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## THE (FIFTEEN) SIGNS BEFORE DOOMSDAY IN IRISH TRADITION

It is an honour and pleasure for me to be invited to contribute to this Festschrift in honour of Dr Marek Starowieyski who has contributed so much to the study of New Testament apocrypha and has translated the New Testament apocryphal gospels into Polish. As A. De Santos Otero has brought to the attention of the scholarly world, Old Slavonic has a rich tradition in apocryphal writings. The same is true of Irish tradition. Currently, in conjunction with the AELAC (Association pour l'Étude de la littérature Apocryphe Chrétienne) an Irish Editorial Board is preparing a critical edition of all the New Testament Apocrypha, in a subseries *Apocrypha Hiberniae* of *Corpus Christianorum Series Apocryphorum*. The first volume has already appeared: *Apocrypha Hiberniae*. Vol. I: *Evangelia Infantiae* (Brepols 2001). The second volume in the series is in the process of completion: *Apocrypha Hiberniae*. Vol. 2. *Apocalyptic et Eschatologica*. One section of this volume will be devoted to the (XV) Signs before Doomsday. I give an overview of the question here, much of which must be regarded as 'work in progress'

On the Mount of Olives the apostles asked Jesus privately what would be the sign of his coming and the close of the age (Mat 24:3). Jesus replies in an apocalyptic eschatological discourse, with mention of a variety of woes and wonders, leading to the 'sign of the Son of Man' (24:30), coming on the clouds of heaven to gather his elect from the four winds of heaven (24:31). Predictions of an end, and signs preceding it, were already part of the Old Testament message, and are found also in the New, especially in the Revelation of John.

It is natural that interest in signs predicting the end should continue down through Church history, leading to new compositions and the recasting of older ones. Early interest in signs of the end can be seen in the Greek acrostic translated in Augustine's *City of God* (book 18, chapter 23), a text, however, which was to play no major role in later development of the Signs before Doomsday tradition.

### 1. The Apocalypse of Thomas

There may have been various texts with signs before Doomsday in the west, which ultimately gave rise to a work known as the *Apocalypse of Thomas*. This is probably the book 'called the Revelation of Thomas' in the so-called *Decretum Gelasianum* (probably sixth century) and condemned as apocryphal. Due to publications made in the early twentieth century, an apocryphal work known as the *Apocalypse of Thomas* is now known in two forms, a longer 'interpolated' version published from a Munich manuscript by F. Wilhelm

in 1907,<sup>1</sup> and a 'non-interpolated' version published by P. Bihlmeyer from another Munich manuscript in 1911.<sup>2</sup> The primitive apocalypse would appear to have been a brief address of Christ to Thomas on what is to come to pass before the end of this world, before Christ's elect depart out of this world. The longer text has a historico-prophetic introduction, referring enigmatically to events of the first half of the fifth century, which is generally regarded as an interpolation. Both texts give a list of the seven signs that are to occur before the end of the world, or signs during each of the seven days before the end, although Wilhelm's longer version ends imperfectly after the sixth day. The non-interpolated version says that on the eighth day, 'when the seven days are passed by, there shall be a sweet and tender voice from the east' and the angels will come to deliver the elect who have believed in Christ. Since these earlier publications a further fragment of the 'non-interpolated' version has been identified, and three witnesses of the 'interpolated' version. Charles D. Wright has also identified six versions of abbreviated versions of this apocalypse, which give only the list of signs.<sup>3</sup>

The earliest locus of dissemination of the *Apocalypse of Thomas* seems to have been Italy, and it was probably composed there, possibly in the fifth century. Our two earliest witnesses (representing both the interpolated and non-interpolated recensions) are Italian. One of them (now Naples, Biblioteca Nazionale, lat. 2 [earlier Vienna 2], 5<sup>th</sup> century) was palimpsested in Bobbio in the eighth century. Wright has noted an Insular (British and Irish) link in the transmission history of the Latin texts. One of the interpolated texts is found in MS Vatican City, Biblioteca Apostolica, Pal. lat. 220 (9<sup>th</sup> cent.), fol. 48v-53r, a manuscript which contains other texts regarded as Hiberno-Latin.<sup>4</sup> The *Apocalypse of Thomas* was early known in England and four Old English versions of it are known, two at least with the interpolated version.<sup>5</sup> After his study of the Latin and English and Irish vernacular evidence, Wright notes that the new texts he has described further underscore how *The Apocalypse of Thomas* was subject to redaction, interpolations and abbreviation and that it is hardly possible to reconstruct an original or archetypal text from the surviving witnesses, or even to critically edit just three primary recensions. He goes on to remark that as Thomas D. Hill has pointed out in his introduction to *Sources of Anglo-Saxon Literary Culture*, 'texts such as the *Apocalypse of Thomas* did not circulate in a single authorized version, and ... an edition of a single version ... would misrepresent the way in which most medieval readers had access to [it]'<sup>6</sup> Wright is of the opinion that an appropriate model for an edition of *Thomas* is the recent edition of Long Latin versions of the *Apocalypse of Paul* by Theodore Silverstein and Anthony Hilhorst, who print all the sur-

<sup>1</sup> F. WILHELM, *Deutsche Legende und Legendare* (Leipzig: 1907), pp. 40\*-42\* (from MS Munich, Clm 4585; 9<sup>th</sup> century).

<sup>2</sup> P. BIHMEYER, 'Un texte non interpolé de l'Apocalypse de Thomas', *Rev. Bén.* 28 (1911), 270-282 (from Munich, Clm 4563, of the 11<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> century)

<sup>3</sup> See C.D. WRIGHT, 'The *Apocalypse of Thomas*: Some New Latin Texts and their Significance for the Old English Versions', in: *Apocryphal Texts and Traditions in Anglo-Saxon England*, edited by K. Powell and D. Scragg (Publications of the Manchester Centre for Anglo-Saxon Studies; Woodbridge: Boydell & Brewer, 2003), pp.27-64).

<sup>4</sup> See C.D. WRIGHT, 'The *Apocalypse*', pp. 40-41; C.D. Wright, *The Irish Tradition in Old English Literature* (Cambridge Studies in Anglo-Saxon England 6; Cambridge: University Press, 1993), p. 111.

<sup>5</sup> See WRIGHT, 'The *Apocalypse*', pp. 41-46.

<sup>6</sup> See WRIGHT, 'The *Apocalypse*', p. 46, citing T.D. Hill, *Sources of Anglo-Saxon literary Culture. Volume One: Abbo of Fleury, Abbo of Saint Germain-des-Prés and Acta Sanctorum*, ed. F. M. Biggs et al. (Kalamazoo, MI, 2001), p. xxii.

living texts of three variant recensions in facing pages, parallel-column format.<sup>7</sup> In his view this holds in particular for the Old English versions: 'If we want to clarify the interrelations of the Latin and Old English versions, we need a new edition of this kind – in effect, a synoptic *Apocalypse of Thomas*'<sup>8</sup> This view might profitably be borne in mind for the editions of the Irish texts of *Thomas*, or the (*Fifteen Signs of Doomsday*) as well.

The texts of the Latin *Apocalypse of Thomas*, we may note, speak of the seven days before Doom, and of an eighth day of Judgment, of reward and punishment. The reconciliation of these numbers and the identification of the days with days of the week presented problems and confusion to the Anglo-Saxon tradition. It does not appear that this was the case in Irish tradition. With Irish, and Latin tradition (if not general Christian tradition in general), the general resurrection of the Dead was to take place on Sunday (as all major events in salvation history were in Irish tradition believed to have taken place). The general judgment, Doomsday, would be on the day following, on Monday. This belief seems to have been central to Irish tradition from an early period. In Irish the term *lúan* (Monday; *dies lunae*), is very frequent in phrases meaning 'Doomsday', 'Day of Judgment', based on the belief that the world would come to an end on a Sunday.<sup>9</sup> The original phrase may have been *lúan brátha*, or its equivalent, 'Monday of Judgment'. *Lá an Lúain*, 'the Day of Monday' is also an Irish name of Doomsday, even in modern Irish.<sup>10</sup>

## 2. The (Fifteen) Signs before Doomsday

At a given time in the development of the Latin tradition, and of the western tradition in general, on the Signs before Doomsday interest passed from the seven days or seven signs before Doomsday to the Fifteen Signs or Days before Doom. How precisely the transition came to be made, and the direct influence of the seven-day sign and sequence on the later fifteen-day system remains to be determined. The Fifteen Day system is represented by four traditions (which can be reduced to two), all rather closely related, namely the Pseudo-Bedan, that of Peter Comestor (AD 1169-1175), in his *Historia scholastica. Historia evangelica*, chap. 141 (PL 198, 1611), that of Peter Damian (died 1072, in his 'Signa praecedentia iudicii diem ex S. Hieronymi sententia', being chapter IV of his work *De Novissimis et Antichristo*; PL 145, 840); that of Thomas Aquinas (ca. 1250, in his *Commentarium in quartum librum Sententiarum magistri Petri Lombardi*, distinct. 48, quaest. 1, art. 4).<sup>11</sup> The use of the tradition by Peter Damian shows that it was well established by the eleventh century, and was known through a written text believed to be the work of Jerome. Damian inserts the list of signs into his theological treatise. The same is true of Thomas Aquinas, who in his commentary on the *Sentences* of Peter Lombard is discussing the question whether certain signs will precede the coming of the Lord to judgment. For him as against such a belief stand texts such as 1 Thess 5:3 (sudden destruction will come [at the end

<sup>7</sup> *Apocalypse of Paul. A New Critical Edition of Three Long Latin Versions*, ed. Th. Silverstein and A. Hilhorst (Cahiers d'Orientalisme 21; Geneva: , 1997).

<sup>8</sup> WRIGHT, 'The Apocalypse', p. 47.

<sup>9</sup> See s.v. 'lúan' in *Dictionary of the Irish Language*, col. 224, 3-15, with reference to *RC (Revue Celtique)* 13, 122; *Vitae Sanctorum Hiberniae* ii, 198 note.

<sup>10</sup> See s.v. 'lá' in *Dictionary of the Irish Language*, col. 9, 84-85.

<sup>11</sup> Ed. Fratres Praedicatorum, *Summa Theologica XII*, Rome 1906, p. 162; earlier in *Doctoris Angelici Thomae Aquinatis Opera Omnia*, ed. S.E. Freté, vol. 11; Paris: Vivés, 1874, p.441.

time]) and 1 Thess 5:2 (the Day of the Lord will come like a thief in the night). In favour of the belief we have Luke 21:25: 'There will be signs in the sun, the moon and the stars', to which text Aquinas adds: 'Furthermore, Jerome gives fifteen signs which precede judgment', at which point he lists them in brief. It is recognised that Aquinas depends on Peter Damian.<sup>12</sup> For this reason, and because Aquinas's learned work did not influence popular tradition, his list may be ignored. Peter Comestor (ca. 1150) also accepted the signs as a work of Jerome. He inserts the list into his account of the Gospel teaching on the end time, from the death of Antichrist to Christ's second coming. While Comestor has a more concise expression of the signs than Pseudo-Bede, it is recognised that his signs tradition depends on Pseudo-Bede's text, into which, however, he has introduced changes.<sup>13</sup> He omits Pseudo-Bede's third day, with the result that he has moved all the subsequent signs back one day, and has to supply a final fifteenth day sign to make up for his omission. Furthermore, the Comestor group regularly reverses the order of signs 12 and 13 of Pseudo-Bede. Comestor's work has been very influential, and for this reason is to be borne in mind (with the differences noted) in any study of the affiliations of vernacular texts.

The best known and most influential of these is that of the Pseudo-Bedan *Collectanea*. The *Collectanea*, a collection of various pieces on diverse subjects, was published among the works of Bede by Johann Herwagen the younger in Basel in 1563.<sup>14</sup> No manuscript of the *Collectanea* is known and the date of the work in general, and of individual items of its component parts, is occasionally a matter of debate. The work is clearly not by Bede. In the most recent edition of the *Collectanea* by Martha Bayless and Michael Lapidge the composition is understood to be in three parts, with a total of 388 items (*De quindecim signis* being items no. 356-71): part I, nos 1-304; part II, nos 305-379; part III, nos 380-388. Michael Lapidge attends to the origin of the *Collectanea*. Part I is taken as a unit, probably begun early in the eighth century as a notebook by an Irish scholar who began collecting *dicta* of various sorts, mostly concerned with biblical wisdom and recording them in no particular order. The work of collection would have begun in Ireland, from where the scholar passed to Britain and later to the Continent, completing his collection in an Irish community of expatriates in Austria or Bavaria. The items in Part II (nos 305-379) have an interest in numerology, and this section is possibly inspired by the nature of some of the material in Part I. In his view hypotheses similar to those advanced for Part I might best explain the assemblage of materials in Part II; in this case, however, a date after c. 820 needs to be posited to accommodate the incorporation of two brief treatises which draw on the *Liber officialis* of Amalarius of Metz – always assuming, of course, that their inclusion was the work of the original compiler of Part II, and not by a later interpolator. With regard to our item on the Fifteen Signs Michael Lapidge notes that it is a text which circulated separately in manuscript, although no surviving manuscript is earlier than the twelfth century. He notes its affinities with various Irish texts, including the *Tenga Bithnua* and *Saltair na Rann*, remarking that there is nothing to preclude Irish origin (or indeed an eighth-century origin), but nothing as yet to confirm it.<sup>15</sup>

<sup>12</sup> See HEIST, *The Fifteen Signs*, p. 27.

<sup>13</sup> See HEIST, *The Fifteen Signs*, pp. 25-26..

<sup>14</sup> *Opera Bedae Venerabilis presbyteri Anglosaxonis*. 8 vols in 4 (Basel, 1563), vol.3, 647-674; reprinted on various occasions: in PL 94, 539-562; critical edition, ed. M. BAYLESS and M. LAPIDGE, *Collectanea Pseudo-Bedae* (Scriptores Latini Hiberniae 14; Dublin: Dublin Institute for Advanced Studies, 1998).

<sup>15</sup> M. LAPIDGE, in Bayless and Lapidge, *Collectanea*, p. 9.

All four Latin texts say that the signs have been found by Jerome in a Jewish text, in *annalibus Hebraeorum*. While the *Collectanea* text has only the list of fifteen signs, without other context, in the other three Latin texts they are set in a theological context of the Last Things (*De novissimis*). The Fifteen Signs give the tokens before Doom generally in the order of one (or first day) to fifteen (or fifteenth day), by which is meant the first (or first day) of the fifteen day period before Doom. In some texts (as in the Irish *Airdena*) the enumeration begins with fifteen (or the fifteenth day).

### 3. Irish Origin of the Fifteen Signs Tradition?

The Fifteen Signs, in one form or another, was very popular in Latin and vernacular texts of the Middle Ages. The question arises as to how the tradition originated, and what is its relation to the *Apocalypse of Thomas* and the Seven Day set of signs. William W. Heist has investigated the question in depth and believes that it originated in Ireland and Irish tradition.<sup>16</sup> According to W.W. Heist, in his monograph *The Fifteen Signs before Doomsday* (1952), the legend of the Fifteen Signs as found in England and on the Continent seems to depend on, and to originate in, the material found in the additional strophes of *Saltair na Rann*. In the conclusion to his book he writes:<sup>17</sup>

I have tried here to show that the additional strophes, CLIII-CLXII, of the *Saltair na Rann* constitute a crucial text in the study of the origin and development of the legend of the Fifteen Signs before Doomsday. They are certainly the key to the study of the legend, and they are probably its actual original. For if the origin of the legend remains somewhat uncertain, it is only in the sense that we cannot prove beyond cavil that the immediate source from which it is developed was the matter in these additional strophes. The earliest clear trace of it appears here and nothing in the legend points beyond these strophes to any earlier source, except to the recognized main source of *Saltair na Rann*, the *Apocalypse of Thomas*. But no other form of the *Apocalypse of Thomas* can dispute with *Saltair na Rann* the position of probable source of our legend. So it is stating the case very moderately to say that it seems most likely that these strophes are the primary source of the Fifteen Signs, with *The Evernew Tongue* serving as the most important secondary source, even though we cannot quite exclude the possibility that the legend had been already formed when the *Saltair na Rann* was composed and that the latter borrowed from the legend as well as from the *Apocalypse of Thomas*, upon which it is primarily based.

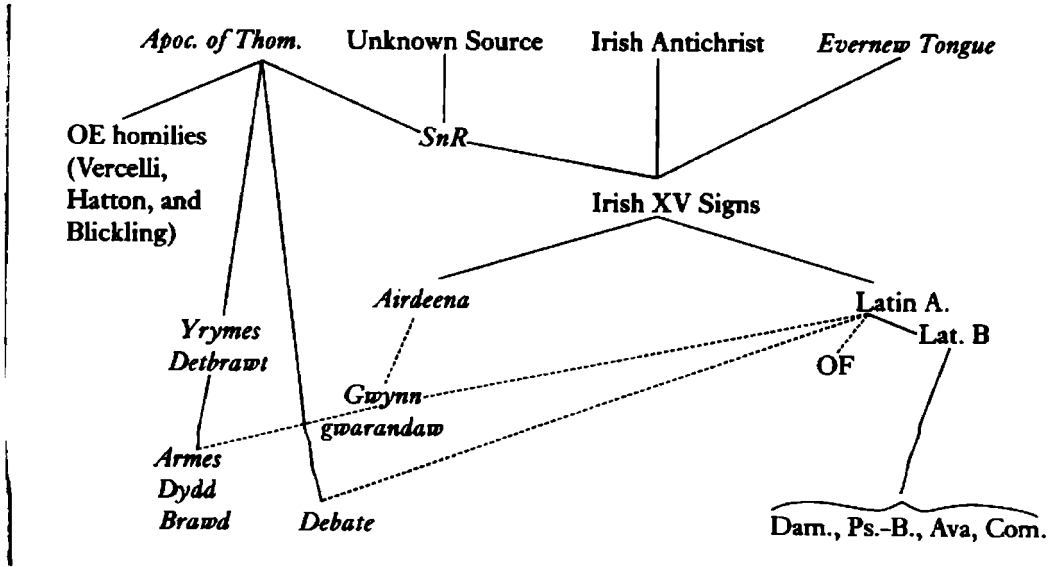
On the assumption that *Saltair na Rann* is the main source of the fifteen-day legend, Heist<sup>18</sup> gives the following diagram as one possible explanation of the formation of the tradition and of the interrelationships of the various texts carrying the legend. In the diagram the 'Irish Antichrist' is the medieval Irish legend found in a number of Irish texts. Not all the forms of the legend of the Fifteen Signs indicated in this diagram have extant texts to represent them. Some are forms whose existence is postulated to explain points of agreement and difference in the affiliated texts of the legend; thus for instance the 'Irish XV Signs'. 'Ava' in the diagram is the type of the legend found in the poem attributed to the twelfth-century German poetess Ava; *Yrmes Detbrawt* (*Armes Dydd Brawd*, 'Proph-

<sup>16</sup> W.W. HEIST, *The Fifteen Signs before Doomsday* (East Lansing: Michigan State College Press, 1952).

<sup>17</sup> HEIST, *The Fifteen Signs*, p. 193.

<sup>18</sup> Heist, *The Fifteen Signs*, p. 99.

ecy on the Day of Judgment') and *Gwynn gwarandaw* are Welsh forms of the legend. This type is given together with those found in Peter Damien, Pseudo-Bede and Peter Comestor—three Latin texts which carry three different types of the legend, types, however which are closely related to one another.



It will be for current research to test the value of Heist's position in the light of a new examination of the evidence.

#### 4. Armenian Tradition

A significant new element has been added to the discussion by Michael Stone who has published and studied two Armenian language texts with Fifteen Signs before Doomsday, preserved in Jerusalem, texts written in 1741 CE (text I) and 1669 CE (text II).<sup>19</sup> The first of these texts, and the older in form, is introduced with the words: 'And other doctors say, "We have read in the books of the Jews that there are going to be fifteen signs on fifteen days before the Judgment"' <sup>20</sup> These fifteen signs of the Armenian texts I and II are precisely those of Latin tradition of Pseudo-Bede (B) and Comestor (C). Stone gives them in a chart as follows:<sup>21</sup>

<sup>19</sup> M. STONE, *Signs of Judgement, Onomastica Sacra and the Generations from Adam* (University of Pennsylvania Armenian Texts and Studies 3; Scholars Press, 1981), pp. 1-57; also M. STONE, 'Jewish Tradition, the Pseudepigrapha and the Christian West', in *The Aramaic Bible: Targums in their Historical Setting*, edited by D.R.G. Beattie and M.J. McNamara (JSOTSup 166; Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1994), pp. 431-449, at 432-435.

<sup>20</sup> STONE, *Signs*, p. 23.

<sup>21</sup> STONE, *Signs*, pp. 9-11.

<u>Day</u>	I Armenian	II Armenian	Bede Latin	Comestor Latin
I	Flood of 40 cubits show that God can destroy	like a wall to the earth	Flood of 40 cubits	like a wall
II	Sea dries up to the depths, scarcely seen	Sea dries up to the depths of dry land and water not seen	Sea descends to depths whose summit is scarcely seen	Sea descends so as to be just seen
			III They will be in balance as originally	
III	Whales upon water cry out to heaven	Fish and whales upon sand perish, cry out, smell	IV Fish and maritime beasts upon water cry out; meaning known only to God	Marine beasts upon seas cry out to heaven
			V Waters burn to west (see Armenian VII)	
IV	Plants and shoots drip bloody dew	Trees and all plants drip bloody dew and wither up	VI All plants and trees give bloody dew	Sea and waters burn
V	All buildings	destroyed	VII All buildings destroyed	Plants and trees give bloody dew
VI	Rocks smite one another	Mountains and rocks smite one another with a terrible noise and are destroyed	VIII Rocks fight one another, are divided into three parts and each smites the other	Buildings destroyed
VII	Sea and earth are	burned with fire (see B V)		Rocks smite one another
VIII	General	earthquake	IX Earthquake unparalleled since creation	General earthquake

IX	Levelling of mountains	and valleys	X All hills and valleys become plain	Levelling of earth
X	Men in caverns come forth, are mad, unable to talk to each other	Men [lacuna]	XI Men come forth from caverns, run as mad, unable to reply to one another	Men come forth from caves, go as mad, unable to talk to one another
XI	Dead go out of graves	Dead fall out of graves	(See XIII below)	Bones of dead rise and stand on graves
XII	Stars appear to	fall from heaven	Stars and signs fall from heaven	Stars fall
			XIII Bones of dead gathered and rise up to graves (see C. XI)	
XIII	All men	die	XIV All men die so as to rise with the dead	XIV All men die so as to rise with the dead
XIV	XV Heavens and earth burn	Heavens and earth burn	XV Heavens and earth burn up to the end of hell	Heaven and earth burn
XV	XIV New heavens and new earth	New heavens and new earth		New heavens and new earth

Stone is aware of Heist's position, but puts questions and has his reservations. Stone writes:<sup>22</sup>

'Armenian I and both Latin versions are attributed to a Jewish original. Both Latin texts state that the work is found in annalibus Hebraeorum which shows a tradition identical with Armenian.

'If, however, the thesis of Heist as to the derivation of this text from a body of material combining tenth century old Irish writings and forms of the Latin version of the Apocalypse of Thomas is correct, then the origins of the attribution to Jerome as well as the Annales Hebraeorum remain puzzling, as he observes. This mention of the Annales Hebraeorum may explain the attribution to the famous Hebraist – Jerome, but why the work, if it was composed in Ireland in the eleventh century, should be given a fictitious Jewish source is obscure.

<sup>22</sup> STONE, *Signs*, pp. 13-15, with reference to HEIST, *The Fifteen Signs*, pp. 201-202(203) for the final paragraph.

‘The question of the original language of the Armenian version remains without solution. It is improbable that Armenian is original, although the framework of II was composed in Armenian. Whether its original was Latin or Greek or another language cannot be determined on any objective grounds that could be discerned by the present writer. Heist’s theories would demand an eleventh century date at earliest, and presumably a Latin *Vorlage*.

‘Although it thus seems likely that the document is of Christian origin, it remains notable that the text itself contains no clearly Christian elements, nor is any of the portents listed necessarily drawn from the New Testament. Admittedly, some of them are paralleled in later Christian sources alone but granted the highly conservative, traditional nature of these signs, indeed of much of what is contained in the literature of these and related topics, as well as the possibility or even probability of mutual influence, it will readily be conceded that the Christian character of a single sign or of the pattern of concurrence of a number of signs must be very distinctive indeed to serve as sole and conclusive proof of a Christian origin. Mere occurrence in a Christian apocalypse is not enough.

‘The discovery of an Armenian version which has undergone certain textual development in that language may serve to open up the issue of origins once more. It could, of course, be a translation from Latin, depending ultimately on Old Irish sources. Perhaps, however, the filiation suggested by Heist should take clearer account of the possible origins of a list of fifteen signs in older writings, parallel to his suggested Irish source documents. This would not be out of keeping with the unique role of Ireland in preserving ancient texts little known elsewhere in Europe’

## 5. Signs of Doomsday in Irish Tradition<sup>23</sup>

After consideration of the Signs of Doomsday in western Latin Church we can now turn to Irish tradition, examining the texts roughly in chronological order.

### a) *The Signs in the Poems of Blathmac*

It is generally accepted that the Irish poems of Blathmac were composed about the year 750.<sup>24</sup> In the first poem the poet calls on Mary to come to him so that he may keen with her her very dear one (Jesus). In the course of 149 quatrains Blathmac laments Jesus’ sufferings in the company of Mary. In his second poem (quatrains 150-259) Blathmac again meditates on Jesus’ saving mission and Mary’s participation in it, beginning with the annunciation by the angel Gabriel, through his public life to victory over the devil at his resurrection, his post-resurrection appearances, his ascension, his lordship of creation. This takes the poet in quatrain 230 to begin his reflections on the prophecies of Christ in the Old Testament, beginning with the prophecy of Balaam on Mary’s son, the great star of dignity to arise from Jacob. This leads Blathmac on to speak of the Old Testament prophecies of Christ, and to enumerate the seven (or eight?) things prophesied of Christ, a theme common in Irish, as in early Christian, tradition. The list varies slightly with the sources. That in the *Scúaib*

<sup>23</sup> See M. McNAMARA, *The Apocrypha in the Irish Church* (Dublin: Dublin Institute for Advanced Studies, 1973; corrected edition 1984), # 104, pp. 128-139.

<sup>24</sup> The poems of Blathmac have been edited by James CARNEY, *The Poems of Blathmac Son of Cú Brettan together with the Irish Gospel of Thomas and a Poem on the Virgin Mary* (Irish Texts Society 47; Dublin 1964).

*Crábaid*, 'The Broom of Devotion', probably from the eighth century and roughly contemporary with Blathmac, is as follows; his birth, baptism, crucifixion, burial, resurrection, ascension, coming of the last judgment. Blathmac's text reads: <sup>25</sup>

232. It is the kingdom of your strong son that the chief prophets have prophesied; though each speaks in his own way the intention of their prophesies is the same.

233. It is of your son (though you may correct him!) that great laws have been prophesied; all this has been fulfilled save the act of his [second] coming.

234. His holy begetting, birth from clay, his undergoing the law of circumcision, his baptism; he is not unbloody (lit. white) before going to cross and burial.

235. His high renowned Resurrection, thereafter his Ascension, his coming to pass judgement (alas!) on the living and the dead.

The final prophecy on Christ's coming to pass judgment, leads the poet on to speak of the signs before Doomsday (quatrains 236-242), to judgment for the individual crimes, the slaughter of Enoch and Elias by Antichrist, ending with Michael's slaying of the Antichrist. The signs in Blathmac do not conform to any of the known groups. However, given that for the things prophesied of Christ Blathmac seems to have drawn on a current list, it is also quite possible that he knew of a list of the signs before Doomsday, even if not quite any of those known to us. The early date of such a text, when the tradition was probably only in the process of formation, might explain the differences. I give here the signs before Doomsday of qq. 236-242 in the edition and translation of James Carney. <sup>26</sup>

236. Alas the coming of hardship - it will utterly crush the great elements. Earth and sky will be ablaze; the smile will be wiped from the face of the seas.

237. This will be a severe shaking; the form of the elements will perish; ocean, sea, and pool will be dry, the beautiful stars will fall from heaven. (cf. Bede 12)

238. The mountain will be as high as the hollow; there will be great complaint; the world will be a level expanse so that a single apple might roll across it. (cf. Bede 1-3)

239. Before your noble unblemished son the angel will sound a good trumpet; there will arise at the sounding every dead one who has been in human shape. (cf. Bede 14)

240. It is by your son—enduring deed! — that many thousands will be struck down into the great fire before the Lord passes judgement on the deeds of all. (cf. Bede 15)

241. Though there be fought (?) a war that will destroy hues — it will be the end of all war; the ignoble demon host will be defeated with their black perverse lord.

242. The impious (pitiful will be the occasion!) who have submitted to Leviathan will suffer burning and slaying; it will be woe to the followers of the Devil!

<sup>25</sup> Irish text with English translation, ed. CARNEY, *The Poems of Blathmac*, p. 78-81.

<sup>26</sup> Ed. CARNEY, pp. 80-83.

This gives the following list:

Alas the coming of hardship –

- i. it will utterly crush the great elements.
- ii. Earth and sky will be ablaze (cf. Ps.-Bede 5); the smile will be wiped from the face of the seas.
- iii. This will be a severe shaking; the form of the elements will perish;
- iv. ocean, sea, and pool will be dry the beautiful stars will fall from heaven. (cf. Ps.-Bede 12)
- v. The mountain will be as high as the hollow (cf. Ps.-Bede 3);
- vi. there will be great complaint;
- vii. the world will be a level expanse so that a single apple might roll across it. (cf. Ps.-Bede 1-3)
- viii. Before your noble unblemished son the angel will sound a good trumpet; there will arise at the sounding every dead one who has been in human shape. (cf. Ps.-Bede 14)
- ix. It is by your son – enduring deed! – that many thousands will be struck down into the great fire before the Lord passes judgement on the deeds of all. (cf. Ps.-Bede 15)

*b) Signs of Doomsday in Karlsruhe (Priscillianist?) Collection (8<sup>th</sup> century?)*

We may have evidence for the presence in Ireland of some form of the *Apocalypse of Thomas* in the eighth century in a text preserved in the Karlsruhe manuscript Aug CCLIV, fol. 153. This manuscript was written at the end of the eighth or the beginning of the ninth century, probably in northern Italy. The codex is a composite one of three distinct manuscripts. The opening section (fol. 153-213) of the third of these was published by D. De Bruyne in 1907, who regarded it as fragments of Priscillianist apocrypha,<sup>27</sup> a position generally rejected. The text published by De Bruyne has six items, the third of which is a sermon attributed to Saint Augustine, beginning: *Fratres karissimi, qui in Xpisto deum colentes*. This has some parallels with the *Apocalypse of Thomas*. M.R. James regarded the contents of the texts published by De Bruyne as Irish, a position that has been generally accepted, but without any detailed examination of the question.<sup>28</sup> A critical edition of this entire text, with an examination of questions relating to it, is called for. A point that may be made here is that some, if not all, the pieces brought together in the Karlsruhe manuscript may have originally circulated as independent units. This is true of the text that interests us, with passages from the *Apocalypse of Thomas*. Charles D. Wright has found that a piece almost identical with the third item published by De Bruyne has been transmitted independently in two other manuscripts, namely Pal. lat. 220 (siglum P) and Pal. lat. 212 (siglum V). P (Pal. lat. 220, fol. 48v-53r) was written in Anglo-Saxon script in the Middle or Upper Rhine regions in the early ninth century, and

<sup>27</sup> Ed. DE BRUYNE, 'Fragments retrouvés d'apocryphes priscillianistes', *RevBén* 24 (1907), 318-335 (with introduction and discussion); the Latin texts reproduced in PLS 2, 1503-1522

<sup>28</sup> M. R. JAMES, 'Irish Apocrypha', *JTS* 20 (1919), 9-16, at 14-16;

was at Lorsch by the tenth century.<sup>29</sup> It has a copy of the interpolated text of the *Apocalypse of Thomas* (not connected with Ireland), and a number of items believed to be Irish or related to Irish tradition, for instance the sole copy of what is regarded as Redaction XI of the *Visio Pauli*, a series of homilies beginning *In nomine Dei summi*, edited by Robert McNally who regarded them as Irish,<sup>30</sup> a recension of the Hiberno-Latin text, *Dies Domenica*, and immediately preceding this an enumerative motif encountered in several Hiberno-Latin compilations.<sup>31</sup> Pal. lat. 220 has also a commentary on the Athanasian Creed, within which one finds a text which overlaps with the second part of De Bruyne's item no. 3 from the Karlsruhe manuscript. This text has not been published. I give it below as an appendix in the edition of Charles D. Wright, who has collated it with Karlsruhe Aug. 254 (K), ed. De Bruyne, p. 325 and with MS Pal. lat. 212 (V).

In his edition of the interpolated text of the *Apocalypse of Thomas* Bihlmeyer noted the parallels between *Thomas* and the Karlsruhe texts published by De Bruyne.<sup>32</sup> He gives the following chart which seems to make clear that some text or texts of *Thomas* was known in the circles from which the Karlsruhe text emanated (which is recognised by a number of scholars as Ireland).

APOCRYPHE PRISCILLIANISTE	APOCALYPSE DE THOMAS
<p>(ed. D. De Bruyne, lines 44-64)</p> <p>Fratres karissimi, in postremo uidebitis multa mala in seculo prelines aduenient, servi dei blasphe-mabuntur, iniquitas unusquisque proximo suo operatur, totus mundus in maligno positus in mendacio in fornicatione in omnibus malis et persecutionibus, anathema uirginitatis denutabitur, ecclesie deserentur, ueritas non agetur, pax non erit, disciplina peribit, bella exercentur in illis diebus.</p> <p>Uae his qui nuptias facient quoniam aut gladio aut fame aut catipiuitate filios generabunt.</p>	<p>Audi Thomas, quae oportet fieri in nouissimis temporibus erunt famis... blasphemium, iniquitas, nequitia... unusquisque quod ille placeant hoc loquantur et sacerdotes mei inter se pacem non habebunt... erit turbatio magna in omni populo, interitus, domus domini erit in desertis et altaria eorum abominabuntur, ut aranea intexant in eis... laetitia periiit, et gaudium recedit, in illis diebus malum abundavit... ueritas non erit, auaritia habundauit...</p> <p>Uae illis qui nuptias faciunt: ad fame et necessitate filius generant. (Texte interpolé de Clm. 4585 d'après Wilhelm [<i>Deutsche Legende und Legendare</i>])</p> <p>...prima die... nubes sanguina...tonitrua</p>

<sup>29</sup> See B. BISCHOFF, 'Lorsch im Spiegel seiner Handschriften', in *Die Reichsabtei Lorsch. Festschrift zum Gedenken an ihre Stiftung 764*, ed. F. Knöpp, 2 vols. (Darmstadt, 1973-77), II, pp. 7-128, at 49 and 108-109. See also WRIGHT, *The Irish Tradition*, p. 111. See also WRIGHT, 'Apocryphal Texts', p. 40.

<sup>30</sup> R. McNALLY, "'In Nomine Dei Summi': Seven Hiberno-Latin Sermons', *Traditio* 35 (1979), 121-143. See also WRIGHT, 'Apocryphal Texts', p. 40.

<sup>31</sup> See C. WRIGHT, *The Irish Tradition*, p. 111.

<sup>32</sup> P. BIHLMAYER, 'Un texte non interpolé de l'Apocalypse de Thomas', *Rev. Bén.* 28 (1911), 270-282 (from Munich, Clm 4563, of the 11<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> century); the chart on p. 279.

Prima die sabbato nix et grando  
ueniet super omnem terram cum tonitrua  
magna terribili tube et mortui resurgent;  
alia dioe mare siccabitur, tertia dioe aperietur  
celum et ascindetur ab oriente usque in occi-  
dente. Tune fugient peccatoribusdicentes  
montibus et collibus : cadent super nos et  
operiet nos et non habebunt refrigerio nisi in  
ore inferni deglutinentur nos. Tunc exercitus  
angelorum uidebitur cum christo et omnes  
sancti et omnes iustis et erunt in letitia oeterna  
sine fine in consortio patriarcharum et in me-  
dio chori angelorum et in iugi letitia propheta-  
rum et consedio cum omnium sanctorum in  
secula seculorum sine fine in letitia magna.

magna (voyez le texte publié ligne 12  
ss.)... portae celi aperientur(l. 19) scin-  
debitur firmamentum celi ab oriente usque  
ad occidentem (l. 40 s.)... omnes homines  
fugebunt in monumentis... et dicent, uti-  
nam terra aperiret se et deglutiret nos (l.  
44 ss.)... Tunc me uidebunt desuperue-  
nientem ... cum uirtute et sanctorum ange-  
lorum (l. 48 ss.)... tunc et in aera tollentur  
... et ibunt mecum gaudentes in celis ...  
tune erit illis magnum gaudium coram  
patre meo et coram angelis sanctis (l. 68  
ss.)...

### c) *Signs of Doomsday in Saltair na Rann (ca. 1000)*

*Saltair na Rann* ('The Psalter of the Quatrains') is a poetical composition of 162 cantos or poems. The original work had only 150, a fact which has given the work its name. From internal evidence it has been generally assumed that the work was composed 988 A.D. The subject matter of the *Saltair* is sacred history from creation onwards, based on scripture, but mainly on the apocryphal *Adam and Eve* tradition for the creation narrative. The additional poems (Cantos 151-162) after canto 150 express repentance and ignorance of God and treat of the signs and events which are to occur during the nine days before Doomsday, then of the resurrection and retribution.

The entire Irish text, without translation, has been edited by W. Stokes.<sup>33</sup> The Irish text of cantos 153-162 on the signs before Doomsday, with English translation, are given by W.W. Heist.<sup>34</sup> Heist devotes chapter 4 of his work to a study of the chief early groups of the signs tradition. Towards the end s of this,<sup>35</sup> and immediately before the diagram (pedigree as he calls it) indicating one of the possible lines of development, he sums up the findings of chapter 4 in nine points, which mainly concern the place of *Saltair na Rann* in the development of the tradition. 1. *Saltair na Rann* is derived, in its basic structure, from the seven-days list of signs before Doom in the *Apocalypse of Paul*; 2. It contains almost all the fifteen signs, five very distinctive ones of them being grouped in the order of the earliest datable form of the legend [=Pseudo-Bede] in strophe CLVI. 3. It is the earliest known text of any part of the Fifteen Signs. 4. It is so closely related in detail and wording to the *Airdena inna Cóic Lá ria mBráth* that either the corresponding parts must be descended from a common Irish ancestor or one must descend from the other. 5. The *Airdena* or an ancestor of it has also borrowed some material from *The Evernew Tongue*. 6. The Damien (in Heist's orthography), Pseudo-Bede, Ava and Comstor types of the legend resemble the *Airdena* fairly closely, though they are much simplified. The earliest of these, the Damien

<sup>33</sup> W. STOKES, *Saltair na Rann* (Anecdota Oxoniensia, Medieval and Modern Series, Liii; Oxford, 1883).

<sup>34</sup> W.W. HEIST, *The Fifteen Signs before Doomsday* (East Lansing, MI; 1952), pp. 2-21.

<sup>35</sup> HEIST, *The Fifteen Signs*, p. 98.

type, is also the closest to the *Airdena* in content. 7. The Old French version is quite different from all other versions, though it is closest to the *Airdena*; but in several details it agrees more closely with *Saltair na Rann* (and in lesser degree with other forms of the *Apocalypse of Thomas*). It also has borrowed at least one detail from an Irish version of the legend of Antichrist. 8. The Welsh *Arwyddion eyn Dydd Brawd* (*Gwynn gwarandaw*) has the days numbered backwards like the *Airdena*, and resembles the Irish piece in some other details. 9. The Middle English *The Debate between the Body and the Soul* is a seven signs type, ultimately derived from the *Apocalypse of Thomas*. But most of the signs are more like those of the fifteen-day legend than the other seven-day forms; and as in fifteen-day forms, there is usually only one sign on each day.

Heist has arrived at definite positions on a variety of questions and texts. It remains for the research currently in progress to re-evaluate these in the light of a new edition of the texts. The section of *Saltair na Rann* with the Signs of Doomsday is being critically edited by Caitriona Ó Dochartaigh for the volume *Apocrypha Hiberniae 2*.

#### d) *The Signs of Doomsday in the Catechesis Celtica* (10<sup>th</sup> century)

*Catechesis Celtica* is the name given to the contents of the Vatican Library codex Reg. 49. It is a tenth century manuscript, most probably written in Brittany. Its contents are religious, with homilies and other items. It has much material of Irish origin or with strong Irish affiliations.<sup>36</sup>

One of the items it contains (fol. 52v) is a text on signs for the seven days before Doomsday. Charles Wright has shown that it is one of six abbreviated texts of the *Apocalypse of Thomas*.<sup>37</sup> Within this group its closest affiliation is with an abbreviated text of the same apocryphon preserved in the manuscript Oxford, Bodleian Library, Hatton 26, written in England in the thirteenth century. This manuscript has some items with Irish affiliations. While not certain, it is probable that the abbreviated text of *Thomas* of the *Catechesis Celtica* represents Irish tradition. The Vatican codex Reg. 49 and the Oxford text are the only Latin texts of *Thomas* from England or Ireland.

In the *Catechesis Celtica* text the signs are followed by a passage on eternal rewards and punishments, very much in the tradition of Irish eschatological teaching.<sup>38</sup> While it is possible that this ending was added to the signs on the Continent, it would seem more probable that the entire unit, with the seven-day set of signs, circulated in Ireland.

I here give the text with the Signs before Doomsday (from MS Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Reg. lat. 49, fol. 52v) and the retribution that follow on the general judgment.<sup>39</sup>

<sup>36</sup> On the *Catechesis Celtica* and its Irish affiliations see M. McNAMARA, 'The Irish Affiliations of the *Catechesis Celtica*', *Celtica* 21 (1990), 291-334; M. McNAMARA, 'Sources and Affiliations of the *Catechesis Celtica* (MS Vat. Reg. lat. 49)', *Sacris Erudiri* 34 (1994), 185-237; J. RITTMUELLER, 'MS Vat. Reg. 49 Reviewed', *Sacris Erudiri* 33 (1992-1993), 259-305.

<sup>37</sup> C.W. WRIGHT, 'Apocryphal Texts', 37-40, 55-62.

<sup>38</sup> See McNAMARA, 'Sources and Affiliations', p. 234, with reference to p. 233, with an earlier text on eternal joys in the same manuscript.

<sup>39</sup> With this ending see the ending on a homily on the Second Coming in the same MS Reg. lat. 49, fol. 51r (cited in McNAMARA, 'Sources and Affiliations' p. 233): *Beati quibus dabitur altum rus angelorum sine curis, ubi est dies sine nocte, tranquillitas sine uento, gaudium sine fine, ubi sunt VIII quae nullus in hoc*

## De diebus VII ante diem iudicii

Primo die primum signum iudicii, mormur magnum, erit in caelo. Hora tertia diei erit uox magna in firmamento caeli, nube magna sanguinea descendente ab aquilone; et tonitrua magna erunt, et fulgora fortia sequentur illam nubem, et cooperient nubes caelum. Et erit pluuia sanguinis super terram.

Secunda die erit uox magna in firmamento caeli, et mouebitur terra de celo suo, et pars aperietur in firmamento caeli ab oriente. Et potestates magne eructabunt per partes caeli, et cooperient totum caelum.

Tertia diei hora II erit in caelo signum igneum et sulfureum, et abissi terram rigabunt. De IIII angulis mundi primum celum plicabitur ut liber et non apparebit continuo ut putei abissi obscurabuntur usque ad horam X. Tunc dicent omnes angelici populi: Appropinqua nobis, Domine, ne pereamus.

Quarto die hora prima maria et terrae aquilonis orientia loquntur, et abissi mugebunt. Tunc commouebuntur uniuersae uirtutes terrae et <terrae>, motus in illa die erit, et cadent idola gentium et omnia facta terrae.

Quinta die hora V subito erunt tonitrua magna in caelis. Ortus solis et ortus lunae rapietur. Erunt tenebrae magnae usque ad uesperum. Et stelle auertuntur a misteriis suis. In ista die omnes gentes odient saeculum et condemnabunt uitam saeculi huius.

Sexta die hora VI diei scindetur caelum in firmamento ab oriente parte usque ad occidentem. Erunt angeli prospicientes de caelis. Tunc <homines> fugient in montibus et abscondent se ante uirtutem angelorum dicentes: Aperiet se terra et deglutiet nos. Sunt et alia quae numquam facta sunt ex quo celum creatum est.

Septimo die hora II per IIII angulos saeculi simul totum caelum plicabitur. Iniqui angeli facientes bellum inter se tota diae et angeli sancti pernecebunt eos propter electos meos.

Post haec hora VI erit uox tenera, suavis, quando dicet Pater sanctis et iustis: *Venite, benedicti Patris mei, possidete regnum quod uobis paratum ab <origine> mundi.* Aspera uox erit, quando dicet impiis et peccatoribus: *Ite, maledicti, in ignem aeternum.* In ista die iudicii, sicut Petrus ait: *Erit dies unus tamquam mille anni et mille anni tamquam dies unus.* Mille erit dies unus impiis et peccatoribus. Sanctis autem et iustis mille anni quasi dies unus erunt.

Vae enim illi homini, qui expectat hunc diem cum malo merito, si prius ei non eueniat dies confessionis peccatorum suorum ante exierit de corpore suo, quia omnis peccator tunc moritur primo uiuens in peccato. Quandiu f<uer>it in peccato, moritur et in sepulcro et in inferno perpetuo.

Vae semper homicidiis et periuris et idolatriae seruientibus et adulteris et furibus et maledic<ti>is et falsis testibus, et rapina inmerito rapientibus. Hi autem omnes, qui iniqua agunt, ibunt in suplicium aeternum, ubi est fletus et stridor dentium, ubi tenebrae sine luce, ubi fumus et frigus, ubi sempiterna maledictio.

Non sic erit iustis et perfectis in omnibus mandatis Dei bene operantibus. Ibunt in uitam aeternam in regno sp<cl>endido, in letitia sempiterna sine tristitia, iuuentus sine senectute,

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*mundo habere potest, etiamsi fuisset rex totius mundi: uita sine morte, iuuentus sine senectute, letitia sine tristitia, pax sine discordia, lux sine tenebris, sanitas sine dolore, regnum sine commotione...*

lux sine tenebris. Nullum malum aduenit. Nullum bonum abierit, sicut apostolus dicit: *Quod oculus non uidit, nec auris audiuit, nec in cor hominis ascendit, quae praeparauit Deus diligentibus se. Et tunc uidebimus eum sicuti est. Videbimus regem iuuenem et aeternum et regnum aeternum. Videbimus Patrem et Filium et Spiritum sanctum.*

*e) The Signs of Doomsday in the Early Recension of the Evernew Tongue (10<sup>th</sup>, 9<sup>th</sup>, 8th century?)<sup>40</sup>*

As we can see from the diagram given above, W.W. Heist believes that in the formation of the Fifteen Signs tradition together with *Saltair na Rann* the *Evernew Tongue* served as a most important secondary source.

*In Tenga Bithnua*, 'The Evernew Tongue', is a name given in Irish tradition to Philip the Apostle, arising from a tradition that at his martyrdom his tongue was cut out seven times (in the Irish *Passion of Philip*; nine times according to *In Tenga Bithnua* itself) by his torturers, but he did not cease preaching. The Irish work under this name is preserved in three recensions, the first and most important in the Book of Lismore.<sup>41</sup> In the work, in response to questions addressed to him the *Evernew Tongue* gives information on a great variety of subjects, such as the creation of the universe, especially about the seven heavens, the seas, wells, rivers, precious stones and trees of the earth, the sun and stars, birds, beasts and men. The two final questions concern the end time, the answer to the second last containing the signs before Doomsday. Some of the questions, and other portions of the text, are in Latin.

Many questions have arisen as to the nature of this work and the sources used, and a variety of answers given. As Máire Herbert has stated in the notes to her translation of part of the text in 1989: 'Much painstaking literary and source analysis is required before any really informed judgement can be passed on this interesting composition'<sup>42</sup> This work has now been very competently completed by John Carey, in a volume to appear in the series *Apocrypha Hiberniae 2*, to be published by Brepols Publishers in the series *Corpus Christianorum Series Apocryphorum*.

Hitherto the original composition was generally assigned a date of the tenth century. His examination of the first recension has made John Carey feel convinced that the original text was older than has hitherto been held, belonging at latest to the ninth and perhaps even this based on a Hiberno-Latin text of the seventh or eighth century.

For a fuller understanding of the Fifteen Signs tradition in Ireland I believe it permitted to reproduce here the full text of the Signs before Doomsday of this recension, and (with his kind permission) in the translation of John Carey. The text reads as follows:

(§91). *Interrogauerunt sapientes Ebreorum: 'Indica nobis de die iudicii, et quomodo destruetur mundus, et quo tempore destruetur.'*

The Ever-new Tongue answered: 'It is not pleasant,' said he, 'even to be reminded of the Judgment concerning which you ask. Trembling and fear come upon even the angels

<sup>40</sup> See MCNAMARA, *The Apocrypha*, # 104A, p. 132.

<sup>41</sup> Ed. W. STOKES, 'The Evernew Tongue', *Ériu* 2 (1905), 96-162.

<sup>42</sup> In M. HERBERT and M. MCNAMARA, *Irish Biblical Apocrypha. Selected Texts in Translation* (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1989), p. 183.

of heaven when it is remembered and brought to mind. For it is cause for much trembling and fear:

- (i) 'The three hundred and sixty-five eruptions (?) from the mountains of fire, bursting upon the lands before the face of the great King whose power will destroy the world.
- (ii) 'The tottering and breaking of the seven heavens as they bend down upon [the] lands.
- (iii) 'The rising and the tumult of the four fiery winds from the cardinal points of heaven, with roaring and the coming of thunder and lightning from every quarter.
- (iv) 'The thundering of the 3,375 stars as they fall from heaven.
- (v) 'The moon turning the colour of blood.
- (vi) 'The sun quenching its light.
- (vii) 'The hosts of heaven will be so numerous on that day that no mortal will be able to see them all, or to reckon their number, but only God.
- (viii) 'The woods and mountains dissolving (?) in a fiery blast from every side.
- (ix) 'The crying out of the beasts, and of all the animals of the land.
- (x) 'The raining down (?) of fire in every land.
- (xi) 'The flocks of birds in the air crying out because of the streams of fire.
- (xii) 'The bellowing of the whales and the fish in the seas because of the ebbing away of the salt seas and the heat of the fire.
- (xiii) 'The descent of the nine orders of heaven, and the crying and singing of the souls as they come to take their bodies from the earth.
- (xiv) 'The wailing and outcry of the sinners as they plead for mercy from the Lord whom they have afflicted; and it will be a 'cry into the void' for them, and 'repentance too late'
- (xv) 'The outcry of those in hell, as the souls are vomited up to the assembly, so that judgment may be passed upon each one according to its deserts.
- (xvi) 'The smiting together of the seven heavens as they dissolve in the winds of fire.
- (xvii) 'The shaking of the earth as it is knocked backwards and upside down.
- (xviii) 'The wailing and outcry of the demons and the souls of the sinners, as hell closes over them forever.'

The next, and final question, in the *Evernew Tongue* is on the precise time, in daytime or nighttime, in which the world was created or will be destroyed and (in which) the Lord rose from the dead. It indicates that the signs before Doomsday were considered with the pattern of the overall endtime:

§93. *Interrogaverunt sapientes Ebreorum: 'Quo tempore die vel nocte mundus factus est vel destruetur. et Dominus surrexit a mortuis?'*

With regard to sources for the Signs texts of *Tenga Bithnua* Carey first reviews earlier research on the matter. St. John Seymour compared 'the crying and singing of the souls as they come to take their bodies from the earth' (lines 20-21; sign xiii) with the *uox magna*

uttered by souls reclaiming their bodies in the *Apocalypse of Thomas*;<sup>43</sup> but W.W. Heist denied that this resemblance was sufficient evidence that the former had indeed drawn from the latter. Heist preferred to assume that *TB*'s lost source had belonged to the same 'general body of Jewish and Christian apocalyptic' as the *Apocalypse of Thomas*, and to see any similarities between the texts as being explicable on this basis: 'in the present state of the evidence, there seems to be little more to say of the relations of the *Evernew Tongue* to earlier works'<sup>44</sup>

Carey then gives his own assessment. When account is taken of the readings of the second recension as well as the first (in the Book of Lismore), however, close parallels to the *Apocalypse of Thomas* can be found in items (ii), (xiii), (xvi) and (xvii): given that the *Apocalypse*'s influence may be discernible in §66.16-17 of the first recension [that is, 'the mountain of fire which was formed from the fire of Judgment'; cf. *Apoc. Thom.*, Bihlmeyer 1911, 273], the case for a significant connection seems persuasive; items (iii-vi) appear to derive from Revelation 6:12-13, 7:1. Nos (i) and (ix-xii) of the above list resemble items in the tract *De quindecim signis*: one copy of this tract is preserved in the pseudo-Bedan *Collectanea*, a miscellany which has been tentatively assigned to an insular milieu (Bayless and Lapidge 1998, 30). Items (ix-xii), however, are closest not to the *Collectanea* version but to that used by the eleventh-century Italian scholar Peter Damian: the latter, or one of its sources, must therefore have been available to the author of *TB*.

### f) *The Signs of Doomsday in the Second Recension of the Evernew Tongue* (12<sup>th</sup> century: middle or second half)<sup>45</sup>

A second recension of the *Tenga Bithnua* is known from four manuscripts. It has been edited by Úna Nic Énri and Gearóid Mac Niocaill.<sup>46</sup> From a study of the language they believe that a date for the work in the middle or second half of the twelfth century would be acceptable. The overall relation of this second to the first recension does not concern us here. There is, however, a significant difference in the Signs before Doomsday. I give the relevant text of this second recension here in the translation of John Carey (with his consent):

§91. The wise men of the Hebrews said: 'Tell us,' said they, 'tidings of the Day of Judgment. How is the world dissolved throughout the land, and at what time is it destroyed?']

§92. The apostle said: 'Those tidings are not pleasant for you. For when the angels of heaven give thought to them, there is trembling and fear upon them on their account:

- (i) 'The tremblings and fear of the three hundred and seventy-five mountains, bursting before the face of the great high powerful King,
- (ii) 'Breaking and trembling seizing the whole world.

<sup>43</sup> With reference to SEYMOUR 1923, 162; text in BIHLMAYER 1911, 273.52-57.

<sup>44</sup> With reference to HEIST, *The Fifteen Signs*, (1952), 65.

<sup>45</sup> See MCNAMARA, *Apocrypha*, # 104F, p. 136.

<sup>46</sup> Úna NIC ÉNRI and Gearóid MAC NIOCAILL, 'The Second Recension of the Evernew Tongue', *Celtica* 9 (1971), 1-59.

- (iii) 'The seven heavens will bend down from the southern corner of heaven, so that the bright radiance of the angels and the sunny dwelling of the royal house will be plainly visible to the earth.
- (iv) 'The rising of the four fiery winds from the four corners of the world,
- (v) 'The tumult and loud clashing of the 1,305 stars as they fall from heaven, and the moon turning the colour of blood, and the sun confined in the blackness of coal and [deprived] of its light.
- (vi) 'So great will be that peril that there will not be a bright angel whose appearance will not change, save only the countenance of God.
- (vii) 'The burning and falling of the woods and mountains at the blast of the fiery sea, and the crying out of the beasts at the heat of the fire of the purgatory of the animals of the earth, and the screaming of the flocks of birds in the air because of the streams of fire, and the bellowing of the whales of the sea because of the great heat of the fire ebbing around them.
- (viii) 'The singing together of the nine orders of heaven, and the crying of the souls as they come to take the bodies in which they did good deeds and bad deeds. Woe-ful then will be the cry of the sinners as they plead for mercy from the Lord after their offence and on account of having gone against his will. It will be a cry without [receiving] mercy, and it will be repentance without atonement, and it will be peril without end.'

[§93. The wise men of the Hebrews asked: 'Is it in the day or in the night that the world was made; or when will it be dissolved, or in what hour did God arise from the dead?']

g) *The Signs before Doomsday in a Poem 'Garbh éirghidh iodhna an bhrátha', attributed to Donnchadh Mór Ó Dálaigh (died. 1224)*<sup>47</sup>

Donnchadh Mór Ó Dálaigh was trained in bardic learning and also in subjects taught in monastic schools, some of which still existed. He is chiefly noted as a religious poet. A large number of poems (more than 160), mostly religious in nature, have been attributed to him.

The poem on the Fifteen Signs is very closely related to the Pseudo-Bede type.<sup>48</sup> According to Heist 'most of the variations from the Pseudo-Bede type in Ó Dálaigh's poem are presumably due to the difficulties of the metrical requirements of his verse'.<sup>49</sup> The poem, in fact, may conceivably be descended directly from Pseudo-Bede, but is, however, probably independent of the Pseudo-Bede text.<sup>50</sup> Heist, in fact, can use the evidence of Pseudo-Bede to corroborate the order of the signs found in RIA, MS. 23.D.3 (one of the MSS used by McKenna), against that of the majority of the MSS, followed

<sup>47</sup> MCNAMARA, *The Apocrypha*, # 104E, pp. 135-136.

<sup>48</sup> Edited with English translation by Lambert MCKENNA, 'The Signs of Judgment', in *The Irish Monthly* 55 (1927), 260-264

<sup>49</sup> HEIST, *The Fifteen Signs*, p.136.

<sup>50</sup> HEIST, *The Fifteen Signs*, pp. 136, 106, 199.

by McKenna in his critical edition.<sup>51</sup> This close relationship, we may add, is possibly an additional indication of the Irish origin of Pseudo-Bede.

It will be for the current research to examine the statements made by Heist. Ó Dalaigh's poem has 38 verses. The first 22 of these are on the fifteen signs; of the remaining verses, 23-34 are on the judgment. Quatrains 35-36 are on the order of the blessed in heaven: married couples, maids [*thus McKenna; ogha* –read 'virgins?'] and widows are above around the Lord, enjoying the same life as the angels (cf. Mark 12:25 etc.). Christ's mother is there in her own body – presupposing belief in the bodily Assumption of Mary. Those there who die young are considered blessed (# 37; cf. Wisdom of Solomon 4:10-14). The poem ends with a somewhat mysterious quatrain: 'To Peter Pope of Rome come mighty throngs; every man (*cách; every one*) shall find him as a golden palace adorned'

Quatrain 17 in McKenna's edition gives the content of the sign for the twelfth day, with explicit mention of the day in question (unlike for all other days). Quatrains 18-19A of McKenna's edition, with no apparent connection with the context, seem out of place. It is for the editor of the new edition to determine whether they are interpolations.

The sources of the entire poem seem relatively clear. For the first part (qq. 1-22) it is the pseudo-Bede text; for the judgment scene (qq 23-33) Mat 24; for 35-36 possibly Irish eschatology texts. I give the final section here, in McKenna's translation, with source indication for some of the text.

22. On the **fifteenth day**:  
the earth shall blaze as tinder:  
next day shall come the judgment  
which shall make all men (?)

23. God shall send His good Son  
on Monday to judge the world;  
God's Monday-meeting to judge  
the dead shall be a dread fierce struggle.

24. Christ will utter— dread strait—  
the great reproach to us;  
the Creator will tell us of  
His being spurned by us in churlishness.<sup>52</sup>

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<sup>51</sup> HEIST, *The Fifteen Signs*, pp. 137-139.

<sup>52</sup> The following verses depend ultimately on Mat 25:44; 25:42; 25:41, but probably more immediately on catechetical developments on the text of Matthew. For the judgment scene we may compare the roughly contemporary (12<sup>th</sup> century) *Scéla láí brátha*, 5-12; ed. W. STOKES, 'Tidings of Doomsday. An Early-Middle-Irish Homily', *Revue Celtique* 4 (1880), 245-257, at 246: '5. 'When the Son of God and Man in one Person shall come with honour and with glory, and all his angels along with him, then will he sit on his throne and on the station of his glory and all the human beings will be collected there in his presence, and he will make their division and their separation thereafter. He will set in order, forsooth, his Saints and his Righteous ones on his right hand; but the sinful and the unrighteous he will set in order on his left. It is then that the King will say to those that are on his right, "Come ye, oh blessed ones, possess my Father's kingdom that hath been prepared for you from the beginning of the world! For I was in hunger and ye gave me food: I was in thirst and ye gave me drink; I was in need of a guesthouse and ye gave me hospitality; I was without raiment and ye gave me raiment: I was in sickness and ye came to watch me: I was in captivity and

25. 'When did we spurn Thee?'  
 we cry out in sorrow  
 'to Thee had we seen Thee. O Lord,  
 we would have given the kine of our possession'

26. 'I was the beggar in thy door-way  
 In thirst and hunger,  
 Not getting price of bit or sup  
 While you were in comfort.

27. 'I was every poor man,  
 the woman in rags;  
 every beggar naked and destitute  
 —they spoke the truth—was I.

28. 'Ye folk who left me thus,  
 depart to Devil's home,  
 and experience, as befits you,  
 the place ye have deserved.'

29. Great then shall be the noise of weeping  
 from Devil's castaways;  
 sad the groans of the anguished folk  
 as devils take them away.

30. Woe to the body cast into the abyss  
 in the dread abode of Hell;  
 it is not possible to describe  
 what the folk of that fort endure.

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ye came to loose me and to help me." 6. It is then that the Righteous will give this answer to the Lord: "Oh Lord", say they, "when saw we thee in hunger or in thirst and gave thee food and drink? when saw we thee in need of a guesthouse or without raiment, and gave thee hospitality and raiment? or when saw we thee in sickness or captivity and came to get tidings of thee and to loose thee?" 7. This then is the answer that the Lord will give to the Righteous: "Every time", saith he, "that ye have done good for the poor in my name, it is for me ye have done it." 8. Those then are the six kinds of mercy by which the heavenly kingdom is bought. They are the six glassen doors through the which comes the light of eternal life into the Church. Those are the six steps whereby the Saints and the Righteous ascend to Heaven. 9. Then shall the Lord give also unto them that are on his left hand this bitter, awful answer, to wit, to the folk that have not fulfilled his will and his command, and it is this that he shall say to them, casting them into hell: "Depart from me, oh cursed ones, and go ye into the everlasting fire that hath been prepared for the Devil and his evil household. For I was in hunger and in thirst and ye gave me not food or drink: I was in need of a guest-house and raiment and ye gave me not hospitality or raiment: I was in sickness and captivity and ye came not to get tidings of me or to loose me." 10. It is then that the impious ones shall give this answer to the Lord: "Oh Lord," say they, "when saw we (thee) in hunger, or in thirst, or in need of a guest-house, or without raiment, or in sickness, or in captivity, and rendered not attendance nor lowly service unto thee?" 11. It is then the Lord will give an answer to them: "Every time", saith he, "that ye have not done good for the poor in my name, it is for me ye have not done it." 12. Those then are the six chief things through the which hell is attained. Thereafter then the unjust shall be hurled headlong into hell's pain and into the everlasting punishment, but the Saints and the Righteous shall go into the life everlasting to inhabit heaven along with God and his angels for ever and ever.'

31. Alas O Lord for him who deserves  
to be driven from Heaven  
woe to him who parts—may we never part—  
from that lofty fair palace.

32. Christ Who holds sway shall say  
'Ye folk who abandoned Me not,  
come in the strength of my blessing  
with me into everlasting life.'

33. 'He who abandoned feast  
in my honour,' says the King of Heaven,  
'shall get a better banquet-house  
without ceasing or end,'

34. Bright shining-faced angels  
shall open the doors to them;  
'twould be hard to distinguish the bright sun from  
the splendour of each angel's face.

35. Married couples, maids [*ógha*, translate: 'virgins?'], widows  
are above around the Lord  
in Heaven in three holy ranks  
enjoying the same life as the angels.

36. Christ's mother in her own body  
shall be seen by all in Heaven;  
Heaven's King on His throne  
shall be seen on Mary's left.

37. Short the life of those whom death  
takes from youth before their sins  
for the world was not long dear to them;  
'tis a danger to those to whom it is granted.

38. To Peter Pope of Rome  
come mighty throngs;  
every man shall find him  
as a golden palace adorned.

*h) The Signs in the Poem 'Airdena an Brátha' (date: not before 1100)<sup>53</sup>*

The text headed *Airdena inna Cóic Lá nDéc ria mBráth* ('The Signs of the Fifteen Days before Doom'), edited by W. Stokes from the *Book of Lismore*,<sup>54</sup> is one of the best-

<sup>53</sup> See MCNAMARA, *The Apocrypha*, # 104C, pp. 133-134.

<sup>54</sup> W. STOKES, 'The Fifteen Tokens of Doomsday', *RC* 28 (1907), 308-326.

known Irish texts with the fifteen signs before Doomsday. Its position within the Fifteen Signs tradition, and place in the development of this tradition, have been examined by St. John D. Seymour<sup>55</sup> and W. W. Heist.<sup>56</sup> These recognise the affiliations with the specific Damian form of the legend. Heist also notes the differences from Damian in some instances and agreements at times with Pseudo-Bede. Much of Heist's examination is taken up with comparisons of *Airdena* with *Saltair na Rann*, and the differences in the individual signs from Damian and comparison with the signs in other forms of the tradition, especially Pseudo-Bede. In his view if we take the *Airdena* to be a quite primitive form of the legend we can successfully account for the relationships between the Damian and Pseudo-Bede types of the legend, as previous explanations have failed to do.<sup>57</sup>

It will be for a new examination of the *Airdena* to evaluate Heist's views and assess the position of this text in the overall development of the legend of the Fifteen Signs. Here I make some basic observations, which need to be taken into consideration.

*Airdena* is a prose text, with fifty-three paragraphs in Stokes's edition. Nineteen of those are devoted to the fifteen signs before Doom, the signs being numbered from the fifteenth day before Doom to the day before Doom, in this differing from the general order found in the texts of the tradition. The signs or events for some days are briefly described; the description of the signs for other days is quite lengthy, in this differing markedly from the Damian text. The order is also not always that of Damian.

While the heading (*Airdena*, 'signs', 'tokens') speaks of the signs before Doomsday, more than half of the text (paragraphs 23 to 53) goes beyond the signs and speaks of judgment, eternal rewards and punishments. The sources used by this section require examination. The source for paragraphs 37-45 and 47-48 is demonstrably the *Elucidarium* of Honorius Augustodunensis (*floruit* early 12<sup>th</sup> century). We know very little of the person who names himself in his writings as Honorius Augustodunensis, and what we do know is derived principally from his writings. He was very much under the influence of Anselm of Canterbury and also of Scotus Eriugena whose writings he was instrumental in popularising. He seems to have lived for some time in England and had relations with Canterbury, and apparently also with Worcester.<sup>58</sup> Most of his work, however, seems to have been in Southern Germany and Austria. He had relationships with Regensburg and the Irish monastery of St James there, and with one of its abbots, the Irishman Christianus. Opinion is divided about the Honorius's country of origin, whether France, Germany, England or even Ireland. Honorius may have been a pen-name, rather than his real name. His first writing, the *Elucidarium* already referred to, was written about 1095, his latest known one from around 1135.

The sources for the remaining paragraphs of the second part of *Airdena* (23-36; 49-53) may be compared with certain texts of Irish eschatology.

The bearing of the identification of sources for the second part of *Airdena* needs to be evaluated in any study of the work's bearing on the history of the Fifteen Signs legend. It

<sup>55</sup> St. JOHN D. SEYMOUR, 'The Signs of Doomsday in the Saltair na Rann' in *PRIA* 36 (1923), 154-163, at 161.

<sup>56</sup> W.W. HEIST, *The Fifteen Signs*, pp. 72-91.

<sup>57</sup> HEIST, *The Fifteen Signs*, p. 90.

<sup>58</sup> For Honorius, see M. MAC CONMARA, *An Léann Eaglasta in Éirinn 1000-1200* (Dublin: Clóchomhar, 1982), pp. 47-49.

will be for literary scholars to determine the date of the Irish text, whether the language of the work is of the same nature and date throughout. The precise literary relationship of *Airdena* to *Saltair na Rann* also needs examination.

I here give the second part of the poem (§ 19-53), after the Signs proper, in Stoke's translation, with some indication of its sources.

§ 19. This is the token of **the day before Doom** [no. 15 of the other texts], to wit, the pure King of Glory, the only Son of the King of heaven and earth and hell, with a countless multitude of angels and archangels, to wit, the nine ranks of heaven, in His company will go, on that day to the summit of Mount Zion to judge their deeds, both good and evil, for Adam's impure children.

§ 20. This is the semblance in number of the household of heaven in the company of the Creator on that day, to wit, stars of heaven, and sand of sea, and grass on earth. Such is the greatness of the power and strength of the angels, that in the space of only a single day seven of them would sweep away the whole world from sunrise to sunset.

§ 21. More awful and mightier than thunder are their voices, so that then, there is sent a proclamation, from the Creator to the human race, to wit, Michael the Archangel; and all human beings will then hear Michael's proclamation from the Creator, summoning them to that great assembly. So then all the dead will arise out of the earth, to wit, first, the apostles will arise, and the prophets and the confessors, the martyrs and the saints and the righteous; and thereafter the virgins and penitents; and, lastly, baptized infants.

§ 22. No one on that day will be younger or older than another, for the whole human race will arise at the age of thirty years, that is, the age at which Adam was created, and the age which Jesus had attained when He was baptized.<sup>59</sup>

§ 23. Oh, foul will be the resurrection of the sinners on that day! A great and vast army of Adam's race will be proceeding distressfully through the seas of heavy, fiery, perilous (?) storm, and through the vast unendurable waves of the red flame which is in the four parts of the world, to the meeting of the justly-judging, mighty Overking, unto Mount Zion.

§ 24. Oh then the household of heaven and earth and hell will gather into that meeting, and then the King of Glory will arise with His final Cross on his shoulder in the presence of them all; and thus He will arise, with all His red Body around Him, with the traces of the stabs and wounds of His Passion upon Him, so that all the deep, incurable gashes, and the great tortures which they themselves inflicted upon Him, may be manifested to the Jews.

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<sup>59</sup> Resurrection at the age of thirty years would have been a common belief. We may compare a text in the more or less contemporary (11<sup>th</sup> century) *Scéla na hEsérgi* (The Story of the Resurrection); ed. with English translation by W. STOKES, 'Tidings of the Resurrection', *Revue Celtique* 25 (1904), 232-259, at 239: '8. It is then asked, since all human beings will arise out of death, in what age or form will their resurrection be? And the apostle deals with that question when he says: 'All men', quoth the apostle, 'will arise out of death in the likeness of the age and form of Christ.' Three years and thirty were completed by Christ, and in the likeness of that age He arose out of death. At the age of Christ, then, the apostle says that all men will arise, but not in His size, that is, not equal in bulk to His body, for it is not certain that all the bodies of the Resurrection will be of equal size. Christ, however, will abide for ever, without addition or diminution, in the form and in the bulk in which He appeared to His apostles after (His) resurrection; and it is therefore that all men will arise at the same age, to wit, at the age of thirty. Howbeit, they will have in their bodies varying size and unequal bulk, in accordance with the likeness and the nature of the times and the countries in which they have been born'

§ 25. Then Christ will sit down with his twelve Apostles around Him. Oh then will be the great, conspicuous end, to wit, the Monday of Doomsday, the day of destruction and vengeance for the sinners, and the day of respect and great honour for the righteous.

§ 26. That day there will be a sad and manifest cry from the rabble of the world at being cast, bound and cruelly fettered, into the awful death of Hell, into the unfriendly hands of their foe, the Devil, tortured continually, and with Hell shut upon them for ever and ever.

§ 27. Then the saints and the righteous will be diligently and always praising their Creator, they being cheerful and glad after gaining victory and triumph from the Devil.

§ 28. Oh the whole human race is arranged in four assemblies, there in presence of Christ, to wit, the good and the very good, the bad and the very bad.<sup>60</sup>

§ 29. Oh sad it is that the provision of the ready, ever-decisive judgments which are then delivered will not be upright, pleasant, righteous, discreet, gentle, patient, loving, abstinent, fasting, humble, penitent!

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<sup>60</sup> The division into four groups for the judgment is a feature of Medieval Irish eschatology. See *Catechesis Celtica*, ed. M. MCNAMARA, 'Some Aspects', pp. 57-58: 'III familiae quae ascri(bentur) in iudicio. Duae familiae ex eis non ueniunt in iudicio, id est *boni ualde et mali ualde*. Sedebunt enim impii statim cum diabolo, sicut sedebunt iusti et perfecti cum Christo. Aliae duo familiae ueniunt ante iudicium, id est *boni non ualde et mali non ualde*. Et iudicabit illos atque illis dicetur: ITE et UENITE. Resurget impius ut damnetur, iustus ut iudicet. Timendum est iudicium' This is found in greater detail in the Irish text *Scéla láí brátha* (Tidings of Doomsday), §§ 15-18; ed. W. STOKES, 'Tidings of Doomsday. An Early-Middle-Irish Homily', *Revue Celtique* 4 (1880), 245-257, at 250-253 (dots represent small illegible sections of the Irish text). '15. It is certain, then, that there will be made four troops of the human race on the Day of Doom. Now a troop of them shall be brought to judgment and shall go after their doom to pain and punishment. It is to them the Lord shall make the awful answer in banishing them from him: "Depart from me, oh cursed, into the everlasting fire that has been prepared for the Devil and for his evil household." It is these that do not fulfil by deed the good which they promise by lips. This is the name of that folk in the scripture, *mali non ualde*, that is, bad, not greatly bad. 16. Another troop of them will not be brought to judgment, but to Hell they will go at once, without adjudication at all then, and they will be tortured thereafter through ages of ages without God's mercy to help them, for they do not put term, or law, or rule on committing their sins and the vices here, but every evil which is greatest they could to outrage God and men, it is this that they do. This is the name of that troop, *mali ualde*, that is, what is worst of the human race. 17. Another troop of them will be brought to judgment, and they will go after their judgment unto reward. These are they that here make earnest repentance through grief of heart, and amend their former evils through virtues and fair deeds, and then they give alms of food and of raiment to the poor in honour of the Lord, and these hide the sins they have before committed, and the Lord remembers not for them there the evils they did here. It is to these that the Lord will say on Doomsday, calling them to Him unto heaven. "Come now, O Blessed, to inhabit the heavenly kingdom!" This, then, is the name of that troop in the holy scripture *boni non ualde*, that is, "good who are not greatly good" 18. Another troop of them, however, will not be brought to judgment, but unto heaven and all golden rewards they will go at once without adjudication at all. With them it is not enough of good to fulfil everything that the divine scripture enjoins on them to do, so that they abound through their own virtues and through their fair and they do more of good than what is enjoined on them in the divine commands. It is to them that Jesus pledges and prophecies this great good ... in the gospel, that he will say to them, seeing them ... to him in the great convention of Doomsday. "Since ye have left for me", saith Jesus, "every good thing that ye had in the world, ye have come into my household and into my fellowship. Come ye now that ye may be along with me on twelve thrones, without adjudication on you. Ye are judging the human race" ' (*Here a leaf seems lost in the manuscript, with omission of mention of 'boni non ualde'*). Four ordines on judgment are also mentioned by HONORIUS AUGUSTODUNENSIS in *Lucidarium* 12 (PL 172,1166C), but without the designation *boni, boni ualde*, etc.

§ 30. Oh, on one side then will be cast the envious and the false-judging, the quarrelsome and the incestuous, the harlots and the satirists and the buffoons, the heretics and the marauders, the robbers and the jealous, the liars, the noisy, the lampooners, the she-lampooners, the haughty; the gluttonous, the angry, the homicidal, the parricides, the deceivers, and all other evil ones.

§ 31. Those, then, are cast to the demons, to inhabit Hell for ever and ever. And that folk is swept out of the world, for they themselves have forsaken the reward of heaven and the sight of their holy and mighty Father; and they will be a thousand years in the eternal fire of Doom, for that is the length and period of the Day of Judgment.

§ 32 Oh, neither calm nor easy is that road, for there they get neither food nor drink nor resting, but constant hunger, and thirst without relief, and cold and unendurable heat.

§ 34. Oh, 'tis then on that day the locks will be shut on the sinners! to wit, the shutting on them by casting them into the many awful torments of hell, and the shutting of their eyes against the world, and the shutting from beholding the heavenly Kingdom without their seeing it thenceforward.

§ 35. Oh, then they will sit in the presence of the King of Evil, to wit, the Devil, in the glen of infernal torments, where there is dark, lightless fire, and a life sad, ever-distressful, foul, sooty, virulent, impure; and where there will be trembling on tooth, and hard shackles on body, and grief on mind, and darkness on cheeks, and miserable, mournful moans, and constant weepings, and lasting handclapping, and heavy tears of blood over cheeks at their suffering, and cries at hearing them.

§ 36. Oh, the Devil will then make heavy-headed, cruelly-fettered, bound captives of the tortured sinners at their lasting passion in the narrow chested, rough-headed, iron, awful prison of hell for ever and ever. White faces of constant suffering with the aspect of a dead man they have; and horrible, many-headed monsters with thick, crimson snouts upon them; and one great monster there, with five hundred heads and five hundred fangs in every head, and a hundred feet, and a hundred toes on every foot, and a hundred nails on every toe.

§ 37. Howbeit, the whole human race could not set forth the multitude of Hell's many torments, Everliving fire will be continually blazing therein, and it does not illumine; and if the sea were spilt against it the sea would not quench it.<sup>61</sup>

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<sup>61</sup> Quatrains 37-45 are clearly dependent on the *Elucidarium* of Honorius Augustodunensis; see HONORIUS AUGUSTODUNENSIS, *Elucidarium*, III, 4, *De malorum deductione ad inferos, et de poenis que ibi sustinent* (PL 172, 1159D-1160A): 'D. Quae sunt illae? — M. Prima ignis, qui sic semel accensus est, ut si totum mare influeret, non exstingueretur. Cujus ardor sic istum materialem vincit ignem, ut iste pictum ignem; ardet, et non lucet. Secunda poena est intolerabile frigus, **de quo dicitur: Si igneus mons mitteretur, in glaciem verteretur.** De his duabus dicitur: *Illic erit fletus et stridor dentium* (Matth. XXIV, 51), quia fumus exeat fletum oculorum, frigus stridorem dentium. Tertia, vermes immortales, vel serpentes et dracones visu et sibilo horribiles, qui ut pisces in aqua, ita vivunt in flamma. Quarta, fetor intolerabilis. Quinta, flagra caedentium, ut mallei ferrum percutientium. Sexta, tenebrae palpabiles, ut dicitur *Terra tenebrarum, ubi nullus ordo, sed sempiternus horror inhabitat* (cf. Job 10:22). Septima, confusio peccatorum, quia omnia peccata ibi patent omnibus, et se abscondere non valent. Octava, horribilis visio daemonum et draconum quos igne scintillante vident et miserabilis clamor fletium et insultantium. Nona, sunt ignea vincula, quibus in singulis membris constringuntur'

§ 38. This is the **second torment** therein, to wit, unendurable cold, as saith this testimony: *si mitteretur* etc.<sup>62</sup> that is, in a mountain of fire aflame were cast therein, Hell would make of it ice and snow.

§ 39. The **third torment**, that of poisonous snakes and vermin and many monsters of hell to be gnawing and wounding the souls continually.

§ 40. The **fourth torment**, the lasting, unmeet stench of Hell.

§ 41. The **fifth torment**, the urgent smiting together of the demons, like the sledging of smiths in a forge, at the continual smiting and massacring of the souls.

§ 42. The **sixth torment**, everlasting: A land of darkness wherein dwells the shadow of Death, and no right order, but eternal horror.<sup>63</sup>

§ 43. The **seventh torment**, namely, the confession of the sins which one did not confess in this life, so that they are then manifest to all the folk of Hell.

§ 44. The **eighth torment**, the continual contemplation of the Devil's countenance. For though there were no torment in hell, that would be enough of torment, for sparks of fire drop urgently from the base eye of the Devil as a red firebrand (?) drops from a hearth.

§ 45. The **ninth torment**: locks and fiery bonds to be blazing on every member and on every separate joint of the sinners, so that they cannot escape from the torments in which they abide for ever: for in life they did not control those members by penance and by the cross of repentance in liability for their evil and their sin.

§ 46. But touching the saints and the righteous, the mighty Lord will welcome them attentively on that day, and will then say to them: Come ye blessed ones (in Irish text: *Uenite benidicti et cetera*), etc.

§ 47. Then seven Glories<sup>64</sup> are bestowed on the bodies of the righteous, and seven glories on their souls. These are the seven Glories of those bodies, *Claritatem*, that is brightness, for the bodies of those that arise on that day will be seven times brighter than the sun: *Velocitatem*, that is, speed, for the bodies of those that arise will be swifter than wind: *Fortitudinem*, that is strength: *Libertatem*, that is freedom: *Voluntatem*, that is, will, for their will and the Lord's shall be the same: *Sanitatem*, that is, health, for throughout eternity they will suffer no disease or sickness: *Immortalitatem*, that is, immortality, for in their case they will never have separation of body and soul.

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<sup>62</sup> The Irish text has: '...pian tanusti amail adeir in promhadh so De q[u]o dicitur: si mitt[er]etur mons ignitus in glaciem uerteretur'. See the text of Honorius cited in preceding note.

<sup>63</sup> The Irish text has: 'an sesed pian dorchadas bithbuan, amal sadberthar isin caintic so: 'Terra tenebrarum, ubi umbra mortis, et nullus ordo, sed sempiternus [MS: sedh simpiternus] horror inhabitat'' The citation is from Job 10:22 (Vulgate), cited by Honorius (see note 61 above).

<sup>64</sup> Paragraphs 47-48 are clearly dependent on the *Elucidarium* of Honorius Augustodensis. This is evident from the Latin words embedded in the Irish text, which furthermore are in the accusative, without a governing verb, which they have in Honorius' text. See HONORIUS AUG., *Elucidarium*, III, 17; *De operatione et gaudio beatorum* (PL 172, 1069D): Reply to query to explain further 1 Cor 2:9 on the *gaudia sanctorum*: 'D. Hoc planius edicito. — M. Septem speciales glorias corporis habebunt, et septem animae. In corpore quidem pulchritudinem, velocitatem, fortitudinem, libertatem, voluntatem, sanitatem, immortalitatem'

§ 48. These are the seven Glories of the soul, to wit, wisdom and friendliness and union, power and honour, gentleness and gladness.<sup>65</sup> Oh those are the honours and gifts that the mighty Lord bestows on his own righteous ones, to wit, on the mild and kindly and loving and merciful, the beneficent, and the virgins for sake of God.

§ 49. Then is Life eternal without death, and many-melodied joy, and lordly delight without limit or end, and health without sickness, and pleasure without strife, and youth without aging, and peace without disunion, and dominion without disturbance, and freedom without labour, and patience without desire, and calm without sleep. Holiness without defect, unity of angels, feasting without limit, to partake of the great Pasch among nine ranks of heaven's angels, and together with them a Prince high, noble, fair, just, adorned: great, lordly (?), gentle and pure: on golden thrones and on glassen couches. And every one will be seated there according to honour and law, and according to his good works, contemplating the King perfect, entreated, righteous, truly-judging, noble, reverend, humble; in presence of the great Godhead, to wit, the King of the Three Households, chanting together with Cherubim and Seraphim, and with nine ranks of Heaven, and with Him who was and is and will be there for ever; without age or decay, without feebleness or weakness, without gloom or sadness, in bodies subtile and shining, in the station of angels and in the burgh of Paradise.

§ 50. Oh, unspeakable is the size and amplitude and breadth of the Heavenly City! For the bird whose flight and flying are swiftest on this earth could not finish the journey of that royal abode though it flew from the beginning of the world to the end.

§ 51. Oh great and vast are the size and lastingness and radiance of that City, and its ease and its lustre, its grace and its great purity, its firmness and its stability, its costliness, its beauty, and its pleasantness, its height and its splendour, its dignity and its venerableness: its plenteous peace and plenteous unity.

§ 52. Oh then well for him who shall be with good morals and good works to inhabit that City on the the day of Doom! For he will be in the unity of each of the three, namely, in the unity that is greatly nobler than any unity, the unity of the royal Trinity of the Father and the Son and the Holy Ghost.

§ 53. I entreat the mercy of great God. May we all reach the unity of that noble many-powered King, and may we dwell together with Him for ever!

### *i) Three Irish Texts XV Signs (Comestor type) in late Manuscripts*

There are three hitherto unpublished texts which are being edited by Caoimhín Breatnach for volume 2 of *Apocrypha Hiberniae*, to be published by AELAC in the *Corpus Christianorum Series Apocryphorum*. They appear to belong to the Comestor type.

One is in the MS RIA 23 O 48 (MS 476; *Liber Flavus Fergusiorum*), fol. 12ra1 (written mid-fifteenth century). Without any introduction, this gives each of the list of fifteen signs very briefly, and ends after sign 15 with 'Finid' In his examination of a tract on the fifteen Signs in BL Add. 30512 (15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> cent.) fol. 95-98, R. Flower thinks that the

<sup>65</sup> Drawn from HONORIUS AUGUSTODUNENSIS, *Elucidarium* 17, PL 172,1069D: 'Septem speciales glorias corporis habebunt, et septem animae. In anima autem sapientiam, amicitiam, concordiam, potestatem, honorem, securitatem, gaudium.

form of the tradition in the *Liber Flavus* text appears to be that of Petrus Comestor.<sup>66</sup> We may recall what Heist has said of the Comestor type: it omits Pseudo-Bede sign day 3, supplements this by an extra sign on the new heavens and new earth for sign day 15, and regularly reverses Pseudo-Bede signs 12 and 13.

The second is in the manuscript, Oxford, Bodleian Ir.e.7, which has been described by Brian Ó Cuív in his *Catalogue*.<sup>67</sup> The manuscript was written by Terence Ma Guire (*Tordhealbach Maguidhir*) in 1749. The text begins on p. 333. Ó Cuív says it continues on pp. 334, 331 and 332, ending imperfectly (p. 332): *bhearaidh feachuin ghéar nimhneach lán d'fheirg 7 diombúaidh ar an druing dhamanta 7 maill* (...). The text, Ó Cuív continues, whose opening seems to derive from Petrus Comestor's Pseudo-Jerome text *De xv signis* (*Patrologia Latina* 198, col. 1611), is not included in the list of 120 versions of the legend given by William W. HEIST, *The Fifteen Signs before Doomsday* (Michigan, 1952). Among authorities cited are Franciscus de Marione (14<sup>th</sup> century) and Pelbartus (15<sup>th</sup> century).

The third text, RIA 23 M 7 (287) was written by the scribe Micheál Óg Ó Longáin in Cork in 1818-1819. Its text is very close to that of the Bodleian manuscript, but does not have most of the additional material which Ó Cuív has noted in that text. Instead the scribe, Ó Longáin, adds at the end: 'See the poem that Dónnchadh Mór Ó Dálaigh composed on the signs of the end of the world beginning '*S garbh éirge iodhna brátha*. This is my book of devotional poems but I thought it was too long for me to put it here now, taking up space for these many little short pleasant agreeable pleasing tales. Finit'

*j) Signs of Doomsday in a 'Modern' Recension of the Evernew Tongue, ed. G Dottin*

In 1907, G. Dottin edited what he called 'Une rédaction moderne du Teanga Bithnua'<sup>68</sup> This redaction transcribed in 1817 was communicated to him by Douglas Hyde. Dottin compares its text with that of that of the *Tenga Bithnua* (Recension I) in the Book of Lismore. Other manuscripts and fragments of this recension are known (National Library of Ireland, MS G 32; Edinburgh, National Library of Scotland, MS XLVII; Edinburgh, Advocates Library 72.2.5 (formerly LV); British Library, MS Egerton 174). The oldest of these is the Edinburgh National Library of Scotland MS XLVII text, although fragmentary (perhaps of the 15<sup>th</sup> century). The other texts are late – mainly of the 18<sup>th</sup>, one of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. The texts of this recension have not been critically edited. The date of the recension is thus quite uncertain, but at latest before the date of the earliest manuscript (possibly 15<sup>th</sup> century). There are some notable differences between this recension and that of Recension I (Book of Lismore).<sup>69</sup> From our point of view the most noteworthy difference is that for the signs before Doomsday it replaces the text of Lismore (Recension I) and Recension II with the (fifteen) signs, one for each day. As already noted by Flower,<sup>70</sup>

<sup>66</sup> R. FLOWER, *Catalogue*. 2, p. 502.

<sup>67</sup> B. Ó Cuív, *Catalogue of Irish Language Manuscripts in the Bodleian Library at Oxford and Oxford College Libraries*. Part I: *Descriptions* (Dublin: Dublin Institute for Advanced Studies, 2001), pp. 45-46.

<sup>68</sup> In *Revue Celtique* 28 (1907), pp. 277-307,

<sup>69</sup> On these see R. FLOWER, *Catalogue*, pp. 557-558.

<sup>70</sup> FLOWER, *Catalogue*, p. 558; also FLOWER, *Catalogue*, pp. 501-502.

for the Signs in this recension the form found in the (Pseudo-Bedan) *Collectanea* is substituted for the more general signs of the other (*Tenga Bithnua*) texts.

## VI. Conclusions

Texts with the signs before Doomsday have been composed and transcribed in Ireland for well over a thousand years – from the Poems of Blathmac (750) to the latest known manuscripts known, transcribed in 1817-1819. The earliest text follows no known pattern. There is an eighth-century text (Karlsruhe and related manuscripts), of the *Apocalypse of Thomas* tradition, which may be Irish or have Irish affiliations, and the tenth-century text in the *Catechesis Celtica*, of the *Apocalypse of Thomas* tradition, may also be Irish or with Irish affiliations. The late tenth-century *Saltair na Rann* is clearly related to the seven-day *Apocalypse of Thomas* tradition. Its role in the formation of the Fifteen Signs before Doomsday pattern, which clearly dominated later medieval tradition, remains to be determined, as does the role, if any, of Irish texts in the creation and dissemination of the Fifteen Signs tradition. Later Irish tradition seems to have known and used all three forms of the Fifteen Signs: the Pseudo-Bedan, the Damian and the Comestor. It is to be hoped that current research in the entire Irish tradition will clarify some of the questions raised as to Ireland's role in the origins and development of the Fifteen Signs pattern, regarded by one of the latest scribes of these texts (1818-1819) as containing 'many little short pleasant agreeable pleasing tales'

## APPENDIX

### CATECHETICAL TEXT CONTAINING SOME PARALLELS

#### WITH THE *APOCALYPSE OF THOMAS*

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In this appendix we publish a catechetical text containing some parallels with the *Apocalypse of Thomas*. It is related to a portion of the text published by D. De Bruyne from MS Karlsruhe, Aug. perg. 254. (See above section 5b; pp. 112-114). -

[In the apparatus (second last line) ,e represents an e-hook character in the manuscript]

Pal. lat. 220 [P], fols. 26v-28r = Pal. lat 212 [V], fol. 15rv = Karlsruhe Aug. perg. 254 [K], ed. De Bruyne, p. 325, ll. 41-60.

[Note: The text of the sermon is presented as it occurs in Pal. lat. 220. I have supplied word-division and minimal punctuation but have not emended idiosyncratic spellings (e.g., fermes for uermes) or grammatical errors (e.g., alia ... locus) even when correct forms occur in one or both of the other manuscripts. ]

Predicatio carere tormenta. Peccatoribus autem et impiis, homicidis fornicatoribus et sceleratis, mendacibus rapacibus parricidis raptoribus dolosis neglegentibus transgressoribus dei mandata, et aliis quibusque non facientibus iustitiam, alia preparatur locus. Id est in illo inferni loco, ubi non uidetur lumen sed tenebre et dolore constituti in tristitiam gementes et ululantes in penis in siti et fame et caligine; ubi ignis non extinguitur ab eis et firmes non moriuntur; ubi timor et tremor et angustia magna, aliorum immensissimus, estus intollerabilis; ubi non misericordia nec aliqua consolatio nec letitia nec iocum nec iucunditas. Nesciuntur anni nec menses nec tempora nec nomen domini laudatur nec uox letantium [27r] auditur.

Ve his qui in hoc seculo gaudent et qui non faciunt penitentiam pro delictis suis ante obitum suum, quia in una hora perpetua morte moriuntur. Fratres, in postremo uidebitis multa mala quae pre fine aduenient: serui dei blasphemantur, iniquitatem unusquisque ad proximum suum operatur, totus mundus in maligno positus in maledictione, in mendacio, in fornicatione, in omnibus malis et persecutione, anathema; uirginitas denudabitur, ecclesia deseratur, ueritas non agitur, pax non erit, disciplina peribit, bella exercentur in illis diebus. Ve his qui nuptias faciunt, quoniam aut gladio aut fame aut captiui filii generantur. Flebat tota terra erroribus et cassibus, sacerdotes probabuntur et in mestitia predicabunt, et uirgines lacrimando plorabunt in illis diebus. Ve his qui diem iudi[27v]cii non timent, quia repentinus uniuerso mundo superueniet interitus.

Primo die sabbati nix et grando ueniet super terram cum tonitruo magno et fulgore terribili et clangore tube. Et mortui resurgent. Alia die mare siccabitur. Tertia die celum aperietur et terra scinditur ab oriente usque ad occidentem. Tunc fugient peccatores et dicent montibus et collibus, "Cadite super nos et cooperite nos"; et non habebunt refrigerium nisi in ore inferni deglutientur. Tunc exercitus angelorum uidebitur cum christo. Tunc sacerdotes et uirgines una uoce dicent, "Domine, domine, pater noster subueni nobis et cognosce nos ab omnibus creaturis tuis." Tunc adorabunt eum omnes homines et plangent super eum omnes tribus terre. Et dicent ei sancti, "Domine, domine, qui in magno labore et angustia cordis [28r] iugiter seruiumus tibi, in tribulatione in uigiliis in ieiuniis in elemosinis, nec separauit nos aliquid a caritate tua." Tunc iudex iustus Ihesu Christus reddet unicuique secundum opus suum et regnabunt iusti secum in perpetuum in secula seculorum amen.

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Predicatio c. t.] not in VK; homicidis] homicidiis V, et homicidis et K; mendacibus] et iniustis et m. K; parricidis] *corr. from* parrucidis V, parrecidis patricidis matricidis K; raptoribus dolosis neglegentibus] dolosis et rapacibus raptoris n. K; dolosis] dolsis *with o added above line*; mandata] mandatum K; alia] alius V, aliud eis K; locus] locum K; loco] *om.* K; non uidetur lumen] l. non u. K; tenebre] in tenebris K; constituti in tristitiam gementes] c. i. tristitia g. V, et tristitia c. gementis K; ululantes] ullulantes V, hiolantis K; in siti et fame et caligine] bestie demittuntur illis in site et in fame in caligine K; firmes] uermes V, uermis eorum K; moriuntur] moriuntur K; ubi timor intollerabilis] *om.* K; angustia] angusta V; estus] aestus V; intollerabilis] intolerabilis V; non misericordia] non est m. K; letitia] letia P; laetitia V, letitia K; nec iocum nec iucunditas] nec iocunditas nec iogum K; nesciuntur anni] n. quomodo ueniunt dies a. K; nec menses] uel momenta K; nec nomen dei laudatur] nec l. n. domini K; auditur] *add.* nec aliquid auxilium inuenitur K

Ve] Uae K; in hoc] ad hoc K; ante obitum suum] *om.* K; quia] qui *with i added above line*; quia V, qui K; perpetua morte moriuntur] morte moriuntur in perpetua morte K; fratres] *add.* karissimi K; uidebitis] uidebitis K; quae pre fine] in seculo pre fines K; blasphemantur] blasphemantur V; blasphemabuntur K; iniquitatem] *second i added above line*; iniquitas K; ad proxi-

mum suum] proximo suo K; in maledictione] *om.* K; persecutione] persecutionibus K; uirginitas denudabitur] uirginitatis denutabitur K; ecclesia] ecclesia V, ecclesie K; deseratur] deserentur K; agitur] agetur K; Ve] Uae K; faciunt] facient K; captiui filii] captiuitate filios K; generantur] generabunt K; flebat tota] flebit totam K; et cassibus sacerdotes probabuntur et in] occassionibus probatur sacerdotes in K; sacerdotes] sacerdoties *with second r partially erased*; in mesticia] in mes. *with i added above line* V; predicabunt] predicabuntur K; Ve] Uae K; qui diem] quidem V

Primo] Prima K; sabbati] sabbato K; super] *add.* omnem K; tonidruo magno] tonitruo m. V, tonitrua magna K; et fulgore] *om.* K; et clangore] *om.* K; die] dioe K; die] dioe K; celum aperietur] aperitur celum K; terra scinditur] ascindetur K; ad occidentem] in occidente K; peccatores] peccatoribus; et dicent] dicentes K; cadite] cadete V, cadent K; cooperite] operiet K; refrigerium] refrigerio K; deglutientur] deglutinentur nos K; Tunc sacerdotes amen] et omnes sancti et omnes iustis et erunt in letitia oeterna sine fine in consortio patriarcharum et in medio chori angelorum et in iugi letitia prophetarum et consedio cum omnium sanctorum in secula seculorum sine fine in letitia magna K; terre] terrę V; ieiunis] ieiuniis *with last i added above line* V; elemosinis] elemosynis V; Ihesu] Ihesus V

## SUMMARY

This essay treats of the Signs before Doomesday in Irish tradition, studying the texts in cronological order from the oldest in the *Poems of Blathmac* (ca. 750 AD) down to the latest known manuscript from about 1819 AD. It first deals with the apocryphal work, the *Apocalypse of Thomas* (which lies behind most of the tradition), with signs over the seven days preceding Doom. The essay pays special attention to the view of W.W. Heist that the additional strophes 153-162 of the Irish work *Saltair na Rann* ('The Psalter of the Quatrains'), from about 1000 AD, constitute a crucial text in the study of the origin and development of the later legend of the Fifteen Signs before Doomsday common throughout Europe during the Middle Ages and later. The study also examines the related Armenian tradition on the Fifteen Signs. Each of the Irish texts is examined, concluding that only a new examination of the evidence, now under way, can throw light on the thesis of Heist.

## PIĘTNAŚCIE ZNAKÓW POPRZEDZAJĄCYCH DZIEŃ SĄDU OSTATECZNEGO

### W TRADYCJI IROSZKOCKIEJ

#### *Streszczenie*

W średniowiecznym chrześcijaństwie zachodnim szeroko rozpowszechniona była koncepcja piętnastu znaków poprzedzających Dzień Sądu Ostatecznego. Autor artykułu stara się prześledzić genezę, a następnie rozwój tej doktryny. Źródeł dopatruje się w opisie siedmiu dni poprzedzających Sąd, o jakich jest mowa w Apokalipsie Tomasza, pochodzącej przypuszczalnie z Italii, datowanej na V w. Tekst ten doczekał się wielu redakcji i znany był w środowiskach monastycznych średniowiecznej Irlandii. Przypuszczalnie właśnie tam przekształcono koncepcję siedmiu dni w piętnaście znaków. W tej wersji pojawia się ona w tekstach pochodzących z X w., mianowicie *Catechesis Celtica*, *Saltair na Rann* i innych. Teksty te zostały przytoczone w artykule i poddane analizie.

(streszczenie opr. K. Bardski)