"IF MUSIC COMES FROM MANY HORNS, THEN THE SOUND IS SWEETER": TRUMPETS AND HORNS IN EARLY MEDIEVAL IRELAND

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The fall of the Roman Empire in the west during the fifth century AD is generally considered to mark the start of a disastrous period in European history—the Dark Ages—when the steady progress of civilization, and especially of literate society, was interrupted by the onslaught of barbarian culture. The picture is inaccurate, for it was the state and its overstretched bureaucracy, rather than the society, that collapsed due to the pressure that accompanied the introduction of the *foederati* and the increasing cultural divergence between the Latin-speaking West and the Greek-speaking East. Moreover, the seeds of recovery had already been sown in that collapse with the development of monasticism and the emergence of a powerful papacy. Modern accounts of the recovery normally focus on a western European civilization confined to "half the Iberian peninsula, all modern France and Germany west of the Elbe, Bohemia, Austria, the Italian mainland and England"—that is, the lands affected by the *Völkerwanderung*, which were fringed by "barbaric, but Christian, Ireland and Scotland, and ... the Scandinavian kingdoms."[1] This time-honored identification of the emergence of the Middle Ages with the progress of the Franco-Germanic civilizations unfortunately ignores the possibility of any important contribution from the Celtic fringe in the northwest, which was barbarian only in the sense that Ireland (and most of Scotland) remained beyond the limits of the Roman Empire and was therefore considered to be a "barbaric," that is, foreign land. The *Pax Romana* was never imposed on this westernmost outpost of Europe (although there is evidence that conquest was envisaged on a number of occasions), which remained unique among the Celtic lands in supporting an ancient and stable Celtic civilization that continued to develop unimpeded in Classical times—able to choose whether to accept or reject ideas, material things, and practices from other lands with which there were trading and other links—and emerged into its historical period just as the centralized Roman state entered its final collapse.

The Irish Middle Age also began in the fifth century and it was triggered by the onset of literacy, the result of the Christianization of the country. The Christian emphasis on the power of the written word added a new medium of expression to a long-established tradition of native learning. The arrival of Latin, Greek, and Hebrew texts in Ireland was eagerly welcomed, and the dissemination of Mediterranean and Middle Eastern codices encouraged the establishment of active *scriptoria* in monastic settlements throughout the country. Exposure to the thoughts and forms of the Classical world did not cause debasement or rejection of the native pre-Christian oral culture in Ireland, as happened elsewhere. The Latin alphabet was soon applied to the native language and enabled sacred and secular

learning to flourish together. The first European vernacular literature resulted when Irish scribes complemented their investigation and preservation of Classical writings with their redaction of the treasures of the rich vein of the Irish oral heritage, albeit viewed from a largely Christian perspective.

A large body of classical Greek and Latin texts was saved from destruction and subsequently returned to the former Roman world (which had meantime mislaid much of its literature in the upheavals of the *Völkerwanderung*) during the great period of Irish missionary activity abroad between the sixth and ninth centuries. Additionally, the Irish vernacular experience had an influence on the subsequent development of the written word in other European vernaculars. The early Irish vernacular literature began to appear early in the sixth century AD. It is wide-ranging and includes biblical and grammatical texts, poetry, epic tales (classed by type), and books of law, among other things. The texts occasionally include references to musical matters and these provide a unique and intriguing window on the place of music in at least one early medieval society.

The following account focuses primarily, but not exclusively, on information concerning the early Irish lip-blown aerophones. Occasional reference will be made to other musical instruments, including the voice, to give some hint of the breadth of the musical practices that obtained. (I include as "musical" such functional activities as military signals, in addition to more artistic endeavors.) The information will also be placed in terms of its original cultural contexts in an attempt to give some indication of the extent of the musical situations.[2] The literature selected will be restricted primarily to the time-period preceding the Norman Invasion of 1169-70, but later sources will be referred to where these include material which can be shown to originate within the target timespan, or when they provide further information of particular relevance to the earlier information.

One characteristic of the Irish manuscript tradition must be highlighted at the outset: its tendency to assemble miscellaneous collections of sacred and profane works, both prose and verse, which may be separated by centuries and which are variously written in Old Irish (between the seventh and eleventh centuries), Middle Irish (between the eleventh and fifteenth centuries), and even Early Modern Irish (between the fifteenth and eighteenth centuries). The earliest information is to be found in the Old Irish commentaries on biblical texts, with which our survey will begin. Due to the priority of the original archaic Irish language texts over any modern translations into English, and because the latter can only be approximations which are liable to change, both the Irish texts and English translations will be presented in the main body of the text in parallel columns.

The Biblical Glosses as Organological Resources

Beginning in the second half of the sixth century, waves of Irish missionaries set about evangelizing the extensive areas of Europe that remained pagan, reaching the Italian Peninsula in the South and Kiev in the East. Evidence of their progress may be found in the many great and enduring monastic centers that they established, including Iona, Lindisfarne, Jumiège, Auxerre, Laon, Luxeuil, Liège, Trier, Würzburg, Rheinau, Reichenau, St. Gallen, Salzburg, Vienna, Milan, and Bobbio, for example. Here they left a trail of *libri scottice*

scripti—books written in the unmistakable Irish *majuscule* (half-uncial) and *miniscule* (cursive) scripts—and many of the codices are found today in important library collections scattered across Europe. Explanatory material is often included in the texts in the form of comments placed in the margins, and many of these glosses are written in Old Irish. The biblical glosses begin towards the end of the sixth century and they were primarily intended to aid religious understanding, but they often include incidental information relating to the cultural milieus in which they were formulated. In the present context, they supply an appreciable amount of musical organological terminology.

The eighth-century *Codex Paulinus Wirziburgensis* (Universitätsbibliothek, Würzburg, codex M.th.F.12) is associated with St. Kilian's monastic foundation of Würzburg. It contains Latin texts of the letters of St. Paul together with glosses in Latin, Old Irish, and a mixture of the two. A marginal comment on 1 Corinthians 14:7 includes the information that the Latin term *tibia* (generally represented in English as "pipe") has its equivalent in Old Irish with the noun *buinne,* and that *cithara* (similarly represented in English today with "lyre") was equivalent to *crot.* (See below for more on both instruments.) The subsequent verse "etenim si incertam uocem det tuba, quis praeparabit sé ad bellum?" ("if the trumpet sounds a call which is unrecognizable, who is going to get ready for the attack?") results in a discourse on the use of the *tuba* ("trumpet"), for which the Old Irish cognate is the obviously derived term *tub* (also written as *tob*):

This is another of [St Paul's] similitudes, one of the trumpet, for it has various calls and each of them differs. It is different for battle, for camping, for setting-out, for victory and for assembly. Unless the man who sounds it makes it distinct—that is, if a single note is made—its function will not be understood.	Cosmuilius aile lessom inso .i. cosmulius tuib arataat ilsenman dosuidiu et issain cach næ .i. issain fri cath sain fri scor 7 fri imthect 7 fris roin 7 comairli mani dechrigedar [i]nfer nodseinn .i. mad óinríar dogné, nítucthar cid frissasennar isamlid.[3]

This digression has been ultimately inspired by the two trumpet signals mentioned in Numbers 10:1-10, which were employed for assembly and for setting-out, but the model has been greatly expanded.

The Irish monk seems to have drawn on a personal experience of an Irish trumpet usage of his time, with which he appears to have been thoroughly conversant. Firstly, he notes that different trumpet calls were used for different purposes. Secondly, he supplies an Old Irish terminology for a comprehensive body of five military trumpet signals, one each for battle (*fri cath*), for camping (*fri scor*), for setting-out (*fri imthect*), for victory (*fris roin*), and for assembly (*[fri] comairli*). Thirdly, in noting that confusion would result if a single note only were sounded, he seems to indicate that the five signals were basically sounded on a single pitch and that distinction between the individual signals was then made according to the differing articulations that the trumpeter superimposed on the monotone. This does

not mean that all five signals were necessarily performed on the same single pitch, although comparison with later signal music would tend to support such a consideration.[4]

The collective Irish name given to such trumpet pieces is found in two commentaries included in the early ninth-century *Milan Codex* (Biblioteca Ambrosiana, Milan, Codex C.301), which originally belonged to the Columban monastery at Bobbio and which includes some of St. Jerome's writings on the Psalter, a Latin translation of a Greek commentary on the psalms by Theodorus of Mopsuestia, and some Old Irish glosses. In the first, a gloss on Psalm 80:4, "canite initio mensis tuba" ("blow the trumpet on the new moon"), it is noted that

they used to sound a trumpet-song at the beginning of every month.

huandarbur air nocainte tobchetal leu som hitosuch cech mís.[5]

In the second, a Latin gloss on Psalm 17:14 "et intonuit de caelo Dominus usque eos" ("the Lord thundered from the heavens") includes reference to the theophany of Exodus 19:16 by noting that "post clangorem tonitrui uelut caelestis cuiusdam bucinae pulchre fulmina" ("accompanying the sound of the thunder or of the horn of the heavens [is] the brilliant flash of lightning"), and the latter is explained in Old Irish with the reminder that

thunder is the trumpet-song of heaven.

ised tobchetal nime in torainn.[6]

In both glosses, "trumpet-song"'is represented in Irish by *tobchetal,* a composite of the nouns *tob-* ("trumpet") and *-cétal* ("song").

The Milan Codex also includes information on a second lip-vibrated aerophone in its comments on Psalm 97:6, "psallite Domino usque corneæ" ("play to the Lord ... [to the sound] of the horn"). A Latin gloss describes the instrument mentioned in the psalm verse as "id est ærea corneaque" ("that is, a horn of bronze"), and this is clarified in Old Irish to the effect that the *aerea cornea* is

a bronze instrument made in the shape of a horn

orgain humaidi fochosmailius nadarcae.[7]

This is reiterated and further clarified in the prologue to the Psalter where the Latin text, following established tradition, ascribes the invention of the *tuba cornea* to Idithun. Here, an Old Irish gloss notes that this instrument is

an *adarc,* that is, a trumpet of bronze [made] in the shape of a horn.

.i. adarcdae .i. tob dihumu fochosmailius nadarcae side.[8]

The Old Irish equivalent of *cornu* ("horn") is the noun *adarc.* Note that the Latin terms *aerea cornea* and *tuba cornea* both refer to the same instrument, a horn made of bronze, the metal being termed *umaide* in Old Irish.

A number of inferences may be drawn from the information already presented. Firstly, the availability in Old Irish of terms to describe both trumpets and horns indicates that both instruments were already familiar in early medieval Ireland. Secondly, it appears that these instruments were made of bronze as well as of other materials, such as wood and animal horn. It is not immediately apparent from the Latin term *tuba cornea* that the instrument should be made of bronze (the detail is found only in the Old Irish gloss), so it may well be that, in Ireland, the term *tuba*—and its Old Irish equivalent *tub/tob*—automatically indicated an instrument made of bronze. This is important when it is remembered that the surviving early medieval Irish lip-vibrated aerophones are all wooden.[9] Thirdly, a clear distinction has been made between the trumpet and the horn. The horn is viewed as a type of trumpet, but one which is curved and appears similar in shape to an animal horn. The implication is that the trumpet is not a curved instrument but is outwardly straight in form. No consideration is given to internal bore type, the modern criterion employed to distinguish between the two instruments. In early medieval Ireland, then, outward appearance rather than internal bore type was the key criterion in deciding when a lip-vibrated aerophone was a trumpet and when it was a horn. Confirmation that this criterion was, in fact, standard among the Irish is found in the iconographical record (see below). Therefore, the surviving early medieval Irish wooden lip-vibrated aerophones—which have been classified as horns in recent years due to their internal truncated conical bores—must be defined as trumpets due to their outward appearance as straight instruments, following the classification system current at the time when they were made and in the cultural milieu in which they were employed.

Interaction with the Vikings between the ninth and eleventh centuries included the borrowing into the Irish language of Old Norse terms, mainly connected with seafaring but including one relevant musical borrowing. Keeping to the biblical theme adopted so far, this may be shown in paraphrases of biblical texts included in the fourteenth-century manuscript known as the *Lebor Brecc* ("The Speckled Book of Mac Egan").

The first concerns a passage well known to brass instrumentalists, 1 Corinthians 15:52, "in momento in ictu oculi in novissima tuba canet enim et mortui resurgent incorrupti et nos inmutabimur" ("in the twinkling of an eye, when the last trumpet sounds. The trumpet is going to sound, and then the dead will be raised imperishable, and we shall be changed"), together with its companion passage in 1 Thessalonians 4:16, "quoniam ipse Deus in iussu et in voce archangeli et in tuba Dei descendet de caelo et mortui qui in Christo sunt resurgent primi" ("at the signal given by the voice of the Archangel and the trumpet of God, the Lord himself will come down from heaven; those who have died in Christ will be the first to rise"). The two passages are paraphrased in Latin in the *Lebor Brecc* to describe how "tuba canet Michael et omnes resurgunt," which is explained in Irish to the effect that

Michael will sound the trumpet and all shall rise up again.

senfid Michael a stocc conderecht in uli asanadnacth ibh.

The second concerns Joshua 6:1-21 and relates how the city of Jericho was captured with the help of seven *bucinae* [*iobelorum*]. The Irish commentary describes how

the sons of Israel played seven powerful trumpets they carried around the seven walls of the city [of Jericho] for a week.

rosennit oc maccu Israel uii stuic trena toghaide im vii mura na cathrach co cend sectmaine.[10]

The two paraphrases include another Old Irish term for "trumpet" as *stoc* (plural *stuic*), which appears to have been a loanword cognate with the Old Norse noun *stokkr*.[11] The noun *stoc* quickly superseded the Latin-derived noun *tub/tob* and was subsequently employed in Irish writings until the final collapse of the Gaelic world during the eighteenth century. Associated terms were also derived, resulting in the additional noun *stocaire,* for "trumpeter," and the present participle *stocairecht,* for "trumpeting." The noun *stoc* may also include an allusion to a long straight instrument, for it is employed in non-musical contexts, where it represents a "post" or a "pillar," for example. It is also possible that unqualified use of the term normally indicates an instrument made of wood, since the surviving trumpets are wooden, and reference to metal trumpets now tends to be specific in the literature. One such reference is met in *Gabhaltais Shearluis Mhóir* ("The Conquests of Charlemagne"), a Middle Irish translation from around 1400 of the Latin epic written between 1020 and 1150. Here, the metal trumpets of the original Latin text are described in Irish as *sduic umaidhi* ("trumpets of bronze").[12]

A further paraphrase from the *Lebor Brecc* concerns the employment of the *duas tubas argenteas ductiles* of Numbers 10:1-10. The Irish commentary on the paraphrase notes that the Israelites reserved a *stoc fógra* for marching. The noun *fógra* (also *fócra*) translates as "announcement" or "summons,"[13] and the phrase *stoc fógra* is variously translated into English as "alarm-trumpet" or "trumpet of summoning" in modern texts.[14] It is occasionally suggested that the addition of *fógra* indicates a particular type of *stoc,* but the attributive adjective is simply employed to define the specific function for which the *stoc* was sounded, to announce a "setting-out." Similarly constructed terms are also met in the literature, such as *stuic catha,* for "battle-trumpets," *sdocc comairci,* for "trumpets of assembly," and *stuicc imdechta,* for "trumpets of setting-out"; these terms have been derived from the Old Irish names which were already long-associated with the trumpet calls and which were mentioned earlier.[15]

The same paraphrase also mentions the use of another instrument, the *corn,* to assemble and to call the Israelites to attention. The Old Irish noun *corn* has been derived from the

Latin *cornu* ("horn") and reference to other manuscript sources, to be mentioned later, shows that *corn* also represents "horn." Interestingly, and contrasting with the fate which befell *tub/tob,* the older term *adarc* was not replaced by the newcomer *corn,* but the two enjoyed a healthy coexistence in the literature for many centuries. Indeed, some indication of the tenacity of the older term may be given with reference to the early seventeenth-century *Beatha Aodha Ruaidh Ui Dhomhnaill* ("The life of 'Red' Hugh O' Donnell, Earl of Tyrconnell" [1572-1602]), a manuscript written in Early Modern Irish. In the course of a description of the Battle of the Yellow Ford (14 August 1598) in which a serious defeat was inflicted on the English forces by "Red" Hugh O' Neill, Earl of Tyrone, (c.1540 - 1616), it is recounted how the English army prepared for battle and

sounded their trumpets and horns.   ro seindit a stuic 7 a nadharca.[16]

Associated derivations from the noun *corn* include *cornaire,* for "horn player," and *cornairecht,* for "horn playing." Moreover, although *corn* was equally applicable to musical horns as well as to drinking-horns and other types, it is worth noting that the literary contexts are generally clear in this regard. The noun also implies manufacture from organic material and this is occasionally clarified by expansion to *corn buabhall,* or "buffalo horn."[17] The Old Irish noun *buabhall* (from the Latin *bubalus*) represented the wild-ox or buffalo and it was also employed on its own to indicate the horn of the animal, so that *corn buabhall* could be represented by the contraction *buabhall,* for example. The latter term could itself be further clarified, as in *Gabhaltais Shearluis Mhóir* in which the oliphant of Roland (*tuba eburnea* in the original Latin text) is called *buabhall eboir* in the Middle Irish text.[18] Another cognate of *corn buabhall* is the term *benn buabhall* (also *beann buabhall*), which is occasionally met in Middle Irish texts.[19]

Another term of interest is *sturgán* (also written *storgán*), which appeared before the end of the twelfth century and is a conflation of *stoc* and *orgán,* the latter a term derived from the Latin noun *organum* ("musical instrument"), which was generally reserved for aerophones in Irish writings. *Sturgán* is normally met in alliterative association with *stoc* in contexts that imply that the former term may represent "horn"; the player of the instrument was referred to with the derived term *storgánidhe*.[20] One example of the alliteration is found in a poem in which Randall, Lord of Arann (fl. 1180 AD), was encouraged to claim his right to the high kingship of Ireland, which would be greeted with the sound of

musical [wind] instrument, trumpet, and   organ, stoc 7 sturgan.[21]
horn.

Unassociated references to *sturgán* are rare. One very late example is found in *Trí Bior-Ghaoithe an Bháis* ("The Three Shafts of Death"), a homiletic work written in 1631 by Geoffrey Keating (1570-c.1650).[22] This includes an interesting commentary on the story of the daughter of Jairus in Matthew 9:18-25, particularly verses 23-25 ("Et cum venisset Iesus in domum principis et vidisset tibicines et turbam tumultuantem dicebat 'recedite

non est enim mortua puella sed dormit' et deridebant eum et cum eiecta esset turba in-
travit et tenuit manum eius et surrexit puella." "When Jesus reached the official's house
and saw the flute players, with the crowd making a commotion, he said, 'Get out of here;
the little girl is not dead; she is asleep.' And they ridiculed him. But when the people had
been turned out he went inside and took her by the hand; and she stood up"). According
to patristic writings, the role of the funereal *tibicines* should have been to play trumpets
and pipes to comfort the mourners and to encourage them to contemplate the triumph
of eternal salvation, rather than to promote sorrowful—even sensual—lamentation in the
finality of death.[23] The priest and theologian Keating followed that tradition and noted
that the first thing Christ did before performing the miracle was

to put out of the house the crowd which was in it, including the horn player, musician and piper	do chuir as an dteach an tsochraide do bhí ann, idir storgánaidhe, oirfideach 7 phíobaire.[24]

Note the additional musical terms present in this passage in Early Modern Irish: *oir-
fideach,* which is equivalent to the Old Irish term *airfitid* or *airfitiud* and which represents
a "musician" in the general sense of the term; and *píobaire*, a loanword of Middle Irish date
which refers to a "piper." (See below also.)

Other organological terminology found its way into the Irish language in later centuries
primarily in the form of loan words that joined, rather than replaced, the terms already
in use. Some of the new borrowings were introduced through trading and other similar
links; others were encountered when writings in other European vernaculars came to be
circulated in Ireland and then translated into Irish for the benefit of the Irish nobility;
still others were part and parcel of the gradual conquest of Ireland by its nearest neighbor,
England. A single example will suffice to show the ease with which such loanwords could
be absorbed into both Middle Irish and Early Modern Irish. Found towards the end of
Gabhaltais Shearluis Mhóir, it concerns Michael the Archangel, who brought Roland's soul
to heaven after this heroic and fateful rearguard action against the Iberian Moslems. The
phrase "heavenly trumpeter (*tibicinem virum* in the Latin text) is represented as *trumpóir*
in the Middle Irish text (and still is in Modern Irish), indicating a possible borrowing of
the Old French noun *trompe* as *trompa* and its subsequent manipulation to derive further
terminology.[25]

It has been shown that there existed a number of terms referring to lip-vibrated aero-
phones and to the "music" played on them from the earliest stage of Irish writing, which
were added to over the centuries as the vocabulary of Irish expanded and the language
itself evolved. The nomenclature, taken from the Old Irish and Middle Irish sources, is
summarized in Table 1, while the supplementary information concerning the military use
of the trumpet is given in Table 2. In both cases, the terms have been standardized in order
to facilitate comparison.

Table 1:
The early medieval Irish Lip-vibrated Aerophones and their associated terminology

English term	Latin, or other parent term	Old Irish or Middle Irish term
trumpet	tuba	tub, tob
trumpet	stokkr	stoc, stuic (plural)
trumpet of bronze		stoc umaidhi
trumpeter		stocaire
trumpeting		stocairecht
trumpet		trompa
heavenly trumpeter	tibicinem virum	trumpóir
horn	cornu	adarc
horn of bronze	aerea cornea	adarc dihumu
horn of bronze	tuba cornea	adarc dihumu
horn	cornu	corn
horn player	cornaire	
horn playing	cornairecht	
horn (from wild-ox or buffalo)		corn buabhall, buabhall
horn (from wild-ox or buffalo)		benn buabhall, beann buab-hall
oliphant of Roland	tuba eburnea	buabhall eboire
horn		sturgán
horn player		storgánidhe
musician		airfitid, airfitiud,oirfideach

Table 2:
The early medieval Irish Trumpet Signals and related signaling terminology

English Term	Old Irish or Middle Irish Term
trumpet-song:	tobchétal:
for battle	fri cath
for camping	fri scor
for setting-out	fri imthect
for victory	fris roin
for assembly	[fri]comairli
trumpet of summons, alarm trumpet	stoc fógra
trumpet of battle	stoc catha
trumpet of setting-out	stoc imthechta
trumpet of assembly	stoc comairli

The Secular Texts as Repositories of Musical Practice

The sacred glosses supply much organological terminology and tantalizing snippets of information concerning the forms and employment patterns of early medieval Irish musical instruments. Even more revealing detail is found in the secular literature that began to be written down shortly after the sacred glosses: written verse appeared by the middle of the sixth century, and written narrative prose by the seventh century. A vigorous scribal tradition ensured the survival of a substantial body of secular narrative by the end of the twelfth century. The literature ranges from epic tales (classified by type), through poems, to codes of law and practice, historical writings, genealogies, stories about the derivations of place-names, and grammar tracts. The epic tales are the most important in the present context. They concern half-mythological, half-historical persons and events and they consistently make no distinction between the world of the mortals and the "Otherworld" of the deities: heroes, for instance, can travel between both worlds with impunity. Yet it is clear that the tales unfold against a background which is firmly rooted in pagan/early-Christian Irish societal actuality, rather than scribal invention. Much agreement has been found between the archaeological record and the descriptions of material things mentioned in the tales, and the Celtic society described in the tales bears striking resemblances to those mentioned by the writers of the Classical world—such as Diodorus, Strabo and Caesar—in connection with earlier continental Celtic societies.[26]

This identification of strands of observable reality running through the literature is important, for it was uniquely in Ireland that a Celtic society was able to develop more-or-less unhindered for more than a millenium after it had been suppressed elsewhere. Details of musical life—including additional organological terminology—form but one strand of incidental detail in many of the texts. Because they are incidental, these may be considered to provide a window on the place of music in early medieval Irish society and, by extension, in the continental Celtic societies before their cultural destruction. On the wider plane, it is also likely that they represent more generally the contemporary practices of continental Europe, for Ireland, while "unhindered," was by no means "isolated" from cultural trends elsewhere. The various strands will be examined in turn under the following headings:

- music and battle rituals
- functional music in the daily life of the noble courts
- musical attainment among the aristocratic classes
- the household musicians
- music for entertainment
- formal welcomes and ceremonial entrances
- the perceived sound of music
- the power of music
- the legal status of musicians

Music and battle rituals

A number of epic tales deal with cattle raids made on the territory—or *tuath*— of one group of people by the inhabitants of neighboring territories. These raids were an important

and recurring activity in the almost entirely rural society of an early medieval Celtic Ireland in which cattle were the most common form of currency. (Towns began to appear only from the tenth century and they were Viking settlements.) The epic tale known as *Táin Bó Flidais* ("The Cattle Raid of Flidas") includes a description of pre-engagement ritual at the point where the army of the notorious semi-goddess Queen Medb (the personification of fertility) and her much-cuckolded husband King Ailill of Connaught, an army generally referred to as "the men of Ireland" in the tales, prepared to attack the fort of their enemy Ailill Finn in Connaught. According to the version of the story found in the late fourteenth-century codex known as the *Yellow Book of Lecan* —the tale itself dates back to at least the tenth century—

the men of the four great provinces of Ireland arose, the dark exiles [of Ulster] among them, and were greatly excited by Ailill, Fergus [mac Roich], and Medb. They faced the fort together, sounded their trumpets and horns to proclaim battle, and raised tremendous, terrific shouts.

ro eregedar ceithre holl-cuigid erend and sin, ocus in dubloingeas mar aen riu, ocus ro greis Oilill go mor, ocus Fergus, ocus Medbh iat, ocus tucsat anaigthi a naenfecht ar in dunadh, ocus ro shendit a stuic ocus a sturgana leo i comfuagra catha, ocus ro thogbadar gairi aidbli uathmara.[27]

The same procedure is found in *Aided Finn* ("The Death of Finn"), a Middle Irish tale belonging to the Fenian Cycle of epics that survives in a late thirteenth-century source. Here it is described how the warrior-hero Finn Mac Cumaill and his comrades in a warriorband known as the *Fianna* were confronted by their adversaries, the "Pillars of Tara":

then from the other side came to the ford the three thousand battle-equipped warriors that the 'Pillars of Tara' numbered, and put their attire of battle and contest and combat about them, and their trumpets were sounded before them, and their war cries were raised defiantly, and their battle was put in order.

tángatar immorro na deich cét ar fichit cét curad catharmach ro bátar columna na Temrach don leith ele don áth 7 rogabatar a n-erreda catha 7 comraic 7 comlainn impu 7 rosinnedh a sduicc rompo 7 rocronaiged a comairc 7 ro cóirged a cath leó.[28]

The show of bravado was obviously intended to intimidate the adversary, and part of the belligerent ceremonial were the trumpet calls described in the two passages (and many others also). This indicates the presence of a standard procedure in the ritual which preceded the actual joining of battle. It also mirrors the commentaries made one thousand years earlier by Classical Greek and Roman writers who had witnessed or reported on the battle preparations of the continental Celts in their conflicts with Greece and Rome,[29] the most obvious parallel being that found in Polybius' description of the battle of Telamon, before which the Romans

were terrified by the fine order of the Celtic host, and the dreadful din, for there were in-numerable horn blowers and trumpeters (βυκανητῶν καὶ σαλιγκτῶν), as the whole army were shouting their war-cries at the same time. There was such a tumult of sound that it seemed that not only the trumpets and soldiers but all the country round had got a voice and caught up the cry.[30]

Such parallels, of which the foregoing is just one example, illustrate how practices common throughout the ancient Celtic world were still maintained and ultimately recorded in its westernmost outpost long after they had ceased elsewhere, and how the Irish written witness of its own society may help inform our understanding of the cultural traditions of the earlier Celtic societies.[31]

Functional music in the daily life of the noble courts

The eleventh-century wisdom-text poem *Tri tuli bít a dún Ardda Rudí* ("The three types of things found at the fort of a high king"), a compilation of precepts bearing on the maintenance of an illustrious kingship, recommends three types of musical performance for a king's household:

Three types of music bring good fortune to a king: the music of the cruit, the music of the lyre, [and] the singing of	Fir Tunni mac Throgain. Tri céola bít ca ríg regda sodain; ceol crott. ceol timpain comaig. dord Fir Tunni meic Throgain.[32]

and there is plenty of evidence that music found active support from the higher grades of early medieval Irish society (see below).

(Note, in passing, the term *crot[t]* (also *cru[i]t[t]* or *mennc[h]rott,* and a cognate of the Welsh *crwth,* English *rote,* and German *rotte*), which originally denoted a type of plucked lyre that was played by *cruitire,* or *cruit*-players, and was provided with a tuning key, or *céis,*[33] to tune each string, or *tét.*[34] The term *cruit* was later given to the frame harp when it arrived on the Irish musical scene, possibly by the eleventh century; the lyre was then denoted as *timpán* and was then generally described as having three strings.[35] The appel-lation *cláirse[a]ch* was applied to the frame harp by the end of the fourteenth century.[36] *Timpán* also occasionally served as a cognate of the Latin "tympanum" to indicate "drum," particularly with reference to Exodus 15:20-1.[37])

Trumpets and horns are absent from the musical trinity mentioned in the above list, for it selects the more intimate and more highly esteemed types of music-making that were practised in close proximity to the high-status class of poets, the *fili* or *éces.*[38] Yet both instruments figured in many aspects of Irish life, in addition to their employment in battle.

Indeed, trumpets and horns are consistently associated with the aristocratic echelons of secular society, rather than sacred as is occasionally suggested,[39] and they are encountered in a number of fairly well-defined situations. Many of these occasions are familiar to us in different and more recent cultural contexts, but their inclusion in the traditions of early medieval Irish society may come as a surprise. Take the *Morgensegen,* which is most readily

associated with the trumpet music played at dawn at the late Renaissance and Baroque German courts, or the music of the hunt, which was supplied on the horn in later Medieval times, to mention but two examples: both feature in early medieval Ireland.

This is illustrated in *Buile Suibhne* ("The frenzy of Suibne"), a twelfth-century text compiled from earlier sources (some of ninth-century origin), which is rich in nature poetry and relates the adventures of Suibne, the mad king of Dalriada in northeastern Ireland, who was condemned to mimic a bird for his offences against the Church. Among the interpolated poems is Suibne's poem of lamentation for his predicament, which includes the following stanzas:

I love not the trumpeting
I hear at early morn: sweeter to me the squeal
of the badgers in Benna Broc.

Ni charaim in stocairecht
atchluinim go moch, binne lium a cro-cairecht
bruic a mBennuibh Broc.

I love not the horn blowing
so boldly I hear:
sweeter to me the belling of a stag of
twice twenty peaks.

Ni charuim an chornairecht
atchluinim go tenn,
binni lium ag damhghairecht
damh dá fhiced benn.[40]

Suibne relates one cultural aspect of his former life as king in his royal enclosure in the first half of each stanza, before contrasting it with its equivalent in his present situation as surrogate bird in a woodland in each second half-stanza. From this it may be concluded that daybreak was traditionally announced with the sounding of a trumpet at noble residences, and that horn calls featured in the ceremonial of the hunt. As an added bonus, both stanzas give some indication of the sound-quality of the two instruments as perceived by the original poet: the thin, high-pitched squeal of the trumpet, and the hoarse bellow of the horn. (This aspect of the witness of the literary texts will be revisited later.)

The wisdom-text *Trechung Breth Féni inso sís,* a ninth-century compilation of gnomic statements containing material of relevance to early Irish law (for more about which see later), includes the statement that

there are three silences that are preferable to speech:
 silence during instruction,
silence during music,
silence during preaching.
trí túa ata ferr labra:

túa fri forcital,
túa fri hairfitiud, túa fri procept.[41]

The maxim and its promotion of active listening was readily acted upon by Irish nobles and kings, who consistently encouraged, supported, patronised, and protected learning, music, and religion. Indeed, not only did they themselves strive for musical accomplishment, but nobles and kings maintained musicians and singers in their households. The two will be examined separately as they are important both in aiding our understanding of the nature of the musical values in early medieval Irish society, and because they have ramifications in the wider context of contemporary musical practices elsewhere in Europe.

Musical attainment among the aristocratic classes

Kings, lords and other noble warriors were expected to possess a number of particular attributes. In addition to the essential prowess in the art of war, together with a well-enunciated sense of honor that guided the actions of heroes and whose absence marked out their antagonists, attention was paid to more artistic accomplishments. One was the ability to recognize the properties and elements of the twelve forms of Irish vernacular poetry and to be able to compose poems in each of them.[42] Another was an expertise in vocal and instrumental music.

This is expressed in *Cath Maige Tuired* ("The Second Battle of Moytura") which, although its earliest surviving version dates from the sixteenth century, includes segments from as early as the ninth century. One passage describes an episode that took place at the seat of the High King of Ireland at Tara in County Meath. In it, the warrior-god Lug claimed the right to enter a feast prepared for the *Túatha Dé Danann* by high king Nuada, which had been restricted to practitioners of different arts. His claim was based on his mastery of every conceivable art: he was a carpenter, a smith, a champion, a *cruit* player, a warrior, a poet, a historian, a druid, a cupbearer, a brazier, and a chess player. He proved himself in all of these by undergoing various tests, including a final musical challenge:

"Let a cruit be played for us," said the hosts. Then the warrior [Lug] played sleep music for the hosts and for the king on the first night, putting them to sleep from that hour to the same time the next day. He played sorrowful music and they cried and lamented. He played joyful music and they were merry and rejoiced.

"Seindter cruitt dúin" al i[n]d slúaig. Sephaind íarum ant ógláech súantraige dona slúagaib 7 don rígh an cét oidqui. Focairtt a súan ón tráth co 'raili. Sephainn golltraigis co mbátar oc caeí 7 ac dogra. Sephainn gendtraigi co mbátar hi subai 7 a forbfáilti.[43]

(The special significance of *suantraige* ("sleep music"), *golltraigis* ("sorrowful music"), and *gendtraigi* ("joyful music") will be discussed later.)

The ability to perform in such an affective manner was normally reserved for the "professional" *cruit* player. Yet it is clear from this passage, from a related episode later in the tale,[44] and from similar passages in other epics, that warriors were expected to be skilled *cruit* players. The cultivation of a fine singing voice was another attribute. Clearly musical accomplishment was expected of the noble classes in early medieval Irish society and was well-established by the ninth century at the latest. While they also supported professional musicians in their households, the Irish nobles were not averse to performing at formal gatherings. The Irish chivalric integrity described in the early literature may not have attained the degree of modesty characteristic of a later time in other European societies, most notably that which is noted in French twelfth-century fiction. Nevertheless, it is important to note that it was a recorded feature of early medieval Irish society long before it was recorded elsewhere.[45]

The household musicians

Irish nobles also maintained musicians and singers in their households. This is well illustrated in a prose section of the early eleventh-century *Tochmarc Emere* ("The Courting of Emer"), which enumerates and names the musical entourage of the "Irish Solomon," King Cormac mac Airt (fl. 227-266 AD):

The musical artists of Cormac, that is, the nine sons of Lir mac Etersciuil; his three pipers, noble and faultless, Finn, Eochaid and Illand.	Aes dána do Chormac ciúil .ix. meic Lir meic Etersciúil a trí cuslenda cáem in band Find Eochaid 7 Illand.
His musical horn-players after that, the two [called] Aed, and Firgein; three jesters pure, melodious and keen, Athirne, Drec and Drobel.	A chornaire ciúil iar sin im dá Aed is im Firgein trí drude denma glam ngér Athirne is Drec is Drobél.[46]

The horn-players are described as "musical" in the passage to distinguish between them and the bearers of drinking-horns mentioned later in the text who also formed part of the king's retinue; the term *corn* also denotes "drinking-horn." Trumpeters are absent from the list, and they are also consistently absent from other similar lists. The implication here may be that, whereas the horn found employment in some musical capacity at noble residences (in addition to participating in the hunt) and could then be considered as acting as a primarily "musical" instrument more-or-less in the modern sense, the role of the trumpet was so firmly rooted in, and delineated by, the military and ceremonial spheres of cultural activity that this precluded its consideration in that sense, an important distinction that makes it all the more regrettable that the music concerned belongs to the elusive unwritten tradition.

(In passing, note that the other musicians listed as *aes dána … ciúil,* or "musical artists," are the *cuslenda,* or "pipers" who played a wind instrument made from a stalk or reed and called the *cuisle;* the latter term is usually translated as "flute." Other musical members of the retinue are also mentioned in the poem.)

Music for entertainment

The main opportunity for the purely musical use of instruments such as the horn would be expected to occur during entertainment in the noble households. That this is the case is shown in *Táin Bó Cúalnge* ("The Cattle-Raid of Cooley"), a heavily interpolated late eleventh-century epic text with elements that point to a seventh-century origin. Incidental to the story is a description of the daily routine of king Conchobor Mac Nessa of Ulster at his royal enclosure at Emain Macha, near Armagh city in County Armagh:

This is how Conchobor spends his time of kingship since he assumed sovereignty: as soon as he arises, settling the cares and business of the province, thereafter he divides the day into three: the first third of the day [is] spent watching the youths playing games and hurling, the second third spent in playing [boardgames called] *brandub* and *fidchell,* and the last third spent in consuming food and drink until sleep comes on them all, while singers and instrumentalists are meanwhile lulling him to sleep.

dáig is amlaid domeil Conchobor in rígi óro gab rígi in rí .i. mar atraig fó chétóir cesta 7 canhgni in chóicid d'ordugud; in lá do raind i trí asa athli: cétna trian de fó chétóir ic fégad na maccáem ic imbirt chless cluchi 7 immánae, in trian tánaise dond ló ic imbirt brandub 7 fhidchell, 7 in trian dédenach ic tochathim bíd 7 lenna conda geib cotlud for cách. Aes cíuil 7 airfitid dia thálgud fri sodain.[47]

It is interesting to note that the musicians have been divided into two distinct groups of professional singers—*áes cíúil*—and instrumentalists—*airfitid.*

Much care and attention was invested in the evening meal, which was an expression of the wealth and power of the host. This is shown earlier in the same tale, when king Ailill and queen Medb of Connaught assembled their army at Crúachain (Rathcroghan in County Roscommon) before embarking on the great cattle-raid into Ulster. Their hospitality was such that

food and drink was prepared for them, singers and musicians performed, and they ate a meal.

darónad urgnam bíd 7 lenna leó 7 ra canait ceóil 7 airfiti leó 7 darónad praind 7 tomaltus.[48]

So high was the expectation that feasting should incorporate entertainment that its absence was considered to be a bad omen. This is indicated in *Cath Maige Tuired* ("The Second Battle of Moytura") which, although its earliest surviving version dates from the sixteenth century, includes segments from as early as the ninth century. In this tale, the Túatha Dé Danann (the gods of pagan Ireland) had elected as their king Bres, the illegitimate son of king Elatha of the Fomoire (another supernatural race formerly allied to the Túatha Dé Danann) and Ériu, a woman of the Túatha Dé Danann. They were reminded of their grave error in electing an incompetent king, and were forewarned of impending conflict against the Fomoire, when, among other notable absences of etiquette,

they did not see their poets, nor their bards, nor their singers, nor their *cruit* players, nor their pipers, nor their horn players, nor their jugglers, nor their fools entertaining them in the household.

ní fhacutar dano a filidh iná a mbardai nó a cáinte nó i cruitire nó i cuslendaib nó a cornairie nó i clesomhnaig nó a n-ónmide oga n-airfide aru cinn isin techlug.[49]

of their new ruler, Bres. The passage again refers to both vocal and instrumental groups, and it also shows that the body of instrumentalists—the *airfitid*—who helped entertain during the feasting included horn players in their number, but not trumpeters, thereby confirming the statement made earlier.

In *Táin Bó Cúalnge,* the absence of music at the encampment of "the men of Ireland" during their cattle-raid on Ulster also caused well-founded unease: they subsequently lost one hundred of their number on each of three successive nights during solo forays by their opponent, Cú Chulainn.[50]

Formal welcomes and ceremonial entrances

In early medieval Irish society, all householders were under an obligation to provide hospitality to any freeperson. They were also required to provide a feast for their lord and his entire retinue during the winter,[51] a particularly daunting duty if the guest happened to be a provincial king, as happens in the comical eleventh-century tale *Mesca Ulad* ("The Intoxication of the Ulstermen"). When king Connor mac Nessa of Ulster set out for a feast prepared in his honor by Findtan mac Niall Niamglonnach, he was accompanied by all of Ulster, so that

each [subordinate] king came with his queen, each musician with his proper mate, each hospitaller with his female companion,

cach rí cona rígain, cach fer ciúil cona chomadas, cach ségaind cona banshégaind,[52]

yet they were attended to as well as if only a small company had been entertained.

The size of the musical entourage, let alone the entire retinue, could be formidable. This is the case in *Estid a laigniu na llecht* ("The fair of Carman"), an early twelfth-century poem that includes a description of the order of procession associated with the ceremonial opening of a triennial assembly of the tribes of Ireland by the high king of Ireland, in which we are told that

These are [the assembly's] great   privileges: trumpeters, *cruit*players, players of hollow-necked horns; pipers, lyre players without weariness poets and petty rhymesters …

… Pipe[r]s, fiddlers, men of pledge, bone players and pipers… … Entertainers; freemen; singers.…

Is iat a ada olla. stuic. cruitti. cuirn chroestolla; cúisig timpaig. cen tríamna. filid 7 faenchlíara …

… Pipai. fidli. fir cen gail cnamfhir 7 cuslennaig; … … Aitti. airggni. aidbsi cheoil.…[53]

The meaning of the term *cnamfhir*—a composite of the nouns *cnaim,* meaning "bone," and *fir,* the plural of *fer,* meaning "man"—is unclear, although the context implies that it refers to the player of a musical instrument. It may denote players on an animal horn, rather than a metal horn, in which case *cnam* is cognate with *benn buabhall,* met earlier. It

may refer to a wind instrument made of bone, in which case *cnam* is cognate with *buinne* ("stalk," "pipe," or, in medicine, "[shin]bone"), a term already met in connection with the discussion of the *Codex Paulinus Wirziburgensis;* the idea of the instrument being slender may well be inferred by the association with *cuslennaig*; as will be seen later, the player on the *buinne* was termed *buinnire.*[54] Against the latter interpretation, however, it must be noted that the term *guthbuinde,* a composite of *guth* ("sound") and *buinne,* represents "trumpet" in *Imthúsa Alexandair* ("Concerning Alexander the Great"), a tenth- or eleventh-century translation of the Latin-texted epic.[55]

(*Estid a laigniu na llecht* also includes the earliest known Irish reference to medieval fiddlers, or *fidli,* whose instrument must have been introduced into Ireland through trading links with countries that had dealings with the Near East, as Ireland did not participate in the Crusades. *Pipai,* or "pipers," is a loanword from Old French that we have already met in its Early Modern Irish form, *píobaire.*)

Rituals were developed to accompany the welcome accorded to kings and other nobles when they visited the homes of their subjects. This is seen in *Erchoitmed Ingine Gulidi* ("The Excuse of Gulide's Daughter"), a short eleventh-century tale concerning an unscheduled visit to the home of Gulide the satirist by the late fifth-century king Fedlimid of Munster in which the narrative relates how the arrival of the royal party was greeted with the sounding of horns and trumpets from the rampart of the enclosure surrounding Gulide's home.[56]

The same welcome was also given to warrior-heros. This is forcefully shown in *Táin Bó Cúalnge.* Because of a mysterious debility —noínden Ulad—that afflicted every Ulster-man during the first three months of any emergency, only the "champion of Ulster," Cú Chulainn, the son of the god Lug, could oppose queen Medb's cattle-raid on the province, for he came from Mag Muirthemne, the plains to the south of Dundalk in the province of Leinster. Cú Chulainn was a hero torn between conflicting loyalties, stricken by personal tragedies, and worn down by lone forays against the enemy and mortal combats against former friends. In one particularly harrowing episode he narrowly escaped death when, already engaged in single combat, he was treacherously set upon by a witch. The ensuing depression, dejection, and war-weariness caused him to reflect upon his lone defence of Ulster in a highly-charged poem in which he associated the sounding of horns with the welcome normally due to a warrior-hero, neither of which he had received:

If but few sing here for me,
there will not even be played a single horn.
But if music comes from many horns,
then the sound is sweeter

Mad úathad dochanat form, ní airfitiud nach n-óenchorn.
Mad ilar ceól a cornaib,
iss ed is binniu din choblaig.[57]

As well as being employed to welcome noble and royal visitors, musical instruments also featured in the ceremonial entrance processions of the kings and nobles who undertook the visits. In *Táin Bó Fraích* ("The Cattle Raid of Froech"), the warrior-hero Fróech wished to court Findabair, daughter of king Ailill and queen Medb. His mother's sister, one of the

fairy people (termed *Síde*), gave him wondrous garments and gifts to help him in his task, among them a retinue which included

seven horn blowers, with horns of gold and silver and clothes of many colors, with shining mantles and the golden yellow hair of the Síde … [and] three *cruit* players in royal garb

mórfesser cornaire leo co cornaib órdaib 7 argdidib, co n-étaigib ildathachaib, co monhgiab órdaib sídbudib, co lennaib étrachtaib... Triar cruittire co n-écosc ríg.[58]

Fróech and his party made a number of formal entrances into the fort of king Ailill and queen Medb at Crúachain. In the first of these, the company entered the courtyard and made a ceremonial circuit of their hosts' house[59]; in the course of another, it is noted how

his horn players preceded him into the court, then, and such was their playing that thirty of Ailill's dearest ones died of yearning.

a chornairi íarum remisium dochum in dúine. Sennait di conid abbad tricha fer di shaincháemaib Ailella ar shírechtai.[60]

The ritual of the ceremonial entrance, then, consisted of a formal procession through the gateway piercing the protective walls surrounding the dwelling and into the circular enclosure at whose centre stood the house of the host, followed by a circuit of the house before the building was itself entered, the musicians in the entourage, or at least the horn players, playing all the while.

The result of active listening to the music sounded by Fróech's magical horn players may have been unfortunate for "thirty of Ailill's dearest ones," but the passage highlights two important characteristics of the early medieval Irish psyche as it is recorded in the literature. The first of these is a concern for beauty in music and a striving towards musical perfection. The second is a belief in the power of music and a firmly-held conviction, shared by listeners and storytellers alike, that expert musical performance could unleash a supernatural power with which it was possible—indeed, desirable—to control or significantly alter the emotional state of the listeners. These will be examined in turn.

The perceived sound of music

In *Buile Shuibne,* mentioned earlier, the sound of the morning trumpet was compared to the bark of the badger, the call of the horn to the bell of a stag. This is just one example of the early medieval Irish poetic tradition of expressing the qualities of persons and things through sensitive and imaginative analogies. Many of these descriptions of "things through other things" are stated with regard to the beauty of nature and occasionally of music. Human voices in particular are described with beautifully sonorous musical analogies that, in the absence of any surviving music, are our only indicator of the musical sounds made by

the instruments of the early medieval Irish musical instrumentarium and of the aesthetic pleasure derived from their musical performance.

One such instance is found in *Tochmarc Étaine* ("The Wooing of Étain"), which dates from the ninth century. Early in the story it is recounted how the witch Fuamnach took revenge on her husband Midir, who wished to take the maiden Étain as his second wife, by transforming Étain into a pool of water. Combination with the other three of Empedocles' four elements which were also present in the house—the hot fire, the wind, and the seething earth— caused the liquid to condense into a worm which then metamorphosed into a giant purple fly. For all this, Étain's beauty and nobility survived unscathed and

sweeter than pipes and cruits and horns was the sound of her voice and the hum of her wings…. Midir loved no other woman, and he found no pleasure in music or in drinking or eating when he did not see her and hear the music of her and her voice.

ba bindi cuslendaib 7 crotaib 7 cornairib fuaim a foghair 7 easnad a heiti…. Ná rochar Midir mnaí in tan atchidh an chuil corcrai, 7 níba sam ceól na hól na longadh in tan nach aicedh 7 nach cluinedh a ceol 7 a foghar.[61]

The analogy seems to indicate that Midir took pleasure in a type of music that contained two component parts: the phrase "the sound of her voice" strongly implies a melody, or at least a melodic inflexion, and "the hum of her wings" suggests a sustained drone-like sound. Midir is twice mentioned as finding pleasure in the two, thus it is probably the case that both components were heard simultaneously rather than sequentially. In the same text, the pipes, *cruits,* and horns of entertainment are characterized as "sweet" (*bind*), although the presence of *cruits* in the list casts doubt on any notion that the three types of instruments might have participated in a single ensemble: the evidence from other texts indicates solo performance on the stringed instrument, or an accompanying role in the performance of the poet-singers, rather than performance with other instruments (see later).

The "sweet sound" of the human voice is compared to the sound of "the strings of *cruits* plucked by the hands of masters" in *Táin Bó Cúalnge,*[62] but the most telling use of musical analogy is found in the most harrowing of the tales of the Ulster Cycle (if not of the entire corpus of literature), *Longes Mac nUsnig* ("The Exile of the Sons of Uisliu"), a story dating to the eighth or ninth century that combines romance and honor with extreme treachery. Myles Dillon has pointed out that *Longes Mac nUsnig,* much of which is in verse form that embellishes the narrative, "is the earliest form of the love motif in Irish literature, the motif which later became famous in the story of Tristan, apparently a French adaptation of Irish tradition."[63]

Longes Mac nUsnig concerns the fate of the lovers Deirdre, a ward of king Connor mac Nessa of Ulster (who intended to take her for himself), and Noisiu, one of the three sons of Uisliu (the others were Arddan and Aindle), whose valor and battle-prowess were unmatched among the warriors of Ulster (the tale is set in the period prior to Cú Chúlainn's arrival at Emain Macha).[64] Deirdre eloped with Noisiu and endured many trials and tribulations during exile in Scotland and England before she and the sons of Uisliu returned

to Emain Macha under king Connor's personal guarantee of their safety, where the sons of Uisliu were treacherously massacred on the grassy enclosure of the fort. Deirdre spent a year of lamentation and self-denial during forced companionship with Connor mac Nessa. Whenever musicians were brought to entertain her, she would dismiss them with a poem that includes the following stanzas:

Sweet always to you
your pipers and horn players;
yet today I tell you
I have heard music that was   sweeter.

Cid binni lib in cach mí
cuslennaig 7 chornairi;
is í mo chobais indiu;

rochuala céol bad binniu.

Sweet to Connor, your king
 his pipers and horn players;
sweeter to me—fame of hosts—
 the lilting of the sons of Uisliu.

Bind la Conchobor for ri
cuslennaig 7 chornairi;
binniu lemsa clóth nell.
sian no gebtis meic Uislend.

Noisiu's voice the sound of a wave—
 his music was always sweet;
Arddan's deep voice was good,
and Aindle's singing from his hunting lodge.

Fogur tuinni toirm Noísi. ba ceol bind bithchloísi; coblach Arddain ropo maith. andord Andle dia uarbaith.[65]

Given the early date of the tale, the distinction made between the voices of the sons of Uisliu is of interest, if not completely clear. Noisiu's voice is sonorous but sweet. Arddan's singing is described with the term *coblach,* which is often employed to describe low-sounding music, for example, the bass strings of the *cruit.*[66] The term *andord* (often contracted to *dord*), mentioned in connection with Andle's voice, has a number of meanings: it may refer to the battle-refrain of warriors, it may describe the lowing of a bull or the belling of a stag when the two are considered "musically" in the texts, or it may denote a humming sound or a type of drone; Andle's voice seems to have had a humming quality.[67]

The power of music
The voices of the sons of Uisliu were remarkable judged by any standard. Not only did Deirdre immediately fall in love with Noisiu when she first saw and heard him singing while he was standing alone on the earthen rampart of the stronghold of Emain Macha, but

very sweet was the singing of the sons of Uisliu. Every cow and every dairy animal that heard it gave two thirds more milk. Every person who heard it grew peaceful and sated with [instrumental] music.

ba bind im a n-andord mac nUisnig. Cech bó 7 cech míl rochluined no mbligtis d'immarcraid uadib. Cech duine nod chluined ba leór sithchaire 7 airfitiud doib.[68]

The singing of Noisiu and his brothers conjured up a mystical power, and its presence was recognized by the listeners, human and animal alike, through its ability to cause them to experience peace, satisfaction, and abundance. This extraordinary musical "cause and effect"

was also noted earlier in relation to Froech's horn players, although in that case the intensity of the feeling of yearning had been greatly enhanced by the horn players' connection with the *Síde* ("fairy people"). There was general agreement across the Irish society in which these tales circulated that music had important powers to influence the emotional states of listeners, powers that were concentrated in the skill of the musical performers. This was not unique to Ireland—it formed part of the *lingua franca* of the belief systems of other societies before and after the Irish experiences under discussion, as is shown by the examples of King Saul and Alexander the Great, for instance—but the expression of that common tenet in Irish writings is important, for the descriptions of the causes and effects of the acorporeal power express themselves as a clearly definable dialect of the common belief.

Music was of great significance to the early Irish mind. The Irish Otherworld—a magical place of primitive pagan belief where time was suspended, where sickness, age, and death were unknown, where all needs were satisfied, and where happiness was perpetual—was also a place where music sounded continuously in the air. Belief in the Otherworld survived the introduction of Christianity because it was easily melded with the concept of the Promised Land and its heavenly chorus. Yet music was neither restricted to this Otherworld nor to mere aural experience, for (as we have already seen) it found its way into the prose and verse of early Irish literature as imaginative and beautiful metaphors embellishing the text, the latter yet another form of magic with the power to evoke images, sounds, and emotions.[69]

It was mentioned earlier that three types of music were recognized in early medieval Ireland, each with the potential to induce one of a trinity of emotional states. They were *goltraige,* "sorrowful music"; *gentraige,* "joyful music"; and *súantrige,* "sleep music"; and the emotional states they could conjure up are self-explanatory. While the three types of music possessed their respective emotions in latent form, it was only through skillful musical performance that they could be actuated. As a result, musical skill was highly esteemed and its practitioners were highly valued. Thus the noble classes concerned themselves with musical performance, and supported musicians in their households. *Cruit* players were more highly valued than the others, but this brought them greater responsibility, for it was enshrined in law that there were

three things that constitute a *cruit* player [the ability to play] sorrowful music, joyful music, and sleep music.	tréde neimthigedar cruitire: golltraige, gentraige, súantraige.[70]

It is to the legal documents that we now turn to find the most tangible evidence of the position of the musician in early medieval Irish society.

The legal status of musicians

The high esteem given to music resulted in the allocation of a reasonably advantageous social position to the musician and its enshrinement in law. A number of law-schools flourished

in early medieval Ireland and these produced many legal texts for the instruction of judges on a wide range of issues, of which the earliest definition of the law of copyright is but one example.[71] The surviving legal tracts date from between the fourteenth and sixteenth centuries but, as they retain the original legal texts (complete with archaic Irish forms and references to early historical events contemporary with those forms) and clearly distinguish between these and the accompanying, more modern explanatory glosses and commentaries (which supply case-law interpretations), it can be shown that the codification of the laws began as early as the seventh century. Irish law, commonly known as "Brehon Law," differed from the Roman system obtaining elsewhere in Europe. Eschewing the principle of "equality before the law," each grade of Irish society was allocated its own "honor-price" and bore a share of legal responsibility in proportion to that legal value. The Norman Invasion of Ireland (1169-70) brought with it attempts to impose the English legal system, but the native Brehon Law survived until the end of the seventeenth century, when the victory of King William III over King James II in the Williamite War in Ireland (1689-91) and the subsequent "Penal Laws" ensured the final collapse of the old Gaelic Order.

Musicians enjoyed "free" status, termed *sóer,* in Ireland. The specific degree of freedom enjoyed by the majority of them is stated in a page of possible eleventh- or twelfth-century origin appended to *Críth Gablach* ("The Law of Status"), a legal document redacted in the eighth century, which indicates:

these are the [freemen belonging to the] lower grades and they are entitled to the same honor-price: the pipers, the jugglers, the horn players, and the pipers,

daer nemid tra, .i. fodána na graidsi tuas

ocus comh enechlann iad ocus na pipairedha ocus na clesamnaig[h], ocus na cornairedha, ocus na cuislennaigh,[72]

and this is confirmed in other law tracts.

As *fodána na graidsi tuas* ("freemen belonging to the lower grades"), the pipers—both the *pipairedha* and the *cuislennaig*—and the horn players were free to travel within the territory of the noble or king whom they served, and their honor-price was a proportion of that assigned to their master. Due to the enhanced esteem that was given to the *cruit* (both as lyre and, later, as frame harp), the *cruit* player was accorded the higher "independent" status, termed *soíre,* which entitled him to a fixed honor-price and also enabled him to travel unimpeded across territorial boundaries.[73]

The principle of inheritance ensured that legal status was normally passed on from one generation to the next. This is shown in *Diambad messe bad ri reil* ("Advice to a King"), a late eighth-century wisdom poem that is found in a number of the early manuscripts. The poem provides instruction on the attributes of a virtuous, just and honorable ruler, and it also describes how the principle of inheritance applied equally to all grades in Irish society. Therefore, concerning musicians:

Let the horn player's son carry the horn;
let the soldier's son follow arms;
let the cleric's son go on the circuit,
joyfully to sing the psalms.

Let the *cruit* player's son carry the *cruit;*
that does not harm either of them;
let the potter's son take to the clay;
the physician's son, let him be a physi-
cian.

The son of the player on the stringed lyre,
it is his office to sing fine compositions;
let the mariner's son take to the sea,
the husbandman's son to the soil.

Mac in chornaire fon corn;
mac in láich allus na n-arm
mac in chléirig ar in cuairt;
do gabáil co suairc na salm.

Mac in chruittiri fón cruit;
issed nachassluitt malle
mac na cerda cosin criaid;
mac in lega léic liaig de.

Mac in timpanaig na tét;
issé a bés gabáil gres nglan
mac in murigi icon muir,
mac ind airim icond ar.[74]

Although the principle of inheritance was normally adhered to, it was uniquely possible in early medieval Irish society to change status at all levels and this was, in fact, legislated for. On the one hand, behavior in a manner unbefitting a particular status or failure to carry out the obligations of that status would result in a reduction in the rank, the degree of reduction depending on the severity of the transgression. On the other hand, elevation in rank might result from a person's particular artistic skills, or skills in husbandry, or God-given talent. The important legal maxim was *ferr fer a chiniud*—"a man is better than his birth."[75]

It must be noted at this point that there has not been any reference to trumpeters in the law tracts. Moreover, neither have they been included in relation to the feasting and entertainment in noble households. It is unlikely that the trumpeters would have had a widely differing social position from the horn players, given their irreplacability in battle and ceremonial and their employment together with horn players in both situations. It is more likely that they enjoyed the same status, and that the legislators then considered both trumpeters and horn players under the convenient heading *cornairi* when legal status was being conferred. And there is some circumstantial evidence that this was the case, as will be mentioned later in another context. However, the presumption of legal equality does not imply that the trumpet was sounded along with the horn during entertainments in the households: the evidence of the epic tales clearly indicates otherwise, and this has already been shown.

Musicians, then, served in the households of noble and royal masters. In return they enjoyed patronage and protection, and a reasonable social position. They also benefitted from free sustenance under their master's roof. This is shown in a number of law tracts. A section of *Críth Gablach* regulates the arrangement for feasting in the *tech ríg,* the "banqueting-hall of the king": the king is, of course, centrally placed at a table situated in the north of the banqueting-hall; to the west, and next in order after the hostages of security (*fer gill*), the messengers (*techta*), the guests (*dáama*) and the poets (*éccis*), come the *cruit* players (*crutti*); to the southeast are found the pipers (*cuslennaig*), horn players (*cornairi*), and jugglers (*clesamnaig*).[76] A similar arrangement is described in the great Irish law collection known as the *Senchas Már* ("Great Tradition"): here the company of wind musicians (*áes airfitid*, which is glossed as *fedánaig,* or "whistle players") is consigned to the southeast

corner of the banqueting hall.[77]

The twelfth-century *Lebar na núachongbála* ("The Book of Leinster") includes the advice poem *Suidigud Tigi Midchuarda* ("The Seating Arrangement in the Banqueting Hall at Tara"), a verse description of the seating protocol in the banqueting hall of the High King of Ireland (which includes a directive on the cut of meat allocated to each member of the household present according to his respective rank), together with an accompanying drawing of the seating plan as it might have been in the eighth century. The high king is placed in the position of honor as before, and the rest are positioned according to rank. Of the musicians, the *cruit* players (*cruittiri*) are placed behind the pipers (*cuslennaig*) in the northwest, while diagonally opposite them are situated the horn players (*cornairi*) and the other pipers (*buinniri*).[78]

This particular placement of the musicians in separate groups may reflect differences in their relative ranks (it has already been noted that *cruit* players, in particular, enjoyed a higher status than the other musicians). Alternatively, it may indicate that a distinction was being made between assemblages of what would later be termed "soft" and "loud" musicians. If the latter is the case, then we have here a remarkable early indication of the *hauts et bas instrumens* performance practice.

Such a distinction seems to be indicated in *Auraicept na n-Éces* ("The Scholars' Primer"), a text-and-commentary grammar tract which survives as the Middle Irish version of an Old Irish text. Here, in a passage which acts as a running commentary on a section from Isidore of Seville's (d. 636 AD) *Etymologiae seu Origines,* comparison is made between lesser, or "feminine" types of music—which are listed as *aidbsi* ("choral song") and *ceol bec .i. cronan* ("small music, that is, humming," the equivalent of Isidore's *subtiles voces*)—and greater, or "masculine" types of music—*stocairecht no cornairecht* ("trumpeting or horn playing," equivalent to Isidore's *clangor tubarum*) and *fet* ("whistle"). Trumpeting and horn blowing are then described as *ciuil arda* (literally "high music," that is, "loud music") by comparison with *ciulu isli* (literally "low music," that is, "soft music"): the trumpet (*stoc*) overwhelms because "higher" [that is, louder] is its call" (*is airdi a [fh]aidh*), whereas music "when it is sweetest, is more silent and lower [that is, softer] than the other" (*intan as bindi is tuiu 7 is isliu ata na a n-aill*). It must be added that the Irish grammarian also indicates a rather different understanding of musical "greatness," one which equates greatness with social esteem rather than acoustic power, when he notes that "greater is its music when [the instrument] is a *cruit* (*mo[r] a [n]od intan is cruit*)." Despite this, it is clear that the other passages concern themselves with the actual power of the sound produced on the different instruments and voice, rather than on any aesthetic judgement.[79]

The foregoing sections have brought to attention a number of different strands of information on the trumpet and horn (and, to a much lesser extent, other musical instruments) in early medieval Ireland: an instrumentarium of lip-vibrated aerophones and a related glossary of terms have been developed; the Old Irish and Middle Irish names given to the military trumpet calls have been presented; the use of the trumpet and horn in the military and ceremonial spheres of employment has been established; the inclusion of the horn in music for court entertainment has been indicated; some estimation of the musical

timbres of the instruments has been made; attention has been drawn to place of music in early medieval Irish society and to that society's perception of the power that music possessed; the legal position of musicians in that society has been described; and it has also been noted that there may have been a distinction made between *hauts* and *bas* instruments among the instruments played in the household. All of this has been necessary preparation for the aspects of investigation which follow, for it is only against this background that the surviving instruments, or representations of them, may be identified: by employing the terms that were applied to them at the time when the artifacts were manufactured, or when the iconography was executed, rather than with recourse to anachronistic references to modern, stereotypical benchmark standards.

The evidence from the archaeological record

The presence of many and varied references to musical instruments in early Irish sacred and secular texts and in the legal tracts are strong indicators of the important place of music in early medieval Irish society. Terms have been met for a wide range of musical instruments, the materials from which they were made have been indicated, their various employments in Irish society have been described, and some qualitative indication of their sounds as perceived by the early Irish mind has been found. Depictions of a number of musical instruments are found in early Irish iconography and in the plastic arts, and a few instruments themselves survive among the material remains from the period.

The Irish illuminated gospel manuscripts that were produced between the seventh and ninth centuries count among the greatest artistic achievements of the early medieval world. Best known of these is the *Book of Kells* (c. 800), which marks the pinnacle of Irish artistic achievement during the time when Irish art and culture flourished at home and in centers of Irish missionary activity elsewhere in Europe; it has been described as "the product of a cold-blooded hallucination" by one modern commentator.[80] There does not seem to have been an iconoclastic tendency in early Irish Christian society. Instead, the love of nature already met in the written word was permitted to burst forth in these monuments of insular art—the painted equivalents of the artistry of the Irish metalworker—in their brilliantly chromatic depictions of natural things (including animals, persons, plant,s and implements among others) which, together with the intricate abstract interlacing and the complex spiral, trumpet, and other geometrical devices, comprise the illuminations. (The term "insular art" has been deliberately employed here to avoid entering into disputation concerning the origins of the stylistic traits employed in the manuscripts—whether Irish, Pictish, Anglo-Saxon, Viking, or otherwise—and the resultant relationships between the originating land[s] and the receiving land[s].)

Among the implements depicted are musical instruments. Lip-vibrated aerophones, in the form of truncated cones of around 120cm in length, are included in depictions of the Last Judgement in two eighth-century illuminated manuscripts, the well-known *St. Gallen Gospel Book* (St. Gallen, Stiftsbibliothek, Ms 51; Figure 1) and the lesser-known *Turin Gospel Book* fragment (Turin, Biblioteca Nazionale Universitaria, Cod.O.IV.20; Figure 2).[81] These instruments appear to be made of wood with bronze mounts set along

the tube, and are the exact counterparts of the surviving River Erne trumpet in the Ulster Museum, Belfast (see below). Therefore they must be identified as trumpets in accordance with the Irish classification system described earlier.

The Almost identical trumpets (and also what appear to be animal horns) are included in a representation of King David as lyre player surrounded by musicians in the mid-eighth century manuscript *Cotton Vespasian A.1* (London, British Library; Figure 3). The presence of these musical instruments in a manuscript that originated at Canterbury in Anglo-Saxon southern England attests to "the stimulating influence of Hiberno-Saxon book illumination in the north" and bears eloquent testimony to the commonality of the instruments and also to the presence of similar shared musical cultural values throughout the British Isles at this time.[82] (Scotland and Northumbria were the first areas to receive Irish missionary activity, with centers at the great monasteries of Iona and Lindisfarne, respectively, and also the first to experience Irish book illumination and develop it by adding new inventiveness to it, before it moved southward to the territories that had experienced the missionary activity of St. Augustine and his Roman form of Christianity.)

The decline in importance of manuscript painting in Ireland coincided with the onset of the Viking invasions, beginning in 795. Viking raiding soon gave way to settlement in the towns they founded, and the Vikings ceased to pose a threat after their defeat at the Battle of Tara in 980. The destruction wreaked by the invaders seems to have had little permanent impact on Irish society. The great monastic houses—the principal targets, due to their abundant riches—were able to support an extraordinary flowering of stone sculpture, including almost three hundred high crosses, which were intended to commemorate the power and prestige of the Church.

The high crosses date from between the seventh and twelfth centuries, and they are unique documents in the history of sculpture that stand unrivaled in the grandeur of their conception and execution. The earliest crosses bear abstract ornamentation, but this gave way to figured scenes during the ninth century, including depictions of the crucifixion and enigmatic hunting scenes and processions of horsemen. The Old Kilcullen Cross in county Kildare is a figured cross that includes a depiction of a mounted player sounding what seems to be a horn of around 50cm in length in one of the panels: the instrument has a marked conical expansion and the bell section has weathered somewhat; the depiction may represent a hunting scene (Plate 1). Although it is often stated that a horn player is depicted at the end of an enigmatic funeral procession found at the base of the contemporaneous Ahenny North Cross in county Tipperary,[83] the so-called "horn player" is actually holding a plate upon which a head has been placed; in front of the plate-bearer and his gruesome trophy is a horse bearing the decapitated body belonging to the head.[84]

The late ninth- and tenth-century crosses are notable for their realistic depictions of narrative biblical subjects. A particular feature is the presence of a Crucifixion scene on one side of the crosshead and a representation of the Last Judgement on the other. (Interestingly, these Last Judgement scenes predate by two centuries those found elsewhere in Europe, but situated on the *tympana* of Romanesque churches in the latter case.) Trumpet-like instruments are found on some of these crosses. The Cross of Muiredeach at Monasterboice in

Plate 1
Mounted horn player (Old Kilcullen Cross, county Kildare, West face; reproduced by
kind permission of The Department of Arts, Culture and the Gaeltacht, Ireland).

Plate 2
Trumpeter of the Last Judgement (Cross of Muiredeach, county Louth, East face; repro-
duced by kind permission of The Department of Arts,
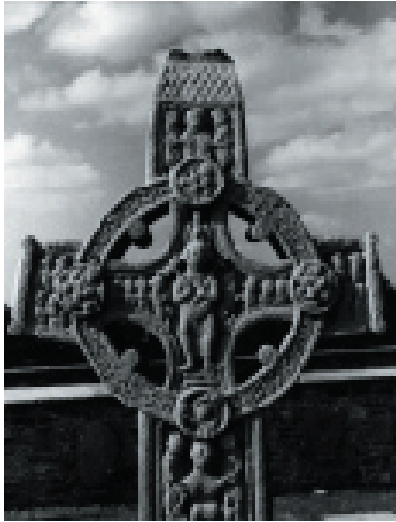Culture and the Gaeltacht, Ireland).

Plate 3
Trumpeter of the Last Judgement (Cross of the Scriptures at Clonmacnoise, county Offaly, East face; reproduced by kind permission of The Department of Arts, Culture and the Gaeltacht, Ireland).
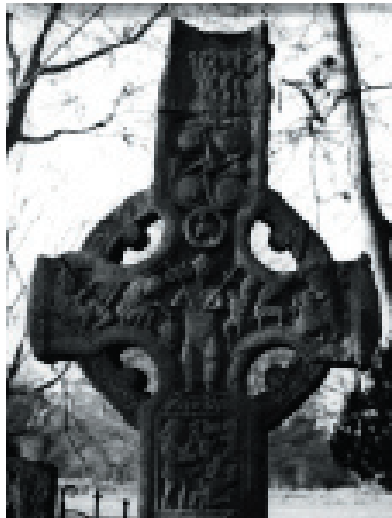

Plate 4
Trumpeter of the Last Judgement (Cross at Durrow, county Offaly, East face; reproduced by kind permission of The Department of Arts, Culture and the Gaeltacht, Ireland)

county Louth, the Cross of the Scriptures at Clonmacnoise in county Offaly, and the Cross at Durrow also in county Offaly all contain depictions of trumpeters with what appear to be trumpets of lengths 64cm, 53cm and 40 cm, respectively, all of them in Last Judgement scenes (Plates 2, 3, and 4, respectively). The trumpeters are depicted, together with *cruit* players and singers, among the ranks of the saved at the right-hand side of Christ; one of the saved is depicted apparently holding a book (of Psalms?) on the Cross of Muiredeach; the damned are also shown at Christ's left-hand side being driven to eternal suffering by a trident-wielding devil on the Cross of Muiredeach and the Cross of the Scriptures.

It has been suggested that the trumpets found on these crosses might be "single pipes,"[85] but this may be safely discounted for a number of reasons. Firstly, the instruments are found in depictions of the Last Judgement: these are the equivalents in stone of the manuscript paintings of Last Judgement scenes which, we have seen, include trumpets. Secondly, the instruments carved in stone are mostly long straight instruments with wide, truncated conical bores: these correspond to surviving trumpets from the same period. Thirdly, the Irish written tradition, as expressed in the biblical glosses and other texts referred to earlier, emphasizes the association of judgement and salvation with the sound of the trumpet: biblical tradition itself associates the sounding of trumpets with the ceremonial of the Last Judgement and with the eternal, heavenly Jerusalem. Fourthly, and finally, the trumpeters, *cruit*-players and singers are depicted on the crosses among the community of the saved who are singing psalms in eternal praise: this describes the imagery found in the "orchestral" Psalm 150, the final psalm of the Psalter that speaks of the eternal praise of God and specifically mentions trumpeting, harp playing, and singing as components of that eternal praise. Therefore, the aerophones depicted among the "heavenly chorus" on these crosses are not a type of woodwind instrument, they are trumpets.

It must also be mentioned at this point that depictions of trumpets and horns (and also possibly the earliest depictions of large frame harps) are found in Scotland among the stone sculptures of the Picts (the indigenous Celtic inhabitants of Scotland) and Scots (the descendants of the Irish settlers in western Scotland). These include horn-playing footsoldiers (at Barochan) and a horn-playing horseman (at Dunkeld), as well as two trumpeters playing long trumpets in a depiction of an enigmatic hunting scene on the magnificent ninth-century cross slab from Hilton of Cadboll, Ross (Figure 4). The existence in Scotland of depictions similar to those found in Ireland and in similar contexts is unsurprising, since the two were Celtic lands beyond the Roman Empire (which ended at Hadrian's Wall, apart from a short-lived expansion northwards to the Antonine Wall between 142 and 161 AD) that held many social, political, and cultural traits in common, shared the same Celtic variety of Christianity (Scotland was the first mission ground for the monks of Colm Cille), and also enjoyed extensive trading links.[86]

It is generally considered nowadays that the Irish depictions of trumpets and horns, like similar continental illustrations, belong to a purely "pictorial tradition [in which] the artists were following models derived from antiquity, rather than representing instruments in use in their time," and do not represent early medieval reality.[87] This may be the case in those manuscript illuminations in which a long curved horn emerges from the mouth of a

Figure 1
Trumpeters of the Last Judgement (St. Gallen, Stiftsbibliothek, Ms 51).

Figure 2
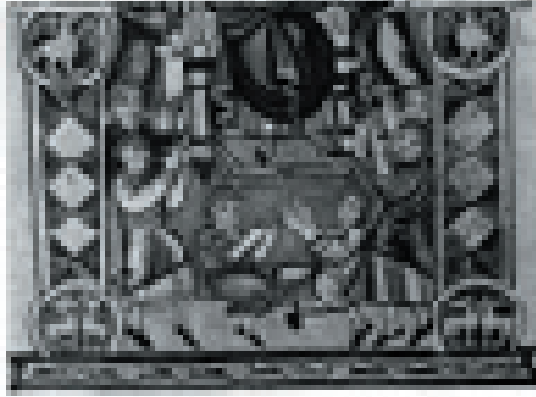Trumpeter of the Last Judgement (Turin, Biblioteca Nazionale Universitaria, Cod. O.IV.20).

Figure 3
Trumpeters and horn players of King David (London, British Library, Cotton Vespasian A.1).

Figure 4
Trumpeters in enigmatic hunting scene (Hilton of Cadboll cross slab, Ross).

symbol representing one of the evangelists—the lion of Mark, the eagle of John, the man of Matthew, and the ox of Luke—or an angel, as in the Lindisfarne Gospels (London, British Library, Cotton Nero D. IV, f. 25v) for example,[88] but this expresses the rather different tradition of *tuba est evangelium Christi* in which "the Gospel of Christ is a trumpet" in as much as each of the gospels proclaims the Christian message through the power of the written word.[89]

Moreover, the survival of three early medieval Irish wooden trumpets, each of them a different length (two of which I have discussed previously in the present journal), refutes the statement and proves that the trumpets of the depictions were also part of the real world contemporary with the sculpture.[90] Those instruments are the long trumpet from Becan in county Mayo, which was probably played with the bell end supported by a separate stand in the same way as is depicted in the 11th-century Anglo-Saxon manuscript *Cotton Tiberius C.VI* (London, British Library; Figure 5); the medium-sized trumpet from the River Erne in county Fermanagh, the size depicted in the Irish manuscript illuminations; and a short trumpet from a peat-bog on the River Bann in county Antrim, a recent acquisition of the Ulster Museum in Belfast which has been tentatively dated to between the ninth and twelfth centuries and includes two loops on the brass mounts suitable for the attachment of a baldric for carrying when not in use.[91] The similarity of these instruments to the iconographical representations is remarkable.

No Irish metal horns or trumpets survive from the early medieval period. However, as they had featured continuously since the late Bronze Age, it is likely that the early Medieval Irish metal lip-blown aerophones were among the casualties of the long-term results of the Norman Invasion of 1169-1170. Evidence of the continued use of metal instruments in Ireland is found in an unlikely external source, the writings of Giraldus Cambrensis, or "Gerald of Wales," which merit individual attention because they also supply a useful connection between the Irish societal focus which has been concentrated on in the previous sections, and the implications for its neighboring societies in Western Europe.

Trumpets and horns in the writings of Gerald of Wales

Gerald of Wales (c.1146-1223) was a Norman-Welsh cleric who belonged to one of the leading Norman families involved in the invasion of Ireland, the Fitzgeralds. He served Kings Henry II and Richard I for a period as diplomat and tutor. In 1185 he wrote *Topographia Hibernica* ("The History and Topography of Ireland"), a political work which was composed specifically to justify to the wider Christian world the invasion of one Christian kingdom, Celtic Ireland, by its neighbor, Norman England. As a result, the general tone treats the Irish in a prejudicial and deprecating manner, although he was unable to deny "the incomparable skill of the [Irish] people in musical instruments" in one of the book's chapters.[92]

In the course of another chapter concerning the Irish reverence for religious relics, Gerald of Wales gave an eye-witness account of the fate that had befallen an over-zealous Welsh priest who dared to blow a bronze horn (*cornu quoddam ere distinctum*), a relic of St. Patrick that was being worn on the neck of an Irish mendicant who was preaching in

Wales.[93] The horn apparently found its way into the collection of relics belonging to the Priory of St. John the Evangelist in Brecon in Wales, but is now lost. It has been suggested that the instrument may have been an Irish late Bronze-Age horn, but the previously discussed information from the *Milan Codex* indicates that it is equally likely to have been an instrument of the Irish early Christian period.[94] One of the manuscript sources includes an accompanying illustration of the scene which shows an end-blown horn. (If the illustration is accurate—which is not necessarily the case, although it dates from the early twelfth century—then it shows an early Christian-period instrument: the Irish late Bronze-Age horns that have the same shape are all side-blown horns[95]; Figure 6).

The same story is recounted in *Itinerarium Kambriae* ("The Journey through Wales") of 1191, an account of a mission undertaken in 1188 by Gerald of Wales in the company of the Archbishop of Canterbury. This book also includes descriptions of the use of trumpets and horns among the Welsh Celts. (Celtic kingdoms had re-emerged in parts of Britain after the withdrawal of the Roman legions, particularly in the less Romanized north and west. Irish settlements in Wales and colonies in parts of southwestern Scotland had also played a part in the process. The maintenance and development of close cultural and economic ties between Wales and Ireland continued until the 12th century, when Wales was invaded by the Normans, who had already conquered Anglo-Saxon England in 1066. It is not surprising that echoes of what has already been noted here in connection with Ireland also emerge in the context of the Welsh Celts.)

A section of the book concerns the campaign of King Henry II against the Welsh in 1163. As Henry II prepared to enter Welsh territory, the Welsh nobles assembled at the Nant Pencarn River near Newport and

to do the king honor and to show their pleasure at his coming, the trumpeters and horn players (who are called *cornhiriez* from *hir*—which means long—and *cornu*—because they blow on long horns) began to sound their instruments.

tubicines et buccinatores quos Cornhiriez vocant, ab Hir, quod est longum, et cornu, eo quod longis in cornubus flatum emittant, ex altera vadi ripa, quasi regi exultantes, in ejusdem honore buccinare coeperunt.[96]

It is unlikely that the Welsh nobles were actually engaged in welcome. It is more conceivable that the Welsh trumpets and horns were sounded in the Celtic pre-battle ritual manner to induce fear among the Norman invaders. Despite Gerald of Wales's pseudo-etymology, the term *cornhiriez* seems to be a simple transliteration into *langue d'oeil* Norman of a plural noun in the Welsh language cognate with (and possibly borrowed from) the Old Irish plural noun *cornaireada*—which, of course, represents "horn players."[97]

In both *Descriptio Kambriae* and *Topographia Hibernica* (apart from the earliest recension of a text that was much-revised by the author), Gerald of Wales also described how both the Welsh Celts and the Irish Celts would "sound the trumpet for battle" (*bellica tuba sonante*), and how
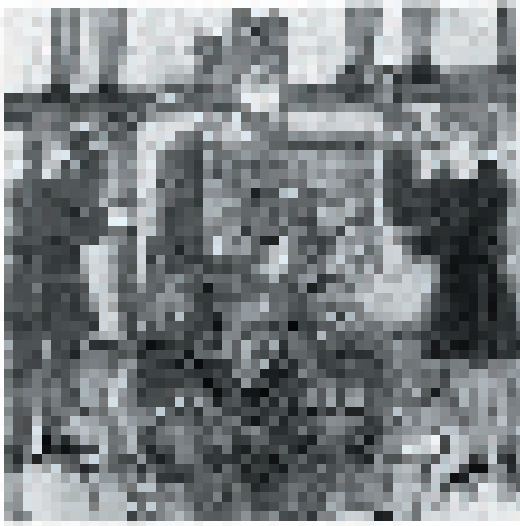
Figure 5
Trumpeter and horn player with King David
(London, British Library, Cotton Tiberius C.VI).

Figure 6
Welsh priest blowing the horn of St. Patrick
(Dublin, National Library of Ireland, Ms 700).

in war, at the first assault, they are ferocious. They shout, glower fiercely at the enemy, and fill the air with fearsome clamor, making a piercing sound with their long trumpets.

in bellico conflictu, primo impetu, acrimonia, voce, vultu terribiles effecti, tam clangore horrendo coelum replente, tubarumque praelongarum clangore altisono, quam pernici.[98]

Note how the "long horns" of the "trumpeters and horn players" have now become simply "long trumpets." Moreover, Gerald of Wales' indication that the term *cornhiriez,* or *cornaireada,* encompasses players of both the trumpet and the horn would tend to verify the suggestion made earlier that there was a possible legal employment of *cornaireada* as an umbrella term in Irish law.

These statements also echo the comments of writers from Classical Greece and Rome, such as that quoted earlier, and they are repeatedly found in the texts of early Irish epic tales. But there is also a perceptible casualness with which Gerald of Wales discusses trumpets and horns both here and elsewhere in his writings. This carries the additional implication that his intended Norman and Anglo-Saxon audience was also well acquainted with the instruments and their employment, an implication that deserves some attention.

Trumpets and horns beyond the Celtic fringe

It has been noted that trumpets and horns were in use among Ireland's nearest Celtic neighbors, Scotland and Wales, with whom there was considerable political, social, and cultural contact. There is also evidence that Normans and Anglo-Saxons were well-acquainted with trumpets and horns, and that there were other important aspects of music culture which seem to have been shared throughout the British Isles and further afield. To give but one example, *Beowulf,* the most important epic of the Anglo-Saxons, which survives in a 10th-century manuscript, includes passages in which the battle employment of the horn (termed *"horn"*) and trumpet (termed *"byman,"* indicating a possible manufacture from wood) is vividly described, including the "battle-call" (termed *fyrdleð*) sounded by the "war-horn" (termed *guðhorn*).[9] The same tale includes descriptions of feasting in banqueting halls, which are complete with musical entertainment supplied by singers and by players on the harp (termed *hearpan*); these also contain evidence of a musical accomplishment among kings, lords, and warriors, enabling them to sing and to play the harp for the others present.[100] There are other parallels, but these would merit a separate study on their own.

It is unfortunate that such aspects of shared musical culture are not considered in the widely disseminated standard modern texts, in which we are told that the musical practices and musical situations "appear to have been different among the German-speaking barbarians of the seventh and eighth centuries" who, in England at least, were the possessors of "the oldest surviving corpus of vernacular epic."[101] That is not to say that the originators of all of these musical practices and musical situations were from Ireland. Rather, it is a recognition that the musical cultures within which such practices and situations occurred were all dialects of a larger, common pan-European musical cultural tradition, but a tradition the first traces of which happen to find themselves first recorded in documents that

originate in early medieval Ireland—the result of an accident of history that led to Irish becoming a written language long before its neighbors.

Similarly, this must also call into question the theory that the manufacture and use of trumpets and horns in the West was lost after the fall of the Roman Empire and had to await the conflict of the Crusades to borrow them again, this time from the Saracens, a theory which has come to prominence since Michaud published his *Histoire des Croisades* in the early nineteenth century.[102] If the example from the Celtic fringe of Europe is anything to go by, it would appear that there was no hiatus in the tradition. Indeed, with the widespread dissemination of trumpets and horns made from organic materials, and with the written evidence pointing to the manufacture of trumpets and horns from metal during the period spanning the gap between the Fall of Rome and the Crusades, there is much in favor of the existence of an unbroken Western European tradition.[103]

Conclusion

It has been shown that trumpets and horns of metal and also of organic materials featured in early medieval Irish society; it has been established that the two instruments found a place in battle-rituals and that there existed a well-developed system of military trumpet calls; the role of the trumpet and horn in the daily ceremonial of the lordly and royal households has been described, including the morning-call and the use of the horn in the hunt; the patronage of music by the noble classes has been described, including the support of musical entertainers, horn players among them, and the acquisition of musical skills by the members of the nobility themselves; the ceremonial procedures associated with formal entrances into households and assemblies have been found to include musical components, including performance by horn players; some insight into the sounds made by the musical instruments as perceived by their listeners has been given; the extent to which the belief in the power of music to influence thoughts and actions was subscribed to has been indicated; the legal status, rights and privileges of horn players and trumpeters have been outlined; and the visual evidence of the iconography and the physical evidence of the surviving artifacts have been surveyed.

It has also been noted that many of the terms and structures, many of the depictions, and many of the situations in which musical instruments have been mentioned in an early medieval Irish context also strike familiar resonances in connection with the music cultures of other early medieval societies. It has been shown that, when subjected to examination by philologists, the Irish sources are consistently found to contain the information in a form that is chronologically earlier than their equivalents elsewhere, a form that seems as a pre-echo of what came to be written down by continental scribes at a later date. Of course, it has also been pointed out that this is more likely to be a simple aberration caused more by the early Irish adoption of a vernacular literacy rather than a statement of innovation. What is certain, however, is that music-oriented study of the literature and material culture of the Celtic fringe of Europe can be used, and must be employed, to aid our understanding of the development of the musical cultures of early medieval Europe in general, including its "brass instrument" culture in particular.

NOTES

[1]According to J.M. Roberts, *History of the World* (London, 1992), p. 312.

[2]The present article is based on a paper presented at the Annual Conference of the Royal Musical Association in London on 7 April 1994. It follows on from my article "Lip-blown Instruments of Ireland before the Norman Invasion," *Historic Brass Society Journal* 5 (1993): 75-91. Ann Buckley has also produced important studies in "Musical Instruments in Ireland from the Ninth to the Fourteenth Centuries," *Irish Musical Studies* 1 (Blackrock, Dublin, 1990): 13-57; and "Music as Symbolic Sound in Medieval Irish Society," *Irish Musical Studies* 3 (Blackrock, Dublin, 1995): 13- 76; however, the latter appeared after the present study was completed and has not been taken into account.

[3]W. Stokes and J. Strachan, *Thesaurus Palaeohibernicus,* 2 vols. (Cambridge, 1901; reprint Dublin, 1987), 1: 577, and 2: 473-4. Throughout the present study, the English translations of the Irish texts have occasionally been adapted by the present writer. E. G. Quin, ed., *Dictionary of the Irish Language based mainly on Old and Middle Irish Materials* (Dublin, 1990), has been employed generally to check the accuracy of the presentations of the Irish texts and to examine the meanings of individual words and phrases. When aspiration has been indicated in the original Old Irish and Middle Irish texts by the placement of a dot above the consonant affected, this has been silently modified by placing the letter *h* after the consonant in accordance with modern practice. Latin biblical texts found in the original codices have been compared with the standard modern texts found in R. Weber OSB, ed., *Biblia Sacra Iuxta Vulgatam Versionem,* 2 vols. (Stuttgart, 1983), although the original orthography has been retained. English translations of biblical texts have been taken from H. Wansbrough, ed., *The New Jerusalem Bible* (London, 1985), unless otherwise indicated.

[4] It is worthwhile recalling that the earliest surviving trumpet signals, dating from the beginning of the sixteenth century, are mainly confined to a single pitch, and that early horn signals are exclusively monotonal.

[5]W. Stokes and J. Strachan, *Thesaurus Palaeohibernicus*, 1: 347.

[6]Ibid., 1: 110.

[7]Ibid., 1: 395.

[8]Ibid., 1: 8.

[9]See my article, "Lip-blown Instruments," pp. 75-91.

[10]E. O'Curry, "Of Music and Musical Instruments in Ancient Erinn," in W. K. Sullivan, ed., *Manners and Customs of the Ancient Irish,* 3 vols. (London, 1873), 3: 338.

[11]According to A. Bugge in "Norse Loan Words in Irish," in O. Bergin & C. Marstlander, eds., *Miscellany presented to Kuno Meyer* (Halle a. S., 1912), p. 296; although he also allows for the possibility of derivation from the Old English noun "stock," itself of Germanic origin.

[12]D. Hyde, ed. and trans., "*Gabhaltais Shearluis Mhóir:* The Conquests of Charlemagne," *Irish Texts Society* 19 (London, 1917): 42. This text is rather late for consideration as it is outside the time limit adopted, but it has been included because the Middle Irish version has been made from the original Latin text rather than from the Old French translation, although the translator seems to have been aware of the latter; see later in the present text and also n. 24.

[13]See Quin, *Dictionary,* s.v. "fócra, fúacra" (p. 315).

[14]See ibid., s.v. "stoc" (p. 563) for the former translation; and O'Curry, "Ancient Erinn," 3: 336, for the latter. The variant translations result in part from the two duties assigned to the trumpet in Numbers 10: 3-8, which are distinguished according to whether the sounding of the trumpet(s) is accompanied by a "battle cry," also termed "alarm."

[15]Quin, *Dictionary,* s.v. "stoc" (p. 563).

[16]P. Walsh, ed. and trans., "Beatha Aodha Ruaidh Uí Dhomhnaill: The Life of Aodh Ruadh O Domhnaill," *Irish Texts Society* 42, nos. 1-2 (London, 1948 and 1957), 1: 180. Elsewhere in the same manuscript, the author Lughaidh O' Cleirigh (?-c.1630) repeatedly enjoys describing the "[cavalry] trumpets and [infantry] drums" of the English forces with the alliterative phrase *ttrompadh 7 ttapur:* see 1: 34, 176, 226, and 230.

[17]As in the Old Irish tale *Tochmarc Ferbae* ("The Wooing of Ferbae"); see R.I. Best, O. Bergin, & M. A. O'Brien, eds., *The Book of Leinster formerly Lebar na núachongbála,* 6 vols. (Dublin, 1954-1983), 5 (1967): 1146, for example.

[18]Hyde, *Gabhaltais,* pp. 82, 86, and 102. Elsewhere in the text, the contraction *buabhall* is used to refer to the oliphant: see pp. 87 and 88. Thus the initially strange phrase *gothaibh buabull ocus adharc* (literally the "voices of horn and of horn"), which is found on p. 109, actually indicates a distinction between the timbres of the ivory horn and the ordinary bovine horn and the phrase is understood to read as *gothaibh buabull eboire ocus adharc,* the "voices of oliphant and horn."

[19]See Quin, *Dictionary,* s.v. "benn (d)" (p. 70). This includes mention of the informative gloss *.x. mbenda* (*.i. x. cuirn buabhaill*)—"the benn (that is, a [musical] horn made from the horn of a buffalo)."

[20]Quin, *Dictionary,* p. 563, mentions an unusual instance in which *sturgán* apparently refers to "trumpet": *a sturgána 7 a cuirn comhraic,* that is, "his trumpets and his horns of assembly."

[21]O'Curry, "Ancient Erinn," 3: 339.

[22]O. Bergin, ed., *Trí Bior-Ghaoithe an Bháis—Seathrun Keitinn / The Three Shafts of Death—Geoffrey Keating* (Dublin, 1931; reprint, 1992).

[23]Praetorius discusses the orthodox interpretation of the matter in *Syntagma musicum*, vol. 1 (Wittenberg, 1614/15; facsimile ed., Kassel-Basel, 1958), pp. 128-9.

[24]Bergin, *Trí Bior-Ghaoithe,* p. 273; and also O'Curry, "Ancient Erinn," 3: 340.

[25]Hyde, *Gabhaltais,* p. 94. There is also evidence of borrowing in the reverse direction: for example, the mid-twelfth-century Anglo-Norman tale *Le Voyage de Charlemagne* was consciously modeled on the Old Irish epic tale known as *Táin Bó Cúalnge* (to be discussed later) and includes some Old Irish words in its text; see A. E. Lea, "Beyond Boasting: Táin Bó Cúailnge and Le Voyage de Charlemagne," in J. P. Mallory and G. Stockman, eds., *Ulidia: Proceedings of the First International Conference on the Ulster Cycle of Tales* (Belfast, 1994), pp. 107-113.

[26]For example, common non-musical features include war-chariots drawn by two horses and carrying an unarmed charioteer and chieftain; the placing of the head of a defeated enemy at the neck of a horse; and the champion's portion of meat, the hindquarters.

[27]O'Curry, "Ancient Erinn," 3: 339.

[28]K. Meyer, *Fianaigecht* (Dublin, 1910; reprint, London, 1937), p. 88.

[29]The pre-engagement practice is just one of many cultural parallels found between early medieval Irish society, as recorded in its literature, and the continental Celtic societies described in the works of Diodorus, Polybius, Strabo, Pliny, Livy, Julius Caesar, and other Classical writers.

[30]In the *Histories*, 2: 29: see Polybius, *The Histories,* Loeb Library (London, 1960), p. 311.

[31]For an exhaustive survey of the Celtic peoples and on the continuity of their culture over the millennia, see V. Kruta, O.H. Frey, B. Raftery, and M. Szab, eds., *The Celts* (London, 1991).

[32]The Irish text is found in Best, et al, *The Book of Leinster,* 4: 992. The English translation is mine.

[33]This term is included in the most important—and one of the earliest—poems in Early Irish, the *Amra Choluimb Chille* ("The Elegy of Colm Cille"), which was composed by the poet Dallán Forgaill, apparently the chief poet in Ireland, immediately following the death of Saint Colmcille (also known

as Saint Columba) in 597 AD. The vacuum left among the religious community of his great monastic foundation of Iona on the death of its founder is described with the beautiful musical analogy,

The whole world, it was his: It is a harp without a key, it is a church without an abbot	hUile bith ba hae hé. Is cruit cen ceis, is cell cen abaid

The Old Irish text is in J.O'Beirne Crowe, *The Amra Choluim Chilli* (Dublin, 1871), p. 28; the English translation has been taken from T.O. Clancy and G. Márkus, *Iona: The earliest Poetry of a Celtic Monastery* (Edinburgh, 1995), p. 105, which also includes the Irish text.

[34]The *Amra Choluimb Chille* also includes the term *tet,* in the plural form *teti,* in the following passage:

Surely for him, not the wail of one house, not the wail of one string.	Doderb, ni ong oen tige, ni ong oen teti.

For the Old Irish text, see O'Beirne Crowe, *The Amra Choluim Chilli,* p. 70; for the English translation, see Clancy and Márkus, *Iona*, p. 115.

[35]This is indicated, for example, in the tenth-century *Cath Maige Mucrama* ("The Battle of Mag Mucrama"), in which we are told of the lyre played by Fer Fí mac Eogabuil that there were "three strings on his lyre" (tri thét ina thimpán): Best, et al, *The Book of Leinster,* 5: 1253.

[36]The term is found in the early fifteenth-century *Gabhaltais,* pp. 57, 58: "there are three things in the harp when it sounds, namely art, strings and hands" ("ataít tri n[eith]i isin clairsigh intan do beir foghur .i. ealadha ocus teda ocus lamha.")

[37]This happens during the Middle Irish Period (between the eleventh and fifteenth centuries); see Quin, *Dictionary,* s.v. "timpan a)" (p. 590). A. Buckley, in the article "Timpán, tiompán" in *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians* (London, 1980), 18: 826, mentions the use of the term to mean "drum" as erroneous, but this does not adequately explain the fairly consistent association of the term in the context of the rejoicing of Miriam and the women of Israel.

[38]The *cruit* was the most highly valued musical instrument. This may be seen in the proverbial saying, "every music is sweet until [it is compared with] the harp" (cáid cach céol co cruit): see F. Kelly, *A Guide to Early Irish Law* (Dublin, 1988), p. 64, n. 195. According to the wisdom-text poem *Trecheng breth Féni inso sís* ("The Triads of Ireland"), there were three accomplishments of Ireland: "trí ségainni Hérenn: fathrann, adbann a cruit, berrad aigthe" ("an accomplished verse [of poetry], a musical strain on the *cruit,* a clean-shaven face"); see K. Meyer, "The Triads of Ireland," *Todd Lecture Series,* 13 (Dublin, 1906): 10-11. I have adapted Meyer's English translation. On the complex nature of the *fili,* of which there were no fewer than seven grades, and the inferior *bard,* or "bard," which class of poet included as many as sixteen grades, see Kelly, *Early Irish Law,* pp. 43-51.

[39]As in *Kilian, Mönch aus Irland: aller Franken Patron 689-1989, Katalog der Sonder-Ausstellung zur 1300-Jahr-Feier des Kiliansmartyriums* (Munich, 1989), pp.159-160, for example.

[40]The extract from the poem is from J. O'Keefe, "Buile Suibhne" ("The Frenzy of Suibhne"), *Irish Texts Society* 12 (1910; London, 1913), pp. 78 (Irish text) and 79 (English translation); see also M. Dillon, *Early Irish Literature* (Chicago, 1948; reprint, Dublin, 1994), pp. 97-8, and M. Dillon, *The Cycles of the Kings* (Oxford, 1946; reprint, Dublin, 1994), p. 72.

[41]Meyer, "The Triads of Ireland," pp. 14-15. I have adapted Meyer's English translation.

[42]The initiation rites of the warrior bands of early Ireland—known as the *fianna*— included this requirement. The literature concerning the *fianna* comprises the Irish heroic cycle known as the

"Fenian Cycle"; see Dillon, *Early Irish Literature*, p. 33.

[43]E.A. Gray, ed., *Cath Maige Tuired* (Naas, 1982), pp. 42 (Irish text) and 43 (English translation). I have modified the English translation. In particular, the translation of *cruit* as "harp" has been replaced with the more neutral use of the original term *cruit.*

[44]The second passage from the same tale follows along similar lines. In it, the *cruit* is described by name as "Just, Four-sided One" (*Cóir Cethairchuir*), showing that the instrument is a type of lyre in this instance; see Gray, *Cath Maige Tuired,* pp. 70 (Irish text) and 71 (English translation).

[45]On chivalric integrity, see C. Page, "Music and Chivalric Fiction in France, 1150-1300," *Proceedings of the Royal Musical Association* 113 (1985): 19-20.

[46]R.I. Best and O. Bergin, *Lebor na hUidre* ("Book of the Dun Cow") (Dublin, 1929), pp. 318-9; the English translation is mine.

[47]C. O'Rahilly, ed. and trans., *Táin Bó Cúalnge* (Dublin, 1967; reprint, 1984), pp. 21 (Irish text) and 158 (English translation). I have substituted the term "instrumentalists" for "musicians" in the final line of the English translation to aid comparison. The most highly regarded modern translation of this famous tale, the central epic of the so-called Ulster Cycle of tales, is that by T. Kinsella, *The Tain* (London, 1969).

[48]O'Rahilly, *Táin Bó Cúalnge,* pp. 19 (Irish text) and 156 (English translation).

[49]Gray, ed., *Cath Maige Tuired,* pp. 32 (Irish text) and 33 (English translation).

[50]O'Rahilly, *Táin Bó Cúalnge,* pp. 40 (Irish text) and 178 (English translation).

[51]Kelly, *Early Irish Law*, pp. 29, 139-140. In return, kings and lords were also required to offer hospitality to their free subjects.

[52]Best, et al, *The Book of Leinster,* 5: 1174; see also J. Gantz, *Early Irish Myths and Sagas* (London, 1981), p. 195.

[53]The Middle Irish text is found in Best, et al, *The Book of Leinster,* 4: 849, 850. The poem is also found together with an English translation in O'Curry, "Ancient Erinn," 3: 523-547; the material quoted in this study is found on pp. 542-545. O'Curry's English text has formed the basis of the translation, for which the present writer is responsible.

[54]See Quin, *Dictionary*, s.v. "buinne (b)" and "buinnire" (p. 91).

[55]See ibid., s.v. "guth" and "guthbuinde" (p. 373); see also the introduction by W. K. Sullivan to O'Curry's "Ancient Erinn," which is entitled "Manners and Customs of the Ancient Irish," (1: dxxx-dxxxi). It is possible that the term may be related to the Anglo-Saxon noun *guðhorn,* or "battle-horn," found in *Beowulf,* for example; see later in main text and n. 98.

[56]M.Dillon, *The Cycles of the Kings*, p. 33.

[57]O'Rahilly, *Táin Bó Cúalnge,* pp.55 (Irish text) and 195 (English translation).

[58]W. Meid, *Táin Bó Fraích* (Dublin, 1967), p. 2; English translation in Gantz, *Myths and Sagas,* p. 115; I have replaced the term "harpers" with "*cruit* players" in the translation. The appearance of the *cruits* and the magical effect they had on listeners are also described in beautiful detail in the text; see Meid, *Táin Bó Fraích,* pp. 4-5; Gantz, *Myths and Sagas,* pp. 117-18.

[59]Meid, *Táin Bó Fraích,* p. 3; Gantz, *Myths and Sagas,* p. 117.

[60]Meid, *Táin Bó Fraích,* p. 9; Gantz, *Myths and Sagas,* p. 121.

[61]O. Bergin and R.I. Best, *Tochmarc Étaine* (Dublin, 1938), pp. 20, 22 (Irish text), and pp. 21, 23 (English translation).

[62]O'Rahilly, *Táin Bó Cúalnge.* The first, a description of the voice of Feidelm the Prophetess, is found on pp. 6 (Irish text) and 143 (English translation); the second, a description of the voice of Sencha mac Ailella, the Speaker of Ulster, is met on pp. 120 (Irish text) and 255 (English translation).

[63]Dillon, *Early Irish Literature,* p. 13.

[64]Noisiu's physical appearance is worth remarking upon for its reemergence in various guises in later tales from elsewhere: his hair was as black as a raven, his cheeks were as red as blood, and his skin was as white as snow; see ibid., p. 13.

[65]Best, et al, *The Book of Leinster,* 5: 1167 (Old Irish text). The responsibility for the English translation is mine, but it has been made with reference to Dillon, *Early Irish Literature,* p. 15; and Gantz, *Myths and Sagas,* p. 264. In Gantz' translation, Arddan's voice is described as a "baritone" and Andle's voice as a "tenor," following the German translation by R. Turneysen, in *Sagen aus dem alten Irland* (Berlin, 1901), pp. 11-20: "Kraftvoll war nur Noisis Lied—ewig konnte man ihm lauschen! Herrlich Ardans mittelstimme Andle sang den Baß dazu."

[66]This is the case as early as the seventh century. The *Amra Choluimb Chille* includes a gloss on the phrase *is cruit cen cheis* ("it is a harp without a [tuning-]key") in which *téit … coblaigib* is employed in the context of low-sounding strings: see O'Beirne Crowe, *The Amra Choluim Chilli,* pp. 28, 30 (Old Irish text) and pp. 29, 31 (English translation); see also Quin, *Dictionary,* s.v. "coblach 2" (p. 127 and n. 34).

[67]Quin, *Dictionary,* s.v. "andord" (p. 42) and "dord" (p. 244).

[68]Best, et al, *The Book of Leinster,* 5: 1164 (Old Irish text). The responsibility for the English translation is mine, but it has been made with reference to Dillon, *Early Irish Literature,* pp. 13-4, and Gantz, *Myths and Sagas,* p. 260.

[69]For some flavor of this "imaginative quality for which Irish literature is well known," see Dillon, *Early Irish Literature,* pp. 101-123, and 149-169, for example.

[70]In *Trechung breth Féni inso sís* ("The Triads of Ireland"); see Meyer, *Triads,* pp. 16 (Old Irish text) and 17 (English translation). I have modified the text of the English translation.

[71]According to tradition, Saint Colmcille (d. 597 AD) secretly copied a gospel book belonging to Saint Fintan. Fintan claimed ownership of the copy when he discovered what had happened, which Columba disputed. The matter was sent for arbitration to Diarmait, High King of Ireland. By analogy with the maxim "to every cow its calf" (*la cach mboin a boinín*), Diarmait ruled "to every book its copy" and delivered the judgement that the copy belonged to Fintan. The truth of the traditional story has been disputed, but the law was certainly in existence from an early period; see Kelly, *Early Irish Law,* pp. 239-240.

[72]O'Curry, *Ancient Erinn,* 3: 336.

[73]Kelly, *Early Irish Law,* pp. 4, 50, 64.

[74] T. O'Donoghue, "Advice to a Prince," *Ériu* 8 (1921): 49 (Irish text) and 54 (English translation).

[75]Kelly, *Early Irish Law,* pp. 11-12.

[76]D.A. Binchy, *Críth Gablach* (Oxford, 1941; reprint, Dublin, 1979), p. 23.

[77]Buckley, "Musical Instruments," p. 24.

[78]Best, et al, *The Book of Leinster,* 1: 117-120 (the advice poem), p. 117 (facsimile of the schematic drawing), and p. 116 (interpretation of the schematic drawing); see also Buckley, *Musical Instruments*, p. 24.

[79]The material discussed here is most readily found in G. Calder, *Auraicept na n-Éces— The Scholars' Primer* (Edinburgh, 1917; reprint, Blackrock, county Dublin, 1995), pp. xxxviii, 114 (Middle Irish text) and 115 (English translation). I have altered the translation of the noun *fáid* from Calder's inaccurate phrase "mournful cry" to the neutral term "call," using as a guide Quin, *Dictionary,* s.v. "fáid" (p. 292).

[80]By Umberto Eco, in the foreword to the facsimile edition of *The Book of Kells* (Lucerne, 1990), p. 14. Color reproductions of a representative sample of the illuminations are found in B. Meehan, *The Book of Kells: An Illustrated Introduction* (London, 1994).

[81]The St. Gallen illustration is reproduced in color in J.C. King and W. Vogler, eds., *The Culture of the Abbey of St. Gall* (Stuttgart & Zurich, 1991), p. 131, Pl. 23. A monochrome reproduction of the scene in the Turin fragment is included in F. Henry, *Irish Art during the Viking Invasions 800-1020 A.D.* (London, 1967), Pl. 40.

[82]A color reproduction of this illustration is found in C. Nordenfalk, *Celtic and Anglo-Saxon Painting* (New York, 1977; reprint, 1995), p. 94, Pl. 32. The quotation is from the accompanying commentary on p. 95.

[83]For example, by F. Henry, in *Irish Art in the Early Christian Period to A.D. 800* (London, 1965), p. 140 and Ill. 83; and by Buckley, in "Musical Instruments," pp. 47-48, 50.

[84]H. Richardson & J. Scarry, *An Introduction to Irish High Crosses* (Cork, 1990), pp. 48 (description) and 134, Pl. 169, state that a trumpet is depicted on the Old Kilcullen Cross; on pp. 29 (description) and 56, Pl. 4, they correctly describe the funeral procession scene on the Ahenny Cross.

[85]Buckley, "Musical Instruments," p. 45, considers the instruments to be single pipes, but concedes that the winged player found on the Cross at Durrow might be "St. Michael blowing the last trump."

[86]Discussion of the connections between the Picts and Scots, on the one hand, and between these and the Irish, on the other, are found in L. Laing and J. Laing, *The Picts and the Scots* (Shroud, Gloucestershire, 1996), esp. pp. 57-99. The depictions mentioned are found on p. 73 (the horn players and harpers) and Pl. 13 (the Hilton of Cadboll cross slab). There is no reason to suspect that Roman influence led to the trumpet depictions: apart from the reasons mentioned, they postdate the Roman withdrawal from the lands to the south by hundreds of years: see L Laing and J. Laing, *Celtic Britain and Ireland* (Dublin, 1995), esp. pp. 12-16, 170-86.

[87]For example, by E. H. Tarr, in the article "Trumpet" in *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians* (London, 1980), 19: 214.

[88]See Nordenfalk, *Celtic and Anglo-Saxon Painting,* Pl. 17 on p. 66.

[89]The phrase is attributed to Clement of Alexandria: see M. Praetorius, *Syntagma Musicum* I (Wittenberg, 1614/15; facsimile ed., Kassel-Basel, 1958), p. 124.

[90]In "Lip-blown Instruments," pp. 86-88.

[91]The acquisition number is A96.1943. I have been unable to obtain detailed measurements of this trumpet.

[92]J. A. Dimock (ed.), "Topographia Hibernica et Expugnation Hibenica," *Giraldi Cambrensis Opera*, 5 (London, 1867): 160; for a modern English translation, see J.J. O' Meara, *Gerald of Wales: The History and Topography of Ireland* (London, 1982), pp. 103-04.

[93]The Latin quotation comes from O'Meara, "Giraldus Cambrensis in Topographia Hiberniae. Text of the First Recension," *Proceedings of the Royal Irish Academy* 52, section C (1948-50): 172. For the English translation, see O'Meara, *Gerald of Wales—Ireland*, pp. 116-17. The bronze horn is associated with a different saint, St. Brendan the Navigator, in the earliest recension of the Latin text.

[94]The suggestion of late Bronze Age origin is found in C. Thomas, "The Artist and the People, a Foray into Uncertain Semiotics"; in C. Bourke, ed., *From the Isles of the North: Early Medieval Art in Ireland and Britain* (Belfast, 1996), p. 1.

[95]See my "Lip-blown Instruments," pp. 75-82.

[96]The Latin text is from J. F. Dimock, ed., "Itinerarium Kambriae et Descriptio Kambriae," *Giraldi Cambrensis opera* 7 (London, 1868): 62-3. The English translation has been adapted by the present writer from that found in L. Thorpe, *Gerald of Wales: The Journey through Wales and The Description of Wales* (London, 1978), p. 122.

[97]Gerald of Wales may also have associated *cornhiriez* with the Old German term *hirhorn.* while there indeed existed the Welsh term 'hirlas' in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, the noun represented

a horn of great length: this would result in tautology in Gerald of Wales's explanation. Other Welsh terms for horns–including bual, buelin, bualgorn, and corn buelin–are similarly closely related to the Irish terminology met earlier: see Table 1 aboce, and also C. Neuman de Begvar, 'Drinking horns ion Ireland and Wales: documentary sources'; in C. Bourke, ed., *From the Isles of the North,* pp. 81-87, especially pp. 84-85.

[98]The two quotations are found in Dimock, *Topographia Hibernica*, p. 155, and *Descriptio Kambriae,* p. 209, respectively. The former translation into English has been made by the present writer; the latter is from L. Thorpe, *Gerald of Wales—Wales,* p. 259.

[99]M.J. Swanton, *Beowulf* (Manchester, 1978). The passages concerned are found on pp. 102 (original text) and 103 (English translation); and 174 (original text) and 175 (English translation). Note the similarity in both structure and context between the Anglo-Saxon composite noun *guðhorn* and the Old or Middle Irish composite term *guthbuinne,* mentioned earlier: see also footnote 55.

[100]Swanton, *Beowulf,* pp. 38 (original text) and 39 (English translation); 84 (original text) and 85 (English translation); 134 (original text) and 135 (English translation); 142 (original text) and 143 (English translation).

[101]All of this is claimed in *The New Oxford History of Music,* vol. 2: *The Early Middle Ages to 1300* (London, 1990); see pp. 460 (source of the former quotation) and 405 (source of the latter quotation). It is unfortunate that the discussions of the origins and performance of narrative melody, and of musical instruments and instrumental music are all treated in this, and in other modern music histories, without any reference to Irish texts, the earliest and most voluminous of the early vernacular literatures. As has hopefully been shown in the present article, there is much important information available about the instrumental musical aspect in the early Irish literature. It is also the case that the early history of the lai and of narrative singing itself would benefit from study of the early Irish literature, which not only includes a poetic form known as the *laíd* by the eighth century, but also includes verse sections—some of them substantial—surrounded by prose narratives in the tales, as we have seen. Many of the latter poems are prefaced by rubrics, such as *unde poeta cecinit* ("then the poet sang") or *chan in laid* ("the lai was sung"), which indicate that these verse portions of the narrative were sung. There is also evidence of the accompaniment of narrative singing on the *timpán* and, especially, on the *cruit.*

It is in this way that Alcuin's admonition to the bishop of Lindisfarne in 797—concerning the singing of the songs of the heathens, apparently accompanied by the harp or lyre, during the evening meal in the monastery—may be a condemnation of a performance practice established there by Irish monks rather than of purely Anglo-Saxon practices (Lindisfarne was founded by followers of Colm Cille in 635, and Irish monks were still numerous and highly influential in the eighth century, particularly in the kingdom of Northumberland (see in L. Sherley-Price, trans., *Bede: Ecclesiastical History of the English People*, [London, 1990]), a performance practice that may also have originally related to the performance of Irish poetry. Alcuin asks, "What has Ingeld to do with Christ?" ("Quid Hinieldus cum Christo?") and this is interpreted by C. Page to refer to the Heatho-Bard prince Ingeld—who later appears in *Beowulf*—and to a distinctive Anglo-Saxon practice: see in *New Oxford History* 2: 461. However, the same prince Ingcél, son of the king of the Britons, plays an important—indeed crucial—role in Ireland in the ninth-century Old Irish heroic tale *Togail bruidne dá Derga* ("The Destruction of Ua Derga's Hostel"); see Dillon, *Early Irish Literature,* pp. 25-31, and J. Gantz, *Myths and Sagas,* pp. 61-106.

[102]As quoted by G. Kastner in *Manuel Général de musique militaire* (Paris, 1848; facsimile ed., Geneva, 1973), p. 86, n. 2, Michaud considered *les tambours* as possibly the only musical borrowings from the Saracens, in addition to other types of borrowing.

[103]The inclusion of pommels on trumpets has been cited as evidence of Saracen origin: see A. Baines, *Brass Instruments (London, 1978), p. 73. However, in Ireland, pommels had also featured on the great Irish late Bronze Age metal horns, such as the Loughnashade Horns (see my "Lip-blown Instruments," pp. 83-86), and the manufacture of pommels continued to feature in early Irish medieval metalwork: Irish croziers were characteristically decorated with metal pommels throughout the period between the eighth and twelfth centuries, for example. The wooden trumpets were also given brass strips which served to both strengthen the instruments and act as decorative features. There is no reason whatsoever that metal trumpets, for which there is evidence of their use in Ireland at this time, could not have pommels also. Moreover, if this could happen in Ireland, there is no reason to doubt that it could happen elsewhere in Western Europe, given the common cultural traits.*