 602–12) in trifunctional terms, Machae Mongrúad being ascribed to his martial second function.

with the same result. She then tied them all together and brought them to the Ulstermen, who proposed putting them to death. Rejecting this as a breach of ruler's truth (*coll fír flatha*, *LL* 2550), she bound them in servitude to dig for her the rampart that would be the chief citadel of the Ulstermen (*prímchathir Ulad*) forever, namely Emain Machae (*LL* 2514–54). After an intervening poem, it is stated that Cimbáeth was its first king (*cétḟlaith Emna Ma*cha) and reigned for 28 years until he died there (*LL* 2624–5). Here a king's daughter unifies a threefold kingship after the death of her own father by taking control of his third share, marrying one of the two remaining kings and excluding the other's posthumous line by partnering his five sons in turn but taking each of them prisoner instead of sleeping with all or at least one of them. Clothru also undid rivals by offering sex, but slept with her own three unfilial brothers to keep her father's kingship and succession intact. Each king's daughter took the initiative in deciding a royal succession by eliminating a group of brothers with claims to it.

The origin tale of the Conaille Muirthemne (Meyer 1910: xi–xii; *Corp. Gen.* 154 = 143a21–41) reflects their anomalous position as Ulaid (Ulstermen) genealogically but subjects of the Uí Néill politically (Ó Corráin 1985: 82–3). Conall Costamail, a king belonging to the Ulaid, begot three sons upon his own daughter, Creidne, and sent them away to the edge of the territory because of his own shame and his wife Aífe's anger. 'Thereafter Creidne entered upon the *fían*-life (*fíannas*) in order to plunder her father and her stepmother on account of her sons (being put) outside their ancestral kindred. She had three nines on *fíannas*, wore her hair plaited behind, and used to attack (by) sea and land alike … Seven years she spent in exile, i.e. between Ireland and Britain, until she made peace with her father'. He granted their three sons land in Muirthemne (present-day Louth) and foretold that 'there will be destruction on the Ulstermen … and they will be moved out of their land, and your three sons, Creidne, will have the lands into which they went forever and they shall not be shifted and they will have wealth and abundance of valour'. Clothru-like incestuous sexual activity securing the future of a royal line has here been hybridised with a widely attested "Romulus and Remus" type of foundation legend involving a migration led by two or sometimes three brothers, typically the offspring of a king's daughter or sister.[74] The key role of the brothers' mother in the "Romulus and Remus" paradigm was retained in tandem with the "Clothru" pattern

[74] Romulus and Remus were the illegitimate twin sons of a deposed king's daughter (e.g. Livy i, 3–8), the migrations of young Gauls to the Balkans and the Po Valley were led by two youthful sons of King Ambigatus' sister (Livy v, 34, 1–4), and the young Scandinavian emigrants destined to become Lombards were led by the two young sons of a wise and influential woman called Gambara (Paul the Deacon, *Historia Langobardorum* i, 2–3, 7 and 14). See McCone 1987: 127–30, and cf. the two leaders of the expedition of the Greek 'youth' (*iuventus*) of Phocaea that resulted in the foundation of Massilia (Justin xliii, 3, 4–11), Vergil's (*Aeneid* vii, 670–3) twin commanders (*gemini fratres*) from Tibur, itself named after a third brother, and the

by making the king's daughter a mother (and half-sister) instead of a sister to the three brothers and shifting the incest up a generation from them to her own father. Creidne too bore offspring destined to continue his dynasty, albeit by being forced into brigandage and later receiving territory (like Romulus and Remus) from which their descendants were not expelled (unlike the legitimate line of Conall and Aífe).

IV. Age-grades and basic IE social structure

Evidence for three PIE post-pubescent age-grades with partially overlapping specialisations includes Strabo's description (x, 4, 20–2) of ancient Crete's system of παῖδες (boys who served in the ἀνδρεῖα 'men's houses'), ἀγέλαοι (youths who had joined an ἀγέλη 'herd' devoted to hunting, contests and fighting and, on leaving it, married simultaneously), ἄνδρες 'men' and γέροντες 'elders' (members of a council consisting of ex-magistrates called κόσμοι). According to Xenophon (*Cyropaedia* i, 2, 3–15), Persians in the time of Cyrus the Great had a 'free place of assembly' located beside the palace and divided into four parts: 'of these one is for the children (παῖδες), one for the adolescents (ἔφηβοι), another for the adult men (τέλειοι ἄνδρες) and another for the old men (γέροντες) over the age of military service' (4). A child aged sixteen or seventeen became an ephebe (8), transition to manhood occurred ten years later (9, 12), and admission to the elders sitting in judgement after twenty-five more (13–14). Since only the powerful sent their children to be trained as a rule and one stage had to be completed before proceeding to the next (15), the upper class will have supplied the mostly unmarried adolescents who lived together and engaged in hunting, weapon drill, warfare, guard duty and policing (9–12). Widengren (1969: 84–95) deduces a similar system from Middle Persian sources, and Falk (1986: 94) notes the Indian *brahmacārin* (8–16 years), *yuvan*, *vratacārin* or *marya* (until 20), 'middle-aged' *madhyama-vayasin*, and 'final-aged' *uttama-vayasin* or elder. Three- to four-grade systems are quite widespread cross-culturally (Schurtz 1902: 59 and 125), and Ireland's Cú Chulainn was said to have killed a hundred old (*sen*), a hundred young (*óc*) and a hundred middle-aged (*mid-aís*) men in his final battle.[75]

Phase 1 spent between adolescence and marriage in a band or sodality was the weakest link in the chain because its inherent wildness tended to jar with the march of civilisation. Falk (1986: 13–14), for instance, identifies a key change to *marya*-sodalities between the *Rig-* and the *Yajur-Veda*: 'In the period of the RV youths were organised in bands … After the settlement of North India had reached a certain density, the raids of those left short must have become a great nuisance. Only the end result can be seen: larger political structures

three brothers at the head of an emigration from Alba responsible for the foundation of three more Latin towns (Dion. Hal. ii, 53).

[75] *Brislech Mór Maige Muirthemni* §34, ll. 636–42 (Kimpton 2009: 32 and 48).

capable of protecting themselves against the bands and, above all, the *varṇa*-system … The YV appears as a generally successful effort to adapt the ritual effect of the bands … and transform it into a means of legitimating rule over a settled, civilised population'. Cornell (1995: 144) points out that 'one of the most important features of the society of central Italy in the archaic period is the presence of … aristocratic warlords whose power rested on the support of armed personal dependants, who are variously styled "clients" (*clientes*) or "companions" (*sodales*) … The so-called Lapis Satricanus, which can be dated with some confidence to around 500 BC, records a dedication to Mars by the companions (*sodales*) of a certain Poplios Valesios (i.e. Publius Valerius)'. Indeed, 'the account of the young herdsmen, fugitives and criminals who flocked to Romulus and Remus and built up a flourishing city in a very short time is the mythical dressing up of the same form of organisation that brought about the sudden rise of the Brettii[76] in 356 BC on the basis of toughening and possession as werewolves' (Alföldi 1974: 132–3). Quirinus' loss of focus presumably accompanied the demise of this institution apart from ritual survivals such as the two colleges of youthful Luperci at the heart of the Lupercalia, the annual festival linked to Romulus and Remus (e.g. Plutarch, *Romulus* 21). Similar factors probably lay behind the aforementioned uncertainty of the late "Berne" scholia regarding the affinities of Gaulish Toutatis and Ēsos. Christian authors were almost bound to disapprove of the unbridled lifestyle of sodalities and promote their eradication or at least marginalisation: Weiser (1927: 60–2) notes an aversion to berserks in Old Norse sources, and well-documented clerical hostility towards the 'diabolical' *fían* in early medieval Ireland[77] probably informs *ETB*'s depiction of Catháer's sons.

Post-PIE environmental and social developments (e.g. urbanisation and its consequences) and/or religious changes (e.g. the rise of an organised priesthood and/or the introduction of a new religion such as Christianity) might bring class or occupation to the fore at the expense of an inherited system of age-grades. In post-Rigvedic India, the outcome was a quadripartite *varṇa*-system with a priestly caste of brahmins at its apex. In effect, shorn of the lowest *śūdra*-caste (arguably the product of conquest) and modified by quite arbitrarily shifting the king from the second *kṣatriya*-caste to a binary 'sovereign' first function shared with priests,[78] this was projected back to the PIE

[76] See Justin (xxiii, 1) on the Bruttii or Brettii and Festus (L 150) on the emigration of young Oscan *Mamertini* 'followers of Ma(me)rs' in the early third century BC that ultimately precipitated the First Punic War. See McCone 1987: 128–9 on the connection with a *ver sacrum* or 'sacred spring', which involved sending youths out (as in note 74) to occupy new territory under the protection of Mars, presumably as the patron of adult soldier-farmer householders to whose status the youths aspired as the result of a successful expedition.

[77] See Sharpe 1979: 80–7 and 90–2 and McCone 1984: 28–9; 1986b: 1–6; 1990: 218–20.

[78] The basic idea being that the king 'lives and functions in symbiosis with an eminent representative of the priestly class' (Dumézil 1966: 31).

community by Dumézil. However, it was very probably a sub-continental innovation and no PIE or even Proto-Indo-Iranian terms for his three 'functions' or corresponding social classes can be plausibly reconstructed.[79] Benveniste, who was more concerned with semantic than formal lexical correspondences, prefaced his chapter on 'the tripartition of functions' (1969: vol. 1, 279–92) with the following summary: 'through parallel series of terms with often revealing etymologies but different from one language to another, Iranian, Indic, Greek and Italic bear witness to a common Indo-European heritage, namely a society hierarchically structured according to three basic functions, those of priest, warrior and farmer'. However, the lack of reconstructed PIE designations made Dumézil uncomfortable and he retreated from a broadly "functionalist" correlation between society, myth and ritual[80], as in the following claim (1968: 15): '"tripartite ideology" is not necessarily accompanied, in the life of a society, by an *actual* tripartite division of that society on Indian lines' and 'may, on the contrary, be no more ... than an ideal and, at the same time, a means of analysing (or) interpreting the forces guaranteeing the world's course and the life of men'. Thus encouraged, Campanile (1990: 40–1) reduces Dumézilian tripartition to an 'Indo-European mindset (*mentalità indoeuropea*)' coexisting with an 'undifferentiated society, not communistic but essentially egalitarian'. Nevertheless, evidence from a number of IE peoples points not only to a system of three main age-grades along with a full set of associated PIE vocabulary[81] but also to a basic PIE hierarchical division, duly reflected in reconstructed lexical items, between an upper and a lower class, of which more anon.

Since Dumézil's model is explicitly geared to IE diachrony, its relevance to daughter families such as Celtic or its later Goedelic/Irish branch depends upon his trifunctional scheme's direct transmission from the PIE period (cf. Campanile 1990: 40). Unless its three classes and/or functions can be shown to

[79] See Falk 1986: 13–14 and 193–4 on the specifically Indian evolution of a caste system from a rather different precursor, and Beekes 1995: 40 on the lack of common PIE or even PII terms for the assumed functions/classes.

[80] See Littleton 1973: 4–6 on the classic "functionalism" of Durkheim and others, and Dumézil 's rather different use of 'function'.

[81] See McCone 1987: 127–48 (brief English summary 1990: 117–19) for criticism of Dumézil's model and evidence for a tripartite PIE system of age-grades and related items of vocabulary. Campanile cites a couple of other contributions to the 1987 volume but does not mention, let alone discuss, this study. His sweeping dismissal of plentiful evidence from a good many early IE cultures from India through Greece to Western Europe (notably Italic, Celtic and Germanic) for warlike sodalities ('so-called *Männerbünde*, of which much has been spoken, especially since the well-known volume by Wikander, 1938'; Campanile 1990: 41) is at odds with his own methodological precept that 'if the contents of the texts of several Indo-Europeans cultures coincide with each other, we will deduce from this that these contents are inheritances of the Indo-European culture' (Campanile 1990: 15) unless parallel innovations or borrowings can be substantiated.

have been clearly defined at that early stage, they cannot be validly applied as inherited categories to the analysis of extant material in Old/Middle Irish or other Indo-European languages. When a system of three age-grades became dislocated and/or marginalised, their partial functional differentiation may have prompted structural realignment with newer modes of organisation. In Dumézilian terms, propertiless members of sodalities devoted to hunting and fighting were "second function" (ii); married householders responsible for livestock and property but also liable for military service straddled the "second" and "third" functions (ii/iii); non-combatant elders apparently combined "third-function" householding with membership of a council performing "first-function" advisory and judicial duties (iii/i).

Social patterns among the Celts of pagan ancient Gaul and early Christian Ireland seem worth considering in this respect. Caesar's *De bello Gallico* (vi, 13) claims that 'in all Gaul there are two kinds (*genera*) of men found in some numbers and held in some honour: for the common folk (*plebes*) are held in a position close to slavery, venturing nothing by themselves and being summoned to no council. … But of these two kinds one consists of druids (*druides*), the other of knights (*equites*)'. His druids were religious authorities with control over sacrifices, arbiters of public as well as private disputes, judges of homicide cases, and members of a pan-Gallic organisation with annual assemblies under a usually elected head (13). They were exempt from military activity, and poetry played a major role in a long training process undergone by 'many (*multi*)' at their own or their parents' and relatives' behest (14). The knights engaged in warfare when occasion demanded, as it often did, and their individual status depended on the number of their 'vassals and clients' (*ambactos clientesque*; 15).[82] Caesar, then, identifies a rigid social divide between a subordinate lower and a ruling upper class with two main components: 'knights' liable to military service in wartime and ranked according to the number of their clients and bondsmen, and a highly organised priestly and learned order of 'druids' with extensive judicial functions. The subdivision of the latter into **dru(u̯)ides*, **u̯ātīs* and **bardoi* (the probable Gaulish forms), ignored by Caesar but clear from Greek sources (e.g. βάρδοι … οὐάτεις … δρυΐδαι, Strabo iv, 4, 4), is of no consequence here.

Despite the lack of formal cognates, there has been an unsurprising temptation to correlate Caesar's *druides*, *equites* and *plebes* with India's three castes of *brahman*, *kṣatriya* and *vaiśya* as direct outcomes of the PIE social tripartition[83] envisaged by Benveniste and, with reservations, Dumézil. The druidic order would then be of Proto-Celtic provenance (e.g. de Vries 1961: 209–213),

[82] Cf. *BG* i, 4 on the wealthy noble Orgetorix's numerous clients, and Polybius (ii, 17, 12) on the importance of a man's companions and followers among the Cisalpine Gauls of his day (about a century before Caesar's).

[83] E.g. Piggott 1975: 88: 'the tripartite division of classes has been called in question as a valid concept, and of course even if its existence is admitted need not be only Indo-European, but it is in this linguistic setting that many scholars have identified such

despite its non-attestation in large areas of Celtic or even Gaulish settlement beyond Ireland, Britain and Transalpine Gaul. An obvious explanation for this distribution would be that druidry was an insular innovation exported across the Channel after Gaulish migrations eastwards through the Balkans and southwards into northern Italy around the end of the fifth century BC and still earlier Celtic settlement in the Iberian Peninsula. Indeed, 'the discipline is thought to have been devised in Britain and transferred thence to Gaul, and now those who wish to make themselves more thoroughly acquainted with it mostly head over there to learn' according to Caesar (*BG* vi, 13, 11). He also clearly saw the distinction between *equites* and *pleb(e)*s as one of rank or social class, limiting the knights' military function to wartime. In peacetime they presumably attended to the property needed to support their horses, vassals and clients.

Rank was also a major factor differentiating *kṣatriya* and *vaiśya* in India, and Lincoln (1981: 134–6) has suggested that the Gaulish parallel points to basic PIE social stratification between an upper and a lower class. One might add that two securely reconstructed PIE terms for adult males, namely **u̯iHro-* and **h₂n(e)r-*,[84] merit consideration in this regard. As a derivative of PIE **u̯iH-* 'muscle, strength',[85] **u̯iH-ro-* will basically have denoted an able-bodied man. He appears as one of the twin pillars of wealth and status in the asyndetic PIE juxtaposition of **pe*$\hat{k}$*u* 'livestock' and **u̯iHro-* 'man' established by Avestan *pasu(-) vīra(-)* and Umbrian *uiro pequo*, and supported by expressions such as Umbrian *dupursus peturpursus* 'for two-footed (men) (and) foor-footed (livestock)' and Old Indic *dvipáde cátuṣpade-ca paśáve* 'for two-footed and four-footed livestock (*paśu*)'.[86] After a request to purify or keep safe *totar iouinar nome* 'the city/state of Iguvium's name', *uiro pequo* 'men (and) cattle' occurs several times on the Iguvine Tables alongside *nerf arsmo* as the object of the imperatives *pihatu* 'purify' or *salua seritu* 'keep safe'.[87] Whatever the precise meaning of *arsmo*, it is manifestly not *pequo* and acc. plur. *ner-f*, the Umbrian reflex of PIE **h₂ner-*, seems to designate a higher social stratum than *uiro*.[88]

a phenomenon, with *brahmans*, *flamines* and *druides*, *equites* and *kshatriyas*, *plebes* and *vaishyas* across Eurasia from Celtic Ireland, past early Rome, and to Sanskrit-speaking India … and we must be seeing fragments of a common heritage that goes back to the second millennium B C'. Cf. Littleton 1973: 221–2.

[84] E.g. OInd. *vīra*, Lith. *výras*, Lat. *vir*, Celtib. *viros* and OIr. *fer*, ON *verr* and OE *wer* for the former, and OInd. and Av. *nar-* 'man', Gk. *ἀνερ-/ἀνδρ-* 'man', Osc. *niir* 'man', Arm. *ayr* 'man', Welsh *ner* 'lord, chief' (cf. OIr. *nert*, MidW. *nerth* < PCelt. **ner-to-m* '(manliness,) strength') for the latter. See *NIL* 726–9 and 332–5.

[85] E.g. Lat. *vīs*, Gk. (ϝ)ἰς.

[86] *Ig. Tab.* vi b, 10–11; *RV* iii, 62, 14 (*paśu* < **pe*$\hat{k}$*u*). See Watkins 1995: 210. Untermann (2000: 858) suggests that 'perhaps *dupursus peturpursus* designates the same thing as *uiro pequo*'.

[87] E.g. VIa 29–30 and 32–3, VIIa 16–17 and 30–1; see Watkins 1995: 210–11.

[88] Untermann (2000: 496 and 858 respectively) calls the former 'the politically active citizen of the higher class in Iguvium' and the latter 'a constituent of the farming household alongside stock, fields (?) and crops'.

PIE **u̯iH-rōs* looks like a generic term, and **h₂n-er-es* (etymologically 'superiors' derived from **h₂en* 'top'?[89]) the specific designation of an upper class to which those who were solely **u̯iH-rōs* were subordinate.[90]

Kazzazi has shown that in the *RigVeda nár-* (attested 439x, predominantly in the plural) typically denoted hereditary members of an upper class (including priests) and could also be used of gods (2001: 50–71), while an association with warfare and physical prowess made *vīra-* (117x) applicable as a title of individual distinction roughly translatable as 'hero' to a noble or a god (notably Indra) in addition to its evidently old use alongside stock (cf. Av. *pasu vīra* above) as a source of wealth and security (2001: 72–94): e.g. 'grant us enjoyable wealth (*rayiṃ*): man and a gift consisting of cattle and horses (*vīráṃ gávyam áśvyaṃ ca rā́dhaḥ*)' (*RV* vii, 92, 3) and 'may we be lords/masters of a good body of men (*suvī́ryasya pátayaḥ syāma*)' (*RV* iv, 51, 10 and vi, 47, 12) (see Kazzazi 2001: 82–3 and 92–3). Dumézil's (1953: 176) identification of **h₂ner-* and **u̯ihro-* with his 'second' and 'third' function respectively is vitiated by the former's inclusion of priests and the latter's warlike side (Kazzazi 2001: 70–1). Accordingly, 'in the Ṛgveda the two words *nár-* and *vīrá-* are not simply to be ascribed to two different social strata (in the sense of Dumézil 1953: 176 …)' (Kazzazi 2001: 79). That said, 'the *nár-* obtain *vīrá-* [but] *vīrá-* never conversely acquire *nár-*' and 'a *nár-* … is an autonomous person belonging to no one, whereas *vīrá-* can designate a man's followers and sons' (Kazzazi 2001: 86 and 95).

Evidence that India's *kṣatriyāḥ* were essentially a continuation of the *naraḥ* (< **h₂n-er-es*) in the secular sphere is provided by three strophes of a Vedic hymn (*RV* viii, 35, 16–18) introducing the same refrain with distinctive first lines, each referring to a separate term from which the later names for the first three castes were derived (Dumézil 1968: 67–8): 'strengthen the spirit (***bráhma***) and strengthen the holy thoughts/prayers (*dhíyaḥ*) … strengthen might/power (***kṣatráṃ***) and strengthen the men (***nṝ́n***) … strengthen the cattle (*dhenű́r*) and strengthen the settlements (***víśaḥ***) …' A PIE distinction of rank between **h₂n-er-es* and (when used non-generically) **u̯iH-rōs* may well underlie social dichotomies such as *kṣatriyāḥ*/*vaiśyāḥ* in ancient India, Caesar's *equites*/*plebes* in ancient Gaul, ancient Rome's *patricii*/*pleb(e)s*, divisions between nobles and a lower class in various parts of ancient Greece (e.g. Dion. Hal. ii, 9), and

[89] As an *r*-stem derivative **h₂n-(é)r-* (with so-called "hysterokinetic" inflection) of **h₂en* 'top' underlying the preverb/preposition seen in Gk. *ἀν-ά* 'upwards, up to, upon', Av. *an-a*, OPers. *an-ā* 'up to' and Goth. *an-a* 'on'.

[90] Regarding **pe*ĥ*ku *u̯iHro-*, Watkins (1995: 211) simply states that '"men" as a form of moveable wealth … means "slaves"'. Notwithstanding the link with chattels and the likelihood that slaves were taken along with livestock on successful raids, PIE **u̯iH-ro-* as a social term hardly referred solely to slaves but rather, above all, to commoners subordinate to wealthier betters as clients and/or serfs, a social institution (cf. Anthony 2007: 99, 260, 462, 465) attested among the Celts as well as in ancient Italy and Greece (e.g. Dion. Hal. ii, 9–11).

the early Germanic one described by Tacitus between *proceres* or *principes* and the *plebs* from whom they drew individual retinues of a hundred *comites* (*Germania* 10–12, where *rex* 'king' and *sacerdos* 'priest' are also mentioned). If so, a corresponding duality should have applied to elders retired from fighting (probably when aged about fifty), and there do indeed seem to have been two PIE words for 'old (man)', namely **sen-o-* and **ĝerh₂-ont-*.[91] The former is widely attested but the latter is largely confined to Indo-Iranian and to Greek, where it is associated with γέρας 'privilege'[92] and survives alongside reflexes of **h₂n-er-* to the virtual exclusion of the other pair. If correlated with **h₂n-er-*, PIE **ĝerh₂-ont-* will have denoted upper-class elders forming a council, while old men in general or as members of the lower class were called **sen-o-*. Osborne's (2009: 30) inference from indicators of low life-expectancy in archaic Greece that 'the elders of the community were chosen by the lottery of survival' would doubtless apply to other early IE peoples as well as the Proto-Indo-Europeans themselves.

A tendency, well documented among the Celts and other Indo-European peoples,[93] to restrict admission into sodalities to upper-class youths may well already have applied to a PIE system displaying basic social stratification. Fighting then seems likely to have devolved chiefly upon able-bodied members of the upper class as the beneficiaries of a thorough military training, while (predominantly pastoral) farming was the main pursuit of a lower class presumably called upon to fight less frequently either in a defensive emergency or on a full-scale offensive. A military role could thus become the defining attribute of an upper class such as India's *kṣatriyāḥ* and those Gauls termed *equites* by Caesar, notwithstanding its members' inevitable concern with dependants, livestock and other property in peacetime. Conversely, its predominantly agricultural activity could come to define a lower class like the Indian *vaiśyāḥ*.

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[91] The former, for instance, in OInd. *sana-*, OIr. *sen*, OW *hen*, Lat. *sen-ex* (*NIL* 613–15), and the latter in OInd. *jarant-*, Gk. γεροντ- (cf. Arm. *cer* 'old (man)' < **ĝerh₂-o-*).

[92] Regarding Greek γέρας /geras/ 'honour, prerogative' (< **ĝérh₂-s*) and γῆρας /gēras/ 'old age', Frisk (*GEW* I, 305) is surely right to argue (*pace* Benveniste 1969: vol. 2, 43–9) on the strength of the derivative adjective γεραιός 'old, venerable' (< **geras-i̯o-*) that the former must also once have meant 'old age' and have been restricted to its honorific side by γῆρας 'old age' with a long vowel taken over from the corresponding verb. Alternatively, a so-called "Narten" paradigm with strong/weak stem **ĝērh₂-s/ *ĝerh₂-s-* might have been skewed (cf. McCone 1994: 103–4). For a full discussion, see Meissner 2006: 72–86 (especially 82 on γῆρας/γέρας, where influence from the finite verb's aorist ἐγήρᾱ is preferred to a "Narten" paradigm).

[93] Kershaw 2000: 132. Cf. Xenophon on the Persians at the beginning of this section (IV), the young "wolves" becoming *equites* on the Gundestrup Cauldron below, and the sons of Dond Désa taking up *díberg* with 'the sons of the lords of Ireland around them' (*co maccaib flaithi fer nÉrenn impu*) and 'wolfing' (*oc faelad*) in Connacht with three fifties of these (*TBDD* ll. 205–7).

IE priesthoods such as Insular Celtic and Gaulish druids, ancient Indian brahmins or Roman *flamines* are hardly the direct outcomes of an organised PIE priestly class for which there is no remotely reliable evidence. There are, however, good grounds for positing a PIE sacral king (V below) charged by definition with essential religious functions, and there may be some truth to Roman representations of major priesthoods and priestly colleges as kingly delegations and creations (e.g. Livy i, 20, 1–2, cited in note 60). If so, threefold systems such as *druides-equites-pleb(e)s* or *brahman-kṣatriya-vaiśya* presumably arose by expanding an inherited division between an upper and a lower class to include a more recently developed priestly/learned class as a branch of the former. Schlerath (1995: 33–4) notes 'clear indications that the same persons exercised priesthood (the allegedly sacral "sovereignty") and kingship in the early Vedic period' and is inclined to accept Gonda's suggestion that 'the three Aryan castes emerged from an original twofold division' in which 'brahmins and warriors had constituted a single elite that had only split later'. A priesthood had obvious potential to encroach not only upon the king's role but also upon those of age-grades 1 and 3 by offering young men an alternative (popular in Gaul according to Caesar) to joining a sodality and/or by reducing elders' role in arbitration and judgment (a major druidic function according to Caesar).

One of the Gundestrup Cauldron's panels[94] has been convincingly interpreted by de Vries 1961: 47–8: 'A group of footsoldiers moves towards this cauldron, whereas above them we see a group of warriors on horseback moving away from the cauldron … men march to the vessel, are immersed therein – the single man depicted presumably represents every warrior in the line – and then move away as mounted warriors … I regard it as really rash to see resurrection from death here … One might rather think of an initiation, bearing in mind that in many places this is represented as a symbolic death, a transition separating two phases of life from one another. In that case the men on horseback could designate the new members of the tribe emerging as young mounted warriors. The figure immersing them one after the other in the vessel would then be the officiating priest'. One might add that the footsoldiers bearing spears and shields and wearing caps are not only dressed like the antlered 'Cernunnos' and a trio of hunters on other panels but also form a column facing an unmistakable wolf, evidently an identifying symbol. The baptismal rite presided over by a priest (or perhaps a god in view of the figure's particularly large size) thus seems to mark

[94] See, for instance, Mac Cana 1983: 28–9 for an illustration of this panel, and Farley & Hunter 2015: 260–271 for a full set of fine photographs. Found in pieces in a Danish bog in 1891 and then assembled for display in Copenhagen's National Museum, the magnificent silver Gundestrup Cauldron was probably made in Thrace around the first century BC on stylistic grounds (e.g. Kaul 1991). Since the Indo-European Thracians coexisted there with Gaulish immigrants from the third century BC onwards and certain recognisably Gaulish motifs such as a 'Cernunnos' figure sporting antlers (de Vries 1961: 104–7), and typically Celtic torques appear on the cauldron, it seems best regarded as a Gallo-Thracian artifact.

their transition from young "wolves" of a hunter-warrior sodality to mounted warriors wearing elaborate helmets. Since ownership of horses presupposes wealth, the young "wolves" were doubtless scions of the nobility being admitted to the adult aristocracy of *equites* 'knights'. The γαισάται 'spearsmen'[95] brought down from the Alps to support the Cisalpine Gauls against the Romans in the Battle of Telamon (225 BC) according to Polybius[96] were clearly a youthful Gaulish sodality: 'The Insubrians and Boii were drawn up wearing trousers and light cloaks about them. But the Gaesatae, having cast these aside through pride and courage, stood naked with their arms in front of the force … Terrifying was the appearance and movement of the naked men standing in front, as they stood out in strength and form'. Livy (xxi, 31, 6–7) records the deposition of a king of the Allobroges in southern Gaul by his younger brother with the support of a band of youths (*coetu iuniorum*) and the elder brother's reinstatement in 218 BC by Hannibal, who had been invited to arbitrate by the Allobroges' senate (*senatus*) and leaders (*principes*). Finally, Caesar (*BG* vii, 37) states that a prominent Gaul hired for a key military role 'certain youths (*adulescentes*), whose leader was Litaviccus and his brothers, young men (*adulescentes*) born of a most renowned family'.

Competition from entry to the order of **dru(u̯)ides*, **u̯ātīs* and **bardoi* did not deprive sodalities of their role in the aristocratic system of pre-Roman Gaul, rather as the army and the church were alternative career paths for younger sons of the nobility in 18th- and 19th-century Britain. Monarchy fared less well and, by the time of Caesar's expedition around the mid-first century BC, most Gaulish peoples seem to have become aristocratic republics along Greek or Roman lines with chief magistrates such as the *vergobretus* of the Aedui (*BG* i, 16, 5).

In Ireland, kingship remained central throughout the pre-Norman period alongside *flaithi* 'lords', whose status depended chiefly upon their clients (*déis*, *cé(i)li*), and a client-class of commoners (*fé(i)ni*) typified by the *bó-aire* 'cow-freeman' and chiefly ranked on the basis of their possessions.[97] There is an obvious similarity to Gaulish *equites* and *plebes*, whose servile condition may have been exaggerated by Caesar insofar as his connection of it with debt and exclusion from assemblies chimes suspiciously well with his own "popular" politics (e.g. Scullard 1963: 7–8 and 117–19; Mackie 1992). The clear social distinction between *flaithi* and *fé(i)ni*, the existence of an early Irish sodality called a *fían*, and attestation of *druí*, *fáith* and *bard* (direct cognates of Gaulish *dru(w)id-*, *wāti-* and *bardo-*) in medieval Irish sources combine to indicate a pre-Christian Irish social system broadly similar to that of pagan ancient Gaul.

[95] The Gaulish word for 'spear' was borrowed into Latin as *gaesum*, which is recorded as γαῖσος by Hesychius and cognate with Old Irish *gaí* 'spear' < **gaisos*. See McCone 1995: 6–7 on the pertinative/agentive *-ati-* suffix.

[96] ii, 28–30: especially 28, 2; 28, 5, 7–8 and 11; 29, 7; 30, 2–3; the citation being from 28, 8, and 29, 7.

[97] See the entries for these terms in the *legal glossary* (pp. 69–109) of *CG*.

Dumézil (1968: 607) goes further, referring to '*flaith*, a concept as ambiguous as *kṣatra* in the *RigVeda* and in the same way: power, royal authority but chiefly, as a distinguishing technical term, the name of the military class – of that class into which kings are born and which, between the priests (druids) and the peasantry (*bó aire*), corresponds in every respect to the Indian class of the *kṣatriya* or *rājanya*, between the brahmins and the crop- and stock-raising *vaiśya*'.

Following the introduction of Christianity, a burgeoning Church was almost bound to come into conflict with pagan druids and wild bachelor sodalities. Its hostility to both is on display in early Irish literature. Druid and *fían* seem to have become increasingly marginalised and moribund from the seventh century onwards (McCone 1990: 218–29). The former slot was expropriated by a clerically approved *áes dano* of variously ranked professions (notably craftsmen of different types, medics, lawyers/judges and the top-ranking *filid* 'poets'), each with its own internal hierarchy and a highest grade often called *ollam* 'master' (McCone 1990: 86–7). The law-tract *Uraicecht Bec* recognises commoners (*féini*), lords (*flaithi*), poets (*filid*) and clerics (*ecalsa*) as 'free-' (*sóer-*)*nemid*, reserving a lower 'unfree-' (*doer-*)*nemed* category for 'people of every art besides (*áes cacha dána olchenae*)' (86). Equivalences of grade were established between different hierarchies of *sóer-nemid* with equal status granted to the highest grade in each of the four: the *rí* 'king' among *flaithi*, the *ollam* 'master' among *filid*, the *epscop* 'bishop' among *ecalsa*, and the *briugu* 'hospitaller' among *féini* despite the inferiority of the other grades of commoner to even the lowest grade of lord.[98]

Allowing for omission of the Church as an anachronism in pre-Patrician settings (McCone 1990: 229–32) and acknowledgment of the king's three-in-one function, a similar scheme underlies the following genealogy:[99] 'Art Mes Delmann son of Sétnae Sithbacc had four sons, namely Mes Gegrai the king (*rí*) of the Leinstermen, Mes Réta, i.e. Mac Da Thó … Mess Dána the battle-champion (*cath-míl*), Mes Domnann, i.e. the poet (*fili*)'. Since Mac Da Thó was a *briugu* 'hospitaller',[100] one brother becomes king and the other three specialise in material provision, warfare and knowledge respectively as the key areas expected to be cultivated by a successful king. Although both lower-class *féini* and upper-class *flaithi* combined the management of household, land and livestock with military duties,[101] an emphasis upon the farming role of *féini* and the warrior role of *flaithi* would have parallels in ancient Gaul's *plebes* and *equites* and ancient India's *váiśyāḥ* and *kṣatriyāḥ*. The idealised Leinster genealogy sharpens this into a dichotomy embodied by a high-ranking *briugu* and *cathmíl*. Hospitaller, chief warrior and master poet thus provide a

[98] See Kelly 1988: 37, 40–1 and 46.

[99] Cited by Knott from 'LL 240^{v}a23 (Facs. 378a)' (in a 15th–16th group of leaves included in the facsimile of the Book of Leinster; see *LL* I, xviii) on p. 72 of *TBDD*.

[100] See McCone 1984: 4.

[101] See *slógad* 'hosting' on p.106 of *CG*.

clear focus upon three essential kingly competences from an elevated position within the social classes of *féini*, *flaithi* and *áes dáno* respectively. This scheme resembles Dumézil's trifunctional one but was hardly a direct IE inheritance.

A PIE compound **k̂m̥to-gᵘu-* 'rich in livestock' (literally 'possessing a hundred cattle') can be reconstructed on the strength of Old Indic *śata-gu-* 'wealthy', Buchet's name and the Homeric 'hecatomb' (McCone 1991: 40–4), a major sacrifice of livestock followed by feasting (e.g. *Od.* iii, 32–66). The *Iliad* (vi, 12–15) refers to a Trojan, Axylus, who owned plentiful livestock and provided hospitality to all in a residence located on a highway. On Phylarchus' authority, Athenaeus (iv, 34) describes the wealthy Ariamnes' dispensing of hospitality to all Galatians for a year from large well-stocked cauldrons in great tents erected at intervals along the main roads. He then (iv, 36–7) turns to the western Gauls (*Keltoi*): 'Posidonius, when telling of the wealth of Louernius father of Bituis … says that in an attempt to win popular favour … he made a square enclosure one and a half miles each way, within which he filled vats with expensive liquor and prepared so great a quantity of food that for many days all who wished could enter and enjoy the feast prepared'. Whether provided regularly or on a one-off basis, lavish hospitality enhanced the giver's prestige and influence (e.g. Leach 1982: 152–5), and the ancient Germani also set great store by the proper treatment of guests according to Tacitus (*Germani*a 21). There may well have been a PIE connection between the possession of plentiful stock, especially cattle, and the provision of sacrificial feasts.[102] However, only in early Ireland does it seem to have given rise to a legally regulated public duty performed by a wealthy commoner, known as a *briugu*, who attained high status by using surplus stock to provide hospitality to all comers rather than to acquire clients.[103] Whether pre- or post-Christian, this innovation endowed Dumézil's rather diffuse 'third-function' peace and plenty with a clear social focus in early medieval Irish ideology. In *ETB* this aspect was personified by Buchet and explored through the vicissitudes of his and Eithne's shared fortunes.

The Irish king's role as war leader, fount of justice and promoter of wellbeing has parallels among other early IE peoples (cf. note 1). Ireland's conversion to Christianity precluded a serious religious role, but a close connection between justice and religion is, for example, indicated by the Indic pairing Mitrā-Varuṇā and the Roman Numa's expertise in legal as well as religious regulation. Among the Hittites 'the king was at the same time supreme commander of the army, supreme judicial authority, and chief priest' (Gurney 1954: 65–6). In Homeric epic Zeus' son, King Sarpedon, 'protected Lycia with judgments (δίκαι) and his

[102] Benveniste (1969: vol. 1, 74–7) discusses potlatch-like 'dépenses de prestige' and the PIE root **dap* (Lat. *daps* 'feast', Gk. δάπτω 'devour' and δαπάνη 'expenditure', ON *tafn* 'sacrificial animal/food', Arm. *tawn* 'festival'), referring to 'expenditure on the occasion of a sacrifice involving extensive consumption of food'.

[103] See McCone 1984: 3 and 28.

might (σθένος)' (*Il.* xvi, 542) and 'the king was at once the chief priest, the chief judge and the supreme war-lord of his people' (Bury 1951: 54). The author of a major work on Greek kingship (Carlier 1984) similarly asserts 'that Homeric and Macedonian kings have in some ways similar functions: they have religious duties, they lead the army, and they act as judges in some circumstances' (Carlier 2000: 262). Sparta's kings 'were priests, though not the sole priests, of the community. They were the supreme commanders of the army' but 'only in three special cases had they still judicial or legal powers' (Bury 1951: 122; cf. Herodotus vi, 56–7, and Osborne 2009: 316–17). Rome's earliest rulers are variously represented as regulators of legal and religious matters, leaders in war and promoters of peace and plenty, while Nala exemplifies the religious observance, martial prowess, generosity and support of law and custom expected of a good Indian king[104] in the episode of the *Mahābhārata* (iii, 50–78) called Nalopākhyāna after him.

Each key area in which an ideal ruler was supposed to excel in order to secure his people's welfare was a preserve of one of three main age-grades: (1) young bachelors were specialists in warfare (ii), (2) married householders were stewards of property (iii) as well as fighters (ii), and (3) elders were non-combatant propertied (iii) repositories of knowledge with judicial applications (i)(b). In effect, by integrating age-grades 1, 2 and 3 the PIE king, whose sacrality must have entailed a significant religious role (i)(a), also combined functions (i)(b), (ii) and (iii) in embryonic form. This, then, looks like a plausible starting point for the later development of more comprehensive trifunctional ideologies and/or systems of the type(s) envisaged by Dumézil and his followers, Art Mes Delmann's four sons (a king, a hospitaller, a warrior and a poet) being a medieval Irish case in point. Since PIE sacral kingship was clearly viewed as a transcendent three-in-one entity and continued to be so in various attested IE cultures (with unmistakable traces even in ancient India), a bipartite "sovereign" first function seems wide of the mark, especially when kings were classed as "second-function" kṣatriyas in the Indian caste-system. The obvious reason for this was that they were recruited from and belonged to the (secular) upper class (PIE **h₂ner-es*), like their Irish (cf. Dumezil's remarks about *kṣatra* and *flaith* above) and other IE counterparts as well as their PIE precursors.

In an Indo-European context, clearly articulated trifunctional and three-class systems seem to belong to a later stage of development than a sequence of three functionally overlapping age-grades. The rise of the former might marginalise the latter without obliterating all traces, rather as archaic linguistic forms can survive alongside innovatory ones reflecting productive patterns.

[104] E.g. *Mhb.* iii, 50, 3, where Nala is described as 'truth speaking (*satya-vādī*) and a great commander of armies', and 55, 7 and 9, where he is one 'who knows the laws (*dharma*)' and 'in whom are truth (*satya*), endurance, liberality (*dāna*), austerity, cleanliness, self-control (and) serenity' (cf. Śibi's attributes at *Mhb.* i, 19).

V. IE sacral kingship and the goddess/lady of sovereignty

The prosperity held to depend, for good or ill, upon a king and his behaviour is represented in *ETB* by the *briugu* Buchet and his fortunes but, as a rule, the benefits (or misfortunes) accruing to a righteous (or flawed) reign are depicted more straightforwardly.[105] In *Genemuin Chormaic* (ll. 30–2), 'a great roar of thunder came into the air at the birth of the boy. Lugne said on hearing the din: "A din of thunder, the birth of a king, increase of corn (*tormach n-etha*), extinguishing of falsehood (*díbad gue*), a male son of splendour, exalted place of intellect, kindling of truth (*adnad fír*), a darkening of any utterance. Grain and milk produce (*ith scéo blicht*) will come from the expedition of Art to Olc's house and from the birth of his great son"'. The personal appearance and attributes of a king or king-to-be are often described in medieval Irish texts (McCone 1990: 121–4). Born in the wilderness, taken by a she-wolf and finally found playing among her cubs in *Genemuin Chormaic*, 'the boy is fostered after that with Lugne and mention of his family name was not dared with a view to his father's enemies. The lad (*mac*) was, then, a feast (*ingelt*, lit. 'grazing') for the eyes of a multitude, i.e. in shape and attire (*delb* 7 *dechelt*) and fitness and evenness (*córi* 7 *cutrumae*) and eloquence and sport and delight and comeliness and dignity and vigour and strength and vehemence (*bruth* 7 *brí́g* 7 *barainn*)' (ll. 68–71). After revealing Cormac's true identity, his foster-father assured him that 'neither corn (*ith*) nor dairy produce (*blicht*) nor nut-mast (*mes*) nor sea produce (*muir-thorad*) nor good weather (*sín*) will be aright (*i córe*) until you be in Tara in lordship' (ll. 81–2). After Mac Con's bad judgment and its correction by Cormac 'the reign of Mac Con was not good, moreover. The men of Ireland gave him notice and grant the kingship to Cormac. The world was full of every good thing thereafter as long as Cormac was alive … Tara was built anew by him … Good, then, was Ireland at the time of that king. It was not possible to drink the waters of a river through the slippery mass of its fish (*slimrad a héisc*). It was not possible to traverse her woods easily through the abundance of their mast (*imad a mesa*). It was not easy to traverse her plains through the abundance of their honey (*imad a mela*) bestowed upon him by Heaven through the truth of his rule (*iarna tidnacol do nim dó tria fírinni a flaithiusa*)' (ll. 100–10). Another text (*CMM* §66) describes the outcome of Mac Con's error as follows: 'A year for him after that in kingship in Tara, and there did not come grass through earth (*fér tria thalmain*) or leaf through trees (*duille tre fidbuid*) or grain in corn (*gránni in arbur*). The men of Ireland then expelled him from his kingship, for he was an unfit ruler (*an-flaith*)'.

These and similar passages ascribe the welfare of a king's people to the effect of his person and conduct upon the natural order as well as the social environment. This outlook reflects a doctrine of "sacral kingship" giving the king a key mediatory role between the human and the natural or supernatural

[105] See, for instance, McCone 1990: 129–30 for a number of typical examples from sagas.

spheres by virtue of either (1) his own divinity or (2) his special relationship with a deity envisaged as (a) a goddess bound to him in a 'sacred' marriage or *hieros gamos*[106] or (b) a general bestower of benefits. Studies of Medb and her ilk by Ó Máille and others (Ib above) point to an early Irish type 2(a). That said, the above detail that nature's bounty was ultimately a gift of Heaven mediated by Cormac's 'truth' resonates with other indications that a biblically oriented Christian doctrine of kingship by God's grace had been smoothly incorporated into an inherited native model without obliterating inherited aspects deemed compatible with it.[107] This, after all, would square with the advice in Bede's version (*Hist. Eccl.* i, 30) of a letter from Pope Gregory to Augustine of Canterbury: 'the shrines of idols (*fana idolorum*) among that same people should by no means be destroyed but let the idols in them be destroyed, water blessed (and) sprinkled in those same shrines, altars built (and) relics put in. For, if the same shrines are well built, it is necessary that they should be converted from the cult of demons to the worship of the true God'.

In short, pre-existing structures could survive an injection of Christianity relatively unscathed, retaining older features more or less intact within a repurposed whole. In the case of kingship, a significant ideological shift from 2(a) to 2(b) seems to have been effected by means of judicious additions and modifications rather than ruthless dismantling and rebuilding (cf. McCone 1990: 143–60). Notwithstanding the ecclesiastical milieu from which they emanated, the investigation of medieval Irish sources from a comparative Celtic and Indo-European perspective can yield data relevant to the reconstruction of PIE culture and mythology (cf. McCone 1996b: 89–92).

A legendary Celtic king (*rex*) named Ambigatus is described by Livy (v, 34, 2) as 'excelling in personal and public virtue and fortune (*virtute fortunaque cum sua, tum publica praepollens*), insofar as Gaul was so fertile in crops and men (*frugum hominumque fertilis*) during his reign that the abundant multitude scarce seemed able to be governed'. Snorri Sturluson's euhemerising account in *Ynglingasaga* §9 states of Óðinn's immediate successor as king of Scandinavia that 'in his days good peace prevailed and there were such good crops of all kinds that the Swedes believed that Njorth had power over the harvests and the

[106] Frankfort (1948: 3 and 47) posits 'a widely spreading network of connections which reached beyond the local and national communities into the hidden depths of nature and the powers that rule nature' and 'the king's function to maintain the harmony of that integration' in the introduction to his study of both types with reference to ancient Egypt and Mesopotamia respectively.

[107] See McCone 1990: 138–43 and a recent study by Fomin that reaches the following conclusion (2013: 364): 'With the advent of Christianity and Buddhism the depictions of ideal kingship prevailing in pre-Christian Ireland and pre-Buddhist India were subject to change. Such exposure to the influence of the new religious systems subjected a range of Irish and Indian social and cultural institutions, including the institution and the ideology of kingship, to a discrete paradigm shift'.

prosperity of mankind'.[108] The third and fourth kings, Frey and Fjolnir, likewise vouchsafed peace and plenty (§§10–11).

A striking parallel with Irish descriptions of an ideal reign is seen in the disguised Odysseus' first words to Penelope since leaving for Troy twenty years earlier: 'Lady, no mortal on the boundless earth would upbraid you. For, indeed, your fame (κλέος) reaches broad heaven like that of some noble king (βασιλεύς) who, ruling god-fearingly (θεουδής) among many stalwart men, upholds righteousness (εὐδικίαι), and through (his) good guidance (εὐηγεσίη) the black earth bears wheat and barley, and trees are heavy with fruit, and flocks breed without fail, and the sea provides fish, and the people fare well by him' (*Od.* xix, 107–14).

The *Mahābhārata* (iv, 27, 13–24) makes similar claims for the oldest Pāṇḍava: 'In the town or countryside where King Yudhiṣṭhira dwells there will be no people who are discontented … There, no doubt, God Parjanya will rain in the proper season and the earth will bear rich crops and be free from plagues. The rice will be fine, the fruit juicy, the garlands fragrant, speech gentle, the wind pleasant to feel, visits agreeable, and no fear will enter where King Yudhiṣṭhira lives. Cows will be teeming, none of them lean or poor milk-givers; the milk, curds and butter will be tasty and wholesome … The people there will be confident, contented, pure, and healthy, affectionate to gods, guests, and all creatures … where King Yudhiṣṭhira lives'.[109]

In neighbouring Iran, stanzas 31–4 of the Avestan *Zamyād Yašt* in praise of the *xᵛarənah-* 'Glory' (on which see Hintze 1994a: 15–28 and, for a brief English summary, 1994b: 10–12) describes a mythical monarch and his downfall as follows: 'We worship the mighty Glory [*xᵛarənō*] of the Kauui-dynasty created by Mazdā [the supreme Zoroastrian deity] …, which accompanied shining Yima of good herds for a long time, so that he ruled over the earth of seven parts, over demons and mortals … Who brought up from the demons both prosperity and reputation, both flocks and herds, both contentment and honour. Under whose reign let that which is edible exist: (let) both kinds of food (be) undiminishing, cattle and men undecaying, water and plants not drying up. Under whose reign there was no frost, no heat, no old age, no death, no envy created by demons: before his not-lying, before he took up the false word [*draogəm vācim*], the untrue one, into his endeavour. When he had taken up the false word [*draogəm vācim*], the untrue one, into his endeavour, the Glory [*xᵛarənō*] flew away from him visibly in the form of a bird. Not seeing the Glory shining Yima of good herds was driven off. Unhappy Yima started to wander about and being laid low because of his evil-mindedness he kept himself hidden on the earth' (Hintze 1994b: 20–1). On a roughly contemporary Old Persian inscription, King Darius (reigned 522–486 BC) states that 'when Cambyses had gone off to Egypt, after that the people became evil. After that the Lie [*draṷga*] waxed great in the

[108] Hollander's translation (1964: 13–14).

[109] van Buitenen's translation (1978: 13–20), also cited by West 2007: 422–3.

country' but 'the kingdom which had been taken away from our family … I reestablished it on its foundation … I restored to the people the pastures [?] and the herds, … the houses which Gaumata the Magian took away from them'.[110]

The documentation of a key diagnostic of sacral kingship in several geographically diverse branches of the IE language family (notably Celtic, Germanic, Greek, Indic and Iranian) corroborates the linguistically justified postulate of a sacral PIE **(H)rḗĝ-on-* 'king' underlying Sanskrit *rājan-* 'king' directly and Latin *rēx* 'king', Old Irish *rí* 'king' (< **rīχ-s*) indirectly (McCone 1998). A full array of fitting traits, utterances and actions endowed an Irish ruler (*flaith(em)*) with 'truth' (*fír(inne)*), from which a wide range of benefits was supposed to flow with divine sanction. However, this could be undone by even a single failing (such as a physical blemish, false judgment or base act) deemed to constitute 'untruth' (*anfír*) or a 'lie' (*gáu*) resulting in widespread misfortune. These concepts have, for instance, been seen to figure prominently in *Esnada Tige Buchet* and *Genemuin Chormaic*, which includes the extinguishing (*díbad*) of *gáu* and the kindling (*adnad*) of *fír* among the results foretold from Cormac's birth. The benefits of his reign were vouchsafed 'through the truth (*fírinne*) of his rule (*flaithius*)', whereas according to *CMM* above his predecessor's false judgment led to poor crops and his deposition for being a 'non-ruler (*an-flaith*)'. The 'lie (*drau̯ga*)' referred to by Darius clearly stigmatised his dethroned predecessor as unfit to be king, and the 'lying/false (*draoga-*)' word similarly disqualified the legendary Yima. A number of scholars[111] have argued, chiefly on the strength of the etymology (*h₂er* 'fit, arrange'; *LIV* 240–1/*LIV²* 269–70) and semantics of Vedic *ṛtá-* 'order, truth' (later *satya-* 'reality, truth'; Av. *aša-* 'truth'), that a similar linkage of king, truth/order and cosmos was a central feature of Proto-Indo-European culture. Since PIE **h₂ṛ-to-* 'order, truth' is only supported by Indo-Iranian, **u̯ēro-* or **(H)u̯eh₁ro-* 'true' (OIr. *fír* 'true, truth', MW *gwir* < PCelt. **u̯īro-*, Lat. *vērus* 'true' and OHGerman *wār* 'true') may be a better candidate as it goes back to Western IE at least, and an arguable connection with a Gk. **ϝηρα /u̯ēra/ in the Homeric expression ἐπὶ ἦρα φέρειν '(bring) help, oblige' (e.g. *Od.* iii, 164)[112] would clinch PIE provenance.

[110] D(areios I.)B(īsutūn) §10.O-Q, §14.D, H-J (Schmitt 2009: 41, 45–6), cf. Kent's (1953: 117–18, 119–20) D(arius)B(ehistan) I, ll. 33–4, 62–3, 64–6, whose translation is given here (on 'pastures' cf. Brust 2018: 111–12).

[111] E.g. Benveniste 1969: vol. 2, 99–105; Dillon 1973: 16–8; 1975: 127–33; Watkins 1979; Lincoln 1981: 56–7; Meid 1987: 162–4; West 2007: 422.

[112] See *GEW* I, 641–2. The usual analysis of Homeric ἦρα as an acc. sg. root noun is supported by a normally athematic (nom./acc. pl. ἐρί-ηρ-ες/-ας) but once thematic (nom. sg. ἐρί-ηρ-ο-ς at *Il.* iv, 266) derivative adjective meaning 'faithful, trusty' often attached to ἑταῖρος 'comrade (in arms)'. The early Irish term for martial honour, *fír fer* 'men's truth', exemplifies a role for 'true, proper (things)' in combat. An alternative interpretation of ἦρα as a substantivised thematic neuter plural would make the formal equation precise, but anyway a root noun could have been the base

This hypothesis would be strengthened by evidence establishing a more detailed picture of PIE sacral kingship and its mythology, including a prototype relevant to *Esnada Tige Buchet* and the *Odyssey*. Non-trivial tripartite representations of kingship and the king's person in early Indian, Iranian, Roman and Irish sources have been discussed. It remains to consider the goddess/lady of sovereignty and the relations between her and her kingly suitor/spouse. A dossier of motifs attested in at least three (or two widely separated) early IE literatures will include transformations of either party (beauty↔ugliness, happiness↔distress, finery↔rags, high↔low status), her 'own choice' of (often disguised) husband, her (or reciprocal) 'love of the unseen/absent (one)', her offering him a drink, and his success in a test or feat.

Dillon's discussion (1975: 106–14) of Celtic and Indian sacral kingship begins by stating that 'the notion of a goddess of sovereignty whom the king must wed is a commonplace of Irish literature' before comparing two royal rituals of horse-sacrifice, an Irish one described by Giraldus Cambrensis and the Indian *aśva-medha* (107–8). These also figure in de Vries' presentation (1961: 234–47) of evidence 'that Irish kingship had still quite palpably preserved the traits of its erstwhile sacral character' (1961: 245). The only external correspondence to the Irish 'goddess' adduced (1961: 243) was a Medb-like claim by Hermuntrude/Hermuthruda, Amleth's (Hamlet's) Scottish beloved, in the fourth book of Saxo Grammaticus's *Gesta Danorum* (IV.XXXIIa; Holder 1896: 103.30–2) that any man who shared her bed would become king. In a study of the equine rituals, Puhvel states (1970: 164–5) that the mating of king and goddess 'is clearly discernible in Celtic tradition' but 'has paled in Indic tradition, apart from its epicized survival in Draupadī as the consort of the Pāṇḍavas'. Dumézil (1971: 327–30) has argued that, despite an inexact match between *Medb* and *Mād^{h}avī*, a PIE derivative of **med^{h}u* 'mead' (the only securely reconstructed[113] PIE alcoholic beverage) designated a goddess who bestowed kingship with a drink of mead. A formal equation is possible if *Mādhavī* is taken as a normal "vr̥ddhi"-derivative of *madhu* 'honey, drink' in Old Indic,[114] **Medu̯-ā* as the regular outcome of "vr̥ddhi" **Mēdu̯-ā*[115] in Proto-Celtic, and **mēd^{h}u-eh$_2$* 'pertaining to mead' as the PIE form underlying both. Damayantī and Penelope have since

for a thematic vr̥ddhi-derivative **u̯ēr-o-* 'belonging to, consisting of' **u̯ēr-*/**u̯er-*. See, however, Janda (2005: 214–16) for a summary of Peters' derivation from a root **ser* 'seize, plunder'.

[113] E.g. OIr. *mid*, OW *med*, OE *meodu* 'mead', Lith. *medùs* 'honey', Gk. *méthu* 'wine', OInd. *mádhu* 'sweet (drink), honey'.

[114] See Wackernagel & Debrunner 1954: 128–9 and 396–7 on *-av-a-* rather than *-v-a-* (from *u*-stem bases) and feminine *-ī* rather than *-ā*, both probably innovatory features, in Old Indic vr̥ddhi-derivatives.

[115] See McCone 1996a: 63 on the shortening of vowels before certain consonant groups and precisely comparable OIr. *Sadb* < **swadu̯-ā* < **swādu̯-ā* < PIE **su̯eh$_2$du-eh$_2$* 'sweet' (e.g. Gaul. *Suadu-*, OInd. *svādu-*, Lat. *svāvis*, OEng. *swēte*). If forms like gen. sg. *Me(i)dbe* and Gaulish *Epo-meduos* are due to this, a date before Proto-Celtic *ē* > *ī*

been claimed as Indian and Greek equivalents of Irish figures such as Medb and Eithne (McCone 1990: 109–17). Finally, Campanile (1990: 42–9) asserts the PIE king's sacrality as a mediator between gods and men through a *hieros gamos* on the strength of medieval Irish passages (e.g. Giraldus' horse ritual), the *aśvamedha* plus Gonda's (1969: 7) description of Indian kingship, the Roman Numa's relationship with the nymph Egeria, Odysseus' above address to Penelope and King Peleus' wedding to the goddess Thetis.

Finley (1967: 101–4) was puzzled that in 'a solidly patriarchal society' the claimants to the kingship of Ithaca 'placed the decision in the strangest place imaginable, in the hands of a woman' offering 'some shadow of legitimacy'. Finkelberg (1991: 303 and 307) has since shown that 'kingship by marriage represents the general rule' in Greek mythology, arguing that 'it was not merely the shadow of legitimacy but this very legitimacy itself that marriage with the queen was to bestow on the new king of Ithaca'. She concludes (1991: 315) that 'the king owed his position of local ruler to being the queen's consort' because 'she was the priestess of the goddess of the land'. Finley's conundrum and the lack of evidence for Finkelberg's priesthoods cease to be problems, if this marital pattern and their 'own choice' (Sanskrit *svayaṃ-vara*) of husbands by the likes of Damayantī and Penelope are taken not literally but as narrative reflexes of a mythical and/or ritual sacred marriage. Jamison (1999) has clarified Penelope's position and other aspects of the *Odyssey* in the light of early Indian royal rites, legal rules and their illustration in the *Mahābhārata*. However, pure *svayaṃ-vara* as a mode of royal marriage in real life as opposed to myth or legend[116] seems as out of place in early India as in ancient Greece. Verisimilitude is further undermined by "love of the unseen (one)" leading the woman to prefer a total stranger over local suitors, not to mention the striking physical, mental and/or social transformations[117] liable to affect her and/or her intended.

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follows. A masc. is also seen in Ogam gen. sg. medvvi (*CIIC* no. 12) and twice as a priest's name *Medb* in the *Additamenta* of the Book of Armagh (Bieler 1979: 170–1, §§5.1, 6). If fem. **Medu̯ā* originally meant 'mead-woman' as the bestower of a drink upon a king, masc. **Medu̯os* (< **mēdu̯os*) would presumably be 'mead-man' as its royal recipient and comparable with the Gaulish name Μεδουρειξ (*RIG* I, no. 71; = *Medu-rīx* 'king-through-mead'). PIE **mēd^{h}u-eh$_2$* reflects a prevocalic alternation between *-u̯-/u(u̯)-* after a light/heavy syllable in accordance with "Sievers' Law" (e.g. Beekes 1995: 136), the former replacing the latter in Celtic after this had ceased to apply.

[116] Jamison 2001: 303: 'the evidence for it outside of narratives of the epic and classical period is not abundant. The eight-fold typology of marriage found throughout the dharma texts has no place for the svayaṃvara in its schema'.

[117] The primary concern of Mac Cana's study (1955/8) of early Irish material, the summary of which recognises 'three different categories, namely those depicting the goddess as (i) an ugly hag transformed into a beautiful lady by the embraces of the hero destined to become king … (ii) a wild wandering female who is restored to sanity and beauty through union with the rightful king … and (iii) a girl of royal birth brought

The *Odyssey* tellingly contrasts "own choice" of husband with the normal practice of leaving the decision to the royal woman's family, particularly her father (cf. Finkelberg 1991: 315). For instance, Athena (in Mentes' form) urges Telemachus to bid the suitors disperse to their homes and 'if her [Penelope's] heart is set upon marrying, let her go back to the residence of her powerful father, and they will arrange a marriage (γάμος) and get ready numerous bridal gifts (ἔεδνα), as many as are wont to accompany a dear daughter' (*Od.* i, 275–8; cf. ii, 45–59, cited above in II, paragraph 3).

Eight of the ten years between Odysseus' departure from Troy and return to Ithaca were spent with two goddesses on their remote islands: 'Indeed, Calypso, most divine of goddesses, detained me there in hollow caverns, desiring me to be her husband (πόσις). Likewise, wily Circe of Aeaea kept me in her halls, desiring me to be her husband (πόσις). But they did not persuade the spirit in my breast' (*Od.* ix, 29–33). Even so, Odysseus spent a whole year with Circe, who was attended by four nymphs (x, 348–51), in apparent contentment before yielding to his men and getting her permission to depart (x, 466–574). Calypso, by contrast, lived alone and detained the by then solitary Odysseus against his will for seven years until Zeus finally sent Hermes to order his release (*Od.* v, 13–15 and 27–281). It was not long until another beautiful unattached female crossed Odysseus' path. After he had swum to the Phaeacians' land, Scheria, and found a makeshift place to sleep (v, 313–493), Athena (in a girlfriend's guise) urged their king Alcinous' sleeping daughter, Nausicaa, to go and wash clothes at dawn: 'You are close to marriage (γάμος), when you will have to don fair garments yourself and provide others for those who take you … since you will not be a maiden (παρθένος) for much longer. For already the best men (ἀριστῆες) among the people of all the Phaeacians, to whom you yourself belong by descent, are wooing you' (vi, 27–35). On waking up, Nausicaa got a wagon from her father and took the clothing to the washing places with her handmaids (48–84). After their chores it was playtime and a ball fell into swirling water (99–116). The girls' cries woke Odysseus and his wild appearance frightened off all but Nausicaa, who responded to his overtures by telling her handmaids to give him clothes and oil and take him to a bathing place (137–216). Washed, dressed and with looks enhanced by Athena, Odysseus excited her desire 'that such a one might be called my husband (πόσις), live here and be pleased to stay here' (244–5). On the way back she told him how to reach the city and left for fear of gossip that 'this fine and great stranger' was going to be her husband (πόσις) and 'she thus dishonours these many good Phaeacian wooers among the people' (276–84). After meeting Odysseus, Alcinous exclaimed 'Father Zeus and Athena and Apollo, would that … you would stay here and take my child and be called my son-in-law. I would, moreover, give you a home and possessions if you were to remain willingly, but none of the Phaeacians will

up among cowherds and elevated again to her due dignity through marriage to the king …' (Mac Cana 1958: 63–4).

detain you against your wishes' (vii, 311–16). Since normal social life was impossible in the remote unpeopled realms of Circe and Calypso, any sovereignty on offer there was strictly limited and, anyway, Odysseus was already spoken for. His longing for his wife and home also ruled out acceptance of the lovely Nausicaa's hand and with it, given Greek mythical patterns of royal succession, a strong claim to be the next ruler over a perfectly functioning society. Nausicaa's reluctance to accompany Odysseus into the city was aimed at avoiding local disapproval of what would look like her "own choice" of a stranger as husband, and Alcinous' offer to Odysseus indicates that his daughter's hand was her father's to give.[118] Scheria and Ithaca are depicted in the Odyssey as, in effect, opposite sides of the same coin. Both had very similar systems with one king at the head of several others.[119] However, the former was a utopia of perfect peace, preternatural plenty and social harmony, whereas the latter was afflicted by severe disfunction in the absence of its rightful king.[120] When Odysseus' own sister had reached maturity (ἥβην), her parents 'gave (ἔδοσαν) her (in marriage) to Same (neighbouring Cephallenia) and received numerous [gifts] (μυρί' ἔλοντο)' (*Od.* xv, 366–7; neut. pl. ἕεδνα 'bridal gifts' or the like understood) in the normal way. This practice of parental selection of a girl's husband in return for a bride-price is presented as a desirable norm not only by Phaeacian practice but also by the goddess Athena's recommendation above for Penelope, whose procrastinatory "own choice" is effectively put down to Ithaca's topsy-turvy state. As Cairns (2018: 382) observes, both the Iliad and the Odyssey 'are premised on crises, major departures from the norms that might otherwise prevail'. Moreover, 'Odyssean … ideals of leadership are by no means absent from the *Iliad* … In that poem, the focus is less on actually depicting the king in ideal form … It is much more on the leader of one among many, on his complex interactions with others of the same or similar rank and with the community, whether political or military … but in both poems this is kingship without monarchy. There are communities of kings: Agamemnon and Achilles (like other leaders of the army's contingents) are *basilêes*' (Cairns 2018: 388).

A king's daughter or wife often links legendary Roman monarchs. In Cicero's *De re publica* (ii, 18), Scipio's reference to Ancus Marcius as 'Numa Pompilius' grandson through his daughter' prompts Laelius' reply that 'Roman history is obscure if we have the mother of this king but do not know the father'. The case of Romulus was similar, Tarquinius Priscus' wife helped

[118] As Buchet insists to Cormac's envoys in *ETB* II(3) in Ib above.

[119] Telemachus notes that 'many others, young and old, are kings of the Achaeans (βασιλῆες Ἀχαιῶν) in sea-girt Ithaca, one of whom may have this since Odysseus died' (*Od.* i, 394–6), and Alcinous states that twelve kings hold sway among his people with himself as the thirteenth: δώδεκα γὰρ κατὰ δῆμον ἀριπρεπέες βασιλῆες ἀρχοὶ κραίνουσι, τρισκαιδέκατος δ' ἐγὼ αὐτός (viii, 390–1).

[120] De Jong's (2001: 191) illuminating study refers to 'the difference between Ithaca, a society in disorder, and Scheria, a society in harmony'.

their son-in-law Servius Tullius to become king, and he in turn gave his own daughter to Priscus' (grand)son, Tarquinius Superbus (e.g. Cornell 1995: 123). Two kings were even said to have enjoyed the sexual favours of a goddess. Plutarch (*Numa* 3, 6) mentions Numa's mortal wife Tatia and also (*Moralia* 321B) the 'somewhat fantastic' ascription of Numa's good fortune to the advice of 'a wise wood-nymph named Egeria, who was the man's lover'.[121] She appears as a bestower of plenty in an episode recorded by Dionysius of Halicarnassus (ii, 60): visitors invited to dinner as they left Numa's frugal house returned in the evening to find it decked out for a feast so sumptuously that the goddess' assistance had to be acknowledged. Plutarch (*Moralia* 322C) claimed that Servius Tullius was so successful 'that Tyche (= Fortuna in Latin) was thought to come down to his home through a window now called the *Porta Fenestella* and have intercourse with him'. After mentioning Fortuna and Servius by name, Ovid (*Fasti* vi, 569–78) tells how 'while the goddess timidly confessed her furtive love and was ashamed as a heavenly being to have slept with a man … she was wont to enter the house by a small window (*parva … fenestra*), whence the gate (*porta*) has the name Fenestella ('little window')'. Cornell (1995: 146–7) notes that 'this legend has been interpreted by scholars as evidence for the ritual known as "sacred marriage"'. *Fortuna* was the key to Ambigatus' prosperous reign in Gaul according to Livy above and the Sanskrit equivalent *śrī* '(good) fortune, prosperity', already seen as the overall aim of the tripartite royal *aśvamedha* sacrifice in III, was similarly personified as a goddess Śrī and connected with female transmitters of sovereignty. Draupadī was said to have become Śrī again after her death (*Mhb.* xviii, 4, 136), while Damayantī was likened to Śrī in two descriptions of her peerless beauty (*Mhb.* iii, 50, 12; 65, 9) and described as 'ablaze with beauty and fortune (*vapuṣā śriyā-ca*)' (52, 11).

To turn to 'love of the unseen/absent (one)' (Skt. *adṛṣṭa-kāma*, MidIr. *grád écmaise*[122]), *Cóir Anmann* §38 tells how the King of Spain's daughter gave *grád écmaise* to Éogan the Great of Munster and duly married him when he visited (Arbuthnot 2007: 10 and 87). An extremely beautiful woman 'beside the well (*for ur in topair*)' declares her own choice as follows: 'I am Étaín, daughter of Étar king of Echrad, from the *síd*-mounds. I have been here for twenty years since I was born in a *síd*-mound. The men of the *síd*-mound, both royal and handsome ones, (have been) seeking me and it was not obtained from me because I have loved you like a child since I was able to speak, owing to great reports of you (*ar th'airscélaib*) and to your fairness, and I have never seen you and I recognised you immediately from your description' (*TBDD* ll. 3 and 51–6). In the medieval Welsh tale 'Pwyll Lord of Dyfed', that king's wait on a mound

[121] Cf. *Numa* 4, 1–3; Ovid *Fasti* iii, 151–4, 262, 275–6 and 289; Livy i, 21, 3.

[122] Since 'love of absence' implies the wish to be alone, it seems best to treat *écmais* here as a fem. noun that can also denote its male practitioner (of absence, by being absent) like *flaith* 'lordship, lord' or *díberg* 'reaving, reaver'. Similarly, Skt. *adṛṣṭa-kāma* is hardly 'unseen/invisible love' but rather 'love of the unseen (one)'.

is eventually rewarded by a first encounter with the woman destined to become his wife. She tells him that her chief business is 'trying to see you' and names herself as follows: 'I am Rhiannon daughter of Heueyd Hen and I am being given to a man against my will, and I have not desired any man – and that for love of you – and I will not desire him even now unless you refuse me' (ll. 282, 284–8 of Thomson's 1957 edition).

The *Mahābhārata* (iii, 50) provides the classic case of *adṛṣṭa-kāma* (50, 16), which befell King Nala and Damayantī, King Bhīma's beautiful daughter, as a result of good reports communicated over a great distance. Damayantī's pining condition led her royal father to summon suitors to her 'own choice' (*svayaṃ-vara*) of husband (51, 7–10), to which 'kings and kings' sons (*rājāno rājaputrāś-ca*)' duly flocked (51, 20). Faced with the challenge of picking her beloved out from five lookalikes after four gods had assumed Nala's appearance, Damayantī forced the deities to reveal themselves by repeatedly invoking 'truth' (*satya*). She finally chose and married Nala with their blessing, inaugurating a happy reign characterised by right, due custom (*dharma*), religious observance (including the *aśvamedha*), offspring and general prosperity (54, 35–8). Fragments 94–6 of Hesiod's 'Catalogue of women' (Rzach 1913: 159–165) list the many Greek kings and heroes who came to the house of Tyndareus, the king of Sparta, to seek the hand of his (or rather Zeus') daughter Helen in marriage. These included Tyndareus' own son-in-law Agammemnon pressing his absent brother Menelaus' suit (Frag. 94, ll. 14–5) and another suitor (name missing) who came 'desiring to be the husband of fair-tressed Helen, not having seen her form but hearing the report of others' (Frag. 94, ll. 32–3). According to Euripides (*Iphigenia Aul.*, ll. 68–70) Tyndareus granted Helen her own choice of husband and she chose the absent Menelaus, an outsider who succeeded to the Spartan kingship as a result of what amounted to Helen's *svayaṃ-vara* and *adṛṣṭa-kāma*.

Examples of physical and social transformation include the lady of sovereignty's change from hideous hag to radiant beauty through intercourse with a future king in two medieval Irish tales (VII below). Eithne experienced Cinderella-like demotion from riches to rags as a result of her kinsmen's behaviour and subsequent restoration from rags to riches through marriage to Cormac in *ETB*. After forfeiting his kingdom to his brother in a game of dice, Nala lost his wits and his wife in the wilderness (*Mhb.* iii, 55–9), subsequently being transformed into an ugly short-armed man and entering the king of Ayodhyā's service as a charioteer (63–4). Meanwhile Damayantī's sufferings after separation from her husband included physical and mental deterioration and becoming a queen's chambermaid (60–2). Each of them, then, underwent striking mental, physical and social decline in the other's absence. Having been recognised and returned to her parental home, Damayantī eventually received information regarding her husband's possible whereabouts and Nala's royal employer was offered hopes of success in her pretended *svayaṃvara* of a second husband if he could cover the 500 miles between them in a single day. Nala duly

accomplished this feat on his master's behalf and was vouchsafed the highest skill in dicing by the grateful king. After Damayantī had seen through his disguise, Nala assumed his true form and recovered his kingdom by beating his brother at dice. Finally reunited, both regained their former glory and happiness.

Her royal husband's fortunes are similarly reflected by his wife's physical condition in the *Odyssey*. Arriving at the palace disguised as an old beggar, Odysseus won a prize of food for defeating a gluttonous rival beggar and was formally presented with wine in a golden goblet by the suitor Amphinomus (*Od.* xviii, 121–57). Thereupon Penelope, inspired to visit the hall, quite uncharacteristically 'laughed foolishly/helplessly' (163) and then remarked 'for the gods who possess Olympus destroyed my beauty after he [Odysseus] went off in hollow ships' (180–1). Athena then made Penelope sleep and 'purified her countenance with immortal beauty such as garlanded Aphrodite is anointed with whenever she goes to the lovely dance of the Graces, and made her taller and fuller to behold and made her whiter than sawn ivory' (192–6). Transformation seems to be confined to the woman in medieval Irish literature but a change reminiscent of Odysseus occurs in the medieval Welsh tale just referred to: when his rash generosity at the wedding feast held a year after his first encounter with Rhiannon had enabled Guawl to claim her, Pwyll attended their nuptials disguised as a beggar and tricked his rival into a magic bag, whereupon he cast off his rags and Guawl was beaten into surrendering Rhiannon (Thomson 1957: ll. 301–422).

VI. A second PIE sovereignty myth: twelve royal suitors and "own choice"

According to Jamison (1999: 244–6) 'the svayaṃvara depicted in classical Indian literature is a method of contracting marriage primarily characteristic of the warrior (kṣatriya) class, particularly for the daughter of a king … There are two different forms … In one the princess makes a free choice among the assembled suitors. Such was Damayantī's first svayaṃvara, and this type seems to reflect the literal meaning of the term svayaṃvara "self-choice". But the more common type – at least in epic depictions – seems to be the vīryaśulka svayaṃvara, the self-choice "with manly deed as bride-price". Here a contest or test of skill is set for the suitors, and the girl dutifully "chooses" the winner … The most famous example of this type in the epic is the elaborately treated svayaṃvara of Draupadī in MBh. I.175–81 … attended not only by an array of kings and princes, but also by the five Pāṇḍava brothers. Though they too belong to the warrior (kṣatriya) class … they are disguised as begging Brahmins. After various others have tried and failed at the contest, Arjuna, the third brother and a great warrior, still disguised, tries and succeeds. There is uproar from the other suitors, but eventually Draupadī does choose Arjuna as husband and follows him from the arena'. According to Pausanias (iii, 12, 1), Penelope had

been betrothed to Odysseus as a result of his victory in a footrace set for her suitors by her father. Hippodamea's father Oenomaus, the king of Pisa, used to catch and slay her suitors after giving them a start in a chariot race but was himself killed when she suborned her father's charioteer so that Pelops outraced him, thereby gaining Oenomaus' kingdom and daughter (Apollodorus, *Epit.* ii, 3–8). Hippodamea thus converted a test controlled by her father into a genuine "own choice" of husband.

Towards the end of her first meeting with the still disguised Odysseus, Penelope declared her decision to set a contest (ἄεθλος) based on Odysseus' feat of stringing his mighty bow and shooting an arrow through a dozen crossed axes, and marry the winner (*Od.* xix, 570–87). In effect, this turned her constantly postponed *svayaṃvara* into the *vīryaśulka* version. A remarkable feat of charioteering accomplished by Nala led to his reunion with Damayantī, and the medieval Irish *De Ṡíl Chonairi Móir* describes a charioteering test to determine the next king of Tara (Gwynn 1912: 134, ll. 19–22, and 138–9). Odysseus' recovery of Penelope followed his victory in the archery contest (xxi, 404–23): casting off his rags (xxii, 1), he shot the suitors' ringleader Antinous (8–30), revealed his true identity (34–41), slew all his enemies (42–477), and staged a mock wedding feast in the palace so as to make their relatives outside think all was well inside (xxiii, 111–52). Cleaned and properly clothed, he was restored to his former glory by Athena (153–63) and finally recognised by and united with Penelope (164–301).

Jamison (1999) was not alone in comparing the Odyssey with parts of the *Mahābhārata*. Germain (1954: 11–54) noted parallels between Draupadī's *svayaṃvara* and Penelope's, not least (26) the deciding archery contest won by a recently arrived 'beggar' (Arjuna and Odysseus) who easily managed to string a special bow and make a most difficult shot after the other suitors had failed to do either. Gresseth (1979) turned to the Nala episode, positing an underlyng narrative sequence of typically folkloristic motifs subjected to greater manipulation in the Odyssey. Having briefly reviewed these earlier studies and a couple of his own, Allen (2009) proposed a 'proto-narrative', again better preserved in the Indian than the Greek epic, on the basis of further parallels from diverse parts of the *Mahābhārata*.

Suffice it to say here that none of these studies considers two early *svayaṃvara* narratives, one Scytho-Iranian and the other Celto-Greek, taken from fourth-century BC Greek authors (Chares of Mytilene and Aristotle) and juxtaposed by Athenaeus (xiii, 575–6b). In both, a young woman presents a drink to the husband of her choice, a stranger from afar rather than one of her assembled local suitors. The Iranian takes his Scythian bride home in keeping with normal IE patrilocal residence[123] whereas the Greek remains in the land of

[123] Securely inferred from the lack of PIE words for a husband's "in-laws" from his wife's kindred and the very full set reconstructed for a wife's "in-laws" belonging to her husband's family (Beekes 1995: 38).

his Gaulish spouse. The former pattern may reflect Iranian designs on Scythia, which Darius of Persia apparently tried to conquer in the last decade of the 6th century BC (e.g. Osborne 2009: 303), while the latter confirmed the sovereign status of a Greek colony in Gaulish territory. The Iranian story shares mutual 'love of the unseen (one)' and the accomplishment of a remakable chariot-journey with the Nala episode.

The first tale (575) features Odatis, the beautiful daughter of the king of the region below the River Tanais (Don). In her sleep she saw the fair Zariadres, ruler over the area above the Tanais and younger brother of the king of Media, and fell in love with him. He had the same experience regarding her but was rejected by her father. The latter, having no sons of his own and desiring a local son-in-law, invited his kith and kin to a wedding feast. At its height, he told his daughter to fill a golden bowl (φιάλη) and give it to the man she wished to marry. She, failing to see the man of her dream, left in tears. Having learned of the nuptials, Zariadres with his charioteer crossed the Tanais and drove some 800 stades. He then disguised himself in Scythian garb and found Odatis tearfully filling the bowl. The handsome stranger (ξένος ἀνήρ) revealed himself and she, recognising him from her vision, gave him the bowl. They then eloped in his chariot.

The second story (576a-b) concerns the Phocaean Greek foundation of Massalia (Marseille) c. 600 BC at the mouth of the Rhone: 'Euxenus the Phocaean was a guest-friend (ξένος) to King Nanus, as he was named. This Nanus, being about to order his daughter's nuptials, invited Euxenus to the feast when he turned up by chance. The wedding took place in this wise: after the meal, the girl was to come in and give a mixed drinking bowl (φιάλη) to whomsoever she wished of the suitors present and the one to whom she gave it was her bridegroom. When the girl came in, she gave it to Euxenus ... and the girl's name was Petta. When this occurred and the father deemed him worthy of the gift on the grounds that it was divinely inspired, Euxenus took her to wife and lived with her, changing her name to Aristoxene. And a kindred named the Protiadae descended from the woman still exists in Massalia. For Protus ['first'] was the son of Euxenus and Aristoxene'. Another version survives in Justin's (xliii, 3, 4–11) epitome of the Augustan Roman author Trogus Pompeius' lost *Philippic histories*: 'the youth (*iuventus*) of the Phocaeans ... set out for the most distant bays of Gaul in ships and founded Massilia amidst the Ligurians and wild tribes of the Gauls ... The leaders of the fleet were Simos and Protis. Accordingly, in quest of friendship they encountered the king of the Segobriges, Nannus by name, in whose territory they desired to found a city. As it happened, on that day the king was engaged in organising the wedding of his daughter Gyptis, whom he was preparing to give there to a son-in-law chosen at a feast according to the nation's custom. So, when all the chiefs had been invited to the wedding, the Greeks were also asked to the banquet. Then, when the maiden was brought in and ordered by her father to offer water to the one whom she would choose as husband, she ignored everyone, turned to

the Greeks and offered the water to Protis, who was turned from a guest into a son-in-law and received land for founding the city from his father-in-law'. Aristotle's emphasis upon ξενία 'guest-friendship', even in the names Εὔ-ξενος and Ἀριστο-ξένη, betrays a Greek intermediary, but a native source may underlie the version featuring a classic pattern of emigration under two leaders (note 74) given by Trogus, a Gaul's grandson.

The framework common to these two narratives from the East and West of the IE world is simple: a king invites local aspirants to a feast at which his daughter is to make her "own choice" of one of them by presenting him with a drink, but she gives this to a recently arrived outsider instead and marries him, the pair either remaining with her people or decamping to his. Given the "dialectic" relationship between myth and reality, deviation from a normal IE patrilocal residence in the former (cf. Asdiwal in the final part of II above) is no more problematical than the mismatch between a mythical female's "own choice" of husband/king and IE patriarchal norms. The core just identified seems very likely to continue an underlying PIE template also supported by an already presented array of early Indian, Greek and Irish evidence. The broader picture also suggests that this included "love of the unseen/absent (one)", metamorphosis and/or disguise and a (con)test (typically of archery or charioteering[124]) as optional enhancements.

"Own choice" determined by a contest may have had some basis in reality, as may the basic version as long as the woman's role was confined to the symbolic presentation of a drink (a garland in India, as by Damayantī to Nala at *Mhb*. iii, 54, 26) to a candidate actually chosen by the head of her kindred. That said, as represented in early Indian, Greek and Irish literature, "own choice" clearly belonged first and foremost to myth and legend, where it typically entailed the bestowal of kingship upon a complete outsider by a king's daughter not infrequently smitten by "love of the unseen (one)". Even the long-lost kings Nala and Odysseus returned as apparent strangers before eventually revealing themselves to their wives. Similarities between them point to the following variation on the basic theme: a king disappears, causing his devoted wife to become distraught and disfigured through pining for him (suitably retrospective "love of the unseen/absent (one)"); he later returns in disguise, whereupon his wife instinctively summons suitors to her "own choice" of husband (optionally accompanied by a contest) and (by offering him a drink) selects the "stranger" (after he has performed a revealing feat); he then discards his disguise to reveal himself, recovering the kingship and a wife restored to happiness and beauty. Although this variant could have arisen by independent Indian and Greek tweaking of the standard pattern, it is noteworthy that animals once be-

[124] The only PIE words for weapons that can be reconstructed with any plausibility are **g^{u}iH-* 'bow(string)' (OInd. *jiyā́*, Gk. βιός) and **isu-* 'arrow' (OInd. *íṣu*, Gk. ἰός). There is a considerable number of securely reconstructed PIE words relating to wheeled transport and the horse (Beekes 1995: 37).

longing to the lost king respond instinctively to his otherwise incognito return in both (Gresseth 1979: 67–8): Odysseus' neglected old hound Argus, who wags his tail, drops his ears and dies in a moving scene (*Od.* xvii, 291–327), and Nala's joyful horses (*Mhb.* iii, 71, 3). As a good candidate for Puhvel's (1970: 163) category of 'specific accordances of the curious type that tends to exclude chance', this sideshow featuring animals already domesticated in PIE times[125] tips the balance towards "a long-lost king's return in disguise" as a PIE variant of the "own choice" paradigm.

Its basic scheme is readily discernible through a particularly fraught situation in the Odyssey. Penelope is the wife of Ithaca's long-lost king (Odysseus), for whom (like Damayantī after losing Nala) she continually pines as her appearance deteriorates. Like Damayantī's, Penelope's announcement of "own choice" is a ploy, in this case to keep at arm's length a self-invited throng of unruly suitors whose repeated lavish feasts threaten the royal household with ruin as she procrastinates. The newly arrived stranger is Odysseus disguised as an old beggar. His formal presentation with a drink is displaced, being made by a well-meaning suitor after Odysseus had won a fighting match with a greedy rival beggar. After winning an archery contest suddenly announced by Penelope, Odysseus revealed himself to the suitors and slew them all. Once washed, properly dressed and restored to his true form, he was recognised by and reunited with his wife, and then regained the kingship.

The normal paradigm involving choice of a new king rather than restoration of an old one underlies *Esnada Tige Buchet*, but its dynastic orientation means that brothers rather than suitors play the part of potential future kings repeatedly coming uninvited to feast immoderately in the place where the king's daughter (Eithne) resides. In consequence, her and Buchet's home is unsuited to her exercise of "own choice" of husband, and her first meeting with the royal outsider destined to wed her is shifted from her abode in Leinster to his in Kells. Fleeing with her ruined guardian, Eithne shares his dramatic loss of fortune as they live in poverty in Kells. There her future spouse (Cormac) encounters her milking cows, cutting rushes and drawing water (cf. Étaín beside the well in V above and the woman called 'sovereignty (*flaithius*)' guarding a well in VII below). Recognising her (an inversion of the usual male and female roles also seen in her forced flight and encounter with her husband-to-be instead of his voluntary expedition and meeting with her) from her answers to his questions, Cormac seeks and ultimately obtains her hand in marriage, thereby becoming King of Ireland and more than restoring her and Buchet's fortunes.

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[125] PIE nom./gen. sg. **ĥ̯uō/*ĥ̯un-es* 'hound, dog' (Gk. κύων/κυνός, OInd. *śvā́/śúnaḥ*, OIr. *cú/con*, Lith. *šuõ/šuñs*), PIE nom. sg. **h₁eĥ̯u-o-s* 'horse' (OInd. *aśvaḥ*, Lat. *equus*, OE *eoh*, OIr. *ech*, Gaul. *epo-*). Domestication of the dog occurred very early. The evidence for and consequences of PIE domestication of the horse have been fully discussed by Anthony 2007.

The two narratives central to this study thus display motivated modifications to an underlying prototype without obliterating its basic outline. Age-grades probably played a role in the original pattern, insofar as a king granting his daughter "own choice" of a successor in anticipation of his death or retirement was almost bound to be relatively old, while his daughter's suitors would typically be youthful members of sodalities seeking to progress to the married householder phase by marrying her. Further parallels between *ETB* and the Odyssey are the presence of a righteous but ineffective old or retired king (Catháer; Laertes) and the sharp contrast between an exemplary successful candidate for the kingship (Cormac; Odysseus) aligned with other virtuous characters (Eithne, and the elderly[126] Buchet; Penelope, young Telemachus, and elders such as Halitherses[127]) and a group of reprehensible aspirants (Eithne's brothers; Penelope's suitors). The basic paradigm thus acquires a serious moral dimension. In effect, Cormac passes a test of character by showing generosity and consideration (notably towards Odrán and Buchet) as opposed to the greed and selfishness of his potential rivals for the kingship of Ireland, while Odysseus passes a physical (archery) test failed comprehensively by Peneope's suitors and displays a sense of decency and decorum that they egregiously lack. The figure of the old king, whether frail like Catháer or retired like Laertes, serves to emphasise the limitations of virtue if one is too weak or withdrawn to exercise it effectively.

Conceivably, a contrast between the attitude and/or behaviour of a successful outsider and unsuccessful insiders was already an option for the PIE prototype, but its prominence in *ETB* and the *Odyssey* could well be due to evolving moral awareness and social attitudes in ancient Greece and in medieval Ireland, where the ideology of kingship had been given a Christian makeover. After all, although the woman's choice could simply be based on physical attraction, the probably PIE option of a deciding (con)test introduced prowess or superiority as a factor ripe for further development in a moral direction.

It was argued on stemmatic grounds (Ib) that the number of Eithne's miscreant brothers must have been twelve in *ETB*'s archetype. Twelve was also the number of Penelope's truly local suitors from Ithaca itself along with eight dozen more from neighbouring islands (II). At Odysseus' prompting after slaying the suitors, Euryclea identifies twelve shameless female slaves (δμῳαί), who are then assembled, made to clean up the mess in the hall and finally hanged for sleeping with suitors (*Od.* xxii, 417–73). Gresseth (1979: 85) refers to these 'twelve (the original number of suitors?) women', and West (2014: 104) notes this and several other passages 'that have led scholars to suspect that in an earlier version there were only the twelve from Ithaca and none from the other

[126] It is clear from his conversation (I$^{(2)}$) with Catháer that Buchet had been the king's Hospitaller for some time and his wife was referred to as his *caillech* (I$^{(3)}$) in **L** at least (and quite possibly **A** too).

[127] See *Od.* ii, 157–76, and xxiv, 451–62.

islands'. This precise numerical agreement with *ETB* looks too arbitrary for mere coincidence (cf. Puhvel's dictum cited above and at the end of II), particularly when Catháer's sons are otherwise said to have numbered 33, 10 or 7. Accordingly, twelve may be posited as the canonical number of suitors in the PIE myth of "own choice" and a circumstantial detail corroborating its reconstruction.

VII. A third PIE sovereignty myth: five royal brothers, a deer-hunt and a goddess.

The number five figures in two already discussed accounts of *svayaṃvara*. In one, the five variously gifted Pāṇḍavas emerge in beggars' guise from a forest sojourn, join Draupadī's royal suitors and supply the winner (Arjuna) of the archery contest for her hand. In the other, the royal aspirants to Damayantī's hand are augmented by Nala and his four divine lookalikes.

Cóir Anmann (Arbuthnot 2007: 20–3) tells how a Munster king named each of his five sons Lugaid because of a prophecy that the kingship of Ireland would be obtained by a son of his called Lugaid who caught a fawn (*lóeg)* with a golden sheen. The animal appeared at an assembly and was pursued by the 'the men of Ireland' until a 'magical mist' cut them off from the brothers, who continued the chase. One caught the fawn, another butchered it, another cooked it, another went for water, the catcher ate it and the fifth got the leftovers. A snowstorm as they hunted again in the wilds led them to set out successively in search of a bed for the night, which they found on offer from an ugly and filthily dressed woman in a splendidly appointed and provisioned house. Four of them refused to share her bed and returned, claiming to have found nothing. Finally, the fawn's catcher agreed to join her in bed, whereupon she became radiant and told him 'I am the sovereignty (*flaithius*) and the kingship of Ireland (*ríge nÉrenn*) will be taken by you'. When he brought the others for a feast, she gave each of the five "name-alikes" a distinctive nickname based on the fawn-hunt, Lugaid Loígde ('Fawny') in her mate's case. The pair then slept together again and, seeing a purple robe over them and the woman's beauty, the other brothers asked who she was. She replied 'I am the sovereign woman of Ireland (*ban-ḟlaith Érenn*) … and the kingship of Ireland shall be taken by you, Lugaid Loígde'. The next morning, the five found themselves on a plain with no house and returned to the assembly.

Echtrae mac nEchach Muigmedóin (Stokes 1903: 190–207) concerns the King of Ireland's five sons, including the youngest, Níall, conceived by a bondwoman to the fury of Echu's wife Mongḟind. Abandoned at birth on the green (*faithche*) of Tara, Níall was rescued from birds by a poet, who fostered him and foretold his future greatness. Returning to Tara years later, Níall freed his mother and robed her in purple. When Mongḟind demanded a judgment on the succession, Echu turned to Síthchenn, the druid-smith, and a forge was set on fire with the

boys inside. After Níall had emerged with the most propitious implement (an anvil),[128] Mongfhìnd sent them to seek arms and Síthchenn presented the best set to Níall, telling them all to go and try their weapons out. They went hunting but got lost, lit a fire, cooked and ate their prey but were thirsty. One of them offered to fetch water, encountered a hideous old hag guarding a well and firmly refused her demand for a kiss in return for a drink. Two more fared likewise. A fourth agreed to a quick kiss and was promised a brief visit to Tara, a prophecy fulfilled by just two of his descendants becoming kings of Tara. Finally, Níall came along and slept with the hag, who became beautiful and declared 'I am the sovereignty (*flaithius*)'. Predicting that Tara's kings would almost all be of his stock, she told him to take water to his brothers but not let them drink until they ceded seniority to him. He did so and, once home, raised his arms above the rest in token of his and his line's preeminence. A drink is also linked explicitly with sovereignty in two quasi-mantic Tara king-lists.[129]

Five brothers are the protagonists in both dynastically oriented tales and also in Draupadī's wooing. Their identical appearance makes Damayantī's five suitors look like brothers until she picks Nala out by getting the four gods to reveal themselves, and the five brothers in *Cóir Anmann* have the same name until the woman distinguishes them with nicknames. Damayantī's task has an obvious parallel in *Tochmarc Étaíne*, notwithstanding a multiple of five, inversion of sexes and an unsuccessful outcome: King Echaid is promised satisfaction when about to dig up the *síd*-mound into which Midir has taken his wife Étaín but, although confident of recognising her among fifty lookalikes on the basis of her skill in serving drink, unwittingly selects a daughter of theirs born after her abduction (*TE* iii, §§17–19).

Odysseus and Nala (*vi-rūpo hrasva-bāhukaḥ* 'de-formed (and) short-armed' in his guise as the charioteer Vāhuka according to *Mhb.* iii 68, 6) are long-lost husbands who reveal themselves to their wives by shedding a disfiguring disguise and then resume conjugal relations. In the Irish tales, by contrast, the woman appears loathsome but one brother is undeterred and beds her, whereupon she reveals her true beauty. The five effectively identical Lugaids and "Nalas" all go on a quest (for a bed for the night and marriage respectively) but only one of them sleeps with the woman whom they encounter. The

[128] Cf. the four golden implements (a plough, yoke, sword and bowl) that fell from heaven and burned when the original king's two oldest sons tried to grasp them but were quenched for the youngest, who took them and then the kingship with his brothers' acquiescence, in a Scythian myth recorded by Herodotus (iv, 5–6). For a full discussion (without the Irish parallel) in relation to Dumézil's theory, see Schlerath 1996: 1–14.

[129] In *Baile Chuinn* 'Conn's vision' (Bhreathnach & Murray 2005) some of the foretold kings 'drink' the sovereignty (e.g. §1 Art, §4 Corbmac, §5 Corpre, *co flatho fír* 'with ruler's truth'), and in *Baile in Scáil* 'The phantom's vision' (Murray 2004) a seated woman called *flaith hÉrenn* (l. 44) 'the sovereignty of Ireland' repeatedly pours red ale into a cup as her enthroned companion foretells the king destined to receive it.

Pāṇḍavas, however, not only have distinct characteristics and different divine fathers but also share the woman won by one of them (III above). The brothers are also differentiated in *EmEM*, and Níall succeeds despite being their father's illegitimate youngest son.[130] In both Irish encounters of a king's five sons with 'sovereignty (*flaithius*)', the only one prepared to sleep with her succeeds his father. The kingship thus stays in the family, whereas the "own choice" of a king's daughter typically settles on an outsider. In the two Indian tales, the five attend a *svayaṃvara* as outsiders but the new bride is, like the Scythian Odatis, taken home by one of them. Machae Mongrúad (p. 113–114 above) presents an off-putting appearance (as a leper) to five brothers in a forest but then inverts and negates the basic pattern, deliberately setting out to find them rather than being encountered by chance and exploiting the desire that they all (not just one) feel for her to take them all prisoner in turn (instead of mating with him alone) and thereby deprive them of their father's third of the kingship.

The five actual or apparent brothers in comparable narratives from opposite ends of the IE world constitute a specific but hardly arbitrary numerical correspondence. The thrice fifty nuts used to determine the leader of an incipient sodality in an early Indian ritual led Falk (1986: 104–7) to posit a fundamental role for fifty and multiples thereof in the organisation and symbolism of such bands. He notes Strabo's (xv, 3, 18) reference to the training of youths in groups of fifty under the Persian Achaemenids, the 'thrice fifty' boys with King Conchobar of Ulster in *Táin Bó Cúailnge* (l. 553 of O'Rahilly's 1976 edition), the raiding bands of fifty youths originally formed among the Bruttii in southern Italy (note 76), the Greek hell-hound Cerberus' fifty heads according to Hesiod (*Theogony* 311–2), and finally (Falk 1986: 106) the implication of the Indian *Śata-rudriya* ritual that the wild god Rudra's band comprised three fifties. Further examples can be added. The unmarried Fróech lived with fifty kings' sons of the same age at the beginning of *Táin Bó Fraích* (ll. 1–9 of Meid's 1967 edition) until he heard that Findabair, the daughter of King Ailill and Queen Medb, loved him sight unseen for his 'great reports' (*ara (a)irscélaib*, ll. 10–11; cf. Étaín in V above).[131] He duly set out to meet her with his young companions (*ind óic*, l. 55), their band putting on a hunting spectacle as they reached Ailill and Medb's residence (ll. 40–58). The Myrmidons came to Troy in fifty

[130] Samuel's anointing of David as future king in preference to his seven older brothers (1 Sam. 16: 1–13) is an obvious biblical parallel and likely source with a view to estabishing a deliberate resonance between Cormac and Israel's great king (cf. other arguable instances from the Odrán episode in Ib above). However, the motif of a younger brother succeeding where at first sight more likely older ones fail is also attested elsewhere: e.g. the Scythian myth in note 128 and various Grimms' fairytales such as 'The Golden Bird', 'The Three Feathers' and 'The Golden Goose' (nos. 57 *Der goldene Vogel*, 63 *Die drei Federn*, and 64 *Die goldene Gans* of *Kinder- und Hausmärchen gesammelt durch die Brüder Grimm*).

[131] 'This is the *grád écmaise* common in early Irish saga literature' (Meid 1967: 18, note on l. '10 f.').

ships with fifty men in each, fought in five rows (στίχες, each therefore 500 strong) under five leaders subordinate to the young bachelor Achilles (*Iliad* xvi, 168–97), whom the Myrmidons followed as ἑταῖροι (*Il.* xvi, 170, or ἕταροι, 269), the Greek equivalent of Latin *sodales*. *Togail Bruidne Da Derga* (*TBDD*, also *LU* ll. 6723–8004), a compilation of two older versions ('A' and 'B') in its extant form, narrates the slaughter of King Conaire of Tara and many others in Da Derga's hostel (*bruiden*) by *díberga(ig)* 'reavers' belonging to *fíanna* (McCone 1986b: 4–5) led by the king's own foster-brothers. These sons of the *féinnid* Dond Désa are three in number at the head of three fifties of noblemen's sons engaged in 'wolfing' (*oc fáelad*) in A (*TBDD* §§19–20) but five at the head of a 500-strong *díberg*-band in B (Thurneysen 1921: 625). There are three fifties with five leaders in a notice of an earlier version taken from the lost manuscript *Cín Dromma Snechtai* (Thurneysen 1921: 622–3; *LU* ll. 8005–37).

Fifty is an obvious multiple of the prime number five in the decimal system typical of IE languages and PIE itself.[132] The Cretan king Idomeneus summons five ἑταῖροι to his military aid in the *Iliad* (xiii, 477–9) and, in reply to his son's question 'what were your deeds when you were a young man (*gillae*)?' in *Tecosca Cormaic* §8, King Cormac states: 'I used to kill a pig, I used to follow a track when I was alone; I used to march against a band of five (*cuire cóicir*) when I was one of five; I was ready for slaughter when I was one of ten; I was ready for raiding when I was one of twenty; I was ready for battle when I was one of a hundred'. These five activities begin with a solitary hunt, followed by the key number five in conjunction with *cuire* (the inherited term < PIE **korio̯s* for a sodality mostly displaced by *fían* in Irish[133]) as the base of more multiples (1x5=5x2=10x2=20x5=100). The five men led by an *aire échta* 'noble of slaughter' (*CG* ll. 358–67) were clearly a *fían* (McCone 1986b: 7–8, and 1990: 211–12).

It seems, then, that the iconic size of an Irish *fían* or *cuire* and a PIE **korio̯s* 'sodality' was five and that this constituted a base for further multiples, notably fifty and so on upwards. The IE age-grade system posited in IV enjoined upon kings' sons and other upper-class youths membership of a hunting and fighting sodality in the wilds before acquiring (by inheritance, plunder or conquest) the wherewithal to marry, settle down and, on occasion, become king. In the myth, a hunting expedition in the wilds determines which of five brothers with apparently equal claims (optionally underlined by identical names or appearance) will return home as their father's heir by virtue of having been the only one ready to mate with an initially off-putting sovereignty goddess. This pattern directly underlies the tales of Echu's sons and the five Lugaids, whose supernatural encounter is marked off by a 'magical mist' and then a snowstorm beforehand and the disappearance of the woman and her house on the morrow.[134]

[132] E.g. Beekes 1995: 212–16.

[133] See McCone 1987: 111–12 and 116–18, and 2012: 21–2.

[134] In *Compert Con Culainn* §§1–4, heavy snow while hunting supernatural birds paired

Allowing for inversions and a negative outcome, it also informs the accounts of fifty 'Étaíns' and Machae Mongrúad's dispossession of five brothers belonging to a rival royal line. In two comparable narratives from the *Mahābhārata*, the lack of a hunt and the action's location at a royal residence follow from the five principals' participation in a *svayaṃvara* belonging to an originally separate sovereignty myth (VI). Even so, the Pāṇḍavas do spend a period in the forest before putting in a late appearance at the great *svayaṃvara*, where one of them (Arjuna) wins a bride (Draupadī) destined to be shared by all of the brothers like Clothru in yet another originally distinct sovereignty myth (III). They are then granted a barren half of their deceased father's kingdom and dramatically increase its prosperity until Yudhiṣṭhira loses everything to a cousin in a dice game and the Pāṇḍavas have to return to the forest, this time for twelve years in the course of which Draupadī is abducted but recovered.[135] In the Irish tales, five royal brothers were confronted by a goddess in disguise who then revealed herself, whereas Damayantī had to induce four gods to reveal the real Nala and themselves by abandoning their disguises. After reigning prosperously for twelve years with Damayantī at his side, Nala lost everything to a kinsman (his brother) in a dice game. Refusing to put his wife up as a final stake, he went off with her into the wilds like Yudhiṣṭhira, lost his last piece of clothing on an unsuccessful bird-hunt there and frantically fled from his wife after taking half of her sole garment (*Mhb.* iii, 58–9). The paradigm of successful hunt, acquisition of a mate in the wilderness and attainment of kingship thus undergoes negative inversion to loss of kingship, unsuccessful hunt and abandonment of a wife in the wilderness.

Deer were the classic prey of wolves (e.g. *Il.* xvi, 156–9, and Livy x, 27, 8), with which the members of sodalities in the wilds were prone to be equated and associated, and an Old Irish charm (*Thes.* ii, 293) juxtaposes 'wolves and deer and traversing of mountains and young warriors of the *fían*' (*coin altai 7 ois 7 imthecht slébe 7 oaic féne*; McCone 1990: 207–9). The youth typically spent by kings-to-be in a sodality is symbolised by the suckling afforded by a she-wolf to legendary rulers like Romulus and Cormac as babes abandoned in the wild (McCone 1990: 214–8). Alternatively, future kings such as the Tartessian Habis (McCone 2016: 6–7) or the Greek Telephus (Apollodorus iii, 103–4) could be nurtured by a doe or hind. The fawn (*lóeg*) chased through a 'magical mist' (*céo druídechtae*) by the five Lugaids and caught by one of them was thus a fitting curtain-raiser for the woman of sovereignty encountered by each in turn but only bedded by the catcher and king-to-be. The inverse sequence applied to Mādhavī (III), who bypassed the suitors at her *svayaṃvara* (held by her father

by chains of silver causes the Ulstermen to seek shelter, which they receive from a couple in a house that had disappeared along with its owners on the morrow. See note 53 on mist as a boundary between the natural and the supernatural.

[135] See Dumézil's (1968: 36–8) brief summary of the relevant parts of books i–iii of the *Mahābhārata*.

after she had provided three kings and a brahmin with a son each) and went to live in the forest as a female antelope rather than taking a fifth husband.

The fawn in the Irish tale had a 'golden sheen' (*níam órdae*) prefiguring the transformed hag: 'the light of her countenance was a sun rising in the month of May' (*ba grían oc turgbáil i mís Maí soillse a gnúise*; see Arbuthnot 2007: 20, §72, l. 10 and 22, ll. 1–2). Although unaware of the Irish parallel, Eliade (1972: 151–3) identifies the following 'essential elements' of 'another myth of Indian origin' preserved in a medieval Siamese chronicle: '(1) a divine being changes into a golden stag and lingers in the king's own pleasure grounds, as if to incite him; (2) the king, unable to capture it, orders his son to do so; (3) the prince sets out with a large army, guided by thirty-two hunters disguised as stags; (4) although the golden stag always remains in sight, it proves to be unconquerable; (5) the prince falls in love with a woman of the country and lies with her; (6) he remains in the country for a long time, but the stag waits for him; (7) finally the prince and his army resume the hunt, but when they arrive at the foot of a mountain, the stag disappears … The erotic episode falls within the same scheme of sovereignty'.

Hunting a deer with an unnatural golden hide leads to a sexual encounter between a king's son and a woman here and in the story of the Lugaids. A goddess/lady of sovereignty is linked or even identified with a deer (or antelope) not only in two medieval tales from the western and eastern ends of the Indo-European world but also in the case of Mādhavī above and Circe below. Ritual representation of the sovereignty as a horse in the Indian *aśvamedha* (III) as well as the Irish inaugural ritual described by Giraldus Cambrensis (V) and the likelihood of a PIE prototype have attracted attention.[136] Given 'the continuity between the hunt and sacrificial ritual' and substitution of tame for wild animals in sacrifices after the rise of farming (Burkert 1983: 16 and 43), the swift deer in the myth may be seen as a wild counterpart of the horse, another typically fast mover, in the sacrifice. A king's successor was identified in a supernatural epiphany after a deer-hunt in the case of the Lugaids and Echu's sons but in a vision following a *tarb-ḟeis* or 'bull-feast', which involved killing and devouring another domestic animal comparable with a stag[137] and an incantation known as 'gold of truth (*ór fírinne*)', in *TBDD* §11 and *SCC* §23.

Correspondences between at least one eastern and one western witness among the Indian (and Indo-Siamese) and Irish narratives considered above

[136] Notably from Puhvel 1970 and Watkins 1995: 265–7; cf. McCone 1990: 117–19. There was, of course, a difference of sex between stallion (and king's wives) in India and mare (and king) in Ireland, the latter being the more obvious mythical correlate of a ritual *hieros gamos*.

[137] Eliade (1972: 132–4) discerns a 'ritual hunt' culminating in 'the discovery of an unknown country and finally in the founding of a state' in the *Chronicle of Moldavia*'s entry for 1359 AD: 'Dragoş, Voirode of Maramares, came from Hungary hunting an aurochs and he reigned for two years'.

point to an underlying PIE myth along the following lines: five barely differentiated royal brothers hunt (an activity characterising a five-strong wolfish **korḭos* typically joined by kings' sons) a deer (the classic prey of wolves) with a golden hide (a regal hue) and then encounter a goddess of sovereignty, who reveals herself to and sleeps with the deer's catcher and future king. In both the Indo-Siamese and the Lugaid tale, the deer brings the king's son(s) into the woman's vicinity. However, in the former it evades capture and eventually disappears, whereas in the latter it is caught, killed and eaten.

The Odyssey supplies a "tie-breaker", albeit with inversion to a solitary hunter who encounters a household of five goddesses (Circe and four attendant nymphs; *Od.* x, 348–51), rather as Echaid was confronted by fifty 'Étaíns' above, in a (PIE?) variant where a single male has to select the sovereignty out of a group of five supernatural lookalikes (or a multiple thereof) instead of the repellent disguise of a single goddess putting off all but one of five male visitors. After observing the smoke from their dwelling through a dense wood but deciding to return to his ship and feed his crew, Odysseus encounters a great stag, kills it and brings it to his followers for a feast (x, 144–84). Although 'the killing of the stag is in no way integral to the story' (West 2014: 208) as it stands, like the Lugaids' killing and consumption of the fawn it precedes an encounter with a goddess in her forest home – in this case Circe, who presents Odysseus with a drink in a gold goblet, recognises him as a preordained visitor and takes him to her bed (x, 310–47). Circe, however, did not intend to bestow sovereignty but gave Odysseus a potion intended to transform him outwardly into a pig, as she had the reconnoitring party (203–43) whose rescue was the object of his solitary quest (270–3). Forewarned and forearmed with an antidote by Hermes on the way (274–306), Odysseus was immune, drew his sword (316–24) and obtained her submission. The supernatural woman's form is upgraded from hideous ugliness to radiant beauty by the encounter with her mate in the Irish tales, whereas the fair goddess Circe inversely seeks to degrade her eventual mate's fine human form to that of an ugly pig. A threat was also presented by the fleet-footed virgin Atalanta, who lived in the wilderness and challenged suitors to a foot-race, catching and killing them after giving them a head-start, until Melanion defeated and won her by dropping golden apples supplied by Aphrodite in her path to slow her down as she picked them up (Apollodorus iii, 106–8).

A case has been made above for a PIE ideology and mythology rooted in the belief that a sacred marriage of king and goddess (and/or a human surrogate) created a channel through which divinely vouchsafed peace and prosperity flowed, unless blocked by regal shortcomings, into a society organised into three main age-grades embodied by its three-in-one ruler. There remains one obvious further question to be addressed (in VIII below): can this hypothesis be given additional support by identification of the name(s) as well as some key attributes and/or mythology of the PIE goddess(es) implied by it? Various factors conducive to a degree of fluidity in the formal and functional iden-

tities of deities may be mentioned at the outset: 'Sometimes a god's essence survived under a different name, or his functions were taken over by a different deity. More than one factor contributed to the replacement of names. A god's primary name might be replaced for taboo reasons. It might be displaced by familiar epithets or titles' (West 2007: 134). Alternatively, the latter (cf. Gaulish *Teutates*/*Toutatis* in III above) could slip their original moorings to become new deities in their own right, taking some or even most of the attributes of their erstwhile host with them. This phenomenon is central to a number of Janda's reconstructions as noted in VIII below. After these brief preliminaries, we may now turn to the association of birds with kingship, the role of a divine swan (and goose) in the conception of the sovereignty goddess/heroine Helen (etymologically 'burning, radiant' like the cognate Iranian *x*ᵛ*arənah-* divinely bestowed upon kings), and the likelihood that her name originated as an epithet of the winged and multiple-partnered goddess Eos 'Dawn' (Homeric Ἠώς < PIE **H₂eu̯s-ōs* 'Dawn').

VIII. Geese or swans, sovereignty and the radiant winged Dawn.

The object of Nala's ill-fated hunt was not a deer but 'golden-winged birds (*śakunāḥ*)' (*Mhb.* iii, 58, 11). Unaware of his secret siring by a bird-man (*TBDD* §7), the young Conaire beheld 'large white-spotted birds' (l. 136) and hunted them as far as the seashore, where they turned on him in human form but were restrained by 'Nemglan, king of your father's bird-flock' (*én-laith*, l. 145). He told Conaire how to inaugurate an *én-ḟlaith* 'bird-reign' (ll. 170–1) as the successor of his apparent father, Eterscél, in the Tara kingship (§§13–16). Birds were instrumental in the winning of Damayantī (*Mhb.* iii, 50–1) as well as her loss. Espying 'gold-adorned *haṃsāḥ* (geese/swans)' (50, 18), the lovelorn Nala caught one but released it when it promised to go and sing his praises to Damayantī. The birds flew off and landed in her vicinity, whereupon she and her handmaids tried to catch one each. Chased by Damayantī, the bird spared by Nala praised him to her and then reported back. Damayantī now became sick with love for the unseen Nala, and her father realised that it was time for her to make her 'own-choice' (*svayaṃ-vara*) of husband (51, 7).

Penelope, whose name (Πηνελόπ-εια) looks very much like a feminine derivative of πηνέλοψ (a kind of water fowl),[138] had twenty pet geese (χῆν-ες), and her dream that these had been slain by an eagle was taken as a portent of her suitors' death at Odysseus' hands (*Od.* xix, 535–58). A similar interpretation of an eagle ominously carrying off a 'white goose' (ἀργὴ χήν, l. 161) in its talons had already been given to Telemachus by Helen (*Od.* xv, 160–78), who is represented (e.g. *Il.* iii, 389–420 and *Od.* iv, 261–2) as a virtual pawn of Aphrodite, the

[138] Janda (2015: 49–70) proposes a speculative etymology connected with weaving as part of an interesting argument that Penelope is ultimately a spin-off from 'Dawn'.

'golden' goddess sometimes depicted astride a swan or goose (Carpenter 1991: 42 and plate 67). Circe's name (Κίρκ-η) is simply a feminine of Greek κίρκ-ος 'hawk, falcon'. Eithne's name derives straightforwardly from **(p)et-en-i̯ā*, a feminine *yā*-stem bearing a relationship to **(p)et-no-* 'bird'[139] (> OIr. *én*, MW *edn* 'bird', masc. *o*-stem) similar to that between Helen's name (Ἑλέν-η < **su̯el-en-ā*, fem. *ā*-stem) and Avestan *x^{v}arənah* (< **su̯el-nos*, neut. *s*-tem[140]), 'the radiant nimbus that marks kings and heroes' (Lincoln 1981: 104). The latter successively took the form of three birds of prey when deserting King Yima (III), and Helen was the issue of Zeus' union in the form of a swan (κύκνος) with Queen Leda of Sparta, (e.g. Euripides, *Helen* 18–21) or, alternatively, with the goddess Nemesis transformed into a goose (χήν) that laid an egg from which Helen hatched after a shepherd had found and brought it to Leda (Apollodorus iii, 127).

The *síd*-woman Étaín was introduced earlier (V) as a classic case of "love of the absent (one)" as she waited by a well for a first sight of her future husband, King Echaid. He also appeared above (VII) trying to recognise her (significantly, from her skill in serving drink) among fifty lookalikes after losing her to her ex-husband Midir, ruler of the *síd*-mound of Brí Léith. The latter had recovered his long-lost wife by redeeming a kiss from her pledged by Echaid in a board-game: 'He takes his weapons in his left hand and took the woman under his right arm and abducts (her) through the skylight of the house. The hosts rise up around the king after being shamed. They saw the two swans (*in da ela*) circling Tara. The way taken was to Síd ol Femen' (*TE* iii, §15). Birds also participated in Nala's loss of his wife as a less direct result of gambling. After losing his kingdom and everything else at dice to his brother but refusing to continue by staking Damayantī, Nala repaired with her to the wilderness, each wearing a single remaining garment. Ravenous after three days without food, he tried to catch some birds with his shirt but they took it up into the air, revealing themselves as the dice in disguise come to take his last piece of clothing (*Mhb.*

[139] PIE root **pet* 'fly' seen in OInd. *pát-ati* 'flies' and *pat-tra-* 'wing, feather', Gk. πέτ-εται 'flies', Lat. *penna* 'feather', PC **(p)et-no-* 'bird' above etc. *LIV* 429–31/*LIV*^{2} 477–9 posits **peth$_1$* 'fall', **peth$_2$* 'spread' and **peth$_2$* 'fly' but admits (*LIV* 431/ *LIV*^{2} 479, n. 1) that the latter, for which only Greek provides clear evidence, could be a specialisation of the former via 'spread (wings)'. The facts seem to be best explained by positing **peth$_1$* 'fall', **peth$_2$* 'spread/fly (up)' (act./mid.), **pet* 'fly' and some interaction between them, especially in Greek. If not, the **pet-* clearly underlying the nominal forms just cited from Indo-Iranian, Italic and Celtic would have to be rather implausibly put down to separate post-PIE extrapolations from *pet-V-* after laryngeal loss before a vowel.

[140] Discussed by Janda 2005: 283–6, whose derivation from 'sun' and a root **nes* 'return' entails phonological and morphological difficulties, unlike the preform preferred by Hintze (1994a: 28–33), namely **su̯el-nos* 'blaze' related to **su̯el* 'burn' in much the same way as Av. neut. *s*-stem *taf-nah* 'heat' < **tep-nos* to **tep* 'be(come) warm/hot' (*LIV* 572–3/*LIV*^{2} 629–30).

iii, 58, 1–16), and his resultant distress caused Nala to abandon Damayantī soon afterwards. In *Aislinge Óenguso* (Shaw 1934) Midir's foster-son Óengus (aka the Mac Óc or Mac ind Óic) dreams of the same beautiful woman every night for a year (a clear case of "love of the absent (one)" like Odatis' dream of Zariadres in VI), lapses into silent pining (*serg*, §2) and eventually learns of his beloved's annual alternation between a bird's and a woman's form. When he encounters her in the former state, surrounded by one hundred and fifty swans (*géisi*, §12) 'she goes to him. He puts two hands upon her. They sleep in the form of two swans (*géisi*) and then circled the lake thrice … They depart in the form of two white birds until they were at the Abode (*Bruig*) of Mac ind Óic … The girl stayed with him after that' (§14).

There is, then, plentiful evidence for the association of birds, apt mediators between earth and heaven, with the key ingredients of a "sacred marriage", namely sex (McCone 2014) and sovereignty, and this avian aspect suggests that the goddess involved was regarded as a primarily celestial being. Significantly, the words (Gk. χήν, Skt. *haṃsa*, OIr. *géis*, and also German *Gans* 'goose'[141]) for the swan/goose most prominent in this context are formally straightforward outcomes of PIE **ĝʰans-* (*IEW* 412) designating a large water bird with a long stiff or drooping neck.

Di̯eu̯-s* (ph₂tēr*) '(father) Day/Sky' (gen. *Diu̯-es*) is the only securely reconstructed PIE god's name,[142] and the only well-established PIE name of a goddess is **H₂eu̯s-ōs* 'Dawn' (gen.**H₂us(-s)-es*: Lat. *Aurōr-a*, Homeric Gk. Ἠώς, OInd. *Uṣas*[143]). Twin sons of **Di̯eu̯-s* can also be inferred with some confidence but there is no compelling evidence for a PIE celestial pantheon (of **dei̯u̯ōs* 'gods',

[141] See McCone 2014: 111–12 on the connection between geese and the succession to kingship in a number of folktales collected by the brothers Grimm.

[142] OInd. *Dyáuḥ* (gen. *Diváḥ*); Gk. Ζεύς (gen. Διός); *Iuppiter* (gen. *Iovis*, arch. *Diovos*); Osc. dat. *Diúveí* or *Iúveí*, Umbr. dat. *Iuve*; Hitt. *Sius* (*NIL* 70–1). Examples with 'father' (fixed in Lat. nom./voc. *Iu-ppiter*) include OInd. *Dyáuṣ pitā́* (*RV* iv, 1, 10 and vi, 51, 5); Gk. voc. Ζεῦ πάτερ (*Il.* i, 503, etc.); Umbr. dat. *Iuve patre* (*Tab. Ig.* IIa 5, IIb 7, etc.) (*NIL* 555); Hitt. *at-ta-as* ^{D}UTU-*us* (partially ideographic *Si-us* and innovatory word for 'father'; Watkins 1974: 103–7). Note the meanings of reflexes such as Indic *dyáuḥ* 'sky' and Latin *diēs* 'day' or stereotyped *nu-dius tertius* 'the day before yesterday' (literally 'now (is) the third day'; Watkins 1974: 103). See *NIL* 69–81. The most convincing analysis of securely reconstructed PIE **dei̯u̯o(/eh₂)-* 'god(dess)' (*NIL* 74 and 78-9, n. 66) is as **dei̯u̯-o(/eh₂)-*, a vr̥ddhi-derivative of weak stem **diu̯-* basically meaning 'pertaining to heaven, heavenly' or perhaps 'offspring/descendents of **Di̯eu̯-s* (**ph₂tēr*) referring originally to his three children. The second option would imply a small divine family comprising **Di̯eu̯-s* and his **dei̯u̯-ōs*, either ignoring a shadowy wife or designating her by a specifically female derivative of his own name (*NIL* 71 and 78, n. 57) as **dei̯u̯-ih₂* 'goddess'.

[143] Lat. < **ausōs-ā* (converted to an *ā*-stem); the Indic form combines zero-grade root (**H₂us*) with full-grade suffix; Proto-Greek **āu̯ōs* for **au̯ōs* < **auhōs* under the influence of **Hāu̯elios* 'sun'.

literally 'heavenly ones' or perhaps 'offspring of **Dii̯eu̯-s*'; see note 142) consisting of more than a father **Dii̯eu̯-s* plus a presumed wife (Dunkel 1988–90), a daughter **H₂eu̯s-ōs* and the twins. As Frame (2009: 71) notes with regard to the Aśvins or Nāsatyas, 'in Vedic the twins have the epithet *divó nápātā* "sons of Dyaus", and in Greek mythology they have the corresponding name *Dióskouroi*, "sons of Zeus". The correspondence between these two traditions is confirmed by Baltic, where the Latvian twins are called *Dieva dēli* and the Lithuanian twins *Dievo sunėliai*, both meaning "sons of (the sky-)god"'. These parallels point to a PIE combination of **Diu̯-es* (gen. of **Dii̯eu̯-s*) and a term for two young male offspring. Zeus' daughter Helen is the sister of the Dioscuri in Greek myth, and 'Dyaus' daughter' (*Divó duhitā́*) *Uṣas* 'Dawn' is similarly related to the divine twins or *Divó nápātā* in the RigVeda. Notwithstanding a tendency to regard Helen and the Dioscuri as the semi-divine offspring of Zeus and Leda[144] or even to make one or both Dioscuri the fully mortal sons of Leda and Tyndareus,[145] fully divine status is clearly indicated by the comparative evidence as well as the worship of all three as deities in Sparta especially (e.g. Pausanias iii, 15, 3, and 16, 2–3) and an alternative pedigree as offspring of Zeus and Nemesis.[146] Frame (2009: 71–2) adds that 'the Baltic twins have a sister who corresponds to Helen, the sister of the Dioskouroi. Vedic has an equivalent figure, but she is the twins' common wife rather than their sister. The name of the Vedic figure is *Sūryā́*, the feminized form of *sū́rya*, the "sun", and this figure is also called *duhitā́ sū́ryasya*, "daughter of the sun". The sister of the Baltic twins is likewise called "daughter of the sun", Latvian *saules meita* and Lithuanian *saulės dukterys*'.

144 E.g. *Homeric Hymns* 17 and 33, 1–6, addressed to the Dioscuri (ed. West 2003: 196–7 and 218–19).

145 *Il.* iii, 236–44 treats both as mortals, but *Od.* xi, 298–304 mentions their divine honours and alternation between one day alive and the next dead. Pindar calls both υἱοὶ θεῶν 'sons of gods' who spend one day buried at Therapna in Sparta and another on Olympus with Zeus because Polydeuces chose to share his immortality with his mortal brother Castor (*Pythian* 11, 61–4; *Nemean* x, 49–61). According to Apollodorus (iii, 126), both Zeus (in the form of a swan) and her mortal husband, Tyndareus, slept with Leda on the same night, the former's offspring being semi-divine (Polydeuces and Helen) and the latter's mortal (Castor and Clytaemnestra).

146 The birth of Helen to Nemesis after she had transformed herself into all manner of different creatures in an attempt to escape Zeus' attentions is recorded in a passage cited by Athenaeus (334b-d) from the now lost epic Cypria, which seem to have been composed in the late sixth century BC and dealt with the Trojan War's antecedents. Eustathius' commentary on Homer (*Il.* xxiii, 639) states that the Dioscuri were also fathered upon Nemesis by Zeus. The τούς 'them' at the beginning of Athenaeus' citation from the Cypria (τοὺς δὲ μέτα τριτάτην Ἑλένην τέκε 'and after them she bore Helen third') should refer back to the Dioscuri, although it is not clear why Nemesis was so determined to avoid sleeping with Zeus again after bearing him twins.

It follows from the neuter gender of the PIE word for sun that it was regarded as an inanimate object and so can hardly have had a daughter.[147] If a PIE expression **sh₂uens dʰugh₂tēr* 'the sun's daughter' existed, it will presumably have been as a metaphor[148] rooted in the daily appearance of **h₂eu̯sōs* in tandem with the sun, rather as (χρυσό-θρονος) 'golden-throned' was a stock epithet of Ἠώς in the *Odyssey* (e.g. x, 541 and xii, 142). Once the sun had been personalised, he could acquire siblings and/or progeny. According to Hesiod (*Theogony* 371–4) the union of Hyperion with Theia produced Ἠώς 'Dawn', her sun-god brother Helios (< **hāu̯el-io-s*, a masculine formed by adding a pertinative suffix to the inherited neuter) and moon-goddess sister Selene. Indic *Sūr-yā*, 'pertaining to the sun, sunny' etymologically, may well have begun as an epithet of Uṣas 'Dawn' (Janda 2005: 347, and 2015: 105) and then gravitated towards a newly personified masc. *Sūr-ya* 'Sun' as his daughter and the consort of Uṣas' brothers, the Aśvins (Macdonell 1917: 129). As a result of similar diversification, the PIE goddess **H₂eu̯s-ōs* arguably 'lives on in at least three Greek goddesses, in Eos, Persephone and Aphrodite' (Janda 2005: 128), as well as in Helen and Penelope (Janda 2015: 119–20 and 126–7). It has been suggested[149] that 'golden' (χρυσέη/χρυσῆ, e.g. *Od.* iv, 14, and xix, 54) Aphrodite overshadowed Eos 'Dawn' by appropriating certain of her attributes, including status as Zeus' daughter (Nagy 1990: 247–8). Greek art typically depicts Eos as a winged figure (Carpenter 1991: 206 and plates 322–3 plus 327) and her mythology consists of the serial abduction, in effect "own choice", of partners: Clitus 'on account of his beauty' (*Od.* xv, 250–1), Orion (v, 121), Tithonus (v, 1; *Il* xi, 1) to whom she bore the two kings Memnon and Emathion (Hesiod, *Theog.* 984–5), and Cephalus, the sire of her son Phaethon, who was abducted by Aphrodite (Hesiod, *Theog.* 986–91).

In the *RigVeda*, erotic traits characterise *Uṣas* 'Dawn', who appears to men like a beautiful young woman, exposing her body in the East and baring her breasts (*RV* v, 80, 4–6; cf. i, 92, 4 etc.), and grants prosperity and wealth, including cattle (e.g. *RV* i, 123, 11–13). Kazzazi (2001: 133–48) points out that Uṣas is frequently called or likened to a *yóṣā* (133), namely a '"young, attractive, sexually mature woman" … of marriageable age' often mentioned 'in connection with a young lover' or less often 'as a daughter; as a wife', being 'basically an autonomous person' (148) who often 'plays an active role with regard to men [and] seeks her own partner' (Kazzazi 2001: 158). For instance, after receiving presents 'from young men' (*marya-tó*), a *yoṣā* 'herself (*svayáṃ*) wins (*vanute*) a companion (*mitráṃ*) among the people (*jáne*)' (*RV* x, 27, 12); a hymn to the Aśvins states of their shared wife (the sun-god Sūrya's daughter Sūryā) that 'the noble *yoṣā* … chose (*(a)vr̥ṇīta*, from the root *vr̥* also appearing in *svayaṃ-vara* 'own choice') you both as husbands (*pátī*)' (*RV* i, 119, 5); and 'the Sun(-god)

[147] Sing. nom.-acc. **séh₂u̯-l̥*, gen. **sh₂u-én-s* (Beekes 1984). Cf. *NIL* 606–11, and West 2007: 195–6, 227–37.

[148] On PIE poetic language see especially Schmitt 1967 and Watkins 1995.

[149] E.g. by Boedeker 1974: 31–5 and Dunkel 1988–90: 8–10.

(*sū́ryo*) goes after the shining goddess Dawn (*devī́m uṣásaṃ rócamānām*) like a *márya* [a youthful member of a sodality; cf. IV, paragraph 2 above] (goes after) a *yóṣā*' (*RV* i, 115, 2). As an immortal reborn daily, Uṣas is both *purāṇī* 'old, ancient' and *yuvatíḥ* 'youthful' (*RV* iii, 61, 1; on the latter term and rejuvenation, see Kazzazi 2001: 149–58), a contrast strikingly exhibited by the old hag turned young beauty in two Irish tales featuring five royal brothers in VII above.

The *Odyssey* refers to 'the island Aeaea, where the abodes and dancing floors of early-born Eos and the risings of Helios are' (xii, 3–4) despite previously mentioning only Circe and her four nymphs as its inhabitants (x, 135–6 and 345–51). This discrepancy raises the suspicion that Circe 'Falcon', a daughter of the sun-god Helios (*Od.* x, 138; Hesiod, *Theogony* 956–7) probably imported from the Argonaut legend (e.g. West 2014: 119), may have displaced Eos, the winged and sexually predatory daughter of a god (Hyperion) liable to be equated with Helios (e.g. *Od.* i, 8, cf. *Il.* xix, 398), as the island's mistress and Odysseus' divine lover in an episode derived from the third sovereignty myth above (VII).

Like the dawn itself, the goddess may have a 'white/silver', 'pink/red' or 'golden' hue in early sources. The numerous hymns to *Uṣas* or plural *Uṣasaḥ* 'Dawn(s)' in the *RigVeda* repeatedly mention her or their radiance or bright and variegated colours, which are sometimes specified as red or gold.[150] Janda (2005: 68–84) discusses the dawn's silver gleam and the *u*-stem **h₂(e)rĝ-u-* underlying Greek ἄργυρος 'silver' etc., comparing (2005: 333–4 and 2015: 104) Aphrodite's epithet Ἀργυ-ννίς in Boeotia with Vedic *arju-nī* (fem. of *arju-na-* 'white, silver', also the name of the Pāṇḍava who won Draupadī) describing Uṣas. PIE **h₂erĝ-* '(silvery) white, bright' (*NIL* 317–22) was also the classic colour of the **ĝʰans* 'swan, goose' (e.g. Gk. ἀργὴ χήν 'white goose' above). In the stock formula 'and when early-born rose-fingered Dawn (ῥοδο-δάκτυλος Ἠώς) appeared',[151] typically marking a new day in Homer, verse-final ῥοδο-δάκτυλος Ἠώς arguably (Nagy 1990: 247–8) replaced *θυγάτηρ Διὸς Ἠώς 'Zeus' daughter Eos' corresponding to Vedic *Divó duhitā́ Uṣas* (PIE **Diu̯-és dʰugh₂-tḗr H₂éu̯s-ōs*). Eos is φαεινή 'bright, radiant' (*Od.* iv, 188) and yellow in verse-initial Ἠὼς μὲν κροκό-πεπλος 'saffron-robed Dawn' (*Il.* viii, 1, and xix, 1) and golden in her stock epithet χρυσό-θρονος 'gold-throned' (e.g. *Od.* x, 541, xii, 142, and xv, 56). In the Irish tale of the five Lugaids (VII), the radiant countenance of the female 'sovereignty (*flaithius*)' is likened to the 'sun rising in the month of May'. PIE or at least western IE **h₂eu̯s-o-* 'gold(en)' (Lat. *aurum*, OLith. *ausas* 'gold' and arguably Toch. A *wäs*, B *yasa*; *IEW* 86–7 and, despite a rather strange alternative preform, *NIL* 358–9 and 366, n. 50) can be analysed as a vr̥ddhi-derivative of **h₂us-* (for weak stem **h₂us-s-* by PIE simplification of geminates; cf. Rix 1976: 77) meaning 'belonging to/born of d/Dawn'.

[150] E.g. *RV* iii, 58, 1, and v, 80, 1, or vi, 64, 1 (radiance), v, 80, 1 (red colour), iii, 61, 2 (golden hue).

[151] ἦμος δ' ἠριγένεια φάνη ῥοδοδάκτυλος Ἠώς at *Il.* i, 477, *Od.* iii, 491, xii, 8, xix, 428 etc. (ῥ. Ἠώς also verse-final in a different context at v, 121).

Jamison (2001: 314), followed by Janda (2005: 346–8), has based a semantically apt derivation of Helen's name from PIE **u̯elh₁* 'choose, want' (*LIV* 618–19/*LIV*² 677–8), also seen in Skt. *svayaṃ-vara* (< **-u̯olh₁-o-*), upon Fελένᾱ, the Spartan equivalent of Ἑλένη. This would corroborate her already intimated (V) status as a sovereignty goddess, but Laconian *w-* versus Attic-Ionic *h-* (as opposed to zero) is a much better match with original **hw-* < **su̯-*[152] and West (2007: 231) insists that 'the older form of the name must have been *Swelénā' and 'somehow related to the word for "sun"'. Whether this or Pokorny's (*IEW* 1045) formally easier derivation (along with Av. *x*ᵛ*arənah-*; see note 140) from PIE **su̯el-* 'burn'[153] is preferred, its formation would match that of Skt. *jval-an-á-* 'flaming, shining' (also attested as a woman's name *ǰval-an-ā*) from *jval-* 'burn, blaze' (< PIE **ĝu̯elH*; *LIV* 151/*LIV*² 170–1) and its probable Gaulish cognate *Bel-en-os* (de Vries 1961: 75–6). In addition to her already mentioned "love of the unseen (one)" and "own choice", Helen displayed another common attribute of female bestowers of sovereignty: 'besides her "lawful" husband Menelaos, Helen had relationships with numerous other men: Paris, Theseus, Enarsphoros, the son of Hippokoon, Idas and Lynkeus, Korythos, Deiphobos, Achilles, and even the son of Proteus, Theoklymenos' (Clader 1976: 71, with references; cf. Medb Lethderg in Ib). Her attempt to expose the Greek leaders inside the wooden horse by going around it thrice and calling to each of them by name in the voice of his own wife (*Od.* iv, 271–89) defies logical explanation. However, it makes mythological sense if the spouses of Helen's former royal suitors from all over Greece (V) were regarded as, in effect, local surrogates of a daughter of Zeus (as Helen was, e.g. *Il.* iii, 199, 418, 426, and *Od.* iv, 184, 219, 227) held to embody the sovereignty not just of Sparta but of Greece in general. After all, the Trojan War caused by Helen's elopement with Paris left 'the Greek world … without kings for ten years' (Finley 1967: 95).

A preform **su̯el-en-eh₂* 'burning, blazing' would be a fitting epithet of the daughter of **Dii̯eu̯s* 'Day, Sky', namely the amorous and bountiful **H₂eu̯s-ōs* 'Dawn' frequently envisaged as a plurality in the *RigVeda* at least, presumably on account of her daily regenerations. It seems reasonable to suppose that the Greek outcome **Hu̯elenā* (> Lac. Fελένᾱ, Att-Ion. Ἑλένη) and its bearer acquired independent status, tending to displace Eos as Zeus' daughter and a radiant personification of sovereignty.[154] It was argued in V that PIE **mēdʰu-eh₂* 'meady' was originally an epithet of the sovereignty goddess in her role as the

[152] See Lejeune 1987: 176–7 on reflexes of initial **(s)u̯-* in Greek, and Clader 1976: 63–8 for a review of various etymologies.

[153] OE *swel-an* 'burn', Lith. *svìl-ti* 'singe' and probably, on the assumption of intermediary 'burns (up)', Av. *x*ᵛ*ar-aiti* 'consumes, eats' (cf. *IEW* 1045 and *LIV* 553–4/*LIV*² 609) as a welcome Iranian attestation of the verbal root in question.

[154] Dawn as a transmitter of sovereignty could account for kings' putative descent from Zeus (as in διο-γενής 'Zeus-born', a stock Homeric epithet of kings) and a meaning 'shine' associated with the root **h₂reĝ-* (cf. *h₂erĝ-* '(silvery) white, bright' above) from which the PIE word for 'king' may be derived (McCone 1998: 4–6).

bestower of a drink upon the man due to become king by mating with her. If so, like Helen in Greece, its outcomes and their bearers presumably became emancipated from **H₂eu̯s-ōs* as sovereignty figures in their own right called Medb in Ireland and Mādhavī in India.

The myth of Helen's begetting by Zeus upon the mortal Leda correlates with an already mentioned tendency to reduce her to semi-divine heroine status. Since, however, she was undoubtedly a goddess in Sparta and in origin, priority must be granted to her alternative fully divine pedigree pairing Zeus and Nemesis in the form of a swan and a goose. As a relatively late deification of νέμεσις 'outrage, retribution' (cf. III on Yudhiṣṭhira's divine father Dharma, a comparable deification of *dharma* 'right, law') well attuned to the retribution visited upon Troy for Paris' outrageous abduction of Helen, Nemesis here seems likely to have displaced an older goddess. The joining of two immortals (Midir and Étaín, the Mac Óc and Cáer) in the form of swans in the two Irish tales above is a rather striking parallel pointing to an underlying PIE myth in which a god, presumably Zeus' precursor **Di̯eu̯s*, mates with a goddess who has become a **ĝʰans* 'swan, goose' by transforming himself into a **ĝʰans* as well. Zeus' liaison was fleeting and extramarital, whereas the Mac Óc and Midir assumed or resumed lasting marital relationships with their partners. Since it is not clear that PIE **Di̯eu̯s* shared his Greek successor's penchant for serial sex with immortals and mortals alike,[155] the proto-myth may have involved him in cygniform sex with a goddess who became his wife and laid an egg. From this a radiant (**su̯eleneh₂*) winged (like Greek Eos and the Iranian *xᵛarənah-*) daughter hatched, namely **H₂eu̯sōs* 'Dawn'. One of her functions was the transmission of sovereignty with the help of royal mortal surrogates, especially kings' daughters mirroring her own relationship with the king of the gods, **Di̯eu̯s* (**ph₂tēr*) '(father) Day/Sky'.

IX. Conclusions

Three PIE myths concerned with the transmission of sovereignty have been posited above (III, VI and VII), each with a signature number (3, 12 and 5 respectively) of males who approach a king's daughter (III and VI) or a goddess (VII) as a prelude to a sexual liaison symbolising the sacred marriage held to inaugurate and sustain a reign (V). The first (III) explores the integral three-in-one nature of kingship vis à vis the main age-grades (IV), its possible disintegration and reintegration through the following (Irish/Indian) characters: a king (Echaid/Pāṇḍu), his three sons (Findemna/Pāṇḍavas born to Kuntī), the[/a] king's daughter (Clothru[/Draupadī]) and their son[s] (Lugaid Réo nDerg[/ the Draupadeyas]). Since the sovereignty channelled by the king's daughter

[155] Although the cognates in note 142 prove PIE **Di̯eu̯s ph₂tēr*, only Greek 'Father' Zeus has a significant surviving mythology (largely transferred to Roman Jupiter). Consequently, there is no comparative evidence regarding his sexual mores.

is typically her father's in early Irish and Greek sources, its bestowal upon an outsider followed from conventional exogamy and, for "dialectic" mythical purposes, its transmission by her in the direct male line necessitated socially taboo endogamy/incest. The coherent set of relations between Echaid, Clothru and the Findemna is compromised by the *Mahābhārata*'s adherence to the social norms of exogamy and patrilineality. Her father's dynasty is unaffected by Draupadī's marriage to the Pāṇḍava (half-)brothers, and the Draupadeyas born to them individually are expendable unlike Echaid's triply sired grandson and successor Lugaid Réo nDerg.

From a methodological standpoint, features with no or low function are potentially relics relevant to reconstruction. The mate of three royal brothers reflecting tripartite social structure had to be their own sister if their father's kingship was to be reintegrated and continued in the male line by their son. This pattern is largely intact in the tale of Clothru (one of three sisters) and partially supported elsewhere. The senior Pāṇḍavas were three brothers with the same wife, and Damayantī was an only daughter with three brothers (*Mhb.* iii, 50, 8) lacking a role in the extant narrative. Mādhavī's four partners were not brothers and (like Draudpadī) she bore a son to each rather than (like Clothru) to all jointly (III). Nevertheless, her liaisons and their issue were, like Clothru's, instrumental in saving her royal father from ruin. One half of the scheme 1⟶3⟶1 (Echaid⟶Findemna⟶Lugaid) recurs in the Avestan account of Yima's sovereign aura taking flight as three birds (1⟶3) and the other in Livy's explicit combination of the distinctive characteristics of Rome's first three reigns in a fourth (3⟶1). Indian, Iranian and Roman evidence indicates the three brothers' differentiation in alignment with the three main PIE age-grades, while the description of Agamemnon (III, paragraph 1) parallels the physical marks of his triple nature on Lugaid of the Red Stripes. Clothru's sibling mates died in battle against their father, whereas Draupadī's were the disputed and partial inheritors of Pāṇḍu's kingdom. The only child Machae Mongrúad unified a kingship shared by three dynasties (3⟶1) after the deaths of her father and another king by disinheriting the latter's sons, whom she took prisoner on the pretext of (exogamous) sex, and then marrying the sole surviving king.

The evidence points to a cautionary PIE myth in which a flawed joint succession or a doomed rebellion splits or threatens to split a king's sovereignty into the main constituents individually personified by his three sons, just one of whom would normally be expected to succeed him. This disintegration is forestalled or rectified by their sister, who sleeps with all three and bears a son combining their traits as his grandfather's true heir. Abnormal and socially unacceptable polyandry and endogamy thus provide the antidote to an abnormal and undesirable shared succession without disrupting the direct male line.

The normal exogamous alternative is catered for by a separate myth of evident PIE origin in which a king's daughter granted her "own choice" (Skt. *svayaṃ-vara*) of husband prefers a recently arrived outsider (her disguised

long-lost husband in one variant) to invited suitors closer to home. Its core and optional enhancements such as a "love of the unseen/absent (one)" liable to have social, physical and/or mental repercussions have been discussed in V and VI, where a canonical total of twelve local suitors was inferred from a circumstantial agreement between *ETB* and the *Odyssey*. There is no obvious reason for this figure, unless it could connote 'a lot, many' as the first even number after fulcral ten in the PIE decimal system.[156]

In the *Mahābhārata*, a *svayaṃvara* combines with reflexes (Draupadī and 3/5 Pāṇḍavas, Damayantī and 5 "Nalas"', Mādhavī and 3/4 mates[157]) of the other two PIE sovereignty myths (III and VII) and the woman goes off with her husband in the usual "patrilocal" way. Similarly, the Scythian princess Odatis eloped with the Iranian ruler Zariadres, and Odysseus took Penelope home to his native Ithaca after winning a footrace set by her father (VI). Classic *svayaṃvara* seems not to occur in medieval Irish sources but Étaín follows her new husband home after making her "own choice" in defiant solitude.[158] The opposite "matrilocal" pattern of the husband's residence among his wife's people appears, albeit with some ambiguity,[159] in the legend of Massalia's foundation (VI) and in Medb of Crúachu's choice of an outsider from Leinster when she 'took the kingship of Connacht (*ríge Connacht*) after a time and took Ailill to herself into sovereignty (*i flaithemnas*)' (*LL* 14414–5). It is also seen in several Greek myths, including Pelops' marriage to Hippodamea and replacement of her father as king (VI, pararagraph 1) and the absent Menelaus' selection as Helen's husband and her father Tyndareus' successor as king of Sparta in preference to numerous suitors from all over Greece (p. 136–137 above). This socially aberrant scheme reflects the daughter's mythical function as transmitter of her father's sovereignty or, in the case of Massalia, part of it. Conversely, winning a king's daughter to wife and bringing her home in the usual way should denote the relocation of that sovereignty, as when the kingship of Ireland personified by Eithne passed from Catháer's Leinster dynasty to Cormac's at Tara in *ETB*. The significance of cohabiting with the new or future ruler of another kingdom was liable to dilution, presumably because of tension between mythical logic and the real-life value of a king's daughter as a means of forging alliances by marrying and going to live with her in-laws.

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156 Cf. English 'I've told you a dozen times' etc. or the frequent use of *hamaika* 'eleven', presumably as the first numeral after 10 (*hamar*), to denote 'many' in Basque: e.g. *hamaika aldiz*/*bider* 'many times'.

157 Three of her children born to different kings and the fourth to a brahmin.

158 See the discussion of "love of the unseen/absent (one)" towards the end of V for this and the medieval Welsh example of the similarly defiant Rhiannon. In *ETB* Eithne defies the claims of kinship to follow her guardian Buchet in flight from her kin, and this brings her into contact with and marriage to a royal outsider.

159 After marrying the Gaulish king's daughter (Petta/Gyptis), the Greek visitor from afar was granted part of his father-in-law's territory to found the colony of Massila, where she too then took up residence.

The drink of sovereignty has further Irish resonances. A female *scál* 'supernatural being' called 'the sovereignty of Ireland' fills a cup with ale each time the king due to receive it is foretold (note 129). The *síd*-woman Étaín waits for her beloved by a well and four royal brothers' successive requests for water from a well are refused by its hideous guardian but, when the fifth lies with her, she becomes beautiful, identifies herself as 'sovereignty' and gives him water, with which (on her advice) he gets his thirsty brothers' to acknowledge his right to succeed their father as king. The connection of a drink's bestowal with sovereignty accounts for a PIE epithet **mēd^{h}u-eh$_{2}$* 'mead-lady' (V) underlying OIr. *Medb* and Skt. *Mādhavī*, the names of female transmitters of kingship with evident supernatural attributes (Ib and III). As a human surrogate of the divine **mēd^{h}u-eh$_{2}$* (**H$_{2}$eu̯s-ōs*), a king's daughter likewise selects her mate by presenting him with a vessel containing a beverage (**med^{h}u* 'mead' originally).

Although a supernatural figure such as Circe, Étaín or the hag⟶beauty acts independently, a king's daughter exercises her "own choice" in a ceremony arranged by her father in legends from ancient Gaul, Greece, Iran and India. As a means of designating the heir of a king without suitable sons (e.g. Odatis' father) or cementing an alliance with another kingdom, the betrothal of a king's daughter seems to have centred upon her presentation of a drink in ritual re-enactment of the choice held to have been made by a sovereignty goddess. In myth or legend, the daughter's "own choice" of husband was either genuine or dependent upon the outcome of a (con)test typically set by her father. In practice, however, a patriarchal system presumably called for a ritual pretence whereby the girl proffered the drink to a man already chosen for her, either directly by her head of kin or indirectly on the basis of a (con)test set by him. Real-life reservations may well be implied by the unforeseen selection of a complete outsider regularly resulting from literal "own choice" in legend. In the variant where he turns out to be a former king who has returned in disguise after being forced out (like Nala) or lost on an expedition (like Odysseus), "own choice" naturally devolved upon the king's wife. In the *Odyssey*, Penelope was left as the sole arbiter of the Ithacan succession by her father-in-law Laertes' retirement, her son Telemachus' youth and her reluctance to return to her own parents' distant home. Even though she had been restored to her parents' home in the Nalopākhyāna, Damayantī deliberately kept her father in the dark when arranging for the king of Ayodhyā to be given the "fake news" of her impending second *svayaṃvara* (*Mhb.* iii, 58, 11–24) that eventually led to her reunion with Nala. In the Oedipus myth,[160] the wife of the recently slain king (and with her the kingship of Thebes) was offered in marriage by her brother to whoever freed the city from the Sphinx. Having killed his biological father unwittingly and solved the Sphinx's riddle, the royal couple's son Oedipus (who had been exposed as a baby because of a prophecy that he would slay his father, found

[160] *Od.* xi, 271–280, Sophocles *Oedipus Tyrannus*/*Rex*, Euripides *Phoenissae* 9–83, Apollodorus iii, 48–56.

by shepherds and adopted by the king and queen of Corinth) arrived unknown and unknowing in Thebes and was made king by marrying his own mother. Here succession to the kingship entailed marriage to the ex-king's wife on the basis of a challenge set by her head of kin, but the paradoxical result was continuation of the direct male line through unwitting incest (as opposed to Clothru's deliberate incest) with tragic consequences.

Whereas the female protagonist in the first two myths (III and VI) was typically a mortal, the evidence indicates that a goddess encountered a king's largely undifferentiated five sons in the wilds after a deer-hunt in the third (VII). On balance, the three relevant witnesses (a medieval Indo-Siamese narrative, the medieval Irish tale of the five Lugaids, and the Circe episode in the *Odyssey*) point to a golden (Siam, Ireland) stag (Siam, Greece) as their original prey, not least because the substitution of a fawn (*lóeg*) in the Irish version surviving in *Cóir Anmann* is readily motivated by its concern with the etymology of the successful Lugaid's sobriquet *Loígde*.[161] Since a hind could serve as a surrogate (e.g. as the wet-nurse of exposed future kings exposed like Habis or Telephus in VII) or even metamorphosis (Mādhavī in III) of the sovereignty goddess, the golden stag may have symbolised her mate in this theriomorphic aspect (cf. VIII) and died to make way for her anthropomorphic congress with its slayer.

Be that as it may, the goddess offers her visitors a drink but her capacity for metamorphosis (of herself into a hideous hag, or of men into animals) presents a serious obstacle only overcome by the stag's slayer, to whom she becomes beautiful (the hag) or compliant (Circe) and grants sexual favours. This temporary liaison (a one-night stand in the two Irish tales but a whole year in the *Odyssey*) presages his succession to his father's throne (Lugaid Loígde and Níall) or recovery of his own (Odysseus).[162] As argued in VII, its wild setting and the central role of a king's five sons and potential heirs, only one of whom can succeed their father, reveal this myth's primary concern with the designation of one dir-

[161] The eponymous part of his name in relation to his supposed descendents, the Corcu Loígde (whose name is presumably connected with the nearby River Loígde or Lee): *Lugaid Leog* [*sic*] *a quo Corcco Lóegdai* (*Corp. Gen.* 155 = 143a45–6) is one of three sons of Dáire or alternatively *Lugaid Loígde* is one of his five sons (46–8). This numerical fluctuation is similar to the one inferred for the Pāṇḍavas. Since only the smaller number are awarded descendants here, dynastic relevance may have been a factor as in the case of Catháer's ten or thirty-three sons. Three may have been increased to five to fit the inherited deer-hunt pattern, rather as Cathaer's twelve sons in *ETB* may well reflect the traditional number in the "own choice" paradigm.

[162] Not until he had spent seven years cooped up with Calypso as the poem stands, but there are grounds for thinking that 'in an earlier version of the *Odyssey* three years was the length of Odysseus' wanderings and that it was only when Q [the extant version's author] found himself constrained to invent seven years of wanderings for Menelaos that he extended Odysseus' to ten by adding seven years with Calypso. It is tempting to suppose that the three years assigned to the suitors' activities are a hangover from the older version' (West 2014: 103).

ect male descendant for transition from a sodality (PIE **koṛios*) to his father's kingship. In effect, this is placed in the lap of the gods as the reward for an instinctive attraction, contrasting with his brothers' understandable aversion, to an off-putting manifestation of the goddess of sovereignty, who responds with a radiant transformation for his benefit. An inversion involving selection of the sovereignty from among five (at least optionally identical) supernatural females by a single king (Echaid or Odysseus) seeking to recover her and/or it may also be of PIE provenance. The man marked out for kingship by mating with her could then contract an exogamous marriage with a suitable wife, who thereby became the sovereignty's human surrogate, or resume an interrupted one.

This and the preceding myth justify the proper exogamous transmission of an indivisible elective kingship to an individual inside and outside the direct male line respectively, depending on circumstances. The first myth, by contrast, warns that a kingship threatened or undone by a divided succession can only be rescued and transmitted as a coherent whole in the direct male line by questionable means symbolised by polyandry and incest/endogamy.

These three mythical paradigms were distinct but not hermetically sealed. Since all three had at their core a goddess or a king's daughter/wife as her mortal surrogate transmitting sovereignty to a new king extracted by her from a number of bachelor claimants, they seem to have been liable to interact or even merge over time. For instance, the first paradigm of a sister's incest with three brothers (III) quite possibly underlies the configurations of Damayantī plus her three brothers and/or Draupadī's sharing by the Pāṇḍavas (the arguably original three sons of one mother, plus the younger twin sons of another). In their highly literate extant form, however, both narratives not only feature five at least apparent brothers unrelated to the royal princess in accordance with the third paradigm but have inserted them into a grand *svayaṃvara* belonging to the second paradigm of "own choice" (VI). Since the three, five or twelve male claimants typically emerged from sodalities, it would be natural enough for 3 and 12 to impinge upon a canonical base of 5 or 50 (VII) in counts of their members. The evidence assembled by Sharpe (1979: 81–5) suggests that smaller early Irish sodalities (*fíanna*) tended to have three, five, nine (3x3) or twelve members. Norse berserks 'mostly appear in groups – in twos, in fours and very often twelves' (Weiser 1927: 44–5), twelve being the size of a Roman college of the armed young war-dancers called Salii (Dion. Hal. ii, 70). Thrice sixty (3x5x12) is given as the larger size of the divine Indian band of Maruts (Macdonell 1917: 21), and Creidne's *fían* had thrice nine (3x3x3) members (III, last paragraph), the same as the number 'of his foster-brothers and coevals' (*dia chomaltaib ocus comaísib*; cf. Fróech in VII) who voyaged with Bran to a land of women, where all found partners (*Immram Brain* §§32 and 62).

Notwithstanding deep influence from the monastic milieu in which it was produced, medieval Irish material has a crucial contribution to make to reconstructing PIE ideology and mythology of kingship. Irish evidence plays a key

role in establishing a central PIE institution and associated myths of sacral kingship based upon a ritual of "sacred marriage" between a king and a human surrogate of the "sovereignty" goddess. The king was idealised in tripartite terms as the integral embodiment of a society divided into three main male age-grades, namely the polar opposites of an unmarried vagabond junior first stage (+warfare/–property) and a married sedentary senior third stage (–warfare/+property) separated by an intermediate second stage as a married settled or (if war beckoned) mobile adult (+warfare/+property).[163] This arrangement is fully compatible with the configuration of binary opposition plus mediating third term crucial to the structuralist analysis of myths. It also differs in other significant respects from Dumézil's "trifunctional" model, which he conceived in its developed form as an ideology that (contrary to basic functionalist or structuralist principles) was not necessarily aligned with (or on occasion "dialectically" opposed to) social structure.[164] That said, the king's integrating role *vis-à-vis* three age-grades naturally entailed responsibility for material well-being (propertied age-grades 2/3), warfare (1/2) and justice (3 as a probable preserve of the elders) in addition to an overarching religious function linked to his sacrality. Viewed thus, the Proto-Indo-European king occupied the pinnacle of society as the integrator of the three main social grades below along with their three key areas of activity. As argued earlier (IV above), this bundling of three social functions with the king's overriding religious role constituted an embryo from which, as organised priesthoods evolved among various IE peoples, quasi-Dumézilian systems along priest-warrior-farmer lines could develop at later stages. Finally, there is no substance whatever to Dumézil's concept of a "sovereign first function" with twin "magico-religious" and "contractual" aspects[165] that was coordinated with the other two and merely ranked ahead of them (Ia/b⟶II⟶III in descending order) on the same level.

The dynastic implications and potential applications of the three PIE mythical patterns posited above doubtless contributed to their survival as templates for the creation, with appropriate modifications, of new narratives reflecting current dynastic concerns. These seem not to have been greatly affected by Ireland's conversion to Christianity, and it has been argued above that the medieval Irish reflexes of the first and third PIE myths (III and VII) preserve their

[163] 'Married' here includes 'widowed'. In the event of the basic PIE social stratification argued for in section IV, this age-grade system and associated ideology-cum-mythology will presumably have been primarily geared to an upper class.

[164] See Schlerath for a critical appraisal of and objections to the use of Indic (1995: 21–46; preceded by an introduction, 1–21), Iranian (1996: 1–31), Roman (1996: 31–50) and Germanic material (1996: 50–6; followed by general conclusions 56–62) made by Dumézil in support of his model. In his rather sardonic opinion, 'Dum.'s huge success rests not only upon the credulity of his readers but also upon the overwhelming volume of his publications with their repetitions' (Schlerath 1996: 57).

[165] See Schlerath 1995: 21–38 on Varuṇa and Mitra, and McCone 1996b: 93–109 on the allegedly corresponding one-eyed *borgne* and one-armed *manchot*.

prototypes with considerable fidelity. The second (VI) may have undergone appreciable modification in *Esnada Tige Buchet* but has a more or less direct witness of Celtic provenance in the accounts of the foundation of Massilia recorded by Athenaeus (via Aristole) and Justin (via Trogus Pompeius).

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