THE Earliest occurrence of this word is in the Hiberno-Latin creation poem Altus Prosator, ascribed to Columba of Iona (c. 597); stanza 12 describes the suspension of the globe of the Earth in the circle of the great abyss in the words ‘suffultu dei, iduma omnipotentis valida’. Later occurrences of the word in the so-called Lorica Gildae and the Hisperic Famina are with the literal meaning ‘hand’. But in Altus Prosator the word is clearly being used metaphorically, to mean the ‘hand of Almighty God’ – i.e. the exercise or presence of divine power. A plausible attempt at a derivation of the word from Hebrew yāḏayim, plural of yad ‘hand’, neither explains the transmission of the word to the Irish, who could not have had a first-hand knowledge of Hebrew, nor does it give any account of its peculiar usage in Altus Prosator. Although it is used and declined as a first declension feminine common noun in the Irish sources, the implicit presumption that the word emerged as such in ordinary lexical usage – from Hebrew, or anywhere else – is not justified. Iduma as a proper noun occurs three times in Scripture, at Gen. 25:14, 1 Chr. 1:30 (a repetition of the Genesis genealogical verse) and Isa. 21:11, in the Vulgate as Duma (Sephiagon iduma, Hebrew Dūmah, never Idumah), and in the Vetus Latina and Vulgate variants as Iduma, the sixth child of Ishmael. In its various forms the word occurs as one of a group of names closely associated by virtue of various genealogical and historical connections, stemming from the ancient enmity between the descendants of Jacob and Esau. According to the mythical-symbolic account in Genesis, it was prophesied of the latter at birth that his brother would overcome him and rule over him (Gen. 25:23). In fulfilment of this, Esau carelessly surrendered his birthright for a mess of pottage (Gen. 25:27–34), and was

1 The following study of one tiny facet of the Irish tradition of learning is respectfully offered to Prof. Brian Ó Cuív as a token of recognition of his fruitful labours in the field of Irish studies over many years. Collegate fragmenta ne quid poetas.


4 MS T of Altus Prosator, Trinity College, Dublin, 1441 (E.4.2), f. 12 v, glosses: idumai i. manu; iduma Sephiagne, circus Grece, manus Latinae (Bernard and Atkinson I, 76 line 70a. See below for discussion. Also, the Vatican manuscript of Hisperic Famina (A-text), Reg. lat. 81, glosses (s. l.) the usage at line 32 (ed., p. 88) ‘i. manu’.

later duped out of his father’s blessing by Jacob, upon whom he swore vengeance (Gen. 27). Subsequently, he married a daughter of Ishmael, the low-born son of his grandfather Abraham, cast out by him because of Sara’s jealousy, and went to live in Seir in Edom, another name of Esau (Gen. 28:9, 25:30), thereby becoming the eponymous ancestor of its inhabitants, the Idumaeans (cf. Isa. 21:11, ‘onus Duma clamat ad me ex Seir’). Although the precise connection between Iduma and Edom is nowhere stated, the implication is clear that Esau’s marriage had given him rights of occupation upon land owned by Ishmael’s family. Similarly, another son of Ishmael, Theman, had given his name to a part of Edom/Idumaea (cf. Ezek. 25:12–14). It seems likely that any account of Ishmael’s descendants was deliberately excised by the compilers of Genesis.  

Against this background, the confusion in the biblical use of the names Esau, Edom, (I)duma, Idumaea, is not surprising. Iduma is the Vetus Latina (text-type I, ‘Italischer text des 4/5 Jahrh.’) of Gen. 25:14 and is found as a variant in ms T in the citation of this verse in the Liber genealogus, a fifth-century African Donatist compilation. The text-apparatus to Isa. 21:11 (Vulgate) renders the ‘normal’ form Duma, found in only one manuscript (Dumae R*), variously as iduma/L/M/L (tenth-century Spanish codices); idumaea/L/2M/2R/2; idumaee Q/A. The Septuagint also consistently reads Idumaea, the Hebrew and Vulgate Edom. In consequence, a substantial common body of etymologies for these names – springing mainly from the biblical account of Esau – came into existence. Jerome’s Liber interpretationis Hebraicorum nominum, the first systematic collection of onomastica in Latin, renders them thus:

Esau /(/5/, /2/4/) rufus sive terreus (cf. Gen. 25:25–30, 27:39); /(/1/2/, /2/9/) rufus; Seir /(/1/0/, /2/7/) pilosus vel hispidus (=Esau; cf. Gen. 25:25); /(/2/0/, /1/7/) pilosus vel hircus; Esau /(/6/, /3/; /2/2/, /1/2/; /7/7/, /3/0/) factura sive rubens vel acervus lapidum sive vanus aut frustra; Duma /(/5/, /8/; /2/6/, /2/8/) tacens, silenium; gaudium; Idumaea /(/6/3/, /2/2/) rufa sive terrena/.

There is, of course, no etymology of Iduma in Jerome. But although Jerome was almost unique among the Fathers in having a command of both Hebrew and Greek, the common assumption that he was therefore the primary source or authority on sacred etymology is not correct. Etymological derivation and the exegesis of scripture built upon it—for etymologising is itself, as we shall see, a primitive form of exegesis, and an inseparable part of allegorical interpretation—are found throughout patristic literature. Leaving aside for the moment the central role credited to Origen in the compilation of the earliest Christian onomasticon, the works of Ambrose, and to a lesser extent Hilary of Poitiers and Augustine, contain a substantial body of onomastica of Greek origin. Upon these and the Hieronymian corpus the later, secondary compilations of Eucherius of Lyons and Isidore of Seville are largely dependent. In addition a number of anonymous Latin compilations survive, chiefly the Glossarium Ansileubi and the Clavis Scripturarum falsely attributed to Melito of Sardis. An examination of these and other materials which constitute the Latin corpus fails to locate Iduma. But that does not justify the neglect of the Greek corpus, from which the above are, directly or indirectly, derived.

The earliest known Greek specimens are the third- to early fourth-century Heidelberg papyrus fragment, probably from an amulet, found at an unknown location in Egypt on 1 March 1901, and the verso of...
Oxyrhynchus papyrus 2745, also late third to early fourth century. The extensive similarity in etymological content, particularly with regard to rare words, between these and the later Greek onomastica made it possible to trace the latter back to a much earlier date, and to establish their common origin with the papyri in the early Christian period. Only one Greek text, Onomasticum Coislinianum [hereafter Coisl.], preserves an etymology of Ἰδομαία γνῶσις. Ἰδομαίας γῆς (= terrena), ἐπηρμένος, χειρός ὑμίων, γνωστικός.

Both ἐπηρμένος (perfect participle passive of ἐποιέω 'to rise up, esp. haughtily, against somebody'—cf. A. bl. 3 and 2 Cor. 10:5, 'extollo') and χειρός ὑμίων ('the likeness of a hand'—i.e. metaphorically speaking, 'a hand') are unique to this source. The preceding name, Ἰδομαία (Lag. 168, 45-6) Ἰδομαίας γνῶσις. Ἰδομαί ας γῆς (= terrena), ἐπηρμένος, χειρός ὑμίων, γνωστικός.

Both ἐπηρμένος (perfect participle passive of ἐποιέω 'to rise up, esp. haughtily, against somebody'—cf. A. bl. 3 and 2 Cor. 10:5, 'extollo') and χειρός ὑμίων ('the likeness of a hand'—i.e. metaphorically speaking, 'a hand') are unique to this source. The preceding name, Ἰδομαία (Lag. 168, 44) is interpreted χειρός ὑμίων (the deceiving of the hand), from which it may be assumed that the compiler of Coisl. had derived the first element in both names from Hebrew (yād), pl. (yāda'im) 'hand'. However, Fr Martin McNamara, MSC, informs me that 'the first element would be better derived from the Jewish Palestinian Aramaic form of yād, i.e. Ġd ( ), found also in certain forms of this word in Christian Palestinian Aramaic'. The second element (homoeosis) is also related to Hebrew , dāmāh 'to resemble'; but 'the Palestinian Aramaic form could well have been known to those who drew up this etymology of Ἰδομαίας: Aram. (Ğd) + Aram. or (dīmē; dīmā) "resembling". 22

20 Onomasticum Coislinianum [hereafter Coisl.] (de Lagarde 161, 1-172, 43) from M. H. Hohlemburg's edition of the unique copy in Paris BN, Coisl. 1 (s. vă), Fragmentum Libri Nominum Hebraicorum Antiquissimum [Bonn 1836]; Onomastica Vaticana [hereafter Onom. Vat.] (Lag. 171, 44-185, 83), from J. Martinay II, coll. 160-170. On the Lexicon Origenianum transmitted in the manuscripts of the Vatican see note 23 below; Glossae Colbertinae (Lag. 200, 13-204, 50), from cod. Colbertinus 4124; Onomasticum Marchalianum, edited by E. Klostermann, Zeitschrift für die alttestamentliche Wissenschaft 23 (1903) 135-40, from the marginal notes in cod. Marchalianum [Vat. gr. 2125, s. vă], an Hexapla text of the prophets, designated Q in the critical Septuagint, and attributed by him to Origen (p. 135: 'so gut wie sicher dem Origenes zuschreiben').
21 The New Testament usages of ἀπατή in Matt. 13:22, Eph. 4:22, Col. 2:8, 2 Thess. 2:10 and Heb. 3:13 mean 'deceit', but that in 2 Pet. 2:13 is certainly meant 'pleasure' (by ταῖς δυνάμεσις - 'conviweis', no vars.), which is the intended sense of Mark 4:19 (= Luke 8:14) and Jude 12 also. The dual sense of the Greek idiom could perhaps best be rendered 'begulement', though Wutz adheres to the former meaning (Wutz, 488, 'treffen, verwirren'). Lidthin was one of David's chief harpists (cf. 1 Chr. 9:16; 16:38 and 41-2; 2:15, 3 and 6, and the tituli to Pss. 38, 61, 75), to which fact Jerome's etymology (48, 22) 'transsiliens sive soliens eos' (i.e. the harp strings) alludes. The other etymology in Coisl. μέρως τέλεως is unique, but related to that in Hesychius of Jerusalem, De titulis Psalmorum (ad Pss. 38 tit., Patrologia Graeca 27, 800-801 and elsewhere) 'unus judex adventiens'—i.e. the Final (or complete) Revelation.
22 I am very grateful to Fr McNamara for his learned assistance in this matter.
The survival of *epermenos* and *cheiros homoiosis* from a much earlier collection than Coisl. is demonstrated by the etymology of 'Ἡσαῦ (= Ἰδομαῖος) as ἐπαρσις κυριον (sc. ἑλατιο Δομινι) in the alphabetical onomasticicon, *Lexicon Origenianum nominum Hebraicorum* and of Seir (Σεῖρ) in Syr III, 7, 24 in the Greek equivalent, as ἔπερη σωμα (ἐν) χειρω. 25 Similarly, Syr II, 19–20, renders Ἰδομαῖος as ὁμοιούσις,26 and the Onomasticon armeniacum (a) 260 27 renders Duma as *homoiosis* - Iduma minus the I[d]! The root of the *epermenos* etymology must derive - though Wutz does not note it - from the Septuagint of Abd. 3, referring to Edom (i.e. Idumaea). The origins of the *cheiros homoiosis* etymology will be examined below. The third etymology in Coisl., *gnosis/gnostika*, is also unique and without parallel in the etymologies of the cognate forms of (I)duma in the sources collated by Wutz or published subsequently. Wutz, who was rather puzzled by it, surmised it to be a by-form (Verschiebung', 263) of σωμα (= silenium/tacens). But there is ample evidence, biblical and extra-biblical, that the Idumaeans had a reputation among the Israelites for wisdom and technical skill - cf. Abd. 8 (Septuagint, in the translation of Jerome: 28 'perdam [dicit Dominus] sapientes ex Idumaeæ et intellegiament de monte Esau'); Job 2:11 (Eliphaz the Themanite) and Bar. 3:22–3. It may be connected with Hebrew *yad'/yada* 'to know'.29

Jerome's knowledge of the Hebrew and Septuagint texts certainly made him fully acquainted with these etymologies, for they are all alluded to in a remarkable piece of exegesis on Ezek. 25:12–14 30

Extendam manum meam super Idumaeam, et interficiam de ea hominem et pecus, et ponam eam desertam. . . . Et dabo ullaionem meam super Idumaeam in manu populi mei Israel, et facient in Idumaeam iuxta iram meam et furorem meam, et cognoscent ullaionem

---


24 Wutz, 163 and references.


26 Wutz, 488 and 883.

27 Wutz, 488 and 883.

28 Corpus christianorum 75, 362.

29 Note from Fr McNamara.

meam, dicit Adonai Dominus\(^31\) (Ezek. 25:13–14, Septuagint). Supra duo proposuerat: Pro eo quod dixerunt Moab et Seir (Ezek. 25:8), et postea de Seir tacens contra Moab tantum locutus est; nunc reddid coeptum \(\pi\rho\beta\lambda\eta\mu\varepsilon\) quid Seir, hoc est Idumaea, fecerit — quod autem Esau et Seir et Edom et Idumaea et Duma una gens appellentur, non ambiget qui scientiam habuerit scripturarum [cf. Isa. 21:11–17; Jer. 49:7–22; Amos 1:11–12; Abd. 1:1–21] . . . Nequaquam ergo Idumaea ut Moab locutus est, sed fecit ullaionem de filiis Juda, peccavitque, sive memoriam pristini doloris tenuit, ut ullaionem de eis caperet et quibus in utero supplantatus est. Idercino non per angelos neque per alium quemlibet, sed ipse Dominus, manum extendens super Idumaeam, abstulit de ea hominem et iumentum, et civitates illius redegit in desertum, id est 'Theman' . . . de qua et de alia urbe Dedan interfecit gladio cadent; 'cumque illi se de Juda uli fuerint, ego dabo ullaionem super Idumaeos per manum sive in manu populi mei Israel, ut ab his oppressantur in quos exerceret vindictam, qui facient in Edom, sive Idumaeam, iuxta iram et furorem meum, ut . . . per manus populi mei Israel, in inimicam gentem meae desaeviat, et intellegat, contra iniquam ullaionem Idumaeae meal justam fuisse vindictam' dicit Adonai Dominus. Secundum tropologiam, hic mihi sensus videtur. Idumaea 'terrena' appellatur et 'carnea' quae consurgit contra spiritum ut non faciamus ea quae spiritus sunt, et animam in mediullio positam ad se trahere festinat, vulgque ullaiones reddere quibus prius subdita fuerat filii Juda, et recordatur doloris antiqui quod non propriae fuerit potestatis, et ideo vindictam expetit de eis qui, recedentes a carne, spiritum sequabantur. propter eam iste Dominus, filiiorum Juda uult, manum extendens super Idumaeam et auferit de ea hominem et iumentum, quidquid vel rationis videtur vel simplicis dei; ut eam redigat in solitudinem, et de 'Theman', quae interpretatur 'deficiens', et 'Dedan', quae et ipse 'cognitionem' sonat, omnes gladio interfecit quem posuit in manu populi sui Israel, ut subverlatur Edom, et iram Domini sential ac fuorem, et intellegat vindictam eius ad hoc profecisse. . . .

Jerome's exposition here is almost wholly philological (based upon the historical position of the Israelites vis-à-vis the Idumaeans), with a little moral interpretation thrown in. Thus, 'Seir tacens' = Duma (\(\sigma\omega\pi\nu\hat{\eta}\)); 'et cognoscent / ut intellegant' (sc. Idumaeae \(\gamma\nu\nu\sigma\tau\iota\kappa\acute{\alpha}\kappa\)); 'ut redegat in solitudein' (sc. Idumaea \(\epsilon\kappa\lambda\epsilon\iota\sigma\omega\nu\sigma\alpha\), recessus / solitudo).\(^32\) 'Theman deficiens' is not found in the Liber interpretationis (11, 22 auster vel africus), but it does occur\(^33\) in the Lexicon Origenianum:

\(^{31}\) A Greek form or translation of the divine tetragrammaton (YHVH). The phrase 'Adonai Dominus' (Vg. Dominus Deus) is equivalent to 'Almighty God'.

\(^{32}\) Wutz, 103 and 119.

\(^{33}\) Wutz, 263.
(Lag. 192, 72) ἡδαμών ἐκλείψεις αὐτῶ — a unique occurrence. ‘Dedan cognatio’ is merely an alternative form of the Greek source (no longer extant) rendered in Liber interpretationis (5, 5) as ‘fratruellis eorum’. The most important etymology, however, from the point of view of the usage of Iduma in Altus Prosator, is that which associates Idumaea with the ‘hand of (Almighty) God’, 34 in the execution of divine vengeance upon them by the Israelites. Although the Cois. etymology has some philological basis (see above), it must also have a source in the text of the Septuagint of Ezek. 25:13–14 (Extendam manum meam super Idumaeam . . . dicit Adonai Dominus), as Jerome’s repeated allusion to it — or the ancestral form of it transmitted to Cois. — in his exegesis of that passage clearly shows. The phrase ‘extendam manum meam super Idumaeam’ has an interesting parallelism with Ps. 59:10 and 107:10, ‘in Idumaeam extendam calceamentum meum’, used as part of the etymological exegesis of Idumaea in Clavis Melitonis 13, 7. 35 ‘Idumaea, sanguinea (= konnikos), terrena, gentilitas conversa. “Et erit Idumaea possessio ejus” (Num. 24:18) . . . [Ps. 59:10]: ‘Sanguinea’ occurs in a number of Greek sources, but first appears in Latin tradition in Jerome’s Commentarioli in Psalmos, on Ps. 107:10, 36 and in his Dialogus contra Pelagianos 2, 25 37 (but not in Liber interpretationis), whence it was used by Cassiodore, In Psalmos 107, 10. 38 ‘Gentilitas conversa’ is similar to Jerome ‘quidquid . . . in solitudinem’, but directly related to Origen, In Numeros homiliae 18, 4, 39 on the text of Num. 24:18, which follows directly upon it in the Clavis.

Whether the latter is ultimately dependent upon Greek or Latin sources cannot readily be determined in this case. But what is certain is that Jerome had access to a far greater range of onomastic sacra than he chose to excerpt for his Liber interpretationis — a fact hinted at in his preface to that work — and that many of them are either used or alluded to as above, in his other works. However, before venturing on an explanation of the origins of the usage of Iduma in Altus Prosator, some comment upon the source of the etymology underpinning that usage, in Cois., is necessary. The contents of the unique manuscript at the heart of this problem show incontrovertible evidence of antiquity. 40 An important Greek uncial codex of the seventh century, it contains

34 The hand of God usually signifies either the manifestation of divine power (e.g. Euseb. Cesq. Prorp. Evangel. 4, 23, 6; 8, 10, 1, 7–9) or, more specifically, the wrath of God (e.g. Ambrose, Explanatio Psalmorum XII, ed. M. Petchenig, Corpus Scriptorum Ecclesiasticorum Latinorum 64 (1919): Pss. 37:20 (p. 151): ‘Manum autem Dei virtutem intellegi sum puniendi’). It is curious that several of the scriptural passages relating to Esau refer to his hands — e.g. Gen. 27:22; 32:11 (Vg.).
35 Pitra III, 292.
36 Corpus Christianorum 72, 231.
38 Corpus Christianorum 98, 990.
39 Die griechischen christlichen Schriftsteller 30, 178.
40 The codex is succinctly described in R. Devreese, Bibliothèque de l’Académie Royale de Belgique, Classe des Lettres. Le fonds Coislin (Bruxelles 1955) 1–2.
The margins between the columns contain a great number of Hexaplaric \textit{notae} and citations, as well as brief explanations of words and a series of scholia described by Devreesse (p. 2) as ‘plus développées vraisemblablement d’origine alexandrine; quelques-unes se retrouvent mises ailleurs sous le nom d’Origène’. The attribution of collections of biblical scholia to Origen, as distinct from works preserved as \textit{fragmenta e cætens}, is perfectly valid. Jerome, in the preface to his translation of Origen’s homilies on Ezekiel, points out that the latter’s vast output took three forms: ‘Primum eius opus Excerpta sunt, quae σχόλια nuncupantur, in quibus ea, quae sibi videbantur obscura, aut habere alicud difficultialis, summam breviterque perstrinxit’, then \textit{homiliae}, and finally \textit{omnia}, full-blown commentaries. The onomasticon on pp. 1–4 is largely drawn from 1–2 Chr. and contains a considerable number of rare words and etymologies paralleled mainly in the earliest papyrus fragments, the Heidelberg papyrus fragment and Oxyrhynchus papyrus 2745, and in Jerome. The following examples will illustrate that close affinity.

\textit{(1)} Coisl. (Lag. 170, 7) *Ιωνᾶςοβας Iωσισιωτερης = P. Oxy. AB 12 = HES Ps. tit. (Patrologia Graeca 27, 931C)


\textit{(3)} Coisl. (Lag. 170, 3) *Ιωνηλ απαρχομενος = P. Oxy. AB 10 = HI nom (36, 1; 52, 5; 69, 18) = \textit{Clav. Mel.} 10, 2 (Pitra 306, 5)


\textit{(5)} Coisl. (Lag. 168, 50) *Ιεθερ περρυτης = P. Oxy. AB 15; cf. HI nom (13, 23) lebtho superflus huius

\textit{(6)} Coisl. (Lag. 170, 94) Ιωαθεμ δορατου γεωσις = P. Oxy. AB 17 = HI nom (45, 28) Ioliad (exactly the orthographic form in P. Oxy.) domini cognitio

\textit{(7)} Coisl. (Lag. 162, 19) *Αμυων (v.l. Αμμων) πισιτς = P. Oxy. AB 18 (Ιωωσιωτερης) = Heidl. 5

\textit{(8)} Coisl. (Lag. 168, 47) Ιεζεχαρ αναταυ μυνημη = P. Oxy. AB 19 (Ιωαχος[ρ]) = HI nom (45, 28)

\textit{41} Denoted by the siglum \textit{M} in the Tübingen Critical Septuagint, after Swete.


\textit{43} W. A. Bashres, \textit{Die griechischen christlichen Schriftsteller} 33 (= Origenes, Achter Band, Leipzig 1928) 318. Three collections of scholia by Origen are extant, on Genesis (\textit{Clavis Patrum Graecorum} 1412), the Psalter (CPG 1427) and Apocalypse (CPG 1458); but those in Coisl. 1 have not been published to the best of my knowledge.
In those examples which are marked with an asterisk, Coisl. contains other etymologies of the relevant names, some of which are found in the other Greek onomastica, others unique. From the evidence of the earliest fragment, Oxyrhynchus papyrus 2745, Rokeah has argued that the earliest corpus was compiled in 'the late third or early second century B.C.' and drew its material from the Septuagint, compared against the Hebrew. This eliminates Philo as a possible source in both respects, since he apparently knew no Hebrew. But Turner pointed out that the use at col. 85 of the nomen sacrum ΘΣ indicated that Oxyrhynchus papyrus 2745 had been copied by a Christian scribe. The Heidelberg papyrus fragment likewise uses the forms ΘΣ (2; 3; 9), ΘΣ (24*; 25*; conjectured restorations by the editor), ΘΣ (7 bis). The ultimate derivation of the Greek onomastica from a Jewish background is, however, shown in the use of the vocalized representations Iω/Ιω and αφάτος of the divine tetragrammaton, which Philo habitually renders κυριου and Jerome as Dei/dominii. The evidence therefore of their derivation from an onomasticon of Judaic-Christian origin is not inconsonant with Jerome's statement in the preface to his own collection that Origen

44 In Theol Stud. 19 (1968) 81.
45 Oxyryn. Pap. XXXVI, 2-3. The Hellenistic Jewish origin of the note ΘΣ proposed by L. Traube, Nomina Sacra: Versuch einer Geschichte der christlichen Kürzung (Munich 1907) 31-2, was rejected by A. H. R. E. Paap, Nomina Sacra in the Greek Papyri of first five centuries A.D.: The sources and some deductions (Leiden 1919) 124. It is generally accepted now that the nomina sacra are of Christian origin.
47 Corpus Christianorum 72, 52-60.
'laboravit... Philo quasi Iudaeus omiserat... hic ut Christianus impleret'. Based upon this and upon the unequivocal testimony of the author of the *Quaestiones et responsiones ad orthodoxos*, a late fourth-to early fifth-century Greek text, variously ascribed to Diodore of Tarsus and Theodoretus of Cyrus, which refers in *quaestiones* 82 and 86 to the then extant 'Interpretationem nominum Hebraicorum' of Origen, the consensus of scholarship has been that the latter most probably did compile an onomasticon of the New Testament, as well as perhaps revising or completing that drawn up by Philo from the Old Testament. The disputed question of his knowledge of Hebrew can be got around by supposing, as Wutz (p. 50) did, that a student of Origen's—perhaps a Hellenized or convert Jew who did know Hebrew—drew up such a corpus after his master's death. Origen's acquaintance with Rabbinic tradition and his long association with Palestine—neither of which is disputed—would certainly have provided him with ample opportunity to amass materials for such a compilation.

It is hardly possible in the present state of our knowledge to examine the evidence relating to the etymology of *Iōma/Idumaeus* in Coisl. to any greater extent. But a number of firm conclusions can be drawn:

1. As it occurs in *Altus Prosator*, the word *iduma* must derive in part from an onomasticon related to Coisl. The metaphorical use of the word in *Altus Prosator* tallies perfectly with the Coisl. etymology of the equivalent generic form *Iōmaeus*, and contrasts sharply with the non-sacral, literal use of the word in the *Hispérica Famina* and other Latin texts. This would suggest that *Altus Prosator* is closer to its onomastic source, and therefore earlier in date.

2. The Coisl. etymology alone could not have been the basis for the contextual use of *iduma* since it established no link between *iduma* and the manifestation of divine power implicit in *Altus Prosator*. Jerome's exegesis of Ezek. 25:12–14 provides that link and in stating the equivalence of the singular personal form (*I*)duma with the generic Idu/maeus/Idumaeus ('Idum. et Duma una gens appellantur') justified the

---

48 Jerome's testimony with respect to Philo is supported by Eusebius Caes., *Historia ecclesiastica* 2.18.7 (GCS 9/1, pp. 156/157), who asserts that Philo compiled 'interpretationes nominum hebraicorum, quae sunt in lege et prophetis'.

49PG 6, 1249–1400 (from a manuscript attributing the text to Justin Martyr). The etymologies referred to in qq. 82 and 86 have a remarkable affinity with the *Lexicon Origenianum* (note 23 above). This similarity was noted by Martianay and Vallarsi, who upon the basis, and other grounds, concluded that the *Lexicon* was Origen's.

50Deissmann, 88: 'darf unser Blatt mit hoher Wahrscheinlichkeit als ein Stück indirekter Origenes- und Philo-Überlieferung bezeichnet werden'. Turner p. 3: 'It therefore becomes necessary to ask whether this text is a copy of part of an onomasticon compiled by Origen. Its palaeographical date is entirely suitable'. The views of Klostermann and De Vresse, with respect to their own fields of evidence, are in full agreement with this. Indeed, Deissmann, observing the striking similarity between Coisl. and Heid., asks (p. 93) 'Sollte in Coisl die Origenes-Überlieferung am reinsten bewahrt sein?'

attachment of the etymology of the latter to the former in the Irish source. Two sources are therefore implicated: the equivalence 'iduma = cheiros homoiosis' could not have been extrapolated from the exegesis of Ezek. 25:12–14, but any scholar who was familiar with either source would have immediately perceived the connection with the other.

(3) The most suitable vehicle for such an exposition must have been a scholium on the text from Jerome or an extended etymological exegesis of Iduma, such as those found in the Clavis Melitonis or the Glossarium Ansleubi, since we may hardly suppose that the author of Altus Prosator did all the work for himself, merely to decorate his work with obscure vocabulary. The partial dependence of that scholium (or whatever it was) upon a Greek source is also shown in the gloss attaching to iduma in Trinity College, Dublin, MS 1441. 'iduma ebraice, ciros (?) grece, manus latine.' The mis-identification of iduma and ciros (from the genitive of χειρος) with nominative 'manus' certainly implies that the gloss is derived from a corrupt or misunderstood text of a scholium drawing upon the Coisli. etymology. Likewise, the influence of Jerome is indirectly shown in the Irish usage of the 'Hebrew' original (iduma), in place of its etymological derivation, which is the reverse of Jerome's clever insertion of the etymologies of Hebrew words in disguise into the exposition of scriptural passages containing them.

(4) It would be vain to speculate on how the Coisli. etymology was transmitted to the Irish. But transmitted it was – whether alone, as seems improbable, or as part of a parent collection. Only much more research into the sources of the onomastica sacra found in Hiberno-Latin texts will establish the extent of their dependence upon non-Latin sources. But the common assumption that the mainstay of their knowledge of the meaning of biblical names was Jerome must be revised in the light of the above.

Aidan Breen

Dublin Institute for Advanced Studies