

THE ANCESTRY OF FÉNIUS FARSAID

FÉNIUS FARSAID is one of the central actors in the Irish scheme of synthetic history, important both as ancestor of the Gaels and as one of the principal architects of their language.¹ In many medieval texts he is said to have been closely related to two shadowy personages named Baath and Ibath. In the present article I endeavour to identify the latter doctrine's source; as a preliminary to doing so, I shall briefly discuss the most significant of the texts in question.

The simplest version of Féníus's ancestry appears in the Middle Irish compendium of sacred history *Sex Aetates Mundi* (SAM). Here we are told that Magog son of Japhet son of Noah had two sons Baath and Ibath. Baath was father of Féníus Farsaid, ancestor of the Scythians.² Ibath was father of Elonius or Alanius, whose three sons Armon, Negua and Hissicón fathered the eponymous ancestors of several European peoples.³ The *Miniugud* version of *Lebar Gabála* (LG Min.) repeats this passage almost verbatim;⁴ and Dublittir ua hUathgaile's poem *Rédig dam, a Dé, do nim*, appended to SAM, presents the same doctrine.⁵ The third recension of *Lebar Gabála* (LG R³), and the additional material in *Auraicept na nÉces* (Auraic.), also mention the teaching that Féníus was the son of Baath son of Magog.⁶

¹For an early account of Féníus see the original *Auraicept na nÉces*, ed. A. Ahlqvist, *The early Irish linguist* (Helsinki 1983) 47. For his name the spelling *Foenius* is favoured by the scribe of Rawl. B 502 (e.g. M. A. O'Brien, *Corpus genealogiarum Hiberniae* (Dublin 1962) 6, 17; and the citation from *Sex Aetates Mundi* in note 3 below); cf. R. A. S. Macalister, *Lebor Gabála Éirenn* I–V (Ir. Texts Soc. XXXIV, XXXV, XXXIX, XLI, XLIV, Dublin 1938–56): I, 164, where it seems to be a 'classicizing' spelling: 'Phoeni [= Féni] autem a Foenio Fariseo dicuntur'. The original meaning of his epithet has not been conclusively determined; cf. *Dictionary of the Irish language* s.vv. 2 *farsaid*, *forsaid*.

²Ó Cróinín's edition of SAM, which relies heavily on Rawl. B 502, makes Féníus the ancestor of the Goths as well as the Scythians; this doctrine does not appear in the other manuscripts (see note 3 below). The only other passage known to me in which the Goths are said to be descended from Féníus occurs in the *b* recension of the expanded *Auraicept* (G. Calder, *Auraicept na nÉces: the scholar's primer* (Edinburgh 1917) lines 186–8; cf. Ahlqvist, *Early Irish linguist*, 22–9). Each instance probably reflects independent use of Isidore, *Etymologiarvm sive originvm* I (ed. W. M. Lindsay, Oxford 1911) 9.2.27: 'Magog, a quo arbitrantur Scythas et Gothos traxisse originem'.

³D. Ó Cróinín (ed.), *The Irish Sex Aetates Mundi* (Dublin 1983) 74–5: 'Da mac Magoch meic Iaféth meic Noe .i. Baath 7 Íbath. Mac don Baath Foéníus Forsaid, a quo sunt Scithi 7 Gothi. Foéníus Forsaid didiu mac Baath meic Magoch meic Iaféth meic Nóe, et reliqua. Íbath dano, in mac aili do Magoch, mac dó-side Elónius nó Alanius. Trí meic aca-side .i. Armon, Negua, Hissicón. . .'. Cf. R. I. Best and O. Bergin (ed.), *Lebor na hUidre* (Dublin 1929) lines 2–7.

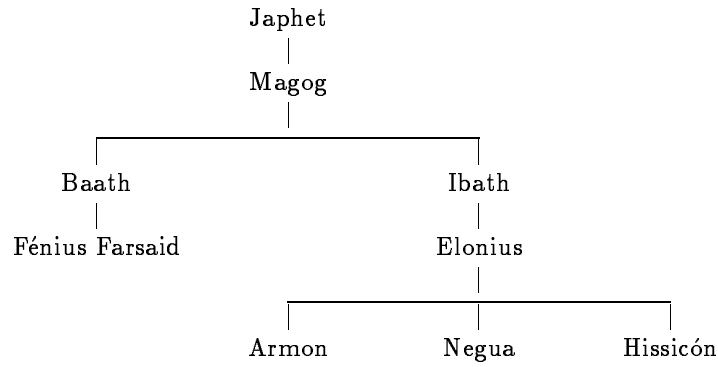
⁴Macalister, *Lebor Gabála* I, 166.

⁵Ó Cróinín, *Sex aetates*, 103–4. The statement that Ibath was ancestor of the 'Roman kings' (*rígrad Rómán*) is probably simply a redundant reference to Romanus son of Hissicón.

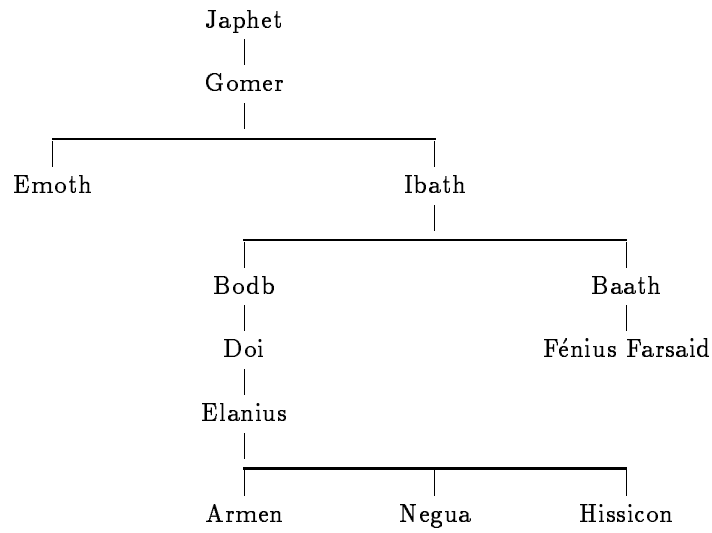
⁶Macalister, *Lebor Gabála* I, 154–6; II, 44–6; Calder, *Auraicept*, lines 180–81, 186–8, 2487–8.

Table 1: Versions of the ‘short pedigree’

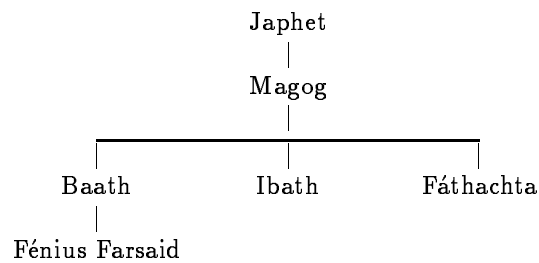
(a)



(b)



(c)



The first recension of *Lebar Gabála* (LG R¹) presents a somewhat more complicated scheme. Here the lineage begins with Gomer son of Japhet, whose two sons are Emoth and Ibath. From Emoth descends 'the kindred of the north of the world' (*fine thuascirt in domuin*), while Ibath has two sons Bodb and Baath. Armen, Negua and Hissicón are the sons of Elanius son of Doi son of Bodb; Fénius Farsaid, ancestor of the Gaels and Scythians, is the son of Baath. Between the accounts of Bodb's progeny and Baath's is inserted a passage deriving Partholón, Nemed, and other pre-Gaelic inhabitants of Ireland from Fattecht son of Magog.⁷

In his *Foras Feasa ar Éirinn* Keating gives a genealogy which he attributes to the lost Old Irish manuscript, *Cín Dromma Snechta* (CDS).⁸ Here three sons are assigned to Magog: Baath, Ibath and Fátachta. From Baath descends Fénius Farsaid, ancestor of the Gaels; from Ibath derive the Amazons, Bactrians and Parthians; and Fátachta is the ancestor of Partholón and Nemed.⁹

The three versions are obviously related, but diverge significantly. The lineage goes back to Magog (SAM, CDS) or Gomer (LG R¹); Ibath is Baath's brother (SAM, CDS) or father (LG R¹). SAM does not mention Fattecht, while CDS does not mention Elonius/Alanius. We must examine the sources of these doctrines if we are to get closer to the original scheme.

An account of Alanius and his sons Hessitio, Armenon and Nogua is given in chapter 17 of the Welsh antiquarian miscellany *Historia Brittonum* (HB; c.800): here we are told that Alanius was the first man of Japhet's race to come to Europe, and his sons and grandsons are enumerated almost exactly as in LG and SAM.¹⁰ In HB, however, he is not Ibath's son nor Fénius's cousin: the text provides him with a long

⁷J. Carey (ed.), 'Lebar Gabála: recension I' (unpublished Harvard dissertation, 1983) 80–82: 'Gomerus mac Iaféth, dá mac lais: Emoth 7 Ibath. Emoth, is uad fine thuascirt in domuin. Ibath, dá degmac leis .i. Bodb 7 Baath. Bodb diarbo mac Doi. Elinus mac Doi, trí meic leis .i. Armen, Negua, Isacon . . . Baath indara mac Ibath meic Gomer meic Iaféth, is uad Gaedil 7 fir na Scithia. Mac dó in fer amra airegda diarbo ainm Faenius Farsaid'. Cf. Macalister, *Lebor Gabála* I, 22; R. I. Best et al. (ed.), *The Book of Leinster, formerly Lebar na Núachongbála* [LL] I–III (Dublin 1954–7) lines 59–103; an R³ allusion to the doctrine occurs at Macalister, *Lebor Gabála* I, 156.

⁸The most recent discussion of the Cín's contents, date and transmission is that of S. Mac Mathúna, *Immram Brain* (Tübingen 1985) 421–69.

⁹D. Comyn, *History of Ireland by Geoffrey Keating, D.D.* I (Ir. Texts Soc. IV, London 1902 for 1901) 226: 'Is eadh adeir, go rabhadar triar mac ag Magóg, mar atá, Báath, Iobáth agus Fátachta. Ó Bháath táinig Féinius Farsaidh, sinnsear sleachta Ghaedhil: ó Iobáth tángadar Amazones, Bactriani, agus Parti: ó Fátachta táinig Partholón [do chéad ghabh Éirinn iar ndílínn], agus Neimheadh mac Agnomain, agus d'a réir sin, Fir Bolg agus Tuatha Dé Danann [amhail adubhramar thuas isna gabhálaib]'.
¹⁰SAM lists the sons and grandsons, and then adds a passage which is either a translation from HB or a paraphrase of the corresponding passage in A. G. van Hamel (ed.), *Lebor Bretnach* (Dublin [1932]) 6–8; the awkwardness of the juxtaposition indicates that this passage is an interpolation.

and curious pedigree, whose links with the ancestry of the Gaels will be discussed below.¹¹ Alanius is first attested in a continental document written apparently in the fifth or sixth century, designated by its editor 'Die fränkische Völkertafel'.¹² Here a list of the descendants of Alanius, *primus rex Romanorum*, is followed by an enumeration of the descendants of three brothers: Erminus, Inguo and Istio. Two manuscripts link the two sections by making the brothers the sons of Alanius; in one of these (Reichenau 229, written in Carlsruhe c.800) the names of the brothers are considerably closer to those in HB and the Irish texts (*Hisione, Ermenone et Niguelo*). Reichenau 229's isolation in the 'Völkertafel's' textual tradition suggests that the exemplar which it shares with the insular sources appeared relatively late.

SAM and CDS make Fénius the grandson of Magog son of Japhet, and the former adds that he was the ancestor of the Scythians: the latter statement reflects the doctrine – first apparently promulgated by Josephus, introduced into Latin by Jerome, and most widely disseminated by Isidore¹³ – that the Scythians derive from Magog. The genealogy in LG R¹, although it connects Fénius with Japhet's son Gomer, still makes him the ancestor of the Scythians, indicating that it too derives from a scheme originally involving Magog. The association of the Gaels with Scythia seems to be an old one: HB gives an account of their descent from a *vir nobilis de Scythia* as representing the opinion of the *peritissimi Scottorum*.¹⁴ Various scholars have plausibly suggested that the link goes back to etymological speculations equating the names *Scotti* and

¹¹T. Mommsen (ed.), 'Historia Brittonum', *MGH Auctores antiquissimi* 13 (Berlin 1898) 159–61.

¹²K. Müllenhoff (ed.), 'Die fränkische Völkertafel', *Abhandlungen der Akademie der Wissenschaften zu Berlin* (1862) 532–8; cf. J. Friedrich, 'Die sogenannte fränkische Völkertafel', *Sitzungsb. der königl. bayer. Akad. der Wissenschaften Philosophisch-philologische und historische Kl.* Jahrg. 1910, 11. Abhandlung. The relevance of the 'Völkertafel' to insular tradition has been discussed among others by H. Zimmer, *Nennius vindicatus* (Berlin 1893) 232–8; A. G. van Hamel, 'On Lebor Gabála', *Zeitschrift für celtische Philologie* 10 (1915) 95–197, pp. 142–7; E. Faral, *La légende arthurienne* I (Paris 1929) 81–6, 294–7; F. Lot, *Nennius et l'Historia Brittonum* (Paris 1934) 49–52; and A. Borst, *Der Turmbau von Babel* II pt 1 (Stuttgart 1958) 473–4. Zimmer's view that HB learned of Alanius from a postulated seventh-century text of SAM has been refuted by Faral and Lot; they go beyond the evidence, however, in assuming that Alanius's pedigree was therefore borrowed from Britain by the Irish. Borst correctly observes that the pedigree contains Irish as well as Hebrew names.

¹³Josephus, *Antiquities* (ed. H. Thackeray, London 1930) IV, 58–60; Jerome, *Quaestiones in Genesim* (in J.-P. Migne, *Patrologia latina* LXXXIII) 10.2; Isidore, *Etym.*, 9.2.27.

¹⁴Mommsen, *MGH* 13, 156. Cf. the *roscaid* 'A maic áin Augaine', in which Fénius seems to be connected with Scythia, and the Gaels return thither after their expulsion from Egypt (Carey, *Dissertation*, 164–5; cf. LL 1787–97; Macalister, *Lebor Gabála* V, 120–22).

Scythae;¹⁵ the subsequent introduction of Gomer may well have been due to similar conjectures concerning the names *Goídil* and *Galatae* (the purported descendants of Gomer).¹⁶ The background of Alanius and Magog is generally recognized, and the suggestions made in the last few paragraphs do not represent much of an advance on what has already been written. So far as I know, however, Baath and Ibath have remained entirely mysterious. I believe that the source from which they were drawn can be identified with reasonable confidence: the names come from the *Liber Antiquitatum Biblicarum* (LAB), a work written in Hebrew at about the time of Christ, translated into Latin (probably via Greek), and circulated as one of the writings of Philo of Alexandria.¹⁷

LAB is an account of sacred history extending from the creation down to the time of David, lavishly elaborated with apocryphal detail. In Genesis 10:2–4 Japhet is assigned seven sons, the sons of two of whom (Gomer and Javan) are then enumerated; in LAB 4.2 all of these figures, their names frequently garbled, are classed together as *filií Iafeth*, and each is given sons of his own. The sons of Dodanim (one of Javan's sons in Gen. 10:4) are *Itheb*, *Beath* and *Fenech* (v.l. *Feneth*, *Fanath*). The resemblance to *Ibath*, *Baath* and *Féníus* is unmistakable; it is particularly telling that these trios of names appear to be unique in their respective literatures.¹⁸ It is very possible that earlier versions of LAB contained readings still closer to the Irish: LAB itself has reached us only in manuscripts of the eleventh and later centuries; and a list later in the text (ibid. 27.4) includes the names . . . *Iabat*, *Enath*, *Beath* . . ., where *Iabat* in close proximity to *Beath* may represent the form of which *Itheb* is a metathesized variant.

Fenech emerges in LAB as a figure of some importance. After the descendants of Japhet settled 'among the Persians and *Monidi*, and in the islands which are in the sea' (cf. Gen. 10:5), it is related that 'Fenech son of Dodanim arose, and commanded that sea-going ships be made' (LAB 4.3).¹⁹ This recalls the racial migrations of Gaelic protohistorical tradition; even more striking is the doctrine that at the building of the Tower of Babel Fenech was leader (*dux*) of the descendants of Japhet (ibid. 5.1–2, 6.14). The idea that Féníus was present at the Tower is

¹⁵e.g. K. Meyer, 'Über die älteste irische Dichtung: I. Rhythmische alliterierende Reimstrophen', *Abhandlungen der königlichen preussischen Akademie der Wissenschaften* 6 (1913) 26; Macalister, *Lebor Gabála* II, 3.

¹⁶Thus Isidore, *Etym.* 9.2.26: 'Gomer, ex quo Galatae, id est Galli'. Cf. R. Thurneysen, 'Zum Lebor Gabála', *ZCP* 10 (1915) 384–95, p. 391 n. 1.

¹⁷D. J. Harrington (ed.), *Pseudo-Philon: les antiquités bibliques* (Paris 1976). Father Harrington, who very kindly discussed LAB's textual history with me, is inclined to date the Latin translation to the third or fourth century.

¹⁸LAB's amplification of the Biblical list of Noah's descendants is peculiar to itself; cf. L. H. Feldman, 'Prolegomenon', in M. R. James, *The Biblical Antiquities of Philo* (New York 1971) lxxi. Where Baath and Ibath appear elsewhere in Irish (e.g. LL 829; Calder, *Auraicept*, line 127), it seems clear that they derive from texts discussed in this paper.

¹⁹'Et ascendit Fanath, filius Dudeni, et precepit fieri naves maris' (see note 17).

attested as far back as the original component of the *Auraicept*;²⁰ and LG R¹ explicitly identifies him as leader of one of the seventy-two peoples who were summoned to its building.²¹ Fénius's name is, of course, an eponym for *Féni*, an early designation of the Irish;²² but his relationship with Baath and Ibath, and his connection with Babel, were evidently suggested by LAB.

Evidence of LAB's influence in Ireland is itself a matter of some interest, as there is no other indication that it was known in the British Isles at this period.²³ More important for Irish scholarship is the light which this derivation sheds on the Fénius legend, and the help which it provides in assessing the relative antiquity of different versions of Gaelic protohistory.

Several early insular texts contain a pedigree which scholars have hitherto found baffling;²⁴ it may be possible to make some progress here. Examples appear in the second, third and fourth of the dynastic poems edited by Kuno Meyer in the first part of his 'Über die älteste irische Dichtung' (*ÁID* 2-4),²⁵ in the expanded text of *Auraicept na nÉces*,²⁶

²⁰Ahlqvist, *Early Irish linguist*, 47.

²¹Carey, *Dissertation*, 82; cf. LL 102-3; Macalister, *Lebor Gabála* II, 8. The summoning of seventy-two *patres* to the Tower is mentioned in *De mirabilibus sacrae scripturae*, written in Ireland in 655 (J.-P. Migne, *Patrologia latina* XXXV, col. 2161).

²²Cf. the frequently-cited quatrain attributed to Mael Muru Othna, e.g. LL 16025-6: 'Féni o Fænius asambertar, / clú cen dochta; / Gaedil ó Gaediul Glas garta, / Scuit o Scotta'. Borst, whose treatment of Celtic materials is often unreliable, is surely wrong in identifying Fénius with Finn mac Cumáill (*Der Turmbau von Babel* II pt 1, 612).

²³On early attestations of LAB see Berndt Schaller, 'Zur Überlieferungsgeschichte des ps.-philonischen *Liber Antiquitatum Biblicarum* im Mittelalter', *Jn. for Study of Judaism* 10 (1979) 64-73: here the first clear reference to the work is found in the writings of Hrabanus Maurus (died 856). The extant manuscripts, the oldest of which date from the eleventh century, appear to go back to a German or Austrian exemplar (Harrington, *Pseudo-Philon*, 15). I am not aware that there is any other convincing indication of knowledge of LAB by the Irish, and it may be the case that only a fragment reached them; Schaller suggests that the citations of LAB by Rupert of Deutz likewise derive from an 'Einzelstück' (*Jn. for Study of Judaism* 10 (1979) 70). Cf. my remarks on Irish use of *1 Enoch*: 'Cosmology in *Saltair na Rann*', *Celtica* 17 (1985) 33-52, p. 48; and 'Angelology in *Saltair na Rann*', *Celtica* 19 (1987) 1-8, p. 7.

²⁴Thus Mommsen, *MGH* 13, 161 n. 1: 'Auctorem genealogiae . . . quam ad Iudaeorum stemmata pertinere probabile est, earum rerum periti nullum reperire potuerunt'; and Van Hamel, *ZCP* 10 (1915) 146: 'As to the origin of all these strange names I can offer no suggestion whatever'.

²⁵'Ált. Ir. Dicht. I', 30, 42, 54-5; cf. O'Brien, *Corpus*, 3-4, 6-7, 201-2 (forms cited from the latter except where indicated).

²⁶Calder, *Auraicept*, lines 181-6, 2465-70. *Auraicept* is the source of the pedigree in the second recension of *Lebor Gabála* (LG R²; Macalister, *Lebor Gabála* I, 36).

in the tale *Scéla Moísauluim* (SM),²⁷ in LG R¹,²⁸ and in HB.²⁹

Auraic's version is evidently based on a text of *ÁID* 2, closely resembling that which survives in Rawl. B 502,³⁰ and it has for some time been generally recognized that *ÁID* 4 is based on the same poem:³¹ all of these sources may accordingly be considered to provide a single witness. The figure of Rifath son of Gomer (Gen. 10:3) is confined to this group, and contrasts with Ibath in *ÁID* 3, SM, LG R¹ and HB. Ibath clearly goes together with Baath (v.ll. *Boath*, *Baoth*, etc.), found in all versions; and the presence of this pair betrays the influence of the genealogical scheme drawn from LAB which we have been considering. It seems most likely that *ÁID* 2 substituted Rifath for Ibath on the strength of Biblical authority.³² What we may call the 'long pedigree' appears to be most closely connected with the version of the 'short pedigree' preserved in LG R¹, where the line is traced back to Gomer rather than Magog, and Baath is Ibath's son rather than his brother.³³ Another source for the long pedigree is the original *Auraicept*:

Goídelc ['Irish'] is hence from Goídel mac Aingin mic Glúmfínd mic Láimfínd mic Agnumain of the Greeks. Now Goídel mac Aingin

²⁷M. O Daly, *Cath Maige Mucrama* (Ir. Texts Soc. L, [London] 1975) 74.

²⁸Carey, Dissertation, 87; cf. LL 212–20, *Lebor Gabála* II, 22–4 (where LG Min. gives essentially the same information). The pedigree in the table has been supplemented by information in LL 100–103, 240, 1500–1504. I have alluded above to the existence in LG R¹ of a genealogy of Partholón, Nemed, et al. (Carey, Dissertation, 80–82; LL 70–99; Macalister, *Lebor Gabála* I, 22–4); it should be noted that it includes several names from the pedigree here under discussion: *Alldui*, *Taitt* (bis), *Baath*, *Ebath*, *Agnoman*, *Srú*, *Fattecht* (< *Athecht*). Unlike the pedigrees in the table, it goes back to Magog, perhaps to differentiate the superseded peoples it accounts for from the Gomer-descended Gaels. That this derivative pedigree existed already in the eighth century is indicated by HB's description of Nemed as *filius quidam Agnominis* (Mommsen, *MGH* 13, 154); mention of it in CDS (*Fáthachta* = *Fattecht*) may therefore go back to an Old Irish original.

²⁹Mommsen, *MGH* 13, 160–61. The argument advanced in this paper is obviously in disagreement with Faral's view (*Légende arthurienne* I, 295–7) that the Irish versions of the long pedigree derive from a British tradition reflected in HB. His position is based largely on the assumption that Baath is a 'doublet incorrect' of Ibath, and does not take account of the full range of the Irish evidence.

³⁰This is a rather simplistic summary of a complicated situation, as considerable corruption has attended the transmission of the pedigree in Auraic.

³¹Thus Meyer, 'Ált. Ir. Dicht. I', 51; Carney, *Ériu* 22 (1971) 67.

³²The views expressed here are diametrically opposed to those of Van Hamel (*ZCP* 10 (1915) 142–7), who believes that Fénus originally had nothing to do with Babel, that Ibath's presence in LG is due to 'mistake or carelessness', that Rifath was the original ancestor of the Gaels, etc. The evidence of LAB weighs heavily against his position; for other criticisms see R. Thurneysen, *ZCP* 10 (1915) 389–91.

³³There is a distinct danger of circular reasoning here, since in LG R¹ the 'short pedigree' is actually the beginning of the 'long pedigree': it is therefore very possible that the long pedigree's influence is itself responsible for several of the differences in doctrine which separate LG R¹ from SAM and CDS. (Note however that not all of these differences can be thus disposed of: the long pedigree has for instance no counterpart to Emoth.)

is identical to Góidel mac Etheoir, i.e. his father had two names: Aingin and Etheoir.³⁴

The equivalence proposed in the *Auraicept* has led to conflation in the pedigree: Angnio, Glúmfínd, Lámfínd and Agnoman have been borrowed from one Góidel, (F)etheoir from the other. The expanded *Auraicept* gives Toe and sometimes Bodb as ancestors of Etheoir, extending the list yet further.³⁵

If the genealogies of Fénius and Góidel have indeed contributed names to the long pedigree – and this is evidently the case – it is curious that they themselves appear in its several versions only as isolated and mutually inconsistent interpolations.³⁶ Why this should be so is not clear to me;³⁷ whatever the explanation may be, the absences themselves are a clear indication of the long pedigree's secondary character.³⁸

We may accordingly assign the long pedigree to the period between the composition of *Auraicept na nÉces* (which its most recent editor would place at 'a fairly early stage of the Old Irish period')³⁹ and the compilation of HB (c.800). It follows from this that those portions of *AID* 2–3 which contain the long pedigree must also postdate the *Auraicept*.⁴⁰ I have shown above that Fénius's links with Babel on the one hand, and Baath and Ibath on the other, entered Irish tradition from a single source: that the former was known to the *Auraicept*'s author therefore indicates that the short pedigree also was already in existence in his time. I can see no grounds on which to propose a *terminus post quem* for the short pedigree: there appears, for instance, to be no way of

³⁴Ahlqvist, *Early Irish linguist*, 47–8.

³⁵In most manuscripts Etheoir is son of Toe mac Barachaim (Calder, *Auraicept*, lines 19, 202, 2303, 2325, 2515–16); cf., however, Book of Uí Mhaine, f. 139 v b 17: 'Goedel mc. Ethoir mc. Thoi mc. Buidb mc. Baracain do Grecaib'.

³⁶Cf. notes 31, 42 and 44 above; Fénius is of course the final figure in the Auraic. pedigree.

³⁷In various sources Fénius appears as Góidel's grandfather (LL 218–20), foster-father (Ahlqvist, *Early Irish linguist*, 47) or uncle (Calder, *Auraicept*, 205–6); yet the long pedigree places their respective pedigrees at opposite ends of an extended series. This may reflect an attempt to accommodate the interval between the building of the Tower and the exodus of the Israelites, the latter being an event associated with Góidel (W. Stokes, *Saltair na Rann* (Oxford 1883) lines 3993–4012), his father (Macalister, *Lebor Gabála* II, 36), or his grandson (Carey, *Dissertation*, 85; cf. LL 173–7; Macalister, *Lebor Gabála* II, 10–14). Keating resolved the difficulty by concluding that Nél son of Fénius must have lived for several centuries (P. S. Dinneen, *History of Ireland by Geoffrey Keating, D.D.* II (Ir. Texts Soc. VIII, London 1908 for 1905) 14–16).

³⁸An oblique trace of Góidel 'of the Greeks' may be discernible in HB's change of Gomer to Javan, ancestor of the Greeks in Jerome and Isidore.

³⁹Ahlqvist, *Early Irish linguist*, 36.

⁴⁰It has for some time been recognized that these sections are later additions: thus J. Carney, *Ériu* 22 (1971) 72–3; idem., 'The dating of early Irish verse texts, 500–1100', *Éigse* 19 (1982–3) 177–216, p. 198; cf. D. Ó Corráin, 'Irish origin legends and genealogy', in *History and heroic tale* (ed. T. Nyberg et al., Odense 1985) 51–96, p. 58. Carney, who favours a very early date for the original poems, would assign the additions to c.630.

determining whether Magog's connection with the Scythians was learned from Jerome or Isidore.

To sum up: the doctrines that Fénius participated in the building of the Tower of Babel, and was closely related to men named Baath and Ibath, entered Irish tradition from some version of the *Liber Antiquitatum Biblicarum*. The earliest version of the legend was probably one in which Baath and Ibath were sons of Magog: Fénius son of Baath was ancestor of the Gaels and Scythians, and Ibath the ancestor of other northern peoples. This legend was used by the author of *Auraicept na nÉces*; it and the *Auraicept* together provided ingredients for an expanded pedigree which must already have been in existence well before the compilation of *Historia Brittonum*, and the amplification of the 'Leinster poems'.

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