

**Fruit of the Terrestrial Paradise:
The Psychedelic Sacrament in St Ephrem the Syrian and Celtic Christianity
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In 2 Corinthians 12:2-4, St Paul referred to "Paradise" in the context of a vision of heaven: "I know a person in Christ who fourteen years ago was caught up to the third heaven--whether in the body or out of the body I do not know; God knows. And I know that such a person--whether in the body or out of the body I do not know; God knows--was caught up into Paradise and heard things that are not to be told, that no mortal is permitted to repeat." A rabbinical legend that modern scholars have named the tale of "Four Who Entered Paradise" similarly concerned the experience of a vision.

Four entered into *pardes*. They were Ben Azzai, Ben Zoma, Aher and Rabbi Akiva. Rabbi Akiva said to them: When you come up to the pure marble stones do not say, Water, Water. For it is said: One who speaks lies cannot before my eyes [Psalm 101:7]. Ben Azzai glanced and died. Concerning him, the verse says: Precious at the fountain of the Lord is the death of His saints [Psalm 116:15]. Ben Zoma glanced and went mad. Concerning him, the verse says: Have you found honey? Eat just enough for you, lest you be filled and vomit it up. Aher chopped down the saplings. Rabbi Akiva emerged in peace.¹

Elsewhere in rabbinical literature, the term *pardes*, which was a loan word from the Persian language, regularly meant "orchard." Like Paul's Second Letter to the Corinthians, the rabbinical legend of Rabbi Akiba employed the term in a different and idiomatic sense. In speaking of *the orchard* as though only a single orchard could possibly be under discussion, both Paul and the Talmud referred to the *prototypical* orchard, the Garden of Eden. The idiom took for granted the Persian practice of surrounding royal residences with botanical parks that contained exotic plants and animals.² Mention of Paradise, the orchard of Eden, was a metonymous means to refer to God's place of residence. In both 2 Corinthians and the Talmud, the act of entering Paradise was a euphemism for having a visionary experience, optimally although not necessarily of the presence of God. Paul was non-committal whether the seer remained in his body having a vision or instead journeyed out of his body into the sky. Visionary experiences enabled a person to learn divine secrets in either event.

St. Ephrem's Account of the Forbidden Fruit

In his *Hymns on Paradise*, St Ephrem the Syrian (d. 373) further developed the association of Paradise with visionary experiences. He was working with an understanding of the Fall of Adam that was current in Syriac Christianity in his era; the Syriac teaching also resembled a Jewish midrash that is found in the Palestinian Targum. "St. Ephrem, in common with a number of other early Christian writers, held the view that God created Adam and Eve in an intermediate state: if they kept the commandment not to eat the fruit of the Tree of Knowledge, then they would be rewarded by being allowed to eat it and would thereby be enabled to progress to the Tree of Life, thus acquiring divinity."³ Adam and Eve sinned through disobedience, but both trees were eminently edible.

In Hymn III, Ephrem explained:

3. In the very midst He planted
the Tree of Knowledge,
endowing it with awe,
hedging it in with dread,
so that it might straightway serve
as a boundary to the inner region of Paradise.
Two things did Adam hear

in that single decree:
that they should not eat of it
and that, by shrinking from it,
they should perceive that it was not lawful
to penetrate further, beyond that Tree.⁴

Like all other animals, the serpent was forbidden to enter Paradise, but learned from Adam and Eve:

...that the Tree of Knowledge,
clothed with an injunction,
served as the veil
for the sanctuary,
he realized that its fruit
was the key of justice
that would open the eyes of the bold
--and cause them great remorse.⁵

It was not simply that the Tree of Knowledge marked the boundary of Paradise. It was located at the center of the Garden of Eden, and not at its perimeter. The access to Paradise that it provided was not geographical, but visionary and spiritual.

6. Their eyes were open--
though at the same time they were still closed
so as not to see the Glory
or their own low estate,
so as not to see the Glory
of that inner Tabernacle,
nor to see the nakedness
of their own bodies.
These two kinds of knowledge
God hid in the Tree,
placing it as a judge
between the two parties.⁶

When Adam ate the fruit of the Tree of Knowledge, he envisioned the visible form of God, the Glory of the Holy of Holies, and he knew his own creatureliness and guilt.

7. But when Adam boldly ran
and ate of its fruit
this double knowledge
straightway flew toward him,
tore away and removed
both veils from his eyes:
he beheld the Glory of the Holy of Holies
and trembled;
he beheld, too, his own shame and blushed,
groaning and lamenting
because the twofold knowledge he had gained
had proved for him a torment.⁷

The two kinds of knowledge were not provided simultaneously. Rather, they were alternative outcomes to consumption of the fruit. The one was a positive experience, the other an adverse reaction.

8. Whoever has eaten
of that fruit
either sees and is filled with delight,
or he sees and groans out.⁸

In Hymn VI, St Ephrem treated the primordial events as precedents for his own religious life. Paradise and the Garden of Eden were types of Scripture and the Church, just as the Tree of Knowledge was a type of the Cross.

2. Scripture brought me
to the gate of Paradise,
and the mind, which is spiritual,
stood in amazement and wonder as it entered....⁹
4. Paradise raised me up as I perceived it,
it enriched me as I meditated upon it....¹⁰
7. God planted the fair Garden,
He built the pure Church;
upon the Tree of Knowledge
He established the injunction....¹¹

Through Scripture, the Church, and the Cross, St Ephrem had access to experiences consistent with those of Adam and Eve. Ephrem explained that people in his own day brought fruit into the Garden--the Church--that provided them with visions of Paradise.

11. The diligent carry their own fruits
and now run forward
to meet Paradise
as it exults with every sort of fruit.
They enter that Garden
with glorious deeds,
and it sees
that the fruits of the just
surpass in their excellence
the fruits of its own trees....¹²
12. Happy indeed is the person accounted worthy
to behold in Paradise
the glorious fruits of the trees
which so surpass....¹³

Ephrem wrote these verses in an equivocal, esoteric manner. In the second half of verse 11, he referred not to actual plant substances but to the fruits of righteous actions, which he said are better than plant substances. When, in verse 12, Ephrem addressed the topic of visions of Paradise, naive readers were expected to assume that he referred to the attainment of Paradise post mortem. Readers who instead appreciated that Ephrem attributed psychoactivity to the fruits of Paradise would recognize, however, that he was dis-

cussing visionary experiences that were available in the Garden--the Syriac Church--in this life.

The Terrestrial Paradise in Irish *Immrama*

St Ephrem's concept of access to Paradise in this life dovetailed with Syriac ascetics' concept of their style of life as a return to the state of Adam in Eden. They lived as solitaries, in desert places, where they engaged in prayer and meditation, eating and drinking as little as necessary. They likened their celibacy to the state of Adam prior to the creation of Eve.¹⁴ This use of language, which spoke of the lifestyle of Christian hermits as a terrestrial Paradise, presumably found its way west in late antiquity. By the middle of the fifth century, monasticism had been established in Gaul, but had yet to take root in Britain, whose church leaders remained bishops and priests.¹⁵ Asceticism and the monastic life became significant trends in both Britain and Ireland in the later sixth century.¹⁶ The teachings of the Desert Fathers were integral to the development. St Benedict, who ended his life as a solitary, recommended the writings of John Cassian, which made the teachings of Egyptian and Syrian monasticism available to Latin readers.¹⁷ Again, in Wales, where communal Christian life had been practiced continuously from Roman times, medieval legend remembered St David, of the late fifth and early sixth century, for organizing monastic life throughout the country, among other manners, to accord with the teachings of the Desert Fathers.¹⁸

The late eighth century saw a revival of asceticism in Ireland, manifesting in the origin of a new order, which termed its members *céli dé* (culdees), "companions of God." A marked increase in the number of recorded anchorites occurred during the same period.¹⁹

The hermit retreated to the woods, living under the forest trees, regarding the seasons advance, listening to the birds, watching the wild beasts as they played or came to drink; or he built himself a hut at the lakeside, or within sight of the sea, perhaps on one of the many islands which surround the coast, where he might meditate and pray. A man might come to such a cell after a long period of training in the monastic schools.²⁰

Irish solitaries equated the deserts of the Desert Fathers with barren islands in the Irish Sea. The *Life of Coemgen* remarked, for example, "he meditated in his mind to forsake the world and the society of men, and to lead a solitary eremitic life on the desert ocean."²¹ A distinctive genre of Irish literature, called *immrama*, "voyages," began to be produced no later than the seventh century. The *Navigatio sancti Brendani* is a Latin entry in the genre that dates to the eighth century. The *immrama* are fabulous stories, full of miraculous events, that mix pagan Irish and Christian motifs. Carney suggested that *Immram Brain*, the oldest *immram* extant, is "an allegory showing Man setting out on the voyage to Paradise..which assumes the existence of an earthly paradise," and presents "an early medieval idea of what form human bliss would have taken if Adam had not sinned."²² Carney assumed, however, that the terrestrial paradise allegorized the soul's fate post-mortem. He was presumably unaware that the terrestrial paradise was a standard Christian trope for the ascetic life. The terrestrial paradise in the *immrama* differed from heaven not only in location, but also in not pertaining to the afterlife. The terrestrial paradise was a metaphor that pertained to the lifestyle of the Irish solitaries on the islands to which protagonists journeyed in *immrama*.

Whether written in Irish or Latin, the stories often conflated two types of sea voyage: the relatively short trips of occasional Irish ascetics to pursue lives as hermits or solitaries on small islands off the coasts of Ireland and western Scotland; and the more far-ranging sea travel accomplished by Irish missionaries who visited the Hebrides, Orkneys, Shetlands, and possibly the Faroes in the sixth and seventh centuries, and also reached Iceland.²³ Although interest in asceticism waned in Ireland after the period of its eighth century revival, the Viking invasions of the ninth century resulted, among other consequences, in a considerable

increase in the number of solitaries on small islands in the ninth and tenth centuries, giving the *immrama* continued currency.

In so far as the ascetic life was conceptualized as a foretaste in this life of the afterlife in heaven, the terrestrial paradise was subject to metaphoric description in heavenly terms; and some parts especially of the later *immrama* tended to blur the two categories. At the same time, because every genre of literature degenerates as a by-product of its popularity, confusion between the terrestrial paradise and heaven need not detain us. Our present concern is with the fruit of the terrestrial paradise that can be consumed in this life. Christian use of the motif of paradise had origin with St Paul in reference to visionary experience in this life, and St Ephrem had added explicit reference to the psychoactive fruit of Eden. The motif of the terrestrial paradise that Irish solitaries inherited from the Desert Fathers was available for practitioners of the mystery of manna to reinvest with its original pertinence to visions. The terrestrial paradise motif had been visionary before it had become ascetic in the deserts of the Middle East; and its ascetic usage preserved the motif, carrying it westward into Europe, until visionaries took it up once more in the British Isles. Irish solitaries lived ascetic lives and piously referred to barren, inhospitable islands as terrestrial paradises; but Irish storytellers told stories about sea journeys to these terrestrial paradises, which they described in terms of miracles and wonders that included the psychoactive fruit of Eden.

The *immrama* imply but do explicitly assert their concern with visionary experiences; but the connection was made openly in two paragraphs in the Irish *Life of Patrick* that is extant in the Book of Lismore. The narrative asserted that after Patrick had trained with Germanus of Auxerre and been sent by him to Rome to be ordained a bishop, he was unwilling to accept his mission to Ireland until he had boarded ship and visited the terrestrial paradise.

Then he went to sea with nine in his number; and he came to the island where he saw the new house and a married pair therein. And he asked the young man who dwelt in the house, how long they had been therein. 'From the time of Jesus,' said he; 'and He blessed us, together with our house, and we shall be thus till Doom; and God hath enjoined thee,' saith the young man, 'to go and preach in the land of the Gaels, and Jesus left with us a staff to be given to thee.' So Patrick took the staff of Jesus with him, and went back to Germanus. Said Victor to him, 'God hath enjoined thee to go and preach in the land of the Gael.' 'If I should hear,' saith Patrick,...I would go.' 'Come,' saith Victor, 'to converse with Him on Mount Hermon.'

Then Patrick went and complained to God of the hard-heartedness of the Gael. Said God: 'I,' saith He, 'will be thy helper.'

Then Patrick went to Rome, and received the rank of bishop from Peter's successor, to wit, Celestinus, the forty-fifth from Peter.²⁴

Whether Patrick historically trained at Auxerre is a matter of scholarly controversy.²⁵ In his autobiographical writings Patrick claimed dialogues with the angel; and his training with Germanus formed part of his legend from Muirchu's seventh century *Life* onward.²⁶ The *immram* motif was a later addition that was fitted into the older legend. In the Book of Lismore, Patrick's commission by the angel was preceded with a sea voyage and followed by a commission directly by God.

Like the *Life of Patrick*, several *immrama* mention individuals who will live on a paradise island until Doomsday. "The Voyage of the Húi Corra" and the Latin *Navigatio sancti Brendani* each specifies that one such individual was a disciple of Jesus. The detail suggests that the source of the motif was the Gospel of St John.

Peter turned and saw following them the disciple whom Jesus loved, who had lain close to his breast at the supper and had said, "Lord, who is it that is going to betray you?" When Peter saw him, he said to Jesus, "Lord, what about this man?" Jesus said to him, "If it is my will that he remain until I come, what is that to you? Follow me!" The saying spread abroad among the brethren that this disciple was not to die; yet Jesus did not say to him that he was not to die, but "If it is my will that he remain until I come, what is that to you?"

This is the disciple who is bearing witness to these things, and who has written these things; and we know that his testimony is true. (John 21:20-24)

The story in *Life of Patrick* that the young couple had inhabited the island paradise from the time of Jesus and would live there until Doomsday joined the *immrama* trope with a favorable attitude toward marriage. As late as the fourth century, married men who took orders in the British church may have observed celibacy--the evidence is ambiguous--but they definitely continued to live with their wives. By the sixth century, the custom in both the British and Irish churches was for bishops to discontinue common residence, while priests and deacons practiced continence while residing with their wives. These customs were evidently breached sufficiently often, because the Council of Lyons in 583 went to the trouble of forbidding domestic contacts between the higher clergy and their wives.²⁷

Like Patrick's sea voyage to the island untouched by death, Patrick's acquisition of the staff of Jesus, his ascension of Mount Hermon, and his dialogue with God, were literary allusions: to Moses' staff, his ascension of Mount Sinai, and his reception of his commission as a prophet at the burning bush. The symbolism implied that after his nomination by Germanus, Patrick deliberately sought a visionary experience in order to learn God's will regarding the proposed course of action. The sea voyage to the island where Patrick received Jesus' staff was equivalent, as a literary motif, to the ascension of Mount Hermon where he heard the word of God. Both were motifs of the commissioning of a prophet.

Like *Immram Brain*, the oldest *immram* extant, Patrick's voyage to the terrestrial paradise involved only a single stop at a single island, rather than the extended island hopping that characterized most *immrama*. It shows the genre at its essence: the tale of a visionary experience, done up in tropes of a sea voyage to an island that was untouched by death. Whether the narrative in *Life of Patrick* accurately preserved a historical memory from the early fifth century, we cannot know; but it was, I suggest, plausible. The hymn *Audite omnes*, "Hear Ye All," is the oldest Latin hymn extant that was composed in Ireland. Since about 800 C.E., it has been attributed to St Secundinus (d. 447), a contemporary and fellow missionary of St Patrick. The poem definitely dates to Patrick's lifetime and was probably written in defense of Patrick during the controversy that followed his demand that the British prince Caroticus be excommunicated.²⁸ Of Patrick, the hymn states:

Untiringly he feeds the faithful from the heavenly banquet,
Let those who are with Christ faint on the way;
Like bread he gives to them the words of the Gospel,
Which are multiplied like manna in his hands.²⁹

In the context of typical patristic references to manna, Secundinus' use of the motif is distinctive. Manna is not here an ancient and obsolete miracle. It is the food of a heavenly banquet that Patrick himself disseminates. It is a bread like the loaves that Jesus multiplied. At the same time, it is "the words of the Gospel." Did the text refer in this manner to Patrick's preaching of the Gospel? Or was there an esoteric concern with Patrick's provision of ecstatic experiences of the divine Logos? These lines in the text were equivocal.

Six stanzas later, Secundinus reverted to the topic of the Eucharist.

A good and faithful shepherd of the flock won for the Gospel,

God has chosen him to watch over God's people
And to feed with divine teaching His folk,
For whom, following Christ's example, he gives his life.

For his merits the Saviour has raised him to the dignity of a bishop,
That he may spur the clergy in their heavenly service,
Providing them with heavenly rations, besides vestments--
The rations of divine and sacred words.

He is the King's herald, inviting the faithful to the wedding,
He is richly clad in a wedding garment,
He drinks heavenly wine from heavenly cups
And gives God's people the spiritual cup to drink.

He finds a holy treasure in the Sacred Volume
And perceives the Saviour's divinity in His flesh.
It is a treasure he purchases with holy and perfect works.
ISRAEL his soul is called--"seeing God."³⁰

Once again Secundinus mixed the motifs of feeding and conveying words. Patrick "feed[s] with divine teaching" and provides "heaven rations...The rations of divine and sacred words." Once again, one must ask: does the text refer in this manner to Patrick's preaching of the Gospel? Or was there an esoteric concern with the biblical mystery, an eating of the psychedelic catalyst of the prophetic experience of dialogue with God? The text was equivocal. The last stanza that I have quoted makes best sense, however, if we treat its second line in parallel with its fourth. "His flesh" may be treated as a reference either to the flesh of Jesus, or to the flesh of Patrick. The Latin was equivocal. If we interpret the line to mean that Patrick "perceives the Saviour's divinity in his [Patrick's] flesh," the final line of the verse ceases to be odd and becomes apt. Philo's incorrect etymology of the name Israel as "seeing God" was adopted, among others, by Eusebius, Jerome, and Augustine.³¹ Secundinus applied the phrase to Patrick in celebration of his many famous dreams and visions. Patrick perceived the Saviour's divinity in his flesh, that is, he saw God, in this life, while he was in the body. Presumably, Patrick heard as well as saw. The legend of Patrick on Mount Hermon was unequivocal.

We cannot know at what point in time the motif of a sea voyage to the terrestrial paradise was added to the legend of Patrick. *Immram Brain*, "The Voyage of Bran," is the oldest *immram* extant and is often dated philologically to the seventh century. Carney suggested that it may have been invented at the monastery of Bangor.³² The narrative begins with a prose introduction that states that Bran was alone near his fort when he heard music whose source he could not find. The music induced sleep. When he awoke, he found "a silver branch in white bloom beside him, and it was not easy to distinguish its blossoms from the branch."³³ Bran took the branch into his palace, where he found a strangely dressed woman within the customary crowd. She sang a lengthy song to him. She named the branch as "the apple-tree of Emain," whose twigs are silver and has crystal leaves with blossoms. She sang of a distant island that was supported by four legs, that contained a tree on which birds perch and sing. Treachery, wailing, sorrow, grief, death, sickness, and debility from wounds were unknown on the island.³⁴ The inhabitants were "many thousands of varicoloured-clad women."³⁵ After several verses foretelling the birth of a king, who "has created the whole world" and "made the heavens," the woman's song concludes with an invitation to voyage oversea to "the Land of the Women." Retaking her branch from Bran's hand, she left.

Bran went to sea next day with a company of men. After two days at sea, "he saw a man approaching him in a chariot over the sea." The man identified himself as Manannán

son of Ler and sang a song to him. The song's opening verses explain the principle of allegorical interpretation by which we are presumably to interpret the tale.

Bran thinks it a wondrous beauty
in his coracle over the clear sea;
as for me, in my chariot from afar,
it is a flowery plain around which he drives.

What is clear sea
for a prowed ship in which Bran is,
is a pleasant plain with abundance of flowers
for me in a two-wheeled chariot.

Bran sees
many waves breaking over the clear sea;
I myself see in Mag Mon
red-topped flowers without flaw.³⁶

In a similar fashion, what Bran sees as sea-horses, Manannán sees as flowers with honey nectar. What are speckled salmon in the sea are calves and lambs on land.³⁷

These several examples teach the principle of allegorical exegesis, by which figures and tropes that appear one way, are instead to be interpreted in another. The narrative implies that pagan Irish motifs were being employed in a fashion that was intended to support Christian interpretations. Neither the fairy woman at the tale's beginning nor Manannán mac Ler, the pagan Irish sea god, were to be understood at face value. Rather, the fruit of Eden was discussed under its conventional Christian designation as an apple, and the island without sorrow, ill-health, or death was similarly paradisaic. The conventional Christian exegesis of Song of Songs, which interpreted Solomon and his bride as God and the human soul, was presumably responsible for the description of Paradise as "the Land of the Women." Paradise is the land of Christian souls.

The concept of Paradise was next developed in heterodox directions. Manannán's song continued:

A gentle pleasant game
they play in fair contest,
men and gentle women under a bush,
without sin, without transgression.³⁸

Although inconsistent with the ideal of celibacy, the motif was biblical and paradisaic.³⁹ It alluded to the circumstance of Genesis 2:25, "And the man and his wife were both naked, and were not ashamed."

Manannán next claimed that Bran's boat had sailed over ridges on the top of a wood of fruit, "on which is the true scent of the vine,/ a wood without decay, without defect."⁴⁰ The motif alluded to John 15:1, "I am the true vine, and my Father is the vinegrower." Manannán's next quatrain began, "We are from the beginning of creation/ without age, without decay of freshness."⁴¹ Because God alone is coeval with creation, the claim implied that Manannán, the pagan Irish god of the sea, its fishes, and consequently of fishermen, here symbolized Jesus, who transformed the fishermen Simon and Andrew into fishers of men (Matthew 4:18-19). Manannán's song continued with an apocalypse that drew extensively on pagan imagery and ended with encouragement to reach the nearby Land of Women.⁴²

Nearing an island, Bran rowed around it, drawing a large crowd who gaped and laughed. Bran sent one of his men to the island, but he joined the crowd, gaping and laughing

and making no conversation. Naming the place “the Island of Joy,” Bran left the man there.⁴³ The motif implicitly portrayed the hilarity that characterizes some psychedelic experiences.⁴⁴

Landing on the Land of the Women, Bran and his men were provided with beds and women and stayed what seemed to them to be a year. When they returned to Ireland, they discovered that centuries had passed. One man leapt from the boat to the soil and immediately died.⁴⁵ The motif alluded presumably to a mystical death during psychedelic experience. The tale concluded with Bran and his remaining company setting out again to sea, “and his adventures are not known from that time.”⁴⁶

In *Navigatio sancti Brendani*, “The Voyage of Saint Brendan,” the voyager Bran was replaced by a sixth century saint. The oldest manuscript that contains the tale dates to the tenth century, but the story was probably composed between 730 and 830.⁴⁷ Brendan’s voyage was motivated by the desire to visit and offer encouragement to the solitaries on “the Promised Land of the Saints.” They sailed through thick fog and arrived promptly on a wide, grassy island with plants in flower, trees in fruit, and stones that were precious. Progressing across the island, they meet a man who “appeared in a great light” and informed them that the island was as it had been “from the beginning of the world.” Although they had felt need for neither food, drink, clothing, nor sleep, they had already spent a year there. Night had not come because Jesus Christ was the light of the island.⁴⁸ The island was implicitly paradisaical.

The Irish *Life of Brendan of Clonfert*, which interpolated portions of the *Navigatio*, rendered the implications explicit. The voyagers stopped initially at an island of monks where they lived in harmony and depended on nature’s bounty. “There was no division in their converse, or counsel, or affection. And their only victuals were apples and nuts, and roots of such kinds of herbs as they found.”⁴⁹ They next sailed through thick fog and arrived at a paradisaical island, “full of fragrant apples and blossom; and there was no single herb or tree among them which was not laden with fruit.” A man “of radiant beauty” appeared and said that the island was as it had been “since the beginning of the world,” and they discovered they had spent a year in what seemed to them a day.⁵⁰ Upon returning through thick mist to the first island, Brendan told the monks whom he had met earlier, “and your dwelling is hard by Paradise, and near to you is the island which is called *the Promised Land of the Saints*.”⁵¹

Brendan’s further adventures in the *Navigatio* included stops at a great many islands. On one of them, he encountered a variant of the miracle of the loaves and fishes.

Saint Brendan spoke to the one who usually placed bread before the brothers:

‘Bring the meal that God has sent us.’

This man stood up immediately, found a table made ready and linen and a loaf for each of marvellous whiteness and fish....In the same way they found as much drink as they wanted.⁵²

Because reference to manna would have been treated as an allusion to the wafer of the Eucharist, the *Navigatio* alluded to the Mosaic miracle by replicating the miracle by which Jesus had replicated Moses’ miracle of manna and quail. The sequel indicates an esoteric concern with psychedelic experience. Brendan accused one of his monks of stealing a silver bridle from the island where they had miraculously been fed without meeting anyone.

When the brother in question heard this, he threw the bridle out of his bosom and fell before the feet of the man of God, saying:

‘I have sinned, father. Forgive me. Pray for my soul, that it may not perish.’

Immediately all prostrated themselves on the ground, praying the Lord for the brother’s soul. As they rose from the ground and the holy father raised up the brother, they saw a small Ethiopian jump out of his bosom, wailing with a loud voice and saying:

‘Why, man of God, do you expel me from my dwelling, where I have lived now for seven years, and make me depart from my inheritance?’

Saint Brendan replied to this voice:

'I order you in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ not to injure any man to the day of judgment.'

Turning again to the brother, the man of God said:

'Receive the body and blood of the Lord, for your soul will now leave your body. Here you will be buried....'

And so when the Eucharist had been received, the soul of the brother left his body, and before the eyes of the brothers was received by the angels of light. His body, however, was buried on the spot by the holy father.⁵³

Because neither an exorcism nor the Eucharist cause death, the narrative may be considered symbolic. The key to the symbolism is the parallelism. The miracle of the loaves and fishes is followed by a spontaneous exorcism, precisely as the Eucharist is followed by death. Because the motif of loaves and fishes was equivalent to the Eucharist, we may infer that exorcism and death were to be understood as similarly equivalent. The episode implied that a mystical death promotes repentance and confession, by which the exorcism of a demon may be accomplished.

The *Navigatio* referred explicitly to psychoactive substances in its account of a spring. "If a man drinks it, sleep will overpower him and he will not awaken for twenty-four hours. It is only when it is outside of the spring that it has the taste and quality of water."⁵⁴

On another island, Brendan and his companions encounter twenty-four monks who have lived for eighty years on a miraculous provision of bread. "Every day we have twelve loaves for our food, a loaf between every two. On feast-days and Sundays God increases the supply to one full loaf for each brother, so that they can have supper from what is left over."⁵⁵ The miracle alluded to the provision of a double portion of manna every Sabbath in Exodus 22:22. The monks further explained: "neither sign of old age nor weakness spreads in our limbs...Neither cold nor heat ever overcomes us."⁵⁶ The *Navigatio* also contains further motifs of the terrestrial paradise: speaking birds that dwell in an auspicious tree, and an island with huge and juicy fruit, including grapes as big as apples.⁵⁷ The birds, which served in "The Voyage of Bran" as a choir in Paradise, were explained in the *Navigatio* as neutral angels who had sided neither with God nor with Satan.⁵⁸

"The Voyage of Máel Dúin" is extant in the Yellow Book of Lecan, which dates from the fourteenth century; but the story's employment of Old Irish, rather than Middle Irish, indicates that it was originally composed centuries earlier. The narrative begins with Máel Dúin's birth to a nun who had been raped by a pagan warrior. After being raised by the queen, Máel Dúin learned of his parentage and went off in search of his father, only to discover that the man had been slain. He then set to sea with the intention of avenging his father. After this intentionally pagan beginning, the narrative takes a different turn. Máel Dúin's adventures include several standard motifs of the terrestrial paradise: auspicious trees with birds, the miraculous provision of salmon, food and liquor, a branch that magically grows apples.⁵⁹ At one point, the symbolic nature of the motifs was remarked explicitly.⁶⁰

In the lower part of the large bridge-[like] a holy sanctuary--[was] a well of pure water, a lovely solid cover protected it.

The beautiful active-handed woman, the fair big woman, poured out before them noble and savoury liquor without offering a draught--a remarkable action.

.....
'You do not speak well without devotion, it is not according to faith; that I may tell you [it], inquire about the secret of the island.'⁶¹

So curious an action as drawing water which, when poured at table, proves to be liquor but was not offered to anyone to drink, conveyed a secret that might not be discussed without devotion and faith.

Other motifs in *Immram Máel Dúin* were unprecedented in older extant *immrama*. They were either original or borrowed from *immrama* that no longer survive. On one island, Máel Dúin and his men are given “food...like cheese or curd” that has the property that “the share of every three [men] had the taste that each desired [to find] in it.”⁶² Rabbinic midrash had maintained that manna had whatever taste a person desired. Saint Basil of Caesarea had attributed his knowledge of the motif to Philo; and St Augustine of Hippo had related the tradition as well.⁶³

On an island with trees inhabited by birds that are the souls of the dead,⁶⁴ a man and his descendants and kin remain living until Doomsday. In *Immram Máel Dúin*, the motif of remaining alive until Doomsday implied that the beloved disciple and the Gospel of St John provided apostolic authority for the medieval Irish terrestrial paradise tradition.

The inhabitants of the island, who were to live until Doomsday, depended for their sustenance on the daily occurrence of the miracle of the loaves and fishes.

‘Half a loaf and a morsel of fish and liquor of the well has God given me. Every day that comes to me,’ he said, ‘by the service of angels.’

At the hour of nones then another half-loaf and morsel of fish came to every single man of them yonder and to every single woman and liquor of the well as is enough for each.⁶⁵

The narrative here combined the daily provision of manna to the Israelites in the wilderness with Jesus’ multiplication of loaves and fishes.

The marvels that Máel Dúin sees included an island that rested on a pedestal and so had the implicit shape of a mushroom.

Then they saw another island on a single pedestal: one foot supporting it. And they rowed around it seeking a way into it but they found no way into it but they saw down in the base of the pedestal a closed door under lock. They understood that that was the way by which the island was entered. And they saw a plough on the top of the island; but they held speech with no one and no one held speech with them. They retreat from there.⁶⁶

The lack of speech, alluding to the absence of the Logos, and the retreat from the island without landing on it, suggest an allusion to a psychoactive mushroom of which the author disapproved.

Another episode explicitly referred to an intoxicating fruit of which the author approved.

They found an island with trees upon it like willow or hazel: marvellous fruits thereon, great berries thereon. So of these they stripped a little tree then, and then lots were cast by them who would try the fruit that was on the tree. It fell to Máel Dúin. He squeezed some of them into a vessel and drank and it cast him into a deep sleep from that hour to the same hour on the next day. And they knew not whether he was alive or dead, and the red foam [was] on his lips till he awoke the next morning. He said to them: ‘Gather,’ he said, ‘this fruit, for it is extremely good.’

So they gathered and they mixed water with it to moderate its power to intoxicate and put to sleep. Then they gathered a great quantity of it and were squeezing it, and a great many vessels were filled by them; and they rowed away from that island.⁶⁷

Following the acquisition of the intoxicating juice, they land on another island where they find a bird that carries in its talons a branch that is as big as a large oak. On its top were fresh leaves and abundant red berries that resembled grapes but were bigger. The bird ate some of the fruit, so Máel Dúin and his men gathered some of the fruit without interference from the bird. In mid-afternoon two big eagles arrived, rested, and then began to remove vermin and old feathers from the bird. The three birds ate berries. The eagles continued cleansing the bird next morning. At midday, they stopped, broke berries against stones, and threw them into a lake, staining it red. The big bird went into the lake and washed itself for the rest of the day, before emerging to sit on the shore. These activities continued on the third day. At its end, the big bird flew three times around the island and then lit on the ground. "Swifter and stronger was his flight at that time than before, so that it was manifest to them all that this was his renewal from old age into youth, according to the word of the prophet who said: 'Your youth is renewed like the eagle's' [Psalm 103:5]." One of Máel Dúin's men followed the bird's example. "Then he went in and bathed himself there and plunged his lips into the water and drank sops thereof. His eyes were ever-strong thereafter while he lived; and not a tooth of him fell, nor a single hair from his crown and he never suffered weakness or infirmity from that time forth."⁶⁸

The episode bears comparison with its probable source, an Old English religious poem entitled "The Phoenix." Its narrative was set in the terrestrial paradise, which it located in Syria. There the phoenix went periodically to build the pyre on which it immolated itself, before "the likeness of an apple" was found in its ashes. A worm presently emerged out of the apple, as from an egg, and grew into a new phoenix. To these materials, which were derived from a Latin poem, *De Ave Phoenix*, which was attributed to Lactantius, the Old English poet added an allegorizing explanation of the terrestrial paradise as a figure of heaven, and the phoenix's death and rebirth as a figure of Christ.⁶⁹ Although "The Voyage of Máel Dúin" appropriated the Anglo-Saxon motifs, it avoided the associated doctrines. The bird was not called the phoenix. It neither died nor was reborn. It was not a figure of Christ. It underwent rejuvenation; and the transformative agency was not a fire but a bath in berry juice.

At the same time, the explicit citation of the Bible in "The Voyage of Máel Dúin" indicated that the episode illustrated what its author considered to be a Christian teaching. The resemblance of the berries to red grapes alluded to Jesus, the true vine; and the reddening of the lake with berry juice alluded to Jesus' transformation of water into wine. The botanical identity of the paradisaical plant of rejuvenation was not indicated by these motifs, which instead expressed the doctrinal significance of the plant. The motif of rejuvenation, which replaced the death and rebirth of "The Phoenix," had its basis in the New Testament. Matthew 18:2-4 states: "And calling to him a child, he put him in the midst of them, and said, 'Truly, I say to you, unless you turn and become like children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven. Whoever humbles himself like this child, he is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven.'" A concern with repentance informed the narrative, precisely as it did the exorcism episode in the *Navigatio*. Unlike the Old English poem, which was focussed on the afterlife, the *immram* conceptualized the terrestrial paradise as a present reality, that might be attained during the course of mortal life.

Near the end of "The Voyage of Máel Dúin," the narrative placed two accounts of the miraculous provision of food in close parallel. The voyagers came upon a solitary who explained that for seven years he depended on seven loaves and a cup of whey-water that he brought with him to the island. After he had fasted for three days, an otter brought him a salmon, but he threw the fish into the sea because he would not eat it raw. The otter returned the next day with both salmon and flaming firewood to cook it. The otter returned daily for seven years, and then stopped. After a further fast of three days, he received a wheat loaf, a morsel of fish, and a cup of liquor that was full every day. A similar repast came to the voyagers during their day with the solitary.⁷⁰ The stacking of the three motifs—the ascetic

dependence on extremely little bread and water, the pagan miracle of a sea otter providing both salmon and fire, and the Christian miracle of loaves, fishes, and liquor--rendered explicit their doctrinal equivalence. Providence was providence, whether a narrative employed motifs of pagan origin or not.

A fourth *immram*, "The Voyage of the Húi Corra," is extant in the Book of Formoy, which was compiled in the fifteenth century; but it was presumably composed centuries earlier. The narrative was structured as a tale of conversion. A childless couple fasted "against the Devil" and had three sons. Once grown, the men robbed, plundered, and persecuted clerics. Visiting their grandfather's church with the intention to destroy it, they were feasted and slept. One of the men envisioned heaven and hell in his sleep, and renounced the Devil when he had awakened. The men were then instructed in Christian teachings and required to rebuild the churches that they had vandalized and destroyed. After completing such reparation as they could make, they boarded a boat in order to voyage to the west, "to see the Lord on the sea."⁷¹ Implicitly, they had progressed from making reparation to undertaking asceticism.

The incidents of their sea voyage took over a variety of motifs from earlier *immrama*: an angel in the form of a bird, birds that are the souls of people, an island with apple trees, a river of wine, and no wounds nor diseases; an island with bright people; an island resting on a pedestal; a well whose water tasted however a person wished, and people inhabiting islands until Doomsday.⁷² The final island of their visit involved an original arrangement of motifs.

They came thence to an island wherein dwelt one of Christ's disciples. Marvellous, moreover, was the island. A cell and a church were therein. They chanted their paternoster to God before the church. Said the elder who was in the church: "Welcome (is) the prayer of our tutor Jesus!" "What is that?" said the sage who was in the doorway: "in what place hast thou seen Him?" "One of His disciples am I," said he, "and I avoided Him, and fled from Him on the sea, till I chanced upon this island, and I ate some of the herbs of the island and also of its fruit, till an angel came to me from heaven and said to me: "Not rightly has thou done," quote he: "howbeit thou shalt abide in this life without death till Doomsday." So I stand in that wise till today, and through him there comes not to me a meal at every none.

Thereafter they (all) went into one house and besought food from heaven for them. When they had prayed that a meal should be given to them (all) at the same time, the angel comes to them and leaves their meal on a flagstone before them on the strand, to wit, a cake for each man of them, and upon it a piece of fish wherein was every savour that each of them severally would desire.⁷³

Here the concept of living until Doomsday, which *Immram Máel Dúin* derived from the reference to the beloved disciple in Gospel of St John, was transformed into a story about an anonymous but sinful disciple, who fled by sea like Jonah, until he arrived at the terrestrial paradise. One episode in the *Navigatio sancti Brendani* similarly concerned a sinful disciple: St Brendan visited an island called the Paradise of Delights where Judas was allowed to visit on feast days and Sundays.⁷⁴ Both episodes about sinners reflected the historical fact that ascetic life as a solitary was often intended, as in the case of the Húi Corra, as penance for sins.

In "The Voyage of the Húi Corra," the anonymous disciple on the paradisaic island ate the island's herbs and fruit before he was visited by an angel. The a temporal relationship possibly implied causality through the plants' psychoactivity. The possibility is increased through the immediate juxtaposition of yet another variant of the miracle of the loaves and fishes, the most frequent allusion to the mystery of manna in the *immrama*.

Terrestrial Paradise Motifs in Irish *Echtraí*

The genre of Irish literature that medieval Irish classified as *echtraí*, “adventures,” were wonder stories whose protagonists interacted with supernatural beings who most frequently inhabited burial mounds or locations beneath inland lakes. The tales are commonly assumed to be sagas of ancient heroes’ interactions with pagan gods who had shrunk in Christian times to the status of fairies. Some few of the *echtraí* contain a sea voyage to a terrestrial paradise as one or more episodes within the tales.⁷⁵ Unlike *immrama*, which were clerical compositions addressed to audiences of religious, the *echtraí* were composed by professional bards for recital to aristocratic patrons. The terrestrial paradise materials within the *echtraí* presumably represented an initiative outside the clergy to make the mystery of manna available to laity.

Echtra Conli, “The Adventure of Conle,” is among the oldest surviving Irish tales, dating perhaps to the seventh or eighth century.⁷⁶ Like *Immram Brain*, *Echtra Conli* was among the contents of a lost codex, *Lebor Dromma Snechtai*, “The Book of Druimm Snechtai,” which was cited in several extant texts that date from around the year 1100 and thereafter. Carey suggested that the lost codex was the product of a literary movement in Ulster “that was foreign to the native tradition at every stage.”⁷⁷ *Echtra Conli* relates that a woman in an unknown garment appeared to Conle the Red, the son of Conn of the Hundred Battles. She claimed to “come from the lands of the living where there is neither death nor sin nor transgression” and lasting feasts proceed “without toil.” The land was located in a great *sid* or mound. Conle alone could see the woman, but others could hear her when she spoke. She professed her love for Conle and invited him to join her people, where he would remain young and beautiful “till the pertaining to visions [of the] Day of Judgment.” At Conn’s request, the druid Corán sang against the woman, so that none could hear her. However, she threw an apple at Conle, who went without drink and food for a month, while he depended on the apple alone. “Whatever he ate, it did not take away anything from the apple, but it remained whole.” Conle longed for the woman, and a month later he saw her approach. Once again she invited him to join her. When Conn called for his druid, the woman spoke against druidry and foretold the coming of Christianity. The woman invited Conle to come away with her in her ship of glass and travel to the *sid* of Boadach. “It is the country that delights the mind of everyone who goes there. No people are there save women and maidens.” Conle sprang into the ship of crystal and they rowed to sea.⁷⁸

The Adventure of Conle has the structure of a pagan tale in which a spirit causes disease and eventually death by stealing a human soul and imprisoning it in the spirit’s home in a burial mound. The druid’s counter-magic was aimed to prevent the soul-loss from occurring. The pagan tale was thoroughly Christianized, however. Rather than a malicious spirit causing disease and death by stealing a soul, the *echtra* told of a loving woman who encouraged a living man to join her voluntarily and remain young and beautiful until Doomsday. She preached against druidry and foretold the coming of Christianity. She made Conle a gift of an apple, a motif that signified the fruit of the tree of Eden;⁷⁹ and they embarked for the Land of the Living by sea, as though they were Christian solitaries. Her actions were consistent with her allegorization of the Church, Wisdom, or another female figure of Christian teaching.⁸⁰ The only element in the *echtra* that was inconsistent with the world of the *immrama* was the location of the woman’s home in a *sid*; but the motif was reconceptualized upon its appropriation as an element of the terrestrial paradise. As places of group burials, mounds had presumably been associated in pagan times with death and the soul’s fate post-mortem. The transformation of fearful burial mounds into hospitable fairy-mounds was consistent with the re-imagining of disease-causing spirits as benevolent fairies, which created a category of supernatural being that was neither angelic nor demonic. Because the entire narrative was allegorical, its fairies were fictions that served the figurative purposes of conveying Christian teachings about the apples of Eden.

The *Echtra Airt ocus Tochmarc Delchaim*, “Adventure of Art and the Wooing of Delchaim,” is extant in the fifteenth century Book of Fermoy. It was written in Early Modern Irish, but its contents have otherwise a style consistent with the Old Irish period.⁸¹ A con-

voluted tale of fairy love, jealousy, revenge, and famine, the story contains a sequence that includes a sea voyage. The protagonist, Art, son of Conn, journeyed in order to find a blameless child who might be offered as a sacrifice. He sailed until he found an island with apple trees, wine wells, hazel trees, a hostel with doorposts of bronze and crystal doors, "and a few generous inhabitants within." There he saw the queen and her son.⁸² In the hostel, his needs were met by invisible hands.

Conn sat down on the bedside of the hostel, and was attended upon, and his feet washed. And he knew not who had washed his feet. Before long he saw a flame arising from the hearth, and the hero was taken by an invisible hand which guided him to the fire, and he went towards the fire. Then food-laden boards of the house with varied meats rose up before him, and he knew not who had given them to him. After a short space he saw a drinking-horn there, and he knew not who had fetched the horn. Then the dishes were removed from him.⁸³

After bathing, Art spoke with the queen and explained that owing to a famine, he had come to fetch "the son of a sinless couple" who would be invited to Tara and bathed in the water of Ireland. The queen asserted that "never did his father and mother come together except when yonder little boy was made," and the boy volunteered to go. Art promised to place the boy under his protection and return him safely if he were able. Three days and nights at sea brought Art and the boy to Tara, where the druids demanded his sacrifice, so that his blood might mingle with the earth and produce their fruitfulness. Art and the kings Conn, Finn, and Art Oenfer had placed the boy under their protection, when the boy shouted that he was willing to be put to death. Just then a lowing cow and a wailing woman were heard. When they arrived, the woman recommended that the cow be slaughtered instead of the boy. Next she proposed a contest between a one-legged bird and a twelve-legged bird. The former won, and the woman proposed that the twelve druids be hanged and the little boy left alive.⁸⁴ The central element of the episode, the replacement of human sacrifice by animal sacrifice, reflected the biblical tale of Abraham and Isaac in Genesis 22. The woman who brought the cow was presumably a figure of the Church. The hostility toward druids was similarly consistent with a Christian perspective.

Motifs of the terrestrial paradise also occur in *echtraí* that did not involve sea voyages. For example, *Echtra Cormaic Maic Airt*, "The Adventure of Cormac Mac Airt" expanded on the motif of fairy-apples. "In his hand the warrior had a fairy branch with three apples of ruddy gold upon it, and not was known the species of its wood. And when it was shaken, what the apples would emit was more melodious than all the songs of the world, and at that melody the men of the world would sleep, and neither sorrow nor affliction would oppress the people who hearkened to that melody."⁸⁵ The fruit of the tree of Eden was called an apple, but its species was not stated. The fruit was melodious; but men who did not know of it, and it left men with the calm necessary for untroubled sleep.

Terrestrial Paradise Motifs in Celtic Saints' Legends

The *immrama* provide a convenient point of entrance into the symbolism of an early medieval tradition of the mystery of manna in Ireland. Motifs of the terrestrial paradise that are earliest demonstrable in the *immrama* also found their way into medieval saints' lives. Because contacts between Irish and British clergy were close and continuous over a period of four centuries, between 750 and 1150,⁸⁶ the symbolism appeared on both sides of the Irish Sea. Many of these saints' lives are undated and presumably no older than the twelfth century. In the *Life of Saint Brynach*, who lived in Wales in the middle of the fifth century, Brynach was said to have converted a king and then been obliged to feed him.

But what was to be done, for he had little or no provisions to place before them as they sat down, but to hope in God, as he had done, who sent food to the hungry children of Israel in abundance, and rained manna upon them for their sustenance. He went therefore to an oak, which was near, and plucked off, hanging by the leaves, as many wheaten loaves as were wanted; wherefore it was called the Bread of Oak, whilst it remained. He also went to the brook Caman, for it ran near, where for water, he drew wine plentifully, and from the same brook for the stones he extracted a sufficiency of fishes. He came to the king, and his attendants, and caused them to sit down, and placed plenty of food before them; they partook, and were sufficiently filled, nor were they disappointed with respect to what they wished. After supper, the hour calling for it, they lay down, went to sleep, and all of them slept soundly until the morning.⁸⁷

Here the biblical miracles of manna, of the loaves and fishes, and of water transforming into wine, provided motifs for the discussion of an edible that Saint Brynach found in a forest.

An episode in the *Life of St Illtyd*, who lived in Wales in the sixth century, constructed a narrative of miraculous feeding that emphasized a different motif associated with manna. Attempting to convert a pagan king with whom he had previously quarreled over a stag, Illtyd invited the man to dinner. He had a servant catch a fish in a neighboring pond, but the king refused to eat it without bread and salt. Illtyd prevailed on him, however, by promising a miracle.

“The maker of all creatures, and the giver of gifts can effect that if thou tastest what is set before thee, thou wilt have in the untasted fish from me what thou dost wish to have.” Those things beings asked for, and heard, the king dare not refuse perversely, but eat and had the tastes of divers kinds of meat in that of one sort. Being satisfied, and thirsty, he asked in a jeering manner for wine or mead to be given to him; but Illtyd wanting them, ordered to be given to him for his drink some water from the fountain; and offered again those prayers which he had before uttered, that from the watery drink the desire of the person asking might be satisfied. He drank what was brought to him, and was pleased with it, and found in water alone the tastes of the divers liquors of wine and mead.⁸⁸

This narrative employed the motifs of fish and water transformed into liquor, together with the motif of manna having whatever taste its eater wished. Another narrative later in the *Life of St Illtyd* provided yet another grouping of motifs related to manna. Fleeing from persecution by King Meirchion, Illtyd took refuge in a cave. “Therefore the blessed Illtyd prayed constantly, and fasted daily; and on every ninth hour, a loaf of barley bread was sent him from heaven, and also a portion of a fish, wherewith he was refreshed.”⁸⁹ Here it is loaf and fish, descending from heaven as though it were manna. On a later occasion, Illtyd lived for three years as an ascetic in a cave at Lingarch, “and every ninth hour he received heavenly food brought to him by an angel and placed on a rock in the inside, where he saw the venerable miracle.”⁹⁰

Findian of Clonard was an Irish saint who studied in Wales, according to legend, for thirty years in the fifth century.⁹¹ He then returned to missionize Ireland. Apples provided by an angel determined the location of his church in Leinster.

Said the king to Findian: ‘Whatsoever place in Leinster thou shalt like will be given thee to build thy church.’ God’s angel came before Findian to the mountain called Condal. God’s angels carried him with his household on that night from the top of the mountain into the glen that was nearest to him. In the morning he told his household to go into the wood to cut trees to build a church. One of them

returned to him with a branch of an apple-tree and its fruit in his hand. Findian went along with him to the place in which the apple-tree was standing. 'Let the church,' saith he, 'be built there.'⁹²

This story, which alluded to the apple of paradise, provided a standard against which to evaluate the motifs of a novel episode later in Findian's legend.

Rúadán of Lothra had a lime-tree, a tree from which there used to drop a sweet-tasted fluid, in which every one would find the flavour which he desired; and the monks used to benefit their guests thereby; wherefore the monks of Ireland were yearning to Rúadán. His pupils came to Findian and were lamenting to him that his pupils were leaving him. They entreated him to go with them to Rúadán, so that Rúadán might be in community of life like every one. Findian went along with them to Lothra. What they first went to was the tree, and Findian made a cross with his crozier over the tree, and not another drop dropped from it. When Rúadán heard that, he ordered water of his well to be brought to him. He made prayer. The water of the well was turned into the taste of the fluid [of the lime tree]. When the fluid was brought to Findian and his saints, he made the sign of the cross over it. It was at once turned (back) into its nature of water. 'What profit is that,' say the clerics to Findian, 'unless thou correctest the well?' 'O dear brethren,' saith Findian, 'why are ye [giving trouble] to Rúadán? For if he wished to change into sweet ale all this water beside the church, God would do it for him.' Then both Findian and the saints entreated Rúadán that his life should be like (that of) every one. Rúadán said he would do that for the sake of his tutor Findian. He complained, however, that the little land that lay round the church was barren. So Findian blessed that land and it became fertile.⁹³

In this narrative, the motif of a food "in which every one would find the flavor which he desired" was applied to the lime which Findian disapproved. Because we already know that Findian built his church on the site of an apple tree, we may infer that the contest of miracles was simultaneously a battle of fruit trees, apple versus lime. Lime symbolized a psychoactive substance, capable of inducing mystical experiences of a type that was inconsistent not only with the sign of the cross, but also with the fertility of the land around Rúadán's church. The conflict was resolved amicably, through Rúadán's acceptance of Findian as his teacher.

One version of the Irish *Life of Ciaran of Saighir* related a number of episodes of present interest. When two contemporaries of St Patrick, Ciaran of Saighir met Ciaran of Clonmacnois, they exchanged most peculiar greetings.

And Ciaran of Clonmacnois said to Ciaran of Saighir: 'Abundance of food and riches be in thine abode till doom.' And Ciaran of Saighir said to Ciaran of Clonmacnois: 'Abundance of wisdom and consecrated oil be in thine abode till doom.'⁹⁴

Remarks that invoked a blessing "until doomsday" would ordinarily refer to the individual being blessed, plus his heirs or successors. Here, the two fifth century saints blessed each other as though they expected each other to live on until doomsday. The exchange implied that the narrator wished knowing readers to appreciate that the two saints had inhabited the terrestrial paradise.

Equally notable is a motif in a healing narrative. Once during autumn, Ciaran came upon a blackberry bramble. "And it was revealed to him by God, that he would have need of them on another occasion, and (therefore) he left some of them." In the spring, the king Aengus visited the king Concra, and Aengus's wife Eithne became enamored and wanted to

leave Aengus, who was aged, and wed Conkra. Conkra refused; but at the feast's end, Eithne complained of illness, insisting that only blackberries would cure her. Conkra feared that Eithne would remain in his home after Aengus left and sought Ciaran's help.

And Ciaran sent Conkra to the bramble on which he had left the blackberries the previous autumn; and the berries were found as Ciaran left them, and he collected them into a brazen vessel, and a white cloth was spread over them, and the queen ate of them and was well; the kings also partook of them, and they had the taste of honey, and the intoxicating property of wine.⁹⁵

The miraculous blackberries were fruits of the terrestrial paradise. The fruit was psychoactive, both in being "intoxicating" and in having the power to heal Eithne of her immorality. The identity of the plant was possibly intimated by the motifs of blackberries and brambles, which can both be treated as allusions to ergot, whose color is black, and which appear somewhat like thorns extruding from the stalks of wheat and other cereals. The legend of St Ciaran is also notable for an unusually large number of the episodes in which Ciaran raised the dead.⁹⁶ Only some saints raised the dead, and none half so many as Ciaran.

The *Life of Maedoc of Ferns* similarly contained miracle stories that alluded to the terrestrial paradise. A confluence of pagan and biblical motifs occurred in a story that surrounded his birth.

The webstress's slay which [Maedoc's mother] Eithne held at the child's birth made of hard dry hazel-wood produced afterwards leaves and goodly flowers; and this hazel still stands, a fresh unaging tree, in Inis Bechmaighe in token of the miracle. The learned men of the district say with reference to this hazel, that when earth from it over which nine Masses have been aid is inserted between prisoners and their chains (*lit.* irons), they thereupon escape forthwith.⁹⁷

The motif of a dead rod of wood sprouting leaves and fruit alluded to the miracle of Aaron's almond rod in Numbers 17, by which God confirmed Aaron as his priest. The motif of hazel alluded to the psychoactive hazel nuts of wisdom in the legend of Finn mac Cumhaill.⁹⁸ A poetic version of the miracle of Eithne's labor added motifs of the terrestrial paradise.

The stick of a webstress found in the house,
Held by Eithne in the time of her travail,
A withered hazel staff,
Was covered with fair fresh leaves.

This hazel is still a fresh hazel,
And will remain so without changing
Till the end of the world shall come
In flowery Inis Brechmaighe.

It is of the virtues of the hazel of great Maedoc,
That earth from it as a preservative of escape
Will arise till the strict judgment,
An addition to his first miracles.⁹⁹

The motif of escape from prison both alluded to the deliverance of the Israelites from Egypt and allegorized the process of spiritual awakening to the unity of God.

The allusion to Aaron's rod, a biblical narrative when Aaron engaged in controversy with Korah regarding the correct incense to offer to God, was consistent with other episodes

in the *Life of Maedoc of Ferns*, when he apparently engaged in controversy with other church authorities.

As he was going along the road, a bitch wolf happened to meet him, wretched, weak, and starving. It came to him gently and fawningly. Maedoc asked a lad who had joined him on the road, whether he had anything which he could give the wolf. The lad said he had one loaf and a piece of fish. Maedoc took this from him, and threw it to the wolf. The boy flushed and flamed at seeing this, and said that he was afraid of his master, for he was not of Maedoc's following, but had chanced upon him by the way. Maedoc said: 'Bring me some of the leaves of the wood,' said he. And he did so. Maedoc blessed the foliage thereupon, and it was turned into a loaf and fish; and he gave it to the lad afterwards.¹⁰⁰

The statement, "afraid of his master, for he was not of Maedoc's following," implied that the lad was a monk who followed a different teacher. What his master regarded as loaf and fish, that is, as manna, was food fit for a wolf--that is, for the shapeshifting ecstasies of pagan Irish warrior bands. Maedoc taught him differently, transforming "leaves of the wood" into the manna of a different sort.

Another episode similarly indicates Maedoc's engagement in controversy regarding the position of the terrestrial paradise within the Irish church.

Another time Maedoc was planting fruit-trees in his garden on a certain day, and the man who was handing the trees to him, brought to Maedoc shoots of unproductive trees, beeches and alders, and any tree that chanced; and they were all planted together on that occasion. It came then of the favour of God and of the miracles of Maedoc that the unproductive trees which he set, ended by becoming trees as fruitful (as the others), and that sweet well-tasted apples, and the proper ripe edible nuts came on them at the time when nuts and fair fruit came on the other trees.¹⁰¹

Here again we find Maedoc, receiving students from teachers who had been unproductive, and introducing them to the fruits of the terrestrial paradise: fairy-apples and hazel nuts of wisdom, among others.

The Spoils of the Otherworld

The medieval Welsh poem *Preiddeu Annwn*, "The Spoils of the Otherworld," is generally regarded as a pre-Norman composition,¹⁰² making its latest date around 1055, when the South Welsh court took refuge in Normandy with Duke William. One line in the poem has been dated, not without challenge, as early as the seventh century¹⁰³ and the subject matter of the poem is, in the opinion of several scholars, the Welsh precursor of the twelfth and thirteenth century Old French romances of the quest of the holy grail.¹⁰⁴ Because the meanings of many of the poem's words are uncertain, it can be translated only approximately. Haycock translated the first verse as follows:

I praise the Lord, the Ruler of the kingly realm,
who has extended his sway over the extent of the world.
Maintained was Gwair's prison in Caer Siddi
throughout Pwyll and Pryderi's story.
No-one went there before he did--
into the heavy grey chain guarding the loyal lad.
And before the spoils/herds of Annwfn he was singing sadly,
and until Doom shall our poetic prayer continue.
Three full loads of Prydwen we went into it:

save seven, none came back from Caer Siddi.¹⁰⁵

“The Spoils of the Otherworld” is one of many poems in the Book of Taliesin that is written pseudonymously in the first person, implicitly by the legendary bard Taliesin. The historical Taliesin was a court poet in northern Britain in the sixth century in whose name poems continued to be written through the late middle ages. Haycock suggested that “the Taliesin persona, as archetypal poet,” was adopted by a variety of bards, as a vehicle for a distinctive attitude and subject matter.¹⁰⁶ With his boast “and until Doom shall our poetic prayer continue,” the poet located himself and his six companions as inhabitants of the terrestrial paradise who will live unagingly until the Day of Judgment. At the same time, the place-name Caer Siddi is almost certainly to be translated “Fairy Fort.”¹⁰⁷ The Irish word *síd*, plural *síde*, meaning “of the tumulus” or “of the fairy-mound,” had through frequent usage gained adjectival force that was taken over as a loan-word into Welsh.¹⁰⁸ The poem concerns an invasion of the pagan otherworld, presumably in order to rescue Gweir, who is usually identified as the Gwair ap G(we)irioed who is listed as one of the “Three Exalted Prisoners” in a Welsh triad.¹⁰⁹ Rhys noted that the island of Lundy, off the western coast of North Wales, is termed Ynys Wair, “Gwair’s Isle,” in Welsh and suggested that the narrative may have located the otherworld there.¹¹⁰ Prydwen, “Fair of Form,” was the name of Arthur’s ship.¹¹¹ It implicitly made three trips carrying the invading forces to Caer Siddi. Pwyll and Pryderi are father and son in the prose tales of the Mabinogi, which are extant in a rescension that is customarily dated to the middle of the eleventh century.¹¹² Their names mean “sense, reason” and “care, concern, worry” respectively.¹¹³

Although no story concerning the imprisonment of Gweir survives, Gruffyd ingeniously argued that it has been preserved in the tale of “Manawydan son of Llyr,” which that forms the Third Branch of the Mabinogi. He noted that the second last sentence of the story preserves an older title, “*Mabinogi Mynweir a Mynordd*,” and he suggested that *Mynweir* had replaced *Gweir* through a poetic convention of adding the beginning of a second of two names to the start of the first. This initial shift led eventually to the attribution of Gweir’s story to Manawydan.¹¹⁴ Here is the account of Pryderi’s imprisonment.

When he came to the caer neither man nor beast nor the boar nor the dogs nor house nor habitation could he see in the caer. As it were in the middle of the caer floor, he could see a fountain with marble work around it, and on the edge of the fountain a golden bowl fastened to four chains, and that upon a marble slab, and the chains ascending into the air, and he could see no end to them. He was transported with the great beauty of the gold and with the exceeding good workmanship of the bowl, and he came to where the bowl was and laid hold of it. And as soon as he laid hold of the bowl, his two hands stuck to the bowl, and his feet to the slab on which he was standing, and all his power of speech forsook him, so that he could not utter one word. And thus he stood.¹¹⁵

Unable to find Pryderi, Manawydan returned to the court, where he met Pryderi’s mother Rhiannon, who scolded him for losing Pryderi. She went to the caer, saw Pryderi, touched the bowl, and immediately became imprisoned too. “And with that, as soon as it was night, lo, a peal of thunder over them, and a fall of mist, and thereupon the caer vanished, and away with them too.”¹¹⁶ Manawydan and Pryderi’s wife Cigfa moved to Lloegr, where he worked as a shoemaker; and then to Dyfed, where he grew wheat. When his grain field was infested by mice, he caught one of them. As he prepared to hang the mouse as a thief, he was approached successively by a cleric, a priest, and a bishop, each of whom offered increasingly large sums of money for the mouse. Manawydan refused. When the bishop asked what price he would accept, he named the freedom of Rhiannon and Pryderi, and the removal of the enchantment of Dyfed. The bargain struck, the bishop

struck the mouse with his magic wand and reverted her to the shape of the beautiful woman who was his wife.¹¹⁷

A similar motif of imprisonment and disenchantment occurs in an episode of the Irish *Life of Abban*.

Corman son of Diarmait, king of Úi Cennselaigh came to ravage Camross, a monastery of Abban's. Some of his host went into Abban's kitchen, and carried out on to the green a bushel measure which was there, but they could not set it down, for their hands clave to it. The king and his host were frightened, and sent for Abban, and begged him to show mercy to them in the strait in which they were. Abban made the sign of the cross with his hand over them, and the bushel fell from them; and the land round about the place was given to Abban, and Abban returned with the benediction of the country.¹¹⁸

The statement in "The Spoils of the Otherworld" that Gweir sang sadly in front of the spoils or booty of the otherworld suggests that like Pryderi and Corman's men, Gweir was imprisoned in the presence--indeed, imprisoned by--the very object that he sought to carry off. The reference to "the heavy grey chain guarding the loyal lad" provided a more naturalistic account of the motif of the chains which, in *The Mabinogi*, reached endlessly into the sky. The meaning of the motif is implicit. The cauldron or basket imprisoned in that a person could not let go of it once it had been touched. Whether it imprisoned a person in the pagan otherworld or with chains that led upward to Christian heaven varied from story to story. The trope pertained to a manner of imprisonment, not to the pagan or Christian cultural context in which the imprisonment occurred. The cauldron or basket implicitly contained a potable and/or edible substance that was addictive.

We learn from the second verse that the object of Arthur's expedition was a cauldron.

I'm splendid of fame--song was heard
in the four quarters of the fort, revolving [to face] the four directions.
My first utterance was spoken concerning the cauldron
kindled by the breath of nine maidens.
The cauldron of the Head of Annwn, what is its disposition
[with its] a dark trim, and pearls?
It does not boil a coward's food, it has not been destined to do so;
Lleog's flashing sword was thrust into it,
and it was left behind in Lleinog's hand.
And in front of the door of Hell's gate lamps were burned
and when we went with Arthur, famed in tribulation,
save seven, none returned from the Mead-Feast Fort.¹¹⁹

In the First Branch of the *Mabinogi*, Pwyll received the title *Penn Annwn*, "Chief of the Otherworld."¹²⁰ Here he was credited with ownership of a cauldron. Pagan Irish religion similarly credited its chief god with a cauldron. A ninth century Irish tradition relates: "Never went an assembly of guests away unsatisfied from the cauldron of the Dagda."¹²¹ Because cauldrons might be extremely large vessels in which an entire cow could be boiled, or mead brewed for a feast, the poem's designation of the fairy fortress as "Mead-Feast Fort" suggests that the cauldron was the spoil that Pwyll took from the otherworld, following his conquest of it. If we assume that the cauldron imprisoned Gweir, as the bowl did Pryderi and Rhiannon and the bushel did Corman's men, the reference to mead might signify a psychoactive beverage that involved mead but also some further substance. The motif of the cauldron would then have been equivalent to the limes in the legend of St Findian and Rúadán. Imprisonment might then symbolize the effects of the fortified mead, referring possibly to the associated religious beliefs, but likely also to physiological addiction.

How was the cauldron disenchanting? The lines concerning the sword thrust into the cauldron and its abandonment to Lleinog, the “leaping (one),”¹²² suggest its attack and capture; but the motif of the cauldron was developed more fully elsewhere. The Third Branch of the Mabinogi related that Bran led several mythic heroes of Wales invaded Ireland to avenge indignities done to Branwen, sister of Bran the Blessed. In the battle that followed the Welsh landing in Ireland, the Welsh discovered that the Irish were making use of a cauldron of rebirth.

The Irish began to kindle a fire beneath the cauldron of rebirth. Corpses were thrown into the cauldron until it was full, and the next morning they rose up fighting as well as before, except they could not speak. But when Efnisien saw the corpses, and no room at all for the men of the Isle of the Mighty, he thought, “Dear God, alas! that I have caused this desolation of men of the Isle of the Mighty! And shame on me unless I find a way to deliver them from this.”

He hid himself, then, among the Irish corpses, and two bare-bottomed Irish came and threw him into the cauldron as an Irishman. He stretched himself out in the cauldron, then, until the cauldron broke in four pieces, and his heart as well. From that came such victory as the men of the Isle of the Mighty got.¹²³

The occultist Arthur Edward Waite plausibly concluded “that the Druidic Mysteries, as we find them in Welsh Legends, are like other Initiations: the Candidate is passed through the experience of a Mystical Death and is brought back, as, for example, by the Cauldron of Bran or that of Ceridwen, to a new term of existence.”¹²⁴ Anthropologists have confirmed the initiatory significance of the cauldron of rebirth. During their initiations, Siberian shamans sometimes envisioned themselves being killed in a cauldron, from which they presently resurrected.¹²⁵ The Irish cauldron of rebirth was similarly associated with initiations. An Old Irish tale, “The Champion’s Bargain,” which forms part of the larger narrative called “The Feast of Bricriu,” related that a giant once approached the men of Ulster and offered to trade blows with an axe. Three successive evenings an Ulster hero beheaded the giant, who gathered his head and left. The next morning when the giant returned to behead the Ulsterman, he avoided him. On the fourth evening Cuchulinn accepted the challenge, beheaded the giant, and broke the head into fragments. The giant rose up nonetheless. The next morning Cuchulinn stretched his neck across the block and the giant struck him with the blunt side of the axe. The giant praised Cuchulinn’s valor and left.¹²⁶ One detail in the giant’s description provided the key to the tale’s interpretation. “Fierce yellow eyes in his head, each of these two eyes standing out of his head as big as a cauldron that would hold a large ox.”¹²⁷ The detail indicated that the narrative concerned the cauldron of initiation. Read as a pagan myth, rather than as a wonder story, the tale concerned a supernatural being who demonstrated the power of death and resurrection, by way of his *bona fides*, before he invited Cuchulinn to undergo an initiation that consisted of a blow of the same axe. Because the initiatory death was a mystical one, Cuchulinn survived.

The same initiatory practice was invoked in a miracle in the *Life of Saint Beino*, a Welsh saint who lived in the fifth century. When a maiden refused to become the concubine of a Welsh king, he beheaded her as she was about to enter the door of the church. Beino prayed that God respect the king no more than the king had respected the maiden. The king promptly melted into a pool and was never again seen. “Then Beino took the head of the maiden, and placed it to the body, and spreading his mantle on the body, said to her father and mother, who were at her head lamenting, “Be silent a little while, until the mass be over.” And then Beino sacrificed to God; and when the mass was over, the maiden arose quite well; and the sweat was wiped from her face, and God and Beino restored her to perfect health”¹²⁸ In this narrative, the motifs of decapitation and resurrection were shifted from an amoral pagan rite to an equally initiatory Christian context. Miracles both punished the king’s sin and rewarded the maiden’s virtue.

The question in “The Spoils of the Otherworld” regarding the disposition of the cauldron was not an idle one. The bounty of a polytheistic deity such as Dagda was plentiful but was also always limited in variety.¹²⁹ The god of game animals provided game; the god of fish provided fish; the god of grain provided grain. When offended by people’s neglect of religious obligations, a divine “owner of nature”¹³⁰ was also capable of withholding food, causing famine. The cauldron of Caer Siddi had instead the property of discerning heroes from cowards. The motif compares with an episode in the *Life of Saint Brynach*. Legend credited the Welsh saint with a miracle that involved a cauldron with the capacity to discern sinners. Once, when a Welsh king had sinned against Brynach, God provided that the water that had been placed in the cauldron to boil meat remained cold, regardless of the size of the fire placed beneath it. Perceiving the miracle, the king repented. The motif of a cauldron that failed to heat a sinner’s food was also employed in the *Life of Saint Beino* who, as we have seen, resurrected the decapitated dead.¹³¹

Motifs of pagan origin underwent a sea-change when they were appropriated not only for the legends of Welsh saints, but also for the poetry of “The Spoils of the Otherworld.” The poem’s equation of Caer Siddi with “Hell’s gate” imposed a Christian understanding on the Celtic otherworld. The Welsh word *Vfern*, here translated “Hell,” derived from the Latin *infernum*.¹³² Scholars are generally agreed that even though the Celtic otherworld was located under burial mounds and under inland lakes, it was not conceptualized as an abode of the dead.¹³³ Classical writers credited the Celts with belief in reincarnation,¹³⁴ and Old Irish tales made occasional reference to individual reincarnations.¹³⁵ The principles that governed the process of reincarnation remain unknown, however; and the god that governed the reincarnation process remains unidentified. The Mabinogi’s designation of the Irish cauldron as the “cauldron of rebirth,” despite its portrait as a cauldron of resurrection, suggests a possibility, however. The cauldron of Dagda that left no guests unsatisfied may have symbolized not only the provision of food, but more metaphysically the process by which aged souls underwent transformation post-mortem into the souls of infants who were ready to be reborn. The replacement of the pagan doctrine of reincarnation by Christian ideas of the afterlife may have been the primary meaning of the shattering of the cauldron by the Welsh invaders.

The second verse’s motif of the revolving fortress compares with the corresponding motif in *Immram Máel Dúin*.¹³⁶ The third verse explicitly named Caer Sidi as an island and also provided a tell-tale motif of the terrestrial paradise:

I’m splendid of fame: songs are heard
in the four quarters of the fort, stout defence of the island.
Fresh water and jet are mixed together;
sparkling wine is their drink, set in front of their battalion.
Three full loads of Prydwen we went by sea:
save seven, none came back from the Petrification Fort.¹³⁷

The transformation of water into wine was a *leitmotif* of both the *immrama* and a variety of saints’ legends.

The four further stanzas of the poem disparaged “the pathetic men involved with religious writings, those who hadn’t seen Arthur’s feat beyond the Glass Fort.”¹³⁸ The poet presumably referred to monks who had no knowledge of the mystery of manna, nor of its symbolization under the tropes of the legend of Arthur. At the same time, the designation “Glass Fort” was multiply playful. The conception of the fairy-fort as a place made of glass was expressed in the Welsh place name *Ynyswitrin*, “Isle of Glass,” which was translated into English as Glastonbury. The earliest extant attestation of the Welsh place occurs in quotations from a charter, dated 601, in William of Malmesbury’s *Gesta regum Anglorum*, which was written around 1135; but the charter or the date that it bore may have been fictitious,¹³⁹

making the antiquity of the place name uncertain. Its derivation from *Ynis gutrin*, “isle of glass,” was offered by Caradog of Llancarfan in the 1130s and Gerald of Wales around 1194.¹⁴⁰ As a reference to the fairy fortress, the designation “isle of glass” must have been well established in Arthurian folklore of the period; the *Erec* of Chrétien de Troyes, which dates to the 1160s or 1170s, made Maheloas the “lord of the ‘isle de Voirre’, or isle of glass.”¹⁴¹ In the absence of conclusive evidence, scholars have also advanced etymologies that avoid deriving Glastonbury from *Ynyswitrin*, variously by deriving Glastonbury from an eponymous English founder named Glaesting, or from the Welsh word *glasstan* (oak) or *glasto* (woad), or by deriving *Ynyswitrin* from the name *Vitrinos*.¹⁴² These speculations imply that the translation of Welsh *witrin* into English *glass* was a folk etymology that was not necessarily older than the twelfth century.

A coincidence remains improbable. Glastonbury Tor is a tall conical hill in a flat plain that is bounded on three sides by a river. In medieval times, the plain was partly marshland or moor, but even then the plain was well above sea level. The Tor’s famous designation as an island was not a meaningless exaggeration; it was a deliberately extravagant literary trope that invoked the paradise island motif of Irish *immrama* in reference to the monastery on its western slope. If the name *Ynyswitrin* did not predate the name Glastonbury, which would give us the mid-seventh century as the latest possible date for the place name, the happy idea to refer to Glastonbury abbey in Welsh as the Isle of Glass assuredly played on the interlingual pun. Saxons controlled the abbey, calling it Glastonbury, by the reign of Ine, which began in 688; but much of the population in Somerset and perhaps Dorset remained Celtic. Glastonbury abbey adopted the Benedictine rule around 768, when the Celtic Church as a whole accepted Roman practices.¹⁴³ A small church that had been built of wattle in the Welsh manner and was regarded in medieval times as the original building on the site,¹⁴⁴ was incorporated within the substantial constructions that were added over the centuries and remained part of the abbey down to the time of its dissolution. The place name *Ynyswitrin* speaks to the presence additionally of Welsh hermits or monks on the Tor, who were familiar with the poetic appropriation of the otherworld and its fairy castle as a trope for the terrestrial paradise that was their own lifestyle. As the poem is extant, “The Spoils of the Otherworld” may have been composed as late as the tenth or early eleventh centuries; but the literary innovation that it celebrated—the Christian appropriation of the pagan otherworld as a source of tropes for terrestrial paradise allegories—assuredly inspired Glastonbury’s designation as *Ynyswitrin*, the Isle of Glass.

Another Taliesin poem referred to the fairy fort, *Caer Siddi*, after its conquest, in terms that were appropriate not to the pagan otherworld, but to the terrestrial paradise of Christianity.

I was with Brân in Ireland:
I witnessed the slaying of mighty-thighed warriors.

.....
Harmonious is my song in *Caer Siddi*;
sickness and old age do not afflict those who are there,
as *Manawyd a[nd] Phryderi* know.
Three instruments/organs around a fire play in front of it
and around its turrets are the wellsprings of the sea;
and [as for] the fruitful fountain which is above it--
its drink is sweeter than the white wine.¹⁴⁵

Caer Siddi was here no longer a place of battle, but a fort where the poet plied his trade. Everyone was healthy and youthful. Musical instruments played on their own, without anyone playing them. And the fountain, where one might expect water, provided drink that was sweeter than wine. The otherworld had been converted into the terrestrial paradise.

Another poem in the Book of Taliesin, *Kat Godeu*, “The Battle of the Trees,” referred explicitly to the artistic innovation. The poem juxtaposed the ideas of the *imrama* and the fairy-forts, implying their equivalence. “I slept on a hundred islands;/ I sojourned in a hundred citadels.”¹⁴⁶

Two implications of the poetic transformation of the otherworld warrant emphasis. The motif of the terrestrial paradise, with its traditional significance of which signified paradisaical experience in this life, was no longer restricted to hermits, monks, and other clerics. It had been appropriated by poets and presumably by such of their patrons and audiences who similarly knew paradisaical experiences while otherwise pursuing secular lives. This enlargement of the terrestrial paradise, from its initial restriction, in Augustine’s terms, to the sense of God’s presence in the City of God, to encompass also God’s omnipresence in the City of Man, brought a change of genre as its corollary. The idyllic, beatific, unconflicted euphoria to which solitaries and monks aspired at the cost of withdrawal from human society, was replaced by adventurous tales of conflict that reflect the realities of life in community. Terrestrial paradise narratives took up the topic of fighting the good fight in the world, where older narratives had been limited to retreats from it.

The Welsh prose tale, “Culhwch and Olwen,” which is the oldest Arthurian narrative extant, included a variant account of Arthur’s expedition to Ireland to seize a cauldron.¹⁴⁷ In this version, Arthur sent word to an Irish king, to request a celebrated cauldron, but he was refused. Arthur and his men took ship to Ireland, where they were feasted by the king but were again refused the cauldron. Bedwyr (Bedevere) seized the cauldron and a battle ensued. “And when the hosts were utterly routed Arthur and his men went on board ship before their very eyes, and with them the cauldron full of the treasures of Ireland.”¹⁴⁸ The treasures of Ireland were presumably the Stone of Destiny, the sword and spear of Lugh, and the cauldron of Dagda that were said in Irish wonder tales to belong to the fairies.¹⁴⁹ Welsh tradition knew a partly overlapping list of the Thirteen Treasures of the Island of Britain.¹⁵⁰ Here again motifs appropriated from Irish wonder tales were described as spoils that Arthur acquired through a raid on Ireland.

Another of the medieval Taliesin poems in the Book of Taliesin expressed the central ideas of the terrestrial paradise: a barren island in the sea; the double meaning of rock in Deuteronomy 32; and divine intoxication. The Deuteronomical passage reads:

How should one chase a thousand,
and two put ten thousand to flight,
unless their Rock had sold them,
and the Lord had given them up?
For their rock is not as our Rock,
even our enemies themselves being judges. (Deut 32:30-31)

The Taliesin poem alluded to the biblical text in its portrait of the terrestrial paradise of pious solitaries.

There is a Rock beyond the wave, according to [God’s] great plan--
[while] the refuge of the enemy is a forlorn place of terror--
the Rock of the foremost Ruler, the supreme judge,
where the intoxication provided by the ruler will bring pleasure to us.¹⁵¹

The explicit attribution of intoxication to God is to be interpolated, I suggest, throughout the Taliesin corpus.

The pseudonymous Taliesin poet elsewhere expanded considerably on the topic of intoxication, referring in a non-metaphoric manner to inspiration. The poem *Angar Kyfundawt*, “hostile or distressed communion or union,” developed these ideas at length. The

poem begins with the poet's self-introduction and a request for his audience's generosity, among other reasons, because:

Through the language of Taliesin
[will come] the profit of manna.¹⁵²

In the poet's view, "the language of Taliesin," which, as we have seen, involved the appropriation of pagan otherworld motifs as tropes for the terrestrial paradise, contributed importantly to Christian teachings about manna.

A few lines later in the poem, the poet made his meaning explicit by referring to the resurrection of the dead on the Day of Judgment and immediately juxtaposing the motif of the initiatory cauldron.

a profound one shall come;
he would bring the dead to life,
and [yet] he is poor.
They'd make their cauldrons
that were boiling without fire.¹⁵³

Another passage, which well illustrates the grandiosity of the Taliesin persona, made two claims of present interest.

A singular one is spoken of,
a great one is praised.
I am Taliesin;
I comprise a [song] of impeccable pedigree;
my praise of Elfin
will last until Doom.¹⁵⁴

The motif of remaining alive until Doomsday originated with the terrestrial paradise trope of the Irish *immrama*. The concept of an "impeccable pedigree" may also be noted; it was resumed later in the same poem.

In the meantime, the poet discussed the topic of inspiration, which he both attributed to God and located in Annwfn, the Otherworld.

Let's approach God who is
--according to the utterance of Talhaearn--
the true judge of the worth of the world,
the One who adjudged the qualities
of passionate song.
He with his miracle bestowed
immeasurable inspiration;
there are 140 'ogrfen'
in inspiration;
eight score...
...in [each] one.
In Annwfn he ranged the [divisions of inspiration],
in Annwfn he made them
in Annwfn below the earth,
in the air above the earth.¹⁵⁵

The equivalence of Annwfn with “the air above the earth” indicated that the poet here referred to the otherworld as a metaphor for heaven, rather than hell. The otherworld was similarly assimilated to heaven in another pseudo-Taliesin poem: “My two keen spears;/ from Heaven did they come./ In the streams of Annwfn/ they come ready for battle.”¹⁵⁶

Further developing the topos, the poet asserted that he fetched inspiration from the depth, a term that was a euphemism for the otherworld. At the same time, he identified the deep with the river that girdles the earth.

I sing inspiration,
I bring it forth from the depth.
The connected river which flows [around the world];
I know its might,
I know how it ebbs,
I know how it flows,
I know how it courses,
I know how it retreats,
I know how many creatures
are under the sea;
I know the nature
of each one in its shoal.¹⁵⁷

In boasting that he knew the river intimately, pseudo-Taliesin was speaking of his familiarity with the process of poetic inspiration. The creatures in the river signified the characters in his poems and stories.

Further lines reverted to the topos of the cauldron.

[I know] what the names of the two words are
that can't be fitted into a single cauldron;
where the intoxicated sea originates.¹⁵⁸

Haycock speculated that the two words might be *fiat lux*.¹⁵⁹ Whatever the words may have been, the derivation of the intoxicated sea from a cauldron makes intoxication equivalent to inspiration, and the cauldron equivalent to the otherworld, within the symbol system of the poem.

The poet reverted to the concept of an “impeccable pedigree” with four enigmatic lines.

My utterance is declaimed
in Hebrew, in Hebraic,
in Hebraic, in Hebrew,
Lauda tu laudate Jesus.¹⁶⁰

With these words the poet asserted, I suggest, that he was both Hebrew ethnically and Hebraic conceptually, yet simultaneously engaged in the Latin praise of Jesus. The assertions were equivalent to the claim in the biographies of several Welsh saints of the fifth and sixth centuries—the biographies themselves date centuries later—that traced the saints’ ancestry to a handful of Welsh families that went back, in some cases, to Anna, who was a cousin of Mary mother of Jesus¹⁶¹ or to an unnamed sister of Mary.¹⁶² The *Life of Patrick* in the Irish Book of Lismore similarly related that Patrick, who hailed from the north of Britain, was descended of Jews who had migrated to Britain following “the vengeance...inflicted by Titus and Vespasian,” which is to say, the Judaeo-Roman war of 66-72.¹⁶³ A Welsh triad, recorded in the Renaissance period, presented a less fabulous version of the same historical reality.

Three Kindreds of Saints of the Island of Britain, by a Welsh mother:
The Offspring of Brychan Brycheiniog,
and the Offspring of Cunedda Wledig,
and the Offspring of Caw of Pictland.¹⁶⁴

St David was the most illustrious of the descendants of Cunedda who founded churches in North Wales; St Cadog and other descendants of Brychan founded churches in South Wales. St Gildas was a member of the lineage of Caw in the northern British holdings that were subsequently lost to the Picts and the Scots.¹⁶⁵ Lagorio explained:

The majority, if not all, of the well known Pan-Britonic saints belonged to royal or noble families, and quite often were related to one another, as the extensive genealogies of the tribal kings reveal. This not only reflects the societal development in the mid-fifth century, following the end of Roman rule, and the Celtic predilection for impressive genealogies, but also an important economic consideration: the saint's holiness notwithstanding, royal connections or sanctions were essential for sufficient land and resources to support a religious community....

Another characteristic of these religious families which paralleled their secular counterparts was the custom of hereditary succession. The *co-arch* or heir of the founding saint, frequently a member of his family, inherited his spiritual and official rights in ecclesiastic affairs. Implicit in the *co-arch*'s duties was serving as the hereditary relic-keeper.

Even more prestigious than noble birth was the honor of having belonged to the immediate following or family of Jesus Christ.¹⁶⁶

Whatever may be the validity of the claim of the sons of Cunedda, endorsed by pseudo-Taliesin, that a Jewish Christian community preserved family traditions in Britain from Roman times onward, several Welsh saints who were active in the relocation of British Christianity in Wales following the Saxon invasion, were close relations of each other. Missionizing was, as it were, a transgenerational project in these family lineages.

Immediately following his claim to speak "in Hebrew, in Hebraic," the poet presented an extended passage that has conventionally been treated as a boast of repeated reincarnations. Close observance of the passage does not support the customary reading.

I was transformed a second time;
I was a blue salmon,
I was a dog, I was a stag,
I was a roebuck on the mountain,
I was a block, I was a spade,
I was an axe in the hand
I was an auger [held] in tongs,
for a year and a half,
I was a speckled white cockerel
covering the hens in Eideyn;
I was a stallion at stud,
I was a fiery bull.
I was a stook in the mills,
the ground meal of the farmers;
I was a grain...
it grew on the hill;
I'm reaped, I'm planted,
I'm dispatched to the kiln,
I'm loosed from the hand

in order to be roasted.
 A hen got hold of me--
 a red-clawed one, a crested enemy;
 I spent nine nights
 residing in her womb.
 I was matured,
 I was drink set before a ruler,
 I was dead, I was alive,
 a stick went into me;
 I was on the lees,
 separated from it, I was whole;
 and the drinking-vessel stiffened resolve,
 [for] the red-clawed one imbued me with passion.
 A singular one is spoken of,
 a great one is praised.
 I'm Taliesin;
 I compose [song] of true pedigree;
 my praise of Elfin
 will last until Doom.¹⁶⁷

It is possible to interpret the blue salmon, dog, stag, and roebuck as reincarnations; but the interpretive strategy cannot be sustained through the block, spade, axe, and auger, because the tools are inanimate. The cockerel, stallion, and bull are plausible as reincarnations; but the sequence of a grain being reaped, planted, cooked in the kiln, and loosed from the hand was neither linear nor concerned with reincarnation. Moreover, the poem next alluded to the legend of Taliesin, which had him flee from the witch Ceridwen by shifting shapes, which she consistently matched, until he became a grain and she a hen, which consumed him. Spending nine nights within her, he was born as a human infant from her womb, sewn up in a leather bag, which was placed in a coracle and set to sea. The coracle, bearing Taliesin, drifted at sea until it reached land. Elfin released him from the bag, named him Taliesin, and became his patron. Of this narrative, the poem cited only a few details: being a grain consumed by a hen who subsequently gestated him in her womb; and having Elfin as a patron until Doomsday. The poem indicated the interpretation that was to be placed on the relation to the hen with the statement, "the red-clawed one imbued me with passion." In medieval psychology, the possession of an affective soul was one of the features that distinguished animals from plants. The conversion of plant into animal, grain into the living matter of a fetus, has nothing whatever to do with reincarnation. The poem refers to consumption, digestion, and physiological supply of nutrients to gestating progeny. The same point was made in a different way in the lines immediately following, which alluded to a psychoactive beverage: "I was drink set before a ruler, \ I was dead, I was alive." To make sense of these many assertions, in which the poet claimed to be mineral, vegetable, animal, and man, I interpolate the concept of extrovertive mystical experience. Pseudo-Taliesin was not claiming multiple reincarnations, nor in any manner asserting Celtic paganism. He was claiming mystical union with all physical existence. His language that bore a superficial resemblance to claims of reincarnation, because he was deliberately appropriating pagan motifs for poetry that celebrated the terrestrial paradise of Christianity. The poem's title *Angar Kyfundawt*, "hostile or distressed communion or union,"¹⁶⁸ alluded, I suggest, to the difficulty of his position as a lay mystic.

The celebrated poem *Kat Godeu*, "Battle of the Trees," to which the poet Robert Graves devoted a delightful but improbable book,¹⁶⁹ contains several passages of present interest. In one, the Taliesin persona claimed to be the fruit of paradise.

It was not from a mother and a father

that I was made,
and my creation was created for me
from nine forms of consistency:
from fruit, from fruits
from God's fruit in the beginning¹⁷⁰

A second passage alluded to Proverbs 8:22-23. The biblical text had Wisdom state: "The Lord created me at the beginning of his work\ the first of his acts of old.\ Ages ago I was set up\ at the first, before the beginning of the earth." Pseudo-Taliesin wrote:

The wisdom of sages fashioned me
before the world [was made],
when I had being
when the extent of the world was [still] small.¹⁷¹

Several lines in a further poem draw these several ideas together into a novel theological concept. The passage referred initially to Taliesin's patron Urien, but rapidly moved to other topics.

He defended my song [emanating] from Ceridfen's cauldron;
unrestrained is my tongue, a repository of inspiration.
The inspiration of poetry--my God created it
at the same time as fresh milk and dew and acorns.¹⁷²

Here we have the familiar idea of the cauldron as the source of inspiration. However, the phrasing that inspiration was "created...at the same time as fresh milk and dew and acorns" converted the biblical concept of wisdom, which pertained to a static body of unchanging knowledge, into a theology of process, of formative unfolding.

The displacing of wisdom by inspiration was equally explicit in a further poem.

I entreat my Lord
that [I may] consider inspiration:
what brought forth [that] necessity
before Ceridfen
at the beginning, in the world
which was in need?¹⁷³

Avalon

The motif of the terrestrial paradise remained a permanent component of the legend of Arthur. In *Historia Regum Britanniae*, written around 1136, Geoffrey of Monmouth introduced the legend of Arthur to an international audience and closed his tale with a succinct reference to the terrestrial paradise: "Arthur himself, our renowned King, was mortally wounded and was carried off to the Isle of Avalon, so that his wounds might be attended to."¹⁷⁴ The wound was mortal, but if Arthur were taken to the terrestrial paradise before the wound claimed him, he would heal and live on.

In *Vita Merlini*, "The Life of Merlin," written around 1150, Geoffrey of Monmouth told the story of Merlin's madness. After a disastrous battle when the South Welsh fought the North Welsh and Cumbrians, Merlin could no longer bear the responsibilities of leadership but instead fled to the woods of Calidon, where he forgot his identity and lived the life of a wild "man of the woods." After Merlin's sister and wife failed in their attempts to return him to society, Taliesin visited Merlin in Calidon and there told him the news of Arthur's

end. From the dialogue, we learn slightly more of the Welsh conception of Avalon, before Old French romancers retold the tale. Taliesin told Merlin:

'The Island of Apples gets its name "The Fortunate Island" from the fact that it produces all manner of plants spontaneously. It needs no farmers to plough the fields. There is no cultivation of the land at all beyond that which is Nature's work. It produces crops in abundance and grapes without help; and apple trees spring up from the short grass in its woods. All plants, not merely grass alone, grow spontaneously; and men live a hundred years or more.

'That is the place where nine sisters exercise a kindly rule over those who come to them from our land. The one who is first among them has greater skill in healing, as her beauty surpasses that of her sisters. Her name is Morgen, and she has learned the uses of all plants in curing the ills of the body. She knows, too, the art of changing her shape, of flying through the air....

*'It was there we took Arthur after the battle of Camlan, where he had been wounded. Barinthus was the steersman because of his knowledge of the seas and the stars of heaven. With him at the tiller of the ship, we arrived there with the prince; and Morgen received us with due honour. She put the king in her chamber on a golden bed, uncovered his wound with her noble hand and looked long at it. At length she said he could be cured if only he stayed with her a long while and accepted her treatment. We therefore happily committed the king to her care and spread our sails to favourable winds on our return journey.'*¹⁷⁵

After further conversation, a spring opened miraculously in Calidon and drinking its waters restored Merlin's sanity. He promptly decided to continue his life in the woods of Calidon as an ascetic, communing with God. He was soon joined by another man, a former soldier who had become insane through eating poisoned apples, but who similarly regained his sanity by drinking the waters of the Calidon spring.

This narrative preserved the Desert Fathers' trope that celebrated the ascetic life as the terrestrial paradise. Monmouth taught the trope by placing the tales of Arthur and Merlin in parallel. Arthur's fabulous wonder story allegorized Merlin's humbler reality. Where Merlin became an ascetic living in an inland forest as a means to deal with mental anguish that he had incurred in battle, Arthur was said to have been carried by boat to the paradise island of Avalon in order to be cured there of a physical wound that he had similarly suffered in battle. The miraculous provision of food without need to labor at farming was the paradisaical condition of Adam and Eve before the Fall. It was also the lifestyle of both madmen and ascetics foraging for food in Calidon forest. The name Avalon, deriving from the Celtic *Avallo*, "apple,"¹⁷⁶ and its Latin explanation as *insula pomifera*, "Isle of Apples," both alluded to the fruit of paradise; the phrasing in the description of Avalon, "trees spring up from the short grass," may have alluded to psychedelic mushrooms. The apples of Avalon may be contrasted with the poisoned apples that caused the insanity of the soldier who joined Merlin as an ascetic, after their healing. The nine sisters who ruled the Isle of Apples echoed the Old Irish motif of the Island of Women, which alluded to the soul's femininity in the context of its spiritual marriage to God. The longevity in Avalon, "living a hundred years or more," replaced and made less incredible the older motif of living until Judgment Day.

It is not insignificant that just as "The Spoils of the Otherworld" had its pseudonymous author Taliesin claim to have introduced the allegorizing of the pagan otherworld, Monmouth had Taliesin introduce the allegory to Merlin. Welsh tradition celebrated a particular poet, active before *Ynyswitrin* was named, who was remembered in legend as Taliesin.

Notes

1. Babylonian Talmud, Hagigah 14b.

2. Maria E. Subtelny, "The tale of the four sages who entered the *Pardes*: A talmudic enigma from a Persian perspective," *Jewish Studies Quarterly* 11/1-2 (2004), pp. 3-58.
3. Sebastian Brock, Introduction. In St. Ephrem the Syrian, *Hymns on Paradise*, trans. Sebastian Brock (Crestwood, NY: St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 1990), pp. 57-58 and n. 39.
4. St. Ephrem the Syrian, *Hymns on Paradise*, trans. Sebastian Brock (Crestwood, NY: St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 1990), p. 91.
5. *Ibid.*, p. 92.
6. *Ibid.*
7. *Ibid.*, p. 93.
8. *Ibid.*
9. *Ibid.*, p. 109.
10. *Ibid.*, p. 110.
11. *Ibid.*, p. 111.
12. *Ibid.*, p. 112.
13. *Ibid.*, p. 113.
14. Sebastian Brock, "Early Syrian Asceticism," *Numen* 20 (1973), pp. 1-19; Paolo Bettolo, "Adam in Eden: The Difficult Discernment of the Perfect Life," in F. Regina Psaki & Charles Hindley (Eds.), *The Earthly Paradise: The Garden of Eden from Antiquity to Modernity* (Binghamton, NY: Global Publications, Binghamton University, 2002), pp. 63-74.
15. Kathleen Hughes, *The Church in Early Irish Society* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1966), pp. 22, 32.
16. *Ibid.*, pp. 45, 57, 76.
17. *Ibid.*, p. 18.
18. William Jenkins Rees, *Lives of the Cambro British Saints: Of the Fifth and Immediate Succeeding Centuries, From Ancient Welsh and Latin MSS. in the British Museum and Elsewhere, with English Translations and Explanatory Notes* (Llandovery: William Rees; London: Longman & Co.; Abergavenny: J. H. Morgan, 1853), p. 431.
19. Hughes, p. 173.
20. *Ibid.*, p. 185.
21. Charles Plummer (Ed.), *Lives of Irish Saints* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1922), p. 152.
22. James Carney. (1955), *Studies in Irish Literature and History*. Dublin: Dublin Institute for Advanced Studies, 1955), pp. 282, 283, 286.
23. William Flint Thrall, "Clerical Sea Pilgrimages and the *Imrama*," *The Manly Anniversary Studies in Language and Literature* (Chicago, 1923) pp. 276-83; reprinted in Jonathan M. Wooding, ed., *The Otherworld Voyage in Early Irish Literature: An Anthology of Criticism* (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2000), p. 21.
24. Whitley Stokes, *Lives of Saints from the Book of Lismore* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1890), p. 155.
25. Hughes, p. 91.
26. Nennius, *British History and The Welsh Annals*, ed. & trans. John Morris (London: Phillimore & Totowa, NJ: Rowman & Littlefield, 1980), p. 34.
27. Hughes, pp. 42-43, 51.
28. *The Works of St. Patrick. St. Secundinus, Hymn on St. Patrick*, trans. Ludwig Bieler (New York, NY: Newman Press, 1953), pp. 57-58.
29. *Ibid.*, p. 62.
30. *Ibid.*, pp. 63-64.
31. Eusebius, *Praep. Evang.* 11.6; Jerome, *In Isa.* 1.1; Augustine, *Enarr. in Ps* 75.2; 97.3; etc.
32. James Carney, "The Earliest Bran Material," in John J. O'Meara & Bernd Naumann, eds., *Latin Script and Letters A.D. 400-900: Festschrift presented to Ludwig Bieler on the Occasion of his 70th Birthday* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1976), p. 191.

33. Séamus Mac Mathúna, *Immram Brain: Bran's Journey to the Land of the Women* (Tübingen: Max Niemeyer Verlag, 1985), p. 46.
34. *Ibid.*, pp. 46-50.
35. *Ibid.*, p. 48.
36. *Ibid.*, p. 52.
37. *Ibid.*
38. *Ibid.*, p. 53.
39. Proinsias Mac Cana, "The Sinless Otherworld of *Immram 'Brain*," *Ériu* 27 (1976), p. 101.
40. Mac Mathúna, p. 53.
41. *Ibid.*
42. *Ibid.*, pp. 53-61. Proinsias Mac Cana, "Mongan Mac Giachna and *Immram Brain*," *Ériu* 23 (1972), pp. 119-142, argued persuasively that Mannanán's prophecy of the birth of Mongan drew on pre-existing stories about the pagan hero; I nevertheless interpret their citation in *Immram Brain* as a literary device by which to allegorize the Second Coming from the esoteric perspective of the mystery of manna. Carney, "The Earliest Bran Material," attempted to reconstruct an *Echtra Brain* that, he claimed, was a pagan source anterior to *Immram Brain*; but the fragments that he assembled (pp. 182-83), where a prophetess opposes a druid, appear to me, as to Carney (p. 191), to be of a piece with the conflict of the fée and the druid in *Echtra Conle*, which is a tale of the terrestrial paradise.
43. Mac Mathúna, p. 56.
44. Andy Letcher, *Shroom: A Cultural History of the Magic Mushroom* (London: Faber and Faber, 2006), p. 18.
45. Mac Mathúna, p. 58.
46. *Ibid.*
47. W. R. J. Barron & Glyn S. Burgess, *The Voyage of St Brendan: Representative Versions of the Legend in English Translation*, 2nd ed. (Exeter, UK: University of Exeter Press, 2002), pp. 13, 19.
48. *Ibid.*, pp. 26-27.
49. Plummer, p. 49.
50. *Ibid.*
51. *Ibid.*, p. 50.
52. Barron & Burgess, p. 31.
53. *Ibid.*, p. 32.
54. *Ibid.*, p. 38.
55. *Ibid.*, p. 40.
56. *Ibid.*
57. *Ibid.*, pp. 26, 45-46, 51.
58. *Ibid.*, p. 36.
59. Hans Pieter Atze Oskamp, *The Voyage of Máel Dúin: A Study in Early Irish Voyage Literature Followed by an Edition of Immram curaig Máel Dúin from the Yellow Book of Lecan in Trinity College, Dublin* (Groningen: Wolters-Noordhoff Publishing, 1970), pp. 111, 113-15.
60. Thomas Owen Clancy, "Subversion at Sea: Structure, Style and Intent in the *Immrama*," in Jonathan M. Wooding, ed., *The Otherworld Voyage in Early Irish Literature: An Anthology of Criticism* (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2000), p. 209.
61. Oskamp, p. 137.
62. *Ibid.*, p. 139.
63. Philip Schaff & Henry Wace, eds., *The Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers: Second Series, Volume 8: St. Basil: Letters and Selected Works* (Rpt. Albany, OR: Sage Software, 1996), p. 548; Philip Schaff & Henry Wace, eds., *The Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers: First Series, Volume 1: The Confessions and Letters of Augustine, with a Sketch of his Life and Work* (Rpt. Albany, OR: Sage Software, 1996), p. 581.

64. Oskamp, p. 139.
65. *Ibid.*
66. *Ibid.*, p. 153.
67. *Ibid.*, p. 159.
68. *Ibid.*, pp. 163-65.
69. Robert Kay Gordon, ed. & trans., *Anglo-Saxon Poetry*, 2nd ed. (London: J. M. Dent; New York: Dutton, 1954), pp. 239-51.
70. Oskamp, p. 173.
71. Whitley Stokes, "The Voyage of the Húi Corra," *Revue Celtique* 14 (1893), pp. 27-39.
72. *Ibid.*, pp. 33, 43, 45, 47, 49, 57.
73. *Ibid.*, p. 61.
74. Barron & Burgess, pp. 57-58. The legend of the wandering Jew, which is not attested prior to the Reformation, similarly concerned a sinner who was condemned to live until Doomsday. Two medieval precursors of the wandering Jew legend date to the 1220s and spoke of gentiles who sinned against Jesus and were condemned to live until Doomsday. Both tales were attributed to Armenians. In the one case, Armenian travelers told their tale at the court of the Emperor Frederic II; an Armenian archbishop related the other version during a visit in 1228 to the monastery of St Albans near London. See R Edelmann, "Ahasuerus, the Wandering Jew: Origin and Background," in Galit Hasan-Rokem & Alan Dundes (Eds.), (1986), *The Wandering Jew: Essays in the Interpretation of a Christian Legend* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1986), pp. 4-7. Although John 21:22-23 may certainly have influenced Armenian story-telling independently, the influence of the *Navigatio* remains possible.
75. John Carey, "The Location of the Otherworld in Irish Tradition," *Éigse* 19 (1982), p. 43.
76. Hans Pieter Atze Oskamp, "Echtra Condla," *Études celtiques* 14 (1974-76), p. 207.
77. Carey, p. 43.
78. *Ibid.*, pp. 225-28.
79. Carney, *Studies in Irish Literature and History*, p. 292.
80. Barbara Newman, *God and the Goddesses: Vision, Poetry, and Belief in the Middle Ages* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2003).
81. R. I. Best, "The Adventures of Art Son of Conn, and the Courtship of Delbchaem," *Ériu* 3 (1907), p. 149; Tom Peete Cross & Clark Harris Slover, *Ancient Irish Tales. With a Revised Bibliography* by Charles W. Dunn (New York: Barnes & Noble Books, 1969), p. 491.
82. Cross & Slover, p. 494.
83. *Ibid.*, pp. 494-95.
84. *Ibid.*, pp. 495-97.
85. Vernam Hull, "Echtra Cormaic Maic Airt, 'The Adventure of Cormac Mac Airt'," *Publications of the Modern Language Association* 64 (1949), p. 877.
86. Clark Harris Slover, "Early Literary Channels between Britain and Ireland," *Texas Studies in English* 7 (1927), p. 52.
87. Rees, pp. 297-98.
88. *Ibid.*, pp. 473-74.
89. *Ibid.*, p. 485.
90. *Ibid.*, p. 488.
91. Stokes, *Lives of Saints*, pp. 223, 229.
92. St. Patrick, *His Writings and Muirchu's Life*, ed. & trans. A. B. E. Hood (London: Phillimore & Co., 1978).
93. Stokes, *Lives of Saints*, p. 227.
94. Plummer, pp. 110-11.
95. *Ibid.*, p. 114.
96. *Ibid.*, pp. 111, 113, 114, 116, 117.
97. *Ibid.*, p. 185.

98. Thomas F. O’Rahilly, *Early Irish History and Mythology* (Dublin: Dublin Institute for Advanced Studies, 1946), pp. 319-23, 329-31.
99. Plummer, p. 185.
100. *Ibid.*, p. 209.
101. *Ibid.*, p. 232.
102. Sir Ifor Williams, as cited in Roger Sherman Loomis, “The Spoils of Annwn: An Early Arthurian Poem,” *Publications of the Modern Language Association* 56 (1941), p. 887; Kenneth Hurlstone Jackson, “Arthur in Early Welsh Verse,” in Roger Sherman Loomis (Ed.), *Arthurian Literature in the Middle Ages: A Collaborative History* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1959), p. 15. However, Marged Haycock, “‘Preiddeu Annwn’ and the Figure of Taliesin,” *Studia Celtica* 18-19 (1983-84), p. 57, dated the poem “between the ninth and the twelfth centuries.”
103. Marged Haycock, ed. & trans., *Legendary Poems from the Book of Taliesin* (Aberystwyth: CMCS Publications, Department of Welsh, Aberystwyth University, 2007), p. 434.
104. Roger Sherman Loomis, “The Spoils of Annwn: An Early Arthurian Poem,” *Publications of the Modern Language Association* 56 (1941), pp. 887-936.
105. Haycock, *Legendary Poems*, p. 435.
106. Haycock, “‘Preiddeu Annwn,’” p. 54.
107. Haycock, *Legendary Poems*, p. 439.
108. Loomis, “Spoils of Annwn,” p. 902.
109. Haycock, *Legendary Poems*, p. 439.
110. John Rhys, *Celtic Folklore: Welsh & Manx* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1901), Vol. II, p. 679.
111. Haycock, *Legendary Poems*, p. 441.
112. Gwyn Jones & Thomas Jones, trans., *The Mabinogion*, rev. ed (London: Dent, & New York: Dutton, 1974), p. ix.
113. Haycock, *Legendary Poems*, p. 439.
114. W. J. Gruffydd, “Mabon ab Modron,” *Revue Celtique* 33 (1912), pp. 459-460.
115. Jones & Jones, pp. 46-47.
116. *Ibid.*, p. 47.
117. *Ibid.*, pp. 48-54.
118. Plummer, pp. 8-9.
119. Haycock, *Legendary Poems*, pp. 435-36.
120. *Ibid.*, p. 439.
121. Vernam Hull, “The Four Jewels of the *Tuatha Dé Danann*,” *Zeitschrift für celtische Philologie* 18 (1930), p. 86.
122. Haycock, *Legendary Poems*, p. 44.
123. Patrick K. Ford, trans., *The Mabinogi and Other Medieval Welsh Tales* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1977), pp. 69-70.
124. Arthur Edward Waite, *The Holy Grail: The Galahad Quest in the Arthurian Literature* (1933; rpt. New Hyde Park, NY: University Books, 1961), p. 317.
125. Mircea Eliade, *Shamanism: Archaic Techniques of Ecstasy*, trans. Willard R. Trask (New York: Bollingen Foundation, 1964; rpt. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1972), pp. 41, 43, 44n, 50, 282, 446; Vilmos Dionszegi, *Tracing Shamans in Siberia: The Story of an Ethnographical Research Expedition* (Oosterhout, Netherlands: Anthropological Publications, 1968), pp. 60-62.
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127. *Ibid.*, p. 11.
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- food-supplying talisman it is not one of the same character as the cauldrons of plenty....the food supply of these latter has the marked characteristic of *quantity*, that of the Grail is remarkable rather for *quality*.”
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 132. Loomis, *Spoils of Annwn*, p. 894.
 133. Eleanor Hull, “The Development of the Idea of Hades in Celtic Literature,” *Folklore* 18 (1907), pp. 121-165; Loomis, “*Spoils of Annwn*,” pp. 896-99.
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 137. Haycock, *Legendary Poems*, p. 436.
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 139. James P. Carley, *Glastonbury Abbey: The Holy House at the Head of the Moors Adventurous* (Glastonbury, UK: Gothic Image Publications, 1996), p. 2.
 140. Aelred Watkin, “The Glastonbury Legends,” in James P. Carley (Ed.), *Glastonbury Abbey and the Arthurian Tradition* (Cambridge, UK: D. S. Brewer, 2001), p. 16.
 141. *Ibid.*, p. 17.
 142. Carley, *Glastonbury Abbey*, p. 163.
 143. Deborah Crawford, “St. Joseph in Britain: Reconsidering the Legends, Part 2,” *Folklore* 105 (1994), p. 52.
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 147. Jackson, p. 16.
 148. Jones & Jones, p. 130.
 149. Hull, “The Four Jewels.”
 150. P. C. Bartrum, “Tri Thlws Ar Ddeg Ynys Brydain (The Thirteen Treasures of the Island of Britain),” *Études celtiques* 10 (1962-63), pp. 434-477; Rachel Bromwich, *Trioedd Ynys Prydein: The Welsh Triads*, 2nd ed. (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 1978), pp. 241-42.
 151. Haycock, *Legendary Poems*, p. 80.
 152. *Ibid.*, p. 110.
 153. *Ibid.*, pp. 110-11.
 154. *Ibid.*, p. 112.
 155. *Ibid.*, pp. 113-14.
 156. *Ibid.*, p. 183.
 157. *Ibid.*, p. 119.
 158. *Ibid.*, p. 120.
 159. *Ibid.*, p. 159.
 160. *Ibid.*, p. 121.
 161. Rees, pp. 308, 377, 400.
 162. *Ibid.*, p. 401.
 163. Stokes, p. 150.
 164. Rachel Bromwich, *Trioedd Ynys Prydein: The Welsh Triads*, 2nd ed. (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 1978), p. 201.
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