Title:

Henry II and the ideological foundations of Angevin rule in Ireland

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Abstract

The English invasion of Ireland is of central importance to the interconnected histories of Britain and Ireland. Yet there is still disagreement over the agency of its ultimate sponsor, King Henry II. This article argues that from the very beginning of his reign as king of England, Henry utilised a rising tide of intolerance among Europe's clerical elite for those holding non-standard beliefs and customs to secure reluctant papal approval for an invasion of Ireland. Once that invasion finally got underway a decade and a half later, members of his court portrayed Henry's firm rule as the necessary precursor to the reform of Irish religion and culture. This propaganda sought its justification in the intellectual and cultural flourishing of the twelfth-century renaissance, which provided European commentators with newly-revived models of logic and classification. In was also carried out amidst Crusade-inspired justifications for the violent subjugation or killing of religious non-conformists. The essential point, however, is that these clerical descriptions did not necessarily reflect contemporary secular opinion. When works written for secular audiences in the vernacular are analysed, they present a much more nuanced image of Ireland and the Irish. Gone are the references to civilising or reforming missions, and the clear sense of cultural superiority. What remains, however, is the fundamental belief that strong, centralised order is required for the successful running of society. This is what the English invaders told themselves, and this is what informed the first generation of settlement in Angevin Ireland.

Key Words:

Invasion of Ireland; Henry II; Barbarian; Twelfth-Century Renaissance; Just War

Article

'*A tomb now suffices him for whom the whole world was not sufficient*'

Such was the epitaph, so Ralph of Diss tells us, inscribed upon the tomb of King Henry II of England in 1189.[1] It consciously evokes Alexander the Great, renowned in the middle ages for his empire-building. Henry's elegist considered it a fitting tribute to a king who added overlordship of lands such as Brittany, Toulouse, Scotland and Ireland to an already-impressive 'empire' that included England and roughly two-thirds of France. Gerald of Wales made the imperial comparison explicit, calling Henry 'our Alexander of the West' who extended his arm 'from the Pyrenees to the westernmost limits of the northern ocean.'[2] In his vernacular history of the Normans (written for Henry), Wace likewise boasted that Henry ruled 'between Spain and Scotland, from shore to shore.'[3] Henry's acquisition of Ireland in 1171 was thus one small step towards consolidating his position as the preeminent power in the West. It not only turned the Irish Sea into a 'second Angevin lake',[4] but also gave Henry command of Northern Europe's Atlantic shore from the Bay of Biscay to the North Channel. Despite these contemporary characterisations, and the clear benefits that Ireland brought him, most historians tend to portray Henry as a reluctant overlord of Ireland, only roused to action when a handful of his vassals threatened to create an independent powerbase under Richard fitz Gilbert (better known today as Strongbow) on the island.[5] As Nicholas Vincent declares in the new Cambridge History of Ireland, 'this 'invasion' of 1171 was a reaction to circumstances rather than a spontaneous bid for empire.'[6]

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[1] 'Ralph of Diss, *Opera Historica*, ed. William Stubbs (2 vols, London, 1876), ii, 65. Dauvit Broun has now put the identification of 'Diceto' with Diss beyond doubt, Dauvit Broun, 'Britain and the Beginnings of Scotland', *Journal of the British Academy*, 3 (2015), 107-37, at 117n.

[2] Gerald of Wales, O*pera*, eds J. S. Brewer, J. F. Dimock, and G. F. Warner (8 vols, London, 1861-91), v, 189.

[3] Wace, *The history of the Norman people : Wace's roman de Rou*, eds G. S. Burgess and Elizabeth van Houts (Woodbridge, 2004), lines 35-6.

[4] Robin Frame, *The political development of the British Isles, 1100-1400* (Oxford, 1990), 37

The problem with this interpretation is that it sets up a false dichotomy between empire-building and opportunism. Empires - ancient, medieval, and modern - often expanded as chance allowed, relying upon pre-existing ideologies or creating *ex post facto* justifications as needed.[7] In other words, the timing of Henry's expedition in 1171 may have been fortuitous, but luck favours the provident. Rather than stumbling into a conquest he had not looked for, Henry had already worked for well over a decade to harness rising (or resurgent) feelings of religious and cultural superiority that empowered conquests such as his throughout Europe.[8] Indeed, William of Newburgh tells us that Henry had been 'indignant' at Strongbow, 'for having achieved so great an enterprise [in Ireland], not only without consulting him, but even in defiance of him, and because he [Strongbow] attributed to himself the glory of so noble an acquisition, which ought to have been ascribed to the king, as his superior'.[9] Once Henry finally assumed control over Ireland, he had a ready supply of clerics standing by to justify his intervention.[10] For instance, Ralph of Diss argued that Henry went to provide the public order and authority that war-torn Ireland sorely lacked.[11] As we shall see, this focus on internecine strife was to be a common theme in both Latin and vernacular depictions of the Irish, a focus which has also found its way into some modern scholarship.[12] Moreover, Gerald of Wales claims that his infamous works containing *ex post facto* justifications for the English conquest were written at Henry's suggestion.[13] As Martin Aurell writes, 'au service de leur maître, [les penseurs de la cour] font de la propagande.'[14] Henry had the will and the means to make an English conquest of Ireland politically acceptable to Europe's ecclesiastical and princely elite. Failure to understand the role of politics and propaganda in Henry's conquest risks underestimating his ambition, and presenting a false impression of contemporary attitudes towards Ireland and the Irish.

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[5] For instance, see W.L. Warren, *Henry II* (2nd ed., New Haven, CT, 2000), 114-5; F.X. Martin, 'Diarmait Mac Murchada and the coming of the Anglo-Normans', in Art Cosgrove (ed.), *A New History of Ireland, ii, Medieval Ireland 1169-1534*, (Oxford, 1987), 43-66, at 64-6; F. X. Martin, 'Allies and an overlord, 1169-72', in Art Cosgrove (ed.), *A New history of Ireland, ii, Medieval Ireland 1169-1534*, (Oxford, 1987), 67-97; M. T. Flanagan, *Irish society, Anglo-Norman settlers, Angevin kingship: Interactions in Ireland in the late twelfth century* (Oxford, 1989), 56-228; Robin Frame, *Colonial Ireland, 1169-1369* (2nd ed., Dublin, 2012), 8-23; David Carpenter, *The struggle for mastery: Britain 1066-1284* (London, 2003), 216-19.

[6] Nicholas Vincent, 'Ireland and the Angevin World, 1150-1272', in Brendan Smith (ed.), *Cambridge History of Ireland, Volume 1: Medieval Ireland, 650-1550* (Cambridge, in press, 2017). My thanks to Professor Vincent for allowing me to see a pre-publication copy of his chapter.

[7] Stephen Howe, *Empire: A very short introduction* (Oxford, 2002), 123; Herfried Münkler, *Empires: The logic of world domination from ancient Rome to the United States* (Cambridge, Polity, 2007), 8.

[8] As profiled in R. I. Moore, *The formation of a persecuting society* (2nd ed., London, 2007).

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[9] William of Newburgh, 'Historia rerum Anglicarum', in Richard Howlett (ed.), *Chronicles of the reigns of Stephen, Henry II and Richard I* (4 vols, London, 1884-9), i, 168.

[10] For the Angevins' use of court intellectuals to promote their 'empire' see Martin Aurell, *L'Empire des Plantagenêt, 1154-1224* (Paris, 2003), 95-177 (English translation: *The Plantagenet Empire, 1154-1224*, trans. David Crouch (Harlow, 2007), 83-162).

[11] Ralph of Diss, *Opera Historica*, i, 350-1.

[12] In addition to the infamous descriptions of 'tribal anarchy' by Orpen and Round (Orpen, *Normans*, i, 19-38; J. H. Round, 'The Conquest of Ireland', in idem, *The commune of London and other studies* (London, 1899), 137-70, at 169-70), Geoffrey Barrow saw in pre-conquest Ireland 'a warrior aristocracy not far removed from the later Iron Age in its culture and outlook... [who] were too ready to indulge in inter-tribal warfare and competition for cattle, slaves, land and prestige.' G. W. S. Barrow, 'Scotland, Wales and Ireland in the Twelfth Century', in David Luscombe, and Jonathan Riley-Smith (eds), *The New Cambridge Medieval History, Volume 4: c.1024–c.1198, Part 2* (Cambridge, 1999), 581-610, at 602.

[13] Gerald of Wales, *Expugnatio Hibernica,* eds A. B. Scott and F. X. Martin (Dublin, 1978), 261. Translated in Colin Veach 'The Geraldines and the conquest of Ireland' in Seán Duffy and Peter Crooks (eds.), *The Geraldines and medieval Ireland: The making of a myth* (Dublin, 2016), 69-92.

Background to Conquest

Before the Norman conquest of England in 1066, Ireland was situated in the same socio-political arena as Britain.[15] Early British and Anglo-Saxon kings allied themselves with their Irish counterparts, and often employed Irish mercenaries in their campaigns against one another. Indeed, the first English invasion of Ireland seems to have occurred in 684, as part of the Northumbrian king Ecgfrith's attempts to consolidate his hold over the Irish of Dál Riata (in modern-day Scotland). According to Bede, the Northumbrians went to Ireland and 'wretchedly devastated a harmless race that had always been most friendly to the English'.[16] That invasion left little lasting legacy, but the very fact that an English king attacked Ireland to influence events in Scotland, reinforces the interconnectedness of early medieval Britain and Ireland.

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[14] Aurell, *L'Empire des Plantagenêt*, 95 ('[The court intellectuals] created propaganda in their master's service.' *The Plantagenet Empire*, 83).

[15] For a good overview, see the collected essays in Paulina Stafford (ed.), *A companion to the early middle ages: Britain and Ireland, c.500-c.1000* (Chichester, 2009).

[16] Bede, *Ecclesiastical history of the English people*, ed. Bertram Colgrave and R. A. B. Mynors (Oxford, 1969), 426 (iv.26/24). The Northumbrians devastated Brega, in modern Co. Meath. *The chronicle of Ireland*, ed T. E. Charles-Edwards (2 vols, Liverpool, 2006), i, 164, *s.a.* 684; *Annala Uladh. Annals of Ulster, otherwise annala Senait, annals of Senat*, ed. Bartholomew Mac Carthy (4 vols, Dublin, 1893), i, 134, *s.a.* 684; *Annals of Tigernach*, ed. Whitley Stokes (2 vols, Llanerch, 1993), ii, 208, *s.a.* 684. *Chronicum Scotorum*, W. M. Hennessy (London, 1866), 106, *s.a.* 681 [*recte* 684].

Once much of northern and eastern England came under Scandinavian control, it was linked to a western maritime network that included the Ostman (Viking) cities in Ireland: Dublin, Wexford, Waterford, Cork and Limerick. After the restoration of Anglo-Saxon rule in England under Edward the Confessor in 1042, Ireland was used as a place of refuge and recruitment by Edward's enemies: the sons of Earl Godwin of Mercia, Harold and Leofwine (1051-2), and Earl Ælfgar of East Anglia (1055).[17] The Scandinavian maritime network also proved durable, so that fleets from Dublin aided the Norwegian invasions of England in 1058 (which included Earl Ælfgar) and September 1066.[18] The patron of all of these eleventh-century dissidents was the powerful king of Leinster, Diarmait mac Máel na mBó (d.1072), who from 1052 controlled Dublin as well as Leinster. Following the Norman victory at Hastings in October 1066, Diarmait once again gave refuge to the family of King Harold Godwinson and aided their unsuccessful invasions of England in 1068 and 1069.[19] Given the willingness of the king of Leinster to provide support to English dissidents, it is little wonder that the Anglo Saxon Chronicle assumes an unrealised desire on William the Conqueror's part to subdue Ireland.[20] Moreover, Gerald of Wales alleges that the Conqueror's son, King William Rufus, boasted on a trip to St

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[17] F.J. Byrne, 'Ireland and her neighbours, c.1014-c.1072', in Dáibhí Ó Cróinín (ed.), *A new history of Ireland I. Prehistoric and early Ireland* (Oxford, 2005), 862-898, at 889.

[18] Benjamin Hudson, 'William the Conqueror and Ireland', in *Irish Historical Studies*, xxix, no. 114 (1994), 145-158, at 145-6.

[19] Dáibhí O Cróinín, *Early medieval Ireland* (Harlow, 1995), 277. Benjamin Hudson, 'Diarmait mac Máel na mBó (*d.* 1072)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford, 2004).

[20] Anglo Saxon Chronicle, s.a. 1087 http://avalon.law.yale.edu/medieval/ang11.asp

David's in Wales that he would build a pontoon bridge across the sea in order to conquer Ireland.[21] The Normans' failure to follow through on either ambition meant that Ireland remained a thorn in England's side for much of the next century. The island served as place of mercenary recruitment and refuge for Arnulf de Montgomery in 1102.[22] Henry fitz Empress also used Irish mercenaries when fighting King Stephen in the 1140s.[23] Once Henry became king in 1154, he continued to employ forces from Ireland.[24] Henry's bloodless assumption of lordship over Ireland in 1171-2 was therefore the culmination of centuries of political interaction between Britain and Ireland. At a stroke the English king had cut off the western escape route for English political fugitives. He had also outflanked the Welsh princes, and restricted their supply of Irish mercenaries. In short, controlling Ireland made the king of England master of the Irish Sea littoral.

Key to understanding Henry's success is the recognition that, in G. H. Orpen's words, 'Henry had long cast hungry eyes towards Ireland.'[25] Henry first formulated his plans during the negotiated beginnings of the Angevin empire. In the space of three years, from 1151 to 1154, Henry had been recognised as ruler of Normandy, Greater Anjou, Aquitaine (in right of his wife, Eleanor), and England. Along the way, he had made a number of enemies, not least his middle brother Geoffrey. In 1152, Geoffrey made a bid to become count of Anjou himself, and, we are told, even attempted to kidnap Eleanor to secure Aquitaine.[26] Henry defeated his brother, but compensated Geoffrey for his loss by installing him as count of Nantes in Brittany.[27] Nantes was therefore acquired as an appanage for Henry's younger brother. That same year, Henry supported his vassal, Conan, earl of Richmond, in his bid to become duke of Brittany (centred on Rennes). Control of Brittany had been a long-held ambition of the Normans, so by placing Geoffrey in Nantes and Conan in Rennes, Henry was able to place Brittany under his lordship. In 1166, the same year that the exiled king of Leinster, Diarmait Mac Murchada sought Henry's support in Ireland, Henry eventually secured the entire duchy of Brittany for his son Geoffrey. Through his assertive diplomacy, Henry thus used his brother, vassal, and son to draw the semi-independent duchy of Brittany into the Angevin empire.[28]

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[21] Gerald of Wales, O*pera*, vi, 109. This consciously evoked the Persian king, Xerxes the Great's pontoon bridge across the Hellespont in 480 BC. Herodotus, *The Histories*, trans Tom Holland (London, 2013), 462-3 (7:33-6).

[22] Victoria Chandler, 'The last of the Montgomerys: Roger the Poitevin and Arnulf' in *Historical Research*, lxii, no. 147 (1989), 1-14, at 10-13; Anthony Candon, 'Muirchertach Ua Briain, politics, and naval activities in the Irish Sea, 1075 to 1119' in Gearóid Mac Niocaill and P.F. Wallace (eds), *Keimelia: Studies in medieval archaeology and history in memory of Tom Delaney* (Galway, 1988), 397-415.

[23] Martin, 'Diarmait Mac Murchada and the coming of the Anglo-Normans', 61-2; Flanagan, *Irish society*, 74-6. As Duke of Normandy, c.1150, Henry also confirmed Rouen's monopoly over trade between Ireland and Normandy. *Regesta regum Anglo-Normannorum*, ed. H. W. C. Davis et al (4 vols, Oxford, 1913-69), iii, no. 729.

[24] *Annals of Ulster*, ii, 148, s.a. 1165.

[25] G. H. Orpen, *Ireland Under the Normans*, 4 vols. (Oxford, 1912-20), i, 81.

In the meantime, it appears that Henry intended to use his younger brother, William, to harness Ireland as well. Robert de Torigny reports under 1155:

'About the feast of St Michael [29 September] Henry, king of the English held a council at Winchester, at which he deliberated with his advisors about the conquest of the kingdom of

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[26] *Recueil des choniques de Touraine*, ed. André Salmon (Tours, 1854), 135.

[27] Warren, *Henry II*, 64-6.

[28] For the relationship see, J. A. Everard, *Brittany and the Angevins: Province and Empire 1158–1203* (Cambridge, 2000).

Ireland and the grant of it to his brother William; but since his mother the empress opposed it the expedition was postponed for the time being.'[29]

William, who was at the council, eventually had to make do with land in England.[30] Historians have tended to be dismissive of Henry's early plans for Ireland,[31] but the evidence points to a plan formulated in 1155 which was temporarily shelved after it was already well-developed. Indeed, a Flemish commentator claimed that Henry had gone so far as to assemble an invasion army, which he instead redirected to France the following year. Under 1156, he writes: 'Henry the younger, king of England, turned against the French king a large and well-equipped army that he had prepared to lead to into Ireland in order to subjugate it to his lordship, and, with the advice of bishops and men of religion, to establish his brother as king for that island.'[32] Ten days after the Winchester council, on 9 October 1155, Henry dispatched emissaries to the new Pope Adrian IV to discuss 'difficult royal matters'.[33] Looking back from 1159, John of Salisbury (who may or may not have been part of that mission) relates:

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[29] Robert de Torigny, 'Chronica', in *Chronicles of the reigns of Stephen, Henry II and Richard I*, ed. Richard Howlett (4 vols, London, 1884-9), iv, 186. Warren doubts Robert's testimony, since he was 'not the most reliable witness to events outside northern France'. Warren, *Henry II*, 195. However, in 1155 Robert had only recently secured his position as abbot of Le Mont-Saint-Michel through Henry's patronage as duke of Normandy, and knew the Empress Matilda personally. *Chronique de Robert de Torigni: Abbé du Mont-Saint-Michel*, ed. L. Delisle (2 vols, Rouen, 1872–3), ii, pp. ii-iv.

[30] *Recueil des actes de Henri II, roi d'Angleterre et duc de Normandie, concernant les provinces françaises et les affaires de France*, eds. Léopold Delisle and Élie Berger (4 vols, Paris, 1906-27), i, 97-8.

[31] For instance, Warren, *Henry II*, 195.

[32] Sigebert of Gembloux, *Chronicon*, ed. L.C. Bethmann (Hannover, 1844), 403. Henry did not in fact lead an army against King Louis VII until 1161, but the chronicler may have been referring to the army Henry took to Anjou in order to put down his brother Geoffrey's rebellion there (mentioned above). Warren, *Henry II*, 64-5; Duggan, 'The Making of a myth', 131.

> 'At my entreaties, Pope Adrian IV had granted and given Ireland to the illustrious Henry II, king of the English to be held by hereditary right, as his letter testifies to this day... He sent also by me a golden ring set with a fine emerald by which investiture of right to rule in Ireland should be made, and that same ring was ordered to be and is still in the public treasury of the king.'[34]

Although John of Salisbury seems to have been guilty of 'considerable verbal economy', amplifying the nature and conditions of Adrian's supposed concession in *Laudabiliter*,[35] it appears that the argument for Henry's invasion continued to be made even after the Winchester council, and, if we trust the Flemish chronicler, that an army may even have been assembled for the purpose.

The timing of Henry's planned invasion is also instructive. The council of Winchester met nine months after Henry's coronation. This was almost two years before he attempted to recover England's northern counties from the Scots or invaded Wales in 1157,[36] and four years before he launched an expedition to secure his wife Eleanor of Aquitaine's rights to Toulouse in 1159.[37] It may be that Henry thought William's appanage more important than recovering lands for himself or his wife, but the time was also ripe for an Irish expedition. Rees Davies has argued convincingly that the idea of a single British-Isles monarchy was current in the mid-twelfth century.[38] That idea owed much to Geoffrey of Monmouth's phenomenally-successful *Historia Regum Britanniae* (composed c.1136), which, among other things claimed that King Arthur conquered and ruled Ireland from Britain.[39] In 1155, the Norman historian and poet Wace completed his French translation (and modification) of the *Historia* for Henry's court, the *Roman de Brut*.[40] Although Martin Aurell has shown that there is very little evidence for Henry's use of Arthurian propaganda,[41] by 1155 the new king of England would nevertheless have been well aware of Ireland's strategic value and his (supposedly) historical right over the island.

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[33] *Gesta abbatum monasterii Sancti Albani*, ed. H. T. Riley (3 vols, London, 1867-8), i, 125-9.

[34] *Iohannis Saresberiensis Metalogicon,* iv. 42, ed. J.B. Hall and K.S.B. Keats-Rohan, *CCCM* 98 (1991), p, 183.

[35] Anne Duggan, 'The making of a myth : Giraldus Cambrensis, Laudabiliter, and Henry II's Lordship of Ireland', in *Studies in Medieval and Renaissance History*, 3rd ser., vi (2007), 249-312, at 109.

[36] Seán Duffy, 'Henry II and England's insular neighbours', in Christopher Harper-Bill and Nicholas Vincent (eds.), *Henry II: New interpretations* (Woodbridge, 2007), 129-53, at 129-32.

[37] Jane Martindale, An unfinished business: Angevin politics and the siege of Toulouse' in *Anglo-Norman Studies*, 23 (2001), 115-54.

However, while Gerald of Wales later drew upon Geoffrey of Monmouth when writing in the 1180s, most contemporary clerical justifications focused (perhaps predictably) upon the Irish Church. The grounds for a religious intervention in Ireland were laid by 1150, when Bernard of Clairvaux produced his *Life and Death of St Malachy*.[42] As bishop of Connor, archbishop of Armagh and papal legate, Malachy was perhaps the doyen of twelfth-century Irish church reform. Bernard's *Life* was informed by the progressive Irish clerics who entreated him to write it, and, unsurprisingly, the Ireland it describes is one in desperate need of reform:

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[38] R. R. Davies, *The First English Empire: Power and Identities in the British Isles, 1093-1343* (Oxford, 2000), chapter 2: 'Island Mythologies', 31-53.

[39] Geoffrey of Monmouth, *The History of the Kings of Britain*, ed. M. D. Reeve, trans. Neil Wright (Woodbridge, 2007), 204, 210, 220.

[40] Wace, *Roman de Brut. A History of the British: Text and Translation,* ed. Judith Weiss (2nd ed, Liverpool, 2005), lines 9455-64, 9659-704, 11,609-10. For literary culture at Henry's court see, Ian Short, *'Literary Culture and the Court of Henry II', in* Christopher Harper-Bill and Nicholas Vincent (eds.), *Henry II: new interpretations* (Woodbridge, 2007), 335-61. For Henry and the Arthurian legend see, Martin Aurell, 'Henry II and the Arthurian Legend', in Christopher Harper-Bill and Nicholas Vincent (eds.), *Henry II: new interpretations* (Woodbridge, 2007), 362-94.

[41] Aurell, 'Henry II and the Arthurian Legend', esp. 388-9.

'[Malachy] understood that he had been sent not to men, but to beasts. Never before had he known the like, in whatever depth of barbarism; never had he found men so shameless in their customs, so uncivilised in their ways, so godless in religion, so barbarous in their law, so obstinate as regards instruction, so foul in their lives. They were Christians in name, pagans in fact.'[43]

Bernard's description was not meant to be a faithful representation of contemporary Irish society, but rather formed part of a didactic presentation of Malachy's mission. Nevertheless, Bernard's *St Malachy* was widely read within the Church, and, although Bernard envisioned a native process of reform guided from Rome, his ideas helped to shape the clerical opinion of Ireland into which Henry tapped on the eve of his planned invasion in 1155.

Here, Marie Therese Flanagan's interpretation of Pope Adrian IV's response to Henry, the bull *Laudabiliter*, should be addressed. In 1989, Flanagan argued that *Laudabiliter*, which (perhaps predictably in a papal document) was concerned primarily with religious reform in Ireland, indicated that the true driving force behind the planned invasion was an imperialist archbishopric of Canterbury eager to have its province expanded to include Ireland.[44] Certainly the previous century had witnessed a degree of intervention by Canterbury into Irish ecclesiastical matters, including the consecration of several bishops of the eastward-looking Ostman cities of Dublin and Limerick. These small gains were threatened by the advance of a native-Irish reform movement, which had by 1152 created a clear diocesan structure under the four archbishops of Armagh, Dublin, Cashel, and Tuam.[45] Flanagan argued that from this point the best way for Canterbury to achieve spiritual control over Ireland was to support, and then mirror, the English king's political control there. Consequently, Canterbury laid the self-interested ideological foundations for Henry's eventual rule. By Flanagan's reckoning, the 1155 council at Winchester aimed to secure papal approval, because at its heart the English invasion of Ireland involved the subordination of the Irish Church to Canterbury. Flanagan's reconstruction is a fine exercise in revisionist history, but went too far.[46] None of the extant sources for the council of Winchester, including Torigny, the Flemish chronicler, and a charter of the count of Eu dated 'at Winchester in the year in which a conquest of Ireland was discussed'[47] give any hint of a Canterbury-led plot. Instead, they, and the wider context, suggest that Henry was the aggressor, who was only dissuaded when his mother argued that he should delay the enterprise to a more opportune time.[48] The founder of the Angevin empire did not need Canterbury to guide his ambition to Ireland.

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[42] For a useful discussion of Bernard's life in the context of twelfth-century views of the Irish see Diarmuid Scully, 'The portrayal of Ireland and the Irish in Bernard's Life of Malachy' in Damian Bracken and Dagmar Ó Riain-Raedel (eds), *Ireland and Europe in the twelfth century: reform and renewal* (Dublin, 2006), 239-56.

[43] Bernard of Clairvaux, 'Vita Sancti Malachiae', ed. Aubrey Gwynn in *Sancti Bernardi opera,* ed. Jean Leclerq and H. M. Rochet, iii (Rome, 1963), 325 (C. 16).

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[44] Flanagan, *Irish society*, chapter 1. In this she was following, but expanding upon, Warren, Henry II, 195-8 and Martin, 'Diarmait Mac Murchada and the coming of the Anglo-Normans', 56-60. For the critical edition of *Laudabiliter*, see *Pontificia Hibernica (i), medieval papal chancery documents concerning Ireland, 640-1261*, ed. M. P. Sheehy (Dublin, 1962), 15-16, no. 4 . For the medieval importance of *Laudabiliter* see J. A. Watt, '*Laudabiliter* in Medieval Diplomacy and Propaganda', in *Irish Ecclesiastical Record*, lxxxvii, (1957), 420-32.

[45] For the process of reform in twelfth-century Ireland see M. T. Flanagan, *The transformation of the Irish Church in the twelfth century* (Woodbridge, 2010).

[46] Duggan, 'The making of a myth', 249-312; Anne Duggan, 'The power of documents: The curious case of *Laudabiliter*', in Brenda Bolton and Christine Meek (eds), *Aspects of power and authority in the middle ages* (Turnhout, 2007), 251-75; Duffy, 'Henry II and England's insular neighbours', 132-4.

Something of the strength of that ambition has been uncovered by Anne Duggan through her comprehensive analysis of *Laudabiliter*.[49] The original papal bull was deposited for safekeeping in the royal treasury at Winchester, and eventually lost. The earliest version that survives today is that preserved by Gerald of Wales in his history of the conquest of Ireland, *Expugnatio Hibernica* ('The Conquest of Ireland').[50] Gerald's version has always been taken as a faithful reproduction of the original, since it matches later surviving versions of the document. However, Duggan has used detailed textual evidence to show that Gerald's version was the source for all of the surviving examples of the document.[51] Gerald originally named his history *Historia Vaticanalis* ('the Prophetic History'), and Duggan convincingly argues that Gerald falsified the text of *Laudabiliter* in an attempt to present the conquest of Ireland as the culmination of a chain of events already prophesied.[52] Instead of the supportive document preserved today, Duggan contends that the original text of *Laudabiliter* was most likely similar to the text of Pope Adrian's later 1159 bull *Satis Laudabiliter*. This second bull argued *against* a joint Franco-English crusade in Spain, unless King Henry II and King Louis VII of France were invited by the church, princes and people of the area. Consequently, Duggan argues, we must assume that the unedited Irish *Laudabiliter* had granted Henry nothing. Instead, in the subjunctive mood, it laid out the conditions on which any English intervention in Ireland might in some circumstances be carried out. Pope Adrian thought Henry 'to be very hasty in the arrangement of this particular exploit', and gave only a conditional consent. Duggan reconstructs the original text as follows:

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[47] Flanagan, *Irish society*, 305.

[48] Duffy, 'Henry II and England's insular neighbours', 133.

[49] Duggan, 'The Making of a Myth' , 249-312; Duggan, 'The Power of Documents', 251-75. See also Michael Haren, '*Laudabiliter*: text and context', in M. T. Flanagan and Judith Green (eds), *Charters and charter scholarship in Britain and Ireland* (Basingstoke, 2005), 140-163.

[50] Gerald of Wales, *Expugnatio*, 144-6.

[51] Duggan, 'Making of a myth', 143-155.

[52] Duggan, 'The power of documents', 266.

'Add to this, that it would seem to be neither wise nor safe to enter a foreign land without first seeking the advice of the princes and people of the area... Wherefore, since we love your honour and advancement with the whole force of our mind and wish you to begin nothing of this kind unless compelled by reasonable cause, we urge your highness by these letters, first to examine and ponder the needs of the area with the aid of the princes of that realm, and carefully seek out the will both of its Church and of its princes and people, and take their advice, as is fitting. If, when you have done this, you see that the region is in immediate need, and its Church advises it, and the princes of the area have themselves also requested your highness's aid and given their advice, you can then go forward in the matter according to their request and advice, and fulfil your laudable desire, supported by divine protection.[53]

Once Henry had invaded, he should 'take particular care to instruct that people [the Irish] in right behaviour, and... strive to ensure that the Church there may be enhanced, that the Christian religion may be planted and grow...'[54]

This reconstruction of the 'unedited' *Laudabiliter* fits quite well with the course of Henry's eventual involvement in Ireland. For instance, Gervase of Canterbury reports that in going to Ireland in 1171, Henry was in part responding to the call of the Irish to be defended against the original invaders under Strongbow.[55] Once in Ireland, Henry II not only received the voluntary submission of its English settlers, but also nearly every native Irish king. Although (or perhaps because) he was stigmatised by the murder of Archbishop Thomas Becket the previous year,[56] Henry also made a great show of his Christian mission in Ireland. Nicholas Vincent has shown that it was while in Ireland that Henry first adopted the title '*Dei Gratia rex*' ('King by God's Grace') for his outgoing correspondence.[57] Coupling function to form, Henry called for a reforming council of the Irish Church, which met at Cashel under the presidency of the papal legate in 1171/2. The council's decrees are preserved in Gerald of Wales's *Expugnatio Hibernica*, wherein he claims that 'the statutes of the council were subscribed to and approved on the authority of the king's majesty'.[58] Henry certainly had agents in attendance at the council, but his role in approving the decrees is far from certain, especially given Gerald's willingness to manipulate his evidence

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[53] 'Duggan, 'Power of documents', 273-4.

[54] Duggan, 'Power of documents', 274-5.

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[55] *The historical works of Gervase of Canterbury*, ed. William Stubbs (2 vols, London, 1879-80), i, 235. Gervase's source (whom he references for this information) seems to have been Strongbow's lieutenant and negotiator with Henry II, Hervey de Montmorency, who had retired to become a monk at Canterbury by the time that Gervase wrote his history in about 1188. Gerald of Wales, *Expugnatio*, 188; *Chartularies of St Mary's Abbey, Dublin; with the register of its house at Dunbrody, and annals of Ireland.*, ed. J. T. Gilbert (2 vols, London, 1884), ii, 304-5, s.a. 1179; Flanagan, *Irish society*, 170.

[56] Warren, *Henry II*, 508-11.

[57] Nicholas Vincent, 'The Charters of King Henry II: The Royal Inspeximus Revisited', in M. Gervers (ed.). *Dating undated medieval charters* (Woodbridge, 2000), 97-120, at 110-12.

[58] Gerald of Wales, *Expugnatio*, 98-9. For the council of Cashel see M. T. Flanagan, 'Henry II, the council of Cashel and the Irish bishops', *Peritia*, 10 (1996), 184-211.

(as with *Laudabiliter*).[59] Nevertheless, Henry then sent one of those agents, Ralph, archdeacon of Llandaff, as part of a delegation to Pope Alexander III with the news of his success.[60] The people, princes, and Church of Ireland all could be said to have accepted Henry's lordship.

When news arrived from Ireland, Pope Alexander III was in a difficult position. Henry had not yet been absolved of his part in the murder of Archbishop Thomas Becket in December 1170, yet Alexander needed his support against a rival pope (Calixtus III) supported by Emperor Frederic Barbarossa.[61] Moreover, Alexander had also been sent letters of support for Henry from the legate and a section of the Irish episcopate. As a result, Alexander signalled his approval of Henry's takeover in three letters: to Henry, the Irish prelates and the Irish kings and princes.[62] In his letter to Henry, Alexander wrote:

'By frequent report and trustworthy evidence and with much joy, we have been assured how that, like a pious king and magnificent prince, you have wonderfully and gloriously triumphed over that people of Ireland, who, ignoring the fear of God, in unbridled fashion at random wander through the steeps of vice, and have renounced all reverence for the Christian faith and virtue, and who destroy themselves in mutual slaughter, … [you] have extended the power of your majesty over that same people, a race uncivilised and undisciplined. For, while we for the present omit other monstrous abuses which the same race, neglecting the observances of the Christian faith, irreverently practice... [as the legate and Irish prelates] have made known to us in their letters... it appears that the aforesaid people, as perhaps has more fully come to your knowledge, marry their stepmothers and are not ashamed to have children with them; a man will live with his brother's wife while the brother is still alive; one man will live in concubinage with two sisters; and many of them, putting away the mother, will marry the daughters.

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[59] Roger of Howden, who was with Henry in Ireland, merely writes that Henry and the Irish bishops were responsible for the council. Roger of Howden, *Gesta Regis Henrici Secundi*, ed. William Stubbs (2 vols, London, 1867) i, 28; Roger of Howden, *Chronica*, ed. William Stubbs (4 vols, London, 1868-71),, ii, 31. For Roger of Howden's presence in Ireland see John Gillingham, 'The travels of Roger of Howden and his views of the Irish, Scots and Welsh', in Christopher Harper-Bill (ed.), *Anglo-Norman Studies XX* (Woodbridge, 1997), 151-69, at 84-6.

[60] *Pontificia Hibernica (i)*, 21, no. 6.

[61] Anne Duggan, 'Henry II, the English Church and the papacy, 1154-76', in Christopher Harper-Bill and Nicholas Vincent (eds.), *Henry II: New interpretations* (Woodbridge, 2007), 154-83, esp 171.

[62] *Celebri fama* (Henry), *Quantis vitiorum* (Irish prelates), and *Ubi communi* (Irish kings and princes), *Pontificia Hibernica (i)*, 19-23, nos 5-7. Translated in *Irish historical documents, 1172-1922*, ed. Edmund Curtis and R. B. McDowell (London, 1943), 19-22, no 3.

And all from time to time eat meat in Lent; nor do they pay tithes, or respect as they ought the churches of God and ecclesiastical persons....

We understand that you, collecting your splendid naval and land forces, have set your mind upon subjugating that people to your lordship and, by Divine grace, extirpating the filthiness of such abomination....'[63]

Pope Alexander's letter mirrors some of *Laudabiliter's* language, but its focus is on the Irish defects reported by reform-minded Irish prelates themselves, and King Henry's role in correcting them. The connection between Christian reform and public order is clear. In his other letters, Alexander enjoined the Irish prelates and kings to 'assist the abovesaid king, so great a man and so devout a son of the Church, to maintain and preserve that land and to extirpate the filthiness of such great abominations.' If any of the Irish who had submitted to Henry should thereafter resist his rule in Ireland, then the prelates were to lay ecclesiastical censure upon them.[64] The language of Alexander's letter is characteristic of late twelfth-century descriptions of the Irish. The Irish were an anarchic people whose very souls were in danger because of their vices. As far as the pope was concerned, Henry's rule would help save them.

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[63] *Pontificia Hibernica (i)*, 21-2, no. 6;.Translation in: *Irish historical documents*, 20-1, no 3 (letter 2).

Twelfth-Century Mentalities

Henry II thus rode a rising tide of anti-Irish propaganda, some of it emanating from reform-minded clergy in Ireland, to secure support for his conquest of Ireland. However, while Henry's actions must be seen in the context of centuries of Anglo-Irish interaction, they also had a wider setting: the social and cultural upheaval of twelfth-century Europe. This period has been variously characterised as one of renaissance, reformation, crisis, and revolution, in which 'good' custom was codified and incorporated into new models of society, while 'bad' custom was rooted out and replaced with 'reason' and 'truth'.[65] Roman law mixed with canon law to form the basis for twelfth-century legal reforms, and ancient modes of logic and classification helped twelfth-century Europeans to build new structures into their changing society. Freed from a neat division of the world into 'Christians' and 'non-Christians', schoolmen constructed more complex, but even more rigid, taxonomies.[66]

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[64] *Pontificia Hibernica (i)*, 21-2, no. 5. Translation in: *Irish historical documents*, 20, no 3 (letter 1).

[65] As advocated by Gratian, *Decretum*, ed. E. A. Friedberg, *Corpus Iuris Canonici*, i (Leipzig, 1879), D.5; D.8. John Van Engen, 'The twelfth century: Reading, reason, and revolt in a world of custom', in T. F. X. Noble and John Van Engen (eds), *European transformations: The long twelfth century* (Notre Dame, 2012), 17-44, at 27.

[66] John Gillingham, 'Foundations of a disunited kingdom' in idem (ed.), *The English in the twelfth century* (Woodbridge, 2000), 93-112, at 105.

Thus, medieval Europe could reconstruct its shaken identity by more clearly defining what it was and was not.

In places like the British Isles, Germany and the Baltic, clerical writers used their knowledge of classical literature and patristic texts to construct images of their neighbours as stereotyped ‘barbarians’. For instance, Diarmuid Scully has shown the similarity of Bernard of Clairvaux’s depiction of the Irish to that of classical authors such as Solinus, Strabo, Diodorus Siculus, and Jerome.[67] These descriptions of Irish barbarity had all but vanished upon Ireland’s conversion to Christianity in the fifth century, but quickly returned in the twelfth with the renaissance of classical learning and a firmer definition of reformed Christianity. In the early days of the conquest, Gerald of Wales frequently used classical wonder stories from writers such as Ovid to illustrate his negative points about the Irish, and modelled his descriptions of the English invaders on other writers such as Suetonius.[68] Furthermore, Gerald and his fellow ecclesiastics, Adam of Bremen (on the Scandinavians) and Helmold of Bosau (on the Slavs), composed remarkably similar portraits of their subject societies.[69] In this way, the Christian Irish could be located in the same cultural category as the pagan Wends and Pomeranians. They were all ‘barbarian’ societies, lacking centralised public authority and a reformed moral code. As a result of this tendency towards classical allusion, it is often difficult to know how much credence to give twelfth-century depictions of these peripheral societies.

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[67] Scully, ‘The portrayal of Ireland in Bernard of Clairvaux’s Life of Malachy’, 242-5.

[68] J. D. Cain, ‘Unnatural history: Gender and genealogy in Gerald of Wales’s Topographia Hibernica’, in *Essays in Medieval Studies*, xix (2002), 29-43; Nicholas Vincent, ‘The strange case of the missing biographies: The Lives of the Plantagenet kings of England 1154–1272’ in David Bates (ed.), *Writing medieval biography 750–1250: Essays in honour of Frank Barlow* (Woodbridge, 2012), 237-58; Vincent, ‘Ireland and the Angevin World, 1150-1272’.

[69] Robert Bartlett, *Gerald of Wales, 1146-1223* (Oxford, 1982), 131-77; Claire Weeda, 'Ethnic identification and stereotypes in Western Europe, c. 1100-1300', in *History Compass*, xii, no. 7 (2014), 586-606.

A useful comparison might be made with the twelfth-century inquisitors who collected testimonies from individuals holding non-standard Christian beliefs. As with their contemporaries describing 'barbarian' societies, inquisitors were likely to seek to understand people they labelled 'heretics' in terms of the literature they knew, in this instance the writings of the fourth-century Church fathers who had refuted the heresies of their day. For instance, William of Newburgh drew heavily upon the descriptions of early Christian heresy by Augustine, Jerome and Isidore when constructing his own depiction of the Cathar heresy in the 1160s.[70] Indeed, it has even been claimed that the supposedly united and highly-organised Cathar church found, among other places, in Toulouse, was in fact a figment of these Churchmen's overly-referential imaginations.[71] Whether or not one accepts that verdict, in both instances, barbarian and heretic, it at least seems clear that individual differences and subtle nuances were elided in these clerics' efforts to understand their world through reference to ancient learning and through increasingly-rigid classification.

The Normans appear to have been precocious in this regard. Writing in the 1070s, William of Poitiers was clearly influenced by classical distinctions between civilisation and barbarism, particularly as found in Sallust, as he characterised the neighbouring Bretons as 'a polygamous, war-like, barbarian people who devotes itself chiefly to arms and horses, and very little to the cultivation of fields or the improvement of customs.'[72] Over half a century later, William of Malmesbury was one of the earliest English writers to apply this method of classification to the peoples of Britain and Ireland.[73] In about 1126 William contrasted barbarous Ireland with the civilised societies of England and France:

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[70] Peter Biller, 'William of Newburgh and the Cathar mission to England', in Diana Wood (ed.), *Life and thought in the northern Church* c.*1100*–c.*1700: Essays in honour of Claire Cross* (Woodbridge, 1999), 11–30.

[71] Mark Pegg *The corruption of angels* (Princeton, 2001). An idea taken up by Moore, *Formation of a Persecuting Society*, 175.

'What would Ireland be worth without the goods that come in by sea from England? The soil of Ireland produces nothing good, because of the poverty, or rather, the ignorance of the cultivators, but engenders a rural, dirty crowd of Irishmen outside the cities; the English and French, with their more civilised way of life, inhabit commercial cities.'[74]

William was perhaps the first off the mark in England, but others soon followed. For instance, writing in the 1180s, Gerald of Wales stated of the Irish:

'They are a wild and inhospitable people. The live on beasts only, and live like beasts. They have not progressed at all from the primitive habits of pastoral living.

While man usually progresses from the woods to the fields, and from fields to settlements and communities of citizens, this people despises work on the land, has little use for the money-making of towns, condemns the rights and privileges of citizenship, and desires neither to abandon, nor lose respect for, the life which it has been accustomed to lead in the woods and countryside.'[75]

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[72] William of Poitiers, *Gesta Guillelmi*, ed. and trans. R. H. C. Davis and Marjorie Chibnall (Oxford, 1998), 74. For classical influences see Leah Shopkow, *History and community: Norman historical writing in the eleventh and twelfth centuries* (Washington, D.C., 1997), 133.

[73] For an excellent analysis see John Gillingham, 'A historian of the twelfth-century renaissance and the transformation of English society, 1066-ca.1200' in T. F. X. Noble & John Van Engen (eds), *European Transformations: The long twelfth century* (Notre Dame, 2012), 45-74. More generally see idem (ed.), *The English in the twelfth century: Imperialism, national identity and political values* (Woodbridge, 2000).

[74] William of Malmesbury, *Gesta regum Anglorum*, ed. R. A. B. Mynors, et al., (2 vols, Oxford, 1998-9), i, 738, c. 409.

This sense of progress from barbarism to civilisation had been evident in the works of Greek and Roman writers, and was picked up in the late eleventh century by Adam of Bremen, who suggested that pre-Christian Saxons had once behaved exactly as the pagan Slavs and Swedes he observed around him.[76] Writing in the 1190s, William of Newburgh similarly compared the politically-fragmented and war-torn Ireland of his day to a comparable state out of which England had since progressed.[77]

Gerald of Wales's theory of cultural progression is more pronounced than Adam of Bremen's or William of Malmesbury's, and a more general hardening of attitudes seems to be discernible as the twelfth-century wore on. This, John Gillingham claims, is even exemplified in the writing of one man, Orderic Vitalis, whose sympathy towards the Welsh and Scots in the 1120s turned into outright hostility and condescension in the 1140s.[78] Similarly, the English monk John of Worcester was initially sympathetic to the Welsh, whom he saw as defending their native land against Norman aggression, but became hostile and condescending to them by the late 1130s.[79] In the late 1140s, the author of the *Gesta Stephani* likewise called the Welsh a 'barbaric people' of 'an animal type', characterised by 'untamed savagery'.[80] Bernard of Clairvaux's depiction of the Irish (mentioned above) shows that this was not just an English or Norman trend, and suggests that Europe's intellectual elite would have been increasingly receptive to Henry II's professed reforming mission in Ireland.

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[75] Gerald of Wales, *Opera*, v, 151, (*Topographia Hibernica,* 3.10).

[76] Bartlett, *Gerald of Wales,* 176.

[77] William of Newburgh, 'Historia rerum Anglicarum', i, p. 167.

[78] John Gillingham, 'Conquering the barbarians : war and chivalry in twelfth-century Britain', in idem (ed.), *The English in the twelfth century: Imperialism, national identity, and political values* (Woodbridge, 2000), 41-58, at 47-8; Gillingham, 'Foundations of a disunited kingdom', 101. Orderic says little about the Irish, though he does speculate that Arnulf de Montgomery hoped to succeed his father-in-law, Muirchertach Ua Briain, when he fled to Ireland in 1102. Orderic Vitalis, *The ecclesiastical history*, ed. Marjorie Chibnall (6 vols, Oxford, 1968-1980), iv, 48-51.

Interestingly, R.I. Moore argues for a trend in the pursuit of heresy following a similar timeline, and involving some of the same writers. According to Moore, in the early-twelfth century, chroniclers, including Guibert of Nogent and Orderic Vitalis, showed little (if any) concern for non-standard teachings in the Church. However, buoyed by the Second Lateran Council of 1139, preachers such as Peter the Venerable and Bernard of Clairvaux stridently attacked any religious deviants. To Moore, the council of Tours in 1163 was the culmination of Europe's hostility towards those holding non-standard beliefs.[81] It was no longer enough to quash heresy as it appeared, ecclesiastical and secular rulers were enjoined to root out and destroy it.

Whether or not one agrees that such attitudes were qualitatively different from what had come before, evolving theories of Christian love and violence meant that their consequences almost certainly were. From the end of the tenth century, the Peace and Truce of God movements had reintroduced Augustinian theories of just war to authorise killing in defence of the weak and innocent.[82] From Pope Urban II's calling of the First Crusade in 1095, complex theological arguments were marshalled which sanctified the killing of non-believers.[83] By the mid-twelfth century, intellectuals had moved beyond infidels. The collection of canon law known as Gratian's *Decretum* reasoned that the killing of Christian heretics was an act of love (*caritas*), since it was designed to correct those in error.[84] Just as a father used physical force to correct his son, or a master his servant, so a Christian could attack those engaged in offensive beliefs or practices. Moreover, Ivo of Chartres concluded in his *Panormia* that love demanded that men prevent their neighbours from doing evil, and that it was a sin for Christians *not* to persecute those who performed evil deeds.[85] As a sermon to the crusaders at the siege of Lisbon (many of whom were English) claimed in 1147: 'since it is just to punish murderers and sacrilegious men and poisoners, the shedding of their blood is not murder… he who puts wicked men to death is a servant of the Lord'.[86]

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[79] Florence of Worcester, *Chronicon ex chronicis*, ed. Benjamin Thorpe (2 vols, London, 1848-9), ii, 35, 41-2, 97; John of Worcester, *Chronicle*, ed. J. R. H. Weaver (Oxford, 1908), 43.

[80] *Gesta Stephani*, eds. K. R. Potter and R. H. C. Davis (2nd ed., Oxford, 1976), 14, 172, 194.

[81] Moore, 'The war against heresy', 198-9.

This evolving attitude towards the correction of sin provides the intellectual context for papal approval of Henry II's Irish endeavour. Indeed, it has been argued that twelfth-century commentators such as Gerald of Wales seem to have been influenced in their writing on Ireland by the tradition of crusader narratives detailing and justifying conquests in the Holy Land.[87] Although the Irish were not considered infidels or heretics, the incoming English still used religious correction to justify their conquests. Moreover, the distinction was not always so clear. Both Strongbow and Henry II introduced the Knights Templar and Hospitaller to Ireland, and these military orders played a significant role in English expansion on the island.[88] Writing in the early thirteenth century, the English clerk, Gervase of Tilbury (a scholastic of the same circle as Gerald of Wales), presented the English conquest of Ireland as a near-crusade: a process of forced conversion of the almost-pagan Irish.[89] Well over a century later, in about 1331, the English colonists of Ireland even wrote to Pope John XXII asking that a crusade be called against the Irish. They recited the terms of Adrian's bull *Laudabiliter* (as found in Gerald of Wales), invoked theories of just war, and claimed that 'in that same land of Ireland, heresy and dissension have arisen and are spreading among the Irish, a sacrilegious and ungovernable people, hostile to God and humanity'.[90] The pope denied their request, but it was repeated again a century later.[91] If the English were never quite elevated to the status of crusaders in Ireland, their conquest was at least carried out in a spirit of religious correction that condoned deadly force in pursuit of its objective.

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[82] For the Peace and Truce of God movements see H. E. J. Cowdrey, 'The Peace and the Truce of God in the eleventh century', in *Past & Present*, xlvi (1970), 42-67; Thomas Head and Richard Landes (eds), *The Peace of God: Social violence and religious response in France around the year 1000* (Ithaca, 1992). On just war see F. H. Russell, *The just war in the middle ages* (Cambridge, 1975).

[83] Russell, *Just war*, 86-126.

[84] Gratian, *Decretum*, Causa XXIII.

[85] Ivo of Chartres, 'Panormia', viii, cc. 15-17. https://ivo-of-chartres.github.io/panormia/pan_8.pdf [Accessed 17-12-2015].

[86] '*De expugnatione Lyxbonensi*, ed. C. W. David and Johnathan Phillips (New York, 2001), 80.

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[87] Geraldine Heng, *Empire of magic: Medieval romance and the politics of cultural fantasy* (New York, 2003); Vincent, 'Ireland and the Angevin World'.

[88] Katherine Hurlock, *Britain, Ireland and the crusades, c.1100-1300* (Basingstoke, 2013), 142-65; Helen Nicholson, 'Serving king and crusade: the military orders in royal service in Ireland, 1220-1400', in Norman Housley and Marcus Bull (eds.), *The experience of crusading* (2 vols, Cambridge, 2003), i, 233-55; Martin Browne and Colmán Ó Clabaigh, *Soldiers of Christ: The Knights Hospitaller and the Knights Templar in medieval Ireland* (Dublin, 2016).

[89] Gervase of Tilbury, *Otia imperalia*, ed. S. E. Banks and J. W. Binns (Oxford, 2002), 308-9. For more on the significance of Tilbury's account see, H. M. Thomas, *The English and the Normans: Ethnic hostility, assimilation, and identity 1066-c.1220* (Oxford, 2003), p. 315; Vincent, 'Ireland and the Angevin World'.

[90] J. A. Watt, 'Negotiations between Edward II and John XXII concerning Ireland', in *Irish Historical Studies*, x, no. 37 (1956), 1-20 at 19.

Vernacular Portrayals

The argument so far has focused predominantly upon the attitudes of clerical elites. Their work is by far the most prominent in the historiography, and it was almost certainly designed to inform international opinion. For instance, Gerald of Wales's work on Ireland survives in an unusually large number of twelfth- and thirteenth-century manuscripts, which suggests its relative popularity. A number were illustrated, presumably to bring the wonders of Ireland to life for his audience.[92] Gerald even claims to have widely publicised his *Topographia Hibernica* through public readings (and free dinners) to the poor (*pauperes*), the learned doctors, and the students, soldiers and townsfolk at Oxford in 1189.[93] Yet Gerald's self-promotion should not lead us to conclude that his arguments were

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[91] H. F. Berry (ed.), *Statutes and ordinances, and acts of the Parliament of Ireland, King John to Henry V* (Dublin, 1907), 564–5; Elizabeth Matthew, 'Henry V and the proposal for an Irish crusade', in Brendan Smith (ed.), *Ireland and the English world in the late middle ages: Essays in honour of Robin Frame* (Basingstoke, 2009), 161-175.

[92] Aurell, *L'Empire des Plantagenêt*, 104, (*Plantagenet Empire*, 91); Bartlett, *Gerald of Wales*, 174-80; Laura Cleaver, 'Gerald of Wales on Irish art: objects, stories and images in the making of history in the thirteenth century', in Jane Hawkes (ed.), *Making histories: Proceedings of the sixth International Insular Art Conference, York 2011* (Donnington, 2013), 315-325.

[93] Gerald of Wales, *Opera*, i, 72-3.

found to be persuasive, or that his viewpoints were universally held.[94] Without the systems of recruitment, transportation, and colonisation found in other areas of European expansion,[95] or the widespread preaching that drummed up support for the Crusades, there is little positive proof that the settlers who travelled to Ireland were exposed to, let alone agreed with, the hostile clerical attitudes profiled above. Writing in the 1170s, William of Canterbury reports a number of miracles associated with St Thomas Becket involving soldiers, who, returning from Ireland, thought that their expedition had simply advanced the tyranny against which St Thomas had fought.[96] Even more convincingly, Gerald of Wales's strident demand that 'the envious and thoughtless end their vociferous complaints that the kings of England hold Ireland unlawfully', suggests a significant backlash against the English invasion that his work sought to rebut.[97]

The problem with accepting William of Malmesbury, Bernard of Clairvaux or Gerald of Wales as representatives of contemporary attitudes towards the Irish is that they all wrote for a limited audience. Gerald later complained that even the dedicatees of his *Topographia Hibernica* (Henry II) and *Expugnatio Hibernica* (Richard I) never paid much attention to them.[98] Writing a new dedication of his *Expugnatio Hibernica* to (the comparatively well-read) King John in 1210, Gerald suggested that his Latin limited his appeal: ‘the fruit of this labour, so far as it can be understood, should indeed be brought to general attention, but because I have not been able [to have it translated into French] I am not appreciated, as princes today are less scholarly.’[99] As Gerald suggests, to analyse the attitudes of the ‘less-scholarly’ princes and secular lords, it is necessary to consult the vernacular works produced for them. This approach recognises that the twelfth century witnessed more than the renaissance of Classical learning. This was also the age of the *miles litteratus*, and ‘the vernacularisation of culture’.[100] Focusing on Britain, John Gillingham argues that the contemporary French works of Jordan Fantosme, Chrétien de Troyes and Guillaume le Clerc reinforce the general feeling of hostile condescension towards the Welsh and Scots one finds in Latin works.[101] This is correct to a point, but is also problematic. Upon closer inspection, vernacular works of history and literature seem not to paint such a stark picture of pastoral barbarism. They certainly do not share the clerical preoccupation with Christian observance, a prerequisite for intellectual slippage into Crusade mentalities. A brief, and by no means exhaustive, treatment of those works should illustrate the point.

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[94] For instance, in a preface to his *Expugnatio Hibernica*, Gerald of Wales attacked those 'envious' people who derided the wonder stories in his earlier *Topographia Hibernica*. Gerald of Wales, *Expugnatio Hibernica*, 2-9.

[95] Bartlett, *Making of Europe*, 133-66; Colin Veach, 'Conquest and Conquerors: Ireland c.1166-c.1254', in Brendan Smith (ed.), *Cambridge history of Ireland, volume 1: Medieval Ireland, 650-1550* (Cambridge, In Press 2017).

[96] Marcus Bull, 'Criticism of Henry II's expedition to Ireland in William of Canterbury's miracles of St Thomas Becket', in *Journal of Medieval History*, xxxiii (2007), 107-129, at 121-2.

[97] Gerald of Wales, *Expugnatio Hibernica*, 148-9.

[98] Gerald of Wales, *Opera*, vi, 7.

To begin with Gillingham’s example: Jordan Fantosme’s verse chronicle was an account of Henry II’s victory over his son in the revolt of 1173-4, which Jordan presents as a victory of the English over invading foreigners.[102] Written for Henry’s own court, it is shot through with national sentiment, and almost certainly incorporated stereotypes current at, or at least recognisable to, that court. For instance, Jordan has an overconfident Norman countess declare: ‘the English are great boasters, but poor fighters;/ they are better at quaffing great tankards and guzzling’,[103] which conforms to the popular French stereotype of ‘the drunk Englishman’.[104] English prowess is nevertheless proved throughout the rest of the chronicle, including during a battle in which a multitude of English knights each thought themselves ‘the equal of a Welsh king’.[105] As one might expect of a partisan military chronical, Jordan is hostile to Henry’s enemies. This includes both the invading Scots and Flemings, who are accused of deplorable acts of violence,[106] and whose homelands, Scotland and Flanders, are described as ‘savage’ countries.[107] The question is whether Jordan’s similar (though not identical) treatment of the predominantly-pastoral

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[99] Gerald of Wales, *Expugnatio*, 264.

[100] Short, ‘Literary Culture at the Court of Henry II’, 340.

[101] Gillingham, ‘Foundations of a disunited kingdom’, 103.

[102] For Jordan’s chronicle in general, see R. C. Johnston, The historicity of Jordan Fantosme's chronicle’, *Journal of Medieval History*, 2 (1976), 159-168; Anthony Lodge, ‘Literature and history in the Chronicle of Jordan Fantosme’, *French Studies*, 44 (1992), 257–70; M. J. Strickland, ‘Arms and the men: war, loyalty and

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lordship in Jordan Fantosme’s Chronicle’, *Medieval knighthood, IV*, ed. C. Harper-Bill and R. Harvey (1992), 187–220; Laura Ashe, *Fiction and History in England, 1066-1200* (Cambridge, 2007), 81-120.

[103] Jordan Fantosme, *Chronicle*, ed and trans. R. C. Johnston (Oxford, 1981), lines 978-9.

[104] The stereotype was relatively popular in contemporary French writing, and seems to have been taken on by the English themselves. For instance, in about 1180 Andrew de Coutances wrote of an Englishman: ‘Of him you can say in all good faith/ That he doesn’t need to be thirsty to drink,/ And it is indeed true for his part/ His only ambition is to fall down dead drunk.’ David Crouch, ‘The Roman des Franceis of Andrew de Coutances: Text, Translation and Significance’ in David Crouch and Kathleen Thompson (eds), *Normandy and its Neighbours, 900-1250: Essays for David Bates* (Turnhout, 2011), 175-98, at 180, 185.

[105] Jordan Fantosme, *Chronicle*, lines 153-61.

[106] For example, Jordan Fantosme, *Chronicle*, lines 991-9, 1000-1, 1059-60 (Flemings); 629-36, 683-8, 1342-3, 1594 (Scots).

[107] Jordan Fantosme, *Chronicle*, lines 706 (‘Escoce la salvage!’), 826 (‘Flandres la salvage!’),

Scots and the predominantly-agrarian and urban Flemings[108] can be said to support the cultural taxonomies one finds in clerical works above. Placed in context, it seems most likely that, for Jordan, 'enemy' was more important than 'barbarian'.

For Ireland, the verse chronicle composed at the end of the twelfth century, *La Geste des Engleis en Yrlande* (also known as *The Song of Dermot and the Earl*), is the most useful vernacular source.[109] Based in part on the testimony of Diarmait Mac Murchada's official, Maurice Regan, it is written from the perspective of the initial English adventurers by a man at home in late twelfth-century Ireland.[110] Similar to Jordan's chronicle, members of its audience may have participated in the events it describes. Revealingly, the author of the *Geste* does not deride the Irish as stereotyped barbarians, or reach for religious justifications for conquest. Instead, he frames the invasion in more mundane terms, as a war between a legitimate king (Diarmait Mac Murchada) and his rebellious vassals. This was a common enough portrayal of rebellion.[111] In this case, the Irish who opposed Diarmait and his English recruits were 'traitors' who had broken their oaths of loyalty to their legitimate king. By contrast, King Diarmait is called 'a noble king, who was so renowned', and 'the mighty king, who was so liberal and courtly'. Faced with rebellion from his own vassals, he is enjoined to seek vengeance on his 'mortal enemies' who had betrayed him.[112] The *Geste* therefore justifies the invasion, not as a reforming mission, but as a more specific judicial exercise. In this, the Irish were treated no worse than any other rebellious population. Indeed, the author of the *Geste* even calls a force of English settlers 'Irish' when they return to England to help defeat the earl of Leicester during the revolt of 1173-4.[113] The author of the near-contemporary biography of William Marshal, whose chief source, John of Earley, spent considerable time in Ireland,[114] takes a similar approach, presenting Ireland as part of the same socio-political arena as England. He writes in glowing terms about William's half-Irish wife, Isabella, and reserves his criticism for those traitors, more often English than Irish, in revolt against his hero there.[115] The anonymous Flemish author of the *Histoire des ducs de Normandie et des rois d'Angleterre* was either on King John's 1210 expedition to Ireland or received detailed information from someone who was.[116] He is like Gerald of Wales and authors of contemporary fiction (discussed below) in presenting Ireland as a land of marvels. However, he says very little to suggest Irish barbarism, beyond the king of Tir Eógain's greed and their general unfamiliarity with saddles.[117]

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[108] For the society and culture of contemporary Flanders see D. M. Nicholas, Medieval Flanders (London, 1992), 89-123. For the Flemings' social identity in England see Eljas Oksanen, Flanders and the Anglo-Norman World, 1066–1216 (Cambridge, 2012), chapter 7.

[109] *The Deeds of the Normans in Ireland. La Geste des Engleis en Yrlande*, ed. Evelyn Mullally (Dublin, 2002); *The song of Dermot and the earl: An Old French poem. From the Carew manuscript no.596 in the Archiepiscopal Library at Lambeth Palace*, ed. G. H. Orpen (Oxford, 1892).

[110] For instance, he uses the Irish terms *daingean* (stronghold) instead of castle, *langport* (encampment), and the Irish names for Dublin, Waterford, Wexford and Wicklow. *Deeds of the Normans in Ireland*, 32-3.

[111] For comparison, see the descriptions of the rebellion of Robert de Bellême against Henry I (Orderic Vitalis, *Ecclesiastical History*, vi, 21-33), and the revolt of 1173-4 against Henry II (Roger of Howden, *Chronica*, ii, 45-67; Jordan Fantosme, *Chronicle*, lines 59-90, 140-152, 212-35).

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[112] *Deeds of the Normans in Ireland,* lines 146-7, 200-1, 897-9.

[113] *Deeds of the Normans in Ireland,* lines 2966-9.

[114] David Crouch, 'Writing a Biography in the Thirteenth Century: the Construction and Composition of the "History of William Marshal"' in, *Writing Medieval Biography: Essays in Honour of Professor Frank Barlow,* ed. D.R. Bates and others (Woodbridge, 2006), 221-36; David Crouch, *William Marshal,* (3rd ed., London, 2016), 126-30.

[115] *History of William Marshal,* eds A. J. Holden and David Crouch, trans. Stewart Gregory (3 vols, London, 2002-7), lines 13514-13578, 13871-13888, 13941-1409414123-14136. For the Marshal's career see Crouch, *William Marshal.*

[116] Seán Duffy, 'King John's expedition to Ireland, 1210: the evidence reconsidered', *Irish Historical Studies,* 30 (1996), 1-24, at 8-9.

When one turns to vernacular fiction, statements about the Welsh, Scots and Irish tend to be situated in literary contexts that make their use as corroborative evidence for clerical opinions even more problematic.[118] For instance, (as Gillingham points out) in Chrétien de Troyes's *Le Conte du Graal (Percival)*, one of King Arthur's knights is made to say that 'all Welshmen are by nature more stupid than beasts in the field.'[119] This, however, is part of a complex scene in which the reader is introduced to the story's hero Perceval as an innocent and uncultured youth (whom the knight claims 'is just like a beast').[120] Naturally, it transpires that the knight was wrong, and Perceval 'le Galois' ('the Welshman') sets out to become a knight, performs tasks for King Arthur, and ends up leading the quest for the holy grail.[121] So, while Chretien certainly gives voice to the contemporary perception of the Welsh as uncultured barbarians, he also distances himself from that opinion and, after a number of jokes at his expense, eventually excuses Percival his initial naiveté. Throughout the rest of *Le Conte du Graal (Percival)*, and indeed throughout its parody, Guillaume le Clerc's *Le Roman de Fergus*,[122] the land beyond the borders of Logres/England (whether Wales or Scotland) is treated as part of the same socio-political sphere as Arthur's realm, but overlaid with a vague sense of being out of time, with overtones of magic.

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[117] *Histoire des ducs de Normandie et des rois d'Angleterre*, ed. Francisque Michel (Paris, 1840), 112-14.

[118] I am grateful to both Professor Keith Busby and Dr Thomas Hinton for their help and advice concerning the analysis that follows.

[119] Chrétien de Troyes, *Le roman de Perceval ou Le Conte du Graal*, ed. Keith Busby (Tübingen, 1993), lines 243-4.

[120] Chrétien de Troyes, *Le roman de Perceval*, line 245.

[121] As soon as Perceval is given his geographical suffix, it is replaced by alternatives ('le chaitis', 'maleürous') indicating that his actions at the Grail Castle, not his origins, would henceforth define him. Chrétien de Troyes, *Le roman de Perceval*, lines 3575-83; Thomas Hinton, *The Conte du Graal Cycle: Chrétien de Troyes's Perceval, the Continuations, and French Arthurian Romance* (Woodbridge, 2012), 121.

Ireland was also part of this Arthurian world. Geoffrey of Monmouth and Wace had already introduced the idea of Arthurian domination over Ireland, and, perhaps unsurprisingly, easily-rhymed Ireland ('Irlande') features in a large number of Arthurian verse romances in the century after the English conquest. In general, Ireland is used much like Wales and Scotland: part of the same socio-political world as Logres/England, but still an outlandish place of adventure. The Irish are regular visitors to Arthur's court, but retain a 'residual savagery' and can never be completely subdued.[123] The difficulty lies in distinguishing between this literary device and genuine reflections of contemporary opinion. As Keith Busby notes, 'marvellous Ireland had become such an indispensable part of the romance world that it long resisted demythification and continued to exist alongside an island whose actual geography, inhabitants, and customs soon became common knowledge in the kind of social circles which consumed literature and took part in the politics of the new land under ongoing colonisation.'[124] Audiences were willing to accept the outlandish stories, even though they may have been familiar with the more mundane reality.

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[122] Since *Le Roman de Fergus* is a parody of *Le Conte du Graal (Percival)*, they cannot be seen as independent sources for contemporary views of the 'barbarians' of Britain. Kathryn Gravdal, *Vilain and courtois* (Lincoln, NA, 1989), 25.

[123] Busby, *French in Medieval Ireland, Ireland in medieval French*, chapter 4.

[124] Busby, *French in Medieval Ireland, Ireland in Medieval French*, chapter 4.

Depicting Reality

The reality of English conquest was quite complex. Having claimed lordship over Ireland, Henry returned to England in 1172, leaving his barons to get on with the job of conquest and settlement. To aid them in their endeavours, and to absolve himself of much of the burden of lordship, Henry granted them a degree of autonomy akin to that enjoyed by the lords of the Welsh march (which a number of them were).[125] This relative independence not only promoted feelings of honorial solidarity, it also gave lords the flexibility to reach accommodation with the Irish.[126] Although the very act of conquest implies a disdain for those being conquered, their conduct in this regard suggests that the knights and barons leading the invasion of Ireland held more nuanced attitudes towards the Irish than those preserved by their clerical brethren. Indeed, one of the only contemporary Latin sources to be at all complementary of the Irish, Jocelin of Furness's *Vita Sancti Patricii*, was commissioned before 1185 by the new lord of Ulster, John de Courcy.[127] John joined with the Irish bishop of Down and archbishop of Armagh in promoting the native saint's cult, so that his own rule might be identified with it. John de Courcy was unique in the level of his engagement with native ideology – he even had coins struck with the name PATRICVS on the reverse – but his pragmatic approach to the Irish was also adopted by other early English settlers. As Gerald of Wales describes Hugh de Lacy's new lordship in Meath:

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[125] Brock Holden, ''Feudal frontiers?' Colonial societies in Wales and Ireland 1170-1330', in *Studia Hibernica*, xxxiii (2004/2005), 61-79.

[126] For a fuller account of English lordship in Ireland see Colin Veach, *Lordship in four realms: The Lacy family, 1166-1241* (Manchester, 2014); Brendan Smith, *Colonisation and conquest in medieval Ireland. The English in Louth, 1170-1330* (Cambridge, 1999).

[127] Jocelin of Furness, *The life and acts of Saint Patrick, the archbishop, primate and apostle of Ireland*, ed. J. C. O'Haloran (Philadelphia, 1823); Helen Birkett, *The saints' lives of Jocelin of Furness* (Woodbridge, 2010).

'Hugh went to great trouble to conciliate those [i.e. the Irish] who had been conquered by others and forcibly ejected from their lands, and thus he restored the countryside to its rightful cultivators and brought back cattle to pastures which had formerly been deserted. So when he had won their support, he enticed them to his side still further by his mild rule and by making agreements on which they could rely, and finally, when they had been hemmed in by castles and gradually subdued, he compelled them to obey the laws.'[128]

In this passage, Gerald documented what he saw as a civilising process in Meath. The barbarous Irish were gradually convinced to live under laws, a twelfth-century marker of civilisation.[129] However, it also shows Hugh de Lacy adapting to his Irish environment in order to secure the workforce necessary to make his new lordship productive.

Lacking effective military support from the English king, the barons of Ireland also needed to define their relations with native dynasties. The major lords of Leinster (Strongbow), Meath (Hugh de Lacy), Ulster (John de Courcy) and Thomond (William de Burgh) all married into neighbouring dynasties, and the children of these mixed marriages played leading roles in the thirteenth-century colony. The same men also imposed their lordship upon neighbouring Irish kingdoms (and sometimes settler lordships), extracting tribute in cattle and assistance in war. Thus, at his death in 1186, the native Irish Annals of Loch Cé remark that '[Hugh de Lacy] was king of Meath, and Bréifne, and Airgialla, and it was to him the tribute of Connacht was paid; and he it was that won all Ireland for the

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[128] Gerald of Wales, *Expugnatio*, 190.

[129] See Van Engen, 'The twelfth century', 17-44; Bartlett, *Gerald of Wales*, 164-5.

Foreigners.'[130] Indeed, in the fragmented frontier-zone that much of Ireland became, English lords were just as likely to ally with Irish kings against one another as to present a united front of English versus Irish one might expect from the clerical sources.[131] This pattern of frontier lordship may even have found its way into the first episodic Arthurian verse romance, Chrétien de Troyes's *Erec et Enide*, which was possibly commissioned by Henry II and was composed about the time of his expedition to Ireland.[132] In it, a lord Erec has defeated gives an account of himself:

'I am king of this land. My liege men are Irish, and there is not one who does not pay me tribute. And my name is Guivret le Petit. I am very rich and powerful, for in whatever direction you go in this region, there is not a baron whose land borders on mine who disobeys my orders and does not do my bidding. I do not have a single neighbour who does not fear me, however proud or haughty he may make himself out to be.'[133]

It seems that English encounters with the Irish were incorporated into vernacular literature from the very moment of invasion.

Ireland and the Irish are much more prominent in the Arthurian romance, *Durmart le Galois*, which dates to the first half of the thirteenth century. Interestingly, its author, who Busby argues may have been a literate knight rather than a clerk, deals directly with the clerical accusations against the Irish.[134] The story's hero, Durmart, is the son of the king of Wales, and after a period of youthful folly, he performs a number of chivalrous deeds in pursuit of the beautiful Irish queen, Fenise. However, Fenise faces rebellion in Ireland by her cousin and vassal, Nogans, who writes to King Arthur, offering him the lordship of Limerick for his help.[135] Arthur agrees, and is told of Fenise's religious deviancy as he and Nogans besiege her castle of Limerick. Nogans declares:

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[130] *The Annals of Loch Cé. A chronicle of Irish affairs from A.D. 1014 to A.D. 1590,* ed. W. M. Hennessy (2 vols, Oxford, 1871), i, 172, *s.a.* 1186. For a fuller analysis of the situation in Meath, see Veach, *Lordship in Four Realms,* esp. 245-51.

[131] See, Frame, *Colonial Ireland*, 31-61.

[132] Busby, *French in Medieval Ireland, Ireland in Medieval French,* chapter 4.

[133] Chrétien de Troyes, *Erec und Enide,* ed. Wendelin Foerster (Halle, 1884), lines 3865-75. The translation is from Busby, *French in Medieval Ireland, Ireland in Medieval French,* chapter 4. I see no reason to follow Michael Faletra's suggestion that the 'Irish' in this passage referred to the first colonists from south Wales. M. A. Faletra, *Wales and the Medieval colonial imagination: The matters of Britain in the twelfth century* (Basingstoke, 2014), 116.

'Their queen is a lady who does not care for her soul, for she is a foolish unbeliever. She does not wish to listen to the word of God; she hates and despises marriage and the sacrament of holy church. All those who are in there with her are unbelievers; but I tell you that if I could take them by force I would have them burned or hanged or have their limbs torn from their bodies. Those unbelievers and traitors dare not come out'[136]

Believing Nogans, Arthur nevertheless offers to rescue the queen if she recants and accepts the '*bon loi*'. Far from recanting, the queen successfully refutes the allegations, showing that they were lies to begin with.[137] Nogans flees, and Durmart marries his beloved to become king of Ireland.[138]

Reflecting the views of a literate knight and his largely secular audience, the focus within this text is political and military. The accusation of religious deviancy is only used as an *ex post hoc* justification for Nogans's attempted conquest. Ireland is a land apart, but its inhabitants are not stereotyped barbarians. King Arthur thinks lordship over Limerick to be a worthy military objective, and the hero of the story, a knight from Wales, becomes king of Ireland. It may also be significant that Durmart's arms, *gules, two leopards or crowned argent*, seem to have been those of Henry II's son, John, when he was designated king of Ireland in 1177, and of other members of the royal family until 1195.[139] The historical parallels are clear enough, and identify the Angevin dynasty with the stable rule of Ireland.

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[134] Busby, *French in Medieval Ireland, Ireland in Medieval French,* chapter 4.

[135] *Durmart le Galois,* lines 12,735-48

[136] '*Durmart le Galois*, ed. Joseph Gildea (2 vols., Villanova, PA, 1965-66), lines 12,883-95. Translation from: Busby, *French in Medieval Ireland, Ireland in Medieval French,* chapter 4.

[137] *Durmart le Galois,* lines 14133-83, 14304-84.

[138] *Durmart le Galois,* lines 14703-11, 15,039-45.

Knights from England/Logres also come to the rescue in the mid-thirteenth century *Les Mervelles de Rigomer*, which seems to have been written for the English of Ireland by someone familiar with the topography and political geography of the island.[140] Although the author follows the literary topos presenting Ireland as a land of adventures and marvels, he also presents as normal the possible marriage of Lancelot to the daughter of the 'wise and courteous' Irish king of Desmond. Lancelot could only consider marriage to an Irish princess if Ireland were part of the same socio-political world as Arthur's court, and, indeed, it transpires that the king of Desmond had travelled to Arthur's court fourteen years earlier to seek help regaining his kingdom.[141] His subsequent stable rule in Desmond is contrasted with the near-anarchy of Bréifne ('a land full of violence. Because of weak lordship') and Thomond ('a land, in sum, full of robbery, of thieves and savagery, inhabited by bad people').[142] As Busby argues, the common Arthurian emphasis on strong central authority - governance, lordship, and justice - is unusually pronounced in the story, with the suggestion that anarchic regions (such as Bréifne and Thomond, but not Connacht or Desmond) might require intervention from Britain. However, while there is an underlying contrast between Britain and Ireland, and within Ireland between the settled and savage, 'it is by no means clear that all of the noble and courteous characters are British, nor that all of the many villains of the piece are Irish.'[143] Irish knights fight with and against the Arthurian knights as the latter seek to liberate Irish knights from their enchanted imprisonment at Rigomer. Although a work of fiction, the *Mervelles* presents a much more nuanced understanding of the Irish frontier than is found in most Latin works of history.

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[139] G. J. Brault, *Early Blazon, Heraldic Terminology in the Twelfth and Thirteenth Centuries with Special Reference to Arthurian Literature* (Oxford 1972), 21-22.

[140] Interestingly, the surviving manuscripts seem to have been purely continental in their transmission. For a full analysis of the source (and much of what follows), see Busby, *French in Medieval Ireland, Ireland in Medieval French,* chapter 4. For the author's extreme use of multiple narratives and the quest motif, all of which make Ireland's alterity essential to the story, see Hinton, *Conte du Graal*, 208-12.

[141] *Les merveilles de Rigomer*, ed. Wendelin Foerster and Hermann Breuer (2 vols, Dresden, 1908-15) , i. lines 4379-560.

Conclusion

A common element within almost all of the contemporary descriptions of Ireland profiled here, Latin or vernacular, was its need for law and order. Papal approval for Henry II's conquest of Ireland, however contingent in the case of Adrian IV, hinged on his firm rule allowing the reform of the Irish Church to gather pace. Gerald of Wales continued this theme, advocating (and planning) a complete conquest from Britain to subdue the Irish.[144] The *Geste des Engleis en Yrlande* characterised English intervention in Ireland as reinstating Diarmait Mac Murchada's legitimate rule over Leinster, and Henry II's assumption of lordship as the result of Diarmait's successor, Strongbow's invitation.[145] Arthurian literature likewise portrayed Ireland, or at least parts of it, as a land in need of firm government. In each case, that law and order was to be imposed from Britain.

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[142] *Les merveilles de Rigomer*, lines 2369-70 (Bréifne), 3148-51 (Thomond).

[143] Busby, *French in Medieval Ireland, Ireland in Medieval French,* chapter 4; Matthieu Boyd characterises the *Merveilles* as text of conciliation and collaboration. Matthieu Boyd, *The source of enchantment: the marvels of Rigomer (Les Mervelles de Rigomer) and the evolution of Celtic influence on medieval francophone storytelling* (Phd, Harvard University, 2011), 190.

[144] Gerald of Wales, *Expugnatio Hibernica*, 244-53.

Despite the diplomatic effort expended to obtain papal sanction for an English invasion of Ireland, and the emphasis on strong and stable rule in nearly every contemporary source, King Henry II failed to secure island-wide control in 1171-2. Desperate to secure absolution for his role in the death of Archbishop Thomas Becket, Henry left Ireland in April 1172 upon hearing of the arrival of papal negotiators in his dominions. This was just before the campaigning season would have allowed him to use his expensive army in Ireland.[146] Indeed, Gerald of Wales claims that Henry 'was particularly grieved at having to take such untimely leave of his Irish dominion, which he had intended to fortify with castles, settle in peace and stability, and altogether to mould to his own design in the coming summer.'[147] When negotiations with the papal envoys became strained, Henry even threatened to walk out and return to Ireland where he 'had pressing matters'.[148] Henry's failure to return meant that Ireland was a partial conquest, with complex frontier arrangements built upon the precedent of the Welsh March.[149] This is the reality reflected in Arthurian romance literature, and lamented by Gerald of Wales.

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[145] *La Geste des Engleis en Yrlande*, lines 2577-82.

[146] For Henry's army see Howard Clarke, 'The early English pipe rolls as a source for Irish history', in Gearóid Mac Niocaill and P. F. Wallace (eds.), *Keimelia : studies in medieval archaeology and history in memory of Tom Delaney* (Galway, 1988), 416-34.

[147] Gerald of Wales, *Expugnatio*, 104-5.

[148] *Materials for the History of Thomas Becket, Archbishop of Canterbury*, ed. J.C. Robertson, 7 vols (London, 1875-1885), vii, p. 514.

[149] See R. R. Davies, 'Frontier arrangements in fragmented societies: Ireland and Wales', in Robert Bartlett and Angus MacKay (eds.), *Medieval frontier societies* (Oxford, 1989), 77-100.

However, Henry did not give up hope of securing island-wide dominion in Ireland, and constructed a large western inheritance for his youngest son John. This included the territory of the lapsed earldom of Cornwall (1175), the earldom of Gloucester with its port of Bristol (1176), and Ireland (1177).[150] John was even given a sword identified as the weapon of Tristan, a Cornish knight whose love affair with the Irish princess Iseult was the subject of a popular cycle of romantic songs in England and Normandy.[151] Three decades after first earmarking Ireland as an Angevin appanage, in 1185 Henry sent his teenage son to Ireland to be crowned its king.[152] Henry had spent the past three decades laying the ideological foundations for foreign rule over the Irish. John's failure to construct an Angevin kingdom of Ireland should not blind us to Henry's ambition.

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[150] Stephen Church, *King John and the Road to Magna Carta* (New York, 2015), 18-19.

[151] Rot. Litt. Pat., 77b. Emma Mason. 'The Hero's Invincible Weapon: An Aspect of Angevin Propaganda', in Christopher Harper-Bill and Ruth Harvey (eds), *The ideals and practice of medieval knighthood, III*, (Woodbridge, 1990), 121-37, esp. 126-35; Aurell, 'Henry II and the Arthurian Legend', 372-3.

[152] For John and Ireland see Seán Duffy, 'John and Ireland: the origins of England's Irish problem', in S. D. Church (ed.), *King John: New interpretations* (Woodbridge, 1999), 221-45; Colin Veach, 'King John and royal control in Ireland: Why William de Briouze had to be destroyed', in *English Historical Review*, cxxix, no. 540 (2014), 1051-78.