Mac Góráin, Fiachra. Forthcoming 2020. 'Dinneen's Irish Virgil.' Ch. 7 of *Classics and Irish Politics 1916–2016*, edited by Isabelle Torrance and Donncha O'Rourke (Oxford: Oxford University Press; in press). Please consult the publication for the final version.

Dinneen's Irish Virgil

Fiachra Mac Góráin

DINNEEN AND THE IRISH REVIVAL

Brian Friel's play *Translations* is set in 1833 in a hedge school in the fictional village of Ballybeg in rural Donegal.[1] Hedge schools, so called from the erroneous belief that they met behind a hedge or in a ditch, were informal and often ephemeral institutions which in the absence of national schools provided education in reading, writing, and arithmetic, but sometimes also classical languages and literature. They existed from the time that King William's anti-Catholic penal laws forbade the education of Catholics until the setting up of national schools in the mid nineteenth century, though in many hedge schools the pupils could be Catholics or Protestants.[2] The hedge school in *Translations* meets in a barn, and the pupils, the schoolmaster Hugh, and his son Manus quote and comment on Greek and Latin literature, often noting connections between the point of the classical quotation and their own experience. Already in 1833 many Irish speakers had abandoned Irish for English as the language of social and economic advancement. At the end of *Translations* the hedge school is to be replaced by a more 'practical' national school in which the language of instruction will be English. The play has on its horizons the potato famine of 1845–9, which would deal a further blow to the Irish language through death and emigration. While the playscript is in English, through a dramatic conceit the Irish characters onstage are understood to be speaking Irish, and much of the play's action hinges on the mutual incomprehension between characters, and on the expedients with which they attempt to overcome the language barrier. In more than one interview Friel refers to the 'sad irony' that the play was written in English.[3] The play's themes include

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For their helpful comments I would like to thank Nicholas Allen; Brian Arkins; Aifric Mac Aodha; Máirín Mac Góráin; Philip O'Leary; Diarmuid Ó Mathúna; Donncha O'Rourke; Isabelle Torrance; and the anonymous reviewers for OUP.

[1] Friel (1981), which premiered the previous year in the Guildhall in Derry.

[2] On the hedge schools see Dowling (1968); Stanford (1976: 25–8); McElduff (2006); O'Higgins (2017: 121–39).

[3] Murray (1999: 80, 85).

language, identity, culture, and education in a colonial context; and, as scholars have recognized, the classical references make a significant contribution to the play's discourse about these themes.[4]

Fast-forward a century or so, and after a long struggle Irish is once again being taught in Irish schools and used as a medium of instruction. Already in the 1880s new material was being printed in Irish, but from the mid 1920s onwards, Irish-language books and editions aimed specifically at schools and teachers begin to appear.[5] Conradh na Gaeilge (The Gaelic League) was central to the revival of Irish-language education, in particular its members Patrick Pearse, Douglas Hyde, Peadar Ua Laoghaire, and Eoin MacNeill.[6] Among those who contributed Irish-language teaching materials was an t-Athair Pádraig Ua Duinnín, or Father Patrick Dinneen, whose writings on Virgil are the main subject of this paper.

Dinneen, who lived from 1860 to 1934, was a Jesuit priest, scholar, editor, journalist, sometime controversialist, and gargantuan figure in the Irish language revival. He was a contemporary of Synge, Yeats, and Joyce, and even makes a brief offstage appearance in the 'Scylla and Charybdis' chapter of *Ulysses*. Most of his writings were in Irish, and his contribution to the development of Irish cultural identity in the decades after independence was significant.[7] He wrote the first novel in Irish, *Cormac Ua Connaill*, and produced editions of several Munster Irish poets, including Aogán Ó Rathaille and Eoghan Ruadh Ó Súilleabháin. He wrote more than a thousand weekly columns in *The Leader* addressing a wide range of subjects from the Great War to classical literature. He translated Dickens' *A Christmas Carol* into Irish, wrote a visionary *aisling* poem on the 1916 Easter Rising, plays on historical themes including the famine, and books on social life in Ireland, and Kerry before the famine.[8] He is best known for the second edition (1927) of his Irish–English

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[4] Many scholars have examined the classical references in *Translations*; see in particular Arkins (1991); Cullingford (1996); Saunders (2012); and Passaretti (2014).

[5] For a full list of Irish-language publications of classical texts see Appendix C to Chapters 5 and 6, along with Ní Mhurchú (Ch. 5) and Moran (Ch. 6) for analysis.

[6] See Ó Súilleabháin (1988) and Walsh (2007).

[7] On Dinneen see Ó Conluain and Ó Céileachair (1976); O'Leary (1994) index s.v. Dinneen; Mac Cárthaigh (2009); and the introductions to O'Leary (2013) and Mac Annraoi (2016).

[8] See Ua Duinnín (1901a), (1901b), (1903), (1905), (1919), (1922), (1929), (1931); Ua Duinnín and O'Donoghue (1911); Ua Duinnín (1927); O'Leary (2013); Mac Annraoi (2016). In turn, Dinneen has been fictionalized in detective short stories by Jenkinson (2008) and (2011).

dictionary and thesaurus, which, more than simply a dictionary, has been described as 'an encyclopaedia of the manners and customs, lore and skills, of the pre-industrial society which survived in Dinneen's home place'.[9] Myles na gCopaleen christened Dinneen 'our great comic lexicographer', and mined his dictionary for his *Cruiskeen Lawn* column in the *Irish Times*.[10]

All of Dinneen's writings were part of a conversation about nation-building and the role of culture, language, especially the Irish language, and the arts in the new state. Since the beginning of the Irish revival, commentators had debated what kind of national literature Ireland should have, and what kind of balance it should strike between the different elements that make up the Irish people: Gaelic, Norman, and Saxon, continental and insular, different religious confessions, urban and rural, traditional and modern; and how, if at all, questions of language and culture should inform political aspirations and their execution.[11] In 1893 Douglas Hyde and Eoin MacNeill had founded the Gaelic League to promote the Irish language and culture, but as a strictly non-political association; but in the years leading up to the 1916 Rising it became politicized indirectly through sharing almost all of its membership with the Irish Republican Brotherhood; and directly through the policy changes brought about by Patrick Pearse and Thomas Clarke. Douglas Hyde resigned his presidency of the Gaelic League in July 1915 when it declared a change of policy in favour of armed insurrection. It remains a subject of debate and dispute how much the language and culture movement should be regarded as a springboard for revolution.[12] Almost all of the essays by Dinneen which I shall discuss appeared originally in 1926 issues of *The Leader*. This organ of opinion was founded in 1900 (and directed until his death) by D. P. Moran, whose mission it was to promote a Gaelic, Catholic, Irish-speaking Ireland, which would be unmaterialistic and whose citizens would play only Gaelic games, a view he set out earlier in *The Philosophy of Irish Ireland*

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[9] MacLochlainn (2002: 72). On the dictionary see also Riggs (2005); Mac Amhlaigh (2008: 93–103); Titley (2014–15).

[10] On the importance of classical material for Myles na gCopaleen's *Cruiskeen Lawn* columns see O'Hogan (Ch. 8).

[11] O'Leary (1994: esp. 1–90); on the Irish Revival see Kiberd and Mathews (2015).

[12] Foster (1988: 446–56) argues that the League was cultural but not political in its nationalism; Hutchinson (1987) and Stewart (2000) for different reasons see cultural nationalism leading to political nationalism. See further McMahon (2008: 2–3), with further references.

(1905).[13] In contrast with the exclusivist Moran, but similar to some other Irish revivalists such as Patrick Pearse and Thomas MacDonagh, Dinneen was intellectually liberal and outward-looking, even though at the same time he was socially conservative, clericalist, and tribal in his thinking. As we shall see, his complex views on Irish culture were interwoven with his understanding of classical antiquity.

Readers of this volume will be interested most in Dinneen's writings on the Classics, in which—like the characters in Friel's *Translations*—he forges strong connections wherever possible between classical antiquity and Irish experience. In fact, Dinneen's entire oeuvre, journalistic and historical as well as scholarly, is generously sprinkled with classical learning, even when classical authors were not his immediate focus. He recognized the classical erudition of Irish poets in his editions.[14] His book on the people of Kerry before the potato famine advances the argument that Kerry people were kinder, more devout, and more welcoming in the past, and in line with this thesis, the book is graced with two epigraphs in Latin from the finale of book 2 of Virgil's *Georgics*, describing a bygone golden-age idyll of rustic peace and religious observance.[15] In *The Queen of the Hearth* (posthumously published from the Nachlass) he makes reference to Homer's Nausicaa and Arete to illustrate his argument that women belong in the home.[16] Most arrestingly, he

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[13] On Moran see Hutchinson (1987); Maume (1995) and (1999); Delaney (2003); Murphy (2017: 115–42).

[14] Cf., e.g., Ua Duinnín (1901a: iii, vi, xi); Ó Buachalla (2004: 6) records how the editorial committee of the Irish Texts Society considered Dinneen's first draft of the Ó Rathaille edition 'too much hampered by reminiscences of Classical models'; see Ua Duinnín and O'Donoghue (1911: vii, xxx, xxxvii, and 92) for references to Menalcas (implicit), Archilochus, Homer, and Virgil.

[15] Ua Duinnín (1905), quoting *Geo.* 2.467–73 *at secura quies … terris vestigia fecit* and 2.532 *hanc olim veteres vitam coluere Sabini*; in Peter Fallon's translation (2004): 'no, what they have is the quiet life – carefree and no deceit – | and wealth untold – their ease among cornucopiae, | with grottoes, pools of running water and valleys cool even in warm weather, | the sounds of cattle and sweet snoozes in the shade. | There are glades and greenwoods, lairs of game, | young men wed to meagre fare but born and built for work. | Here, too, is reverence for god and holy fathers, and it was | here that Justice left her final footprints as she was taking leave of earth.' … 'That was the life, and those the ways the Sabines cultivated in the days of old.'

[16] O'Leary (2013: 73, 88–9).

compared the destruction in Dublin after the Easter Rising of 1916 to the burned and wrecked city of Troy.[17]

Conversely, in his works of classical scholarship he introduces topics from antiquity with reference to Irish counterparts. These works comprise an edition with commentary on book 1 of the *Aeneid* and a volume of *aistí* (essays).[18] The edition is typical of school commentaries in that it offers biographical information, linguistic help, and literary background with parallel citations, but it also explains why Virgil should be of interest to an Irish readership. The essays, thirty-seven in number, and all but one about four pages in length, are arranged in chronological order from Homer through to Virgil and then jumping to early Christianity, with two essays appended on the Latin language, and on money and barter. Written when Irish-language literary criticism in any modern sense was still in its infancy,[19] they offer basic critical and historical introductions to Greek and Latin works. Sixteen of these are concerned with Virgil, with particular emphasis on historical and biographical interpretation and on religious matters such as the prophecy of Christ in the fourth *Eclogue* or the eschatology in the sixth book of the *Aeneid*. Before Dinneen gets to Virgil, he compares early Irish saga and the society it depicts with that of Homeric epic, and recognizes both as foundational for European societies and as repositories of moral instruction.[20] He discerns that Homer must have come at the end of a refined poetic tradition, similar in this respect to the Kerry poets Aogán Ó Rathaille and Eoghan Ruadh Ó Súilleabháin, whose works he had also edited.[21] He reports that Geoffrey Keating was often dubbed the Irish Herodotus for the simplicity and excellence of his storytelling.[22] He compares the metrical complexity of Horace's *Odes* to the metrical schemes of Irish bardic poetry, while also recognizing differences between the two

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[17] Mac Annraoi (2016: 10).

[18] Ua Duinnín (1931) and (1929), respectively. A 1959 report to the Public Accounts Committee of Dáil Éireann records at Appendix XIV, 'Books in Irish Published by An Gúm', that 6,000 copies of the *Aeneid* 1 commentary had been printed, of which approximately 4,000 had been sold by 1957.

[19] See Uí Chollatáin (2003), and (2003: 287 for a comment from Dinneen on the state of literary criticism in Irish.

[20] Ua Duinnín (1929: 9); cf. O'Higgins (2017: 187–8) on Thomas Harney's Irish translation of the *Iliad*, which makes links with Irish heroic saga.

[21] Ua Duinnín (1929: 13).

[22] Ua Duinnín (1929: 22).

systems.[23] He endorses the didactic value for the common people of the myths in the early books of Livy, and observes that many other countries including Ireland have mythical elements in their early history.[24]

VIRGIL IN IRISH

Perhaps the most significant thing about Dinneen's studies of Virgil and other ancient authors is the language in which they are written. Commending the virtues of a classical education, he notes the recent revival of Irish-language study in the foreword to both commentary and essays, arguing that Irish is a more beneficial avenue than English for classical learning:

> Agus is torthamhla go mór an t-eidirmheadhón an Ghaedhealg 'ná an Béarla don obair sin. Is líomhtha, is ársa, is cruinne de theangain í 'ná an Béarla agus is cómhgaraighe agus is oireamhnaighe do sna teangthaibh ársa í.[25]
>
> And Irish is a much more fruitful medium for that work. It is a more fluent, more ancient and more accurate language than English, and closer and more appropriate to the ancient languages.

This said, he adds that teacher and student should of course also take advantage of the knowledge that is to be found in English-language books, and he himself cites English-language scholarship, and occasionally scholarly debates in French and German.[26] In an essay on Virgil and the Roman state, he comments that native Irish speakers should study great world literature in their native tongue.[27] In the commentary he justifies the claim of greater similarity between Irish and the classical languages on the basis that Irish nouns and verbs are highly inflected, and he provides occasional parallels from the Irish for various idioms.[28] In line with this stance, he Gaelicizes Latin

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[23] Ua Duinnín (1929: 71).

[24] Ua Duinnín (1929: 62).

[25] Ua Duinnín (1929: 5), cf. 1931: 3).

[26] Ua Duinnín (1929: 5, 143–4).

[27] Ua Duinnín (1929: 87).

[28] Ua Duinnín (1931: 4 and, e.g., 77, 109, 113, 125); Mac Philibín (1942) was to intensify Dinneen's practice of providing Irish parallels; he gives at least seventeen on *Aeneid* 2, while Dinneen had given only a handful on *Aeneid* 1. Ó Concheanainn (1956: 25) also invoked Irish poetry in a paragraph on Virgil's style, in particular his poetic use of noble historical names.

and other foreign proper nouns. Thus, *Lavinium* becomes 'Laḃinium', and Madvig and Servius become 'Madḃig agus Serḃius';[29] since there was no letter 'v' in the Gaelic alphabet, the 'v' of these names is transliterated with the letter 'b' aspirated with a superscript dot, or in Irish, 'buailte', normally written as 'bh' in roman type. *Alba Longa* becomes 'Alba', which in Irish strictly means 'Scotland', but Dinneen disambiguates the usage by specifying its location in Latium, and it receives an Irish inflection ('go hAlbain'), while *Albanus* become 'Albanaċ', 'Scotsman'.[30] But Dinneen also asserts that the student will feel that Irish is more suitable than English for the ancient ideas and mentality that are in play in the *Aeneid* ('Mothóthaidh an mac léinn, is dóigh liom … gur oireamhnaighe an Ghaedhalg do smuaintibh is d'aigne na sean-aimsire atá i gceist san Aeinéis, ná an Béarla').[31] Hugh's words in *Translations* spring to mind, where he tells the pupils of his encounter with the English Captain Lancey: 'I went on to propose that our own culture and the classical tongues made a happier conjugation'; or later, to Lieutenant Yolland: 'Wordsworth? ... no. I'm afraid we're not familiar with your literature, Lieutenant, we feel closer to the warm Mediterranean. We tend to overlook your island.'[32] Friel's Hugh is harking back to the currents of culture and learning between Ireland and Continental Europe which coursed particularly through ecclesiastical channels. Dinneen, of course, would not have overlooked Wordsworth. He had studied at University College Dublin with Gerard Manley Hopkins, and particularly admired Alexander Pope, perhaps partly due to Pope's Catholicism. In his essay on the fourth *Eclogue* he recommends Pope's *Messiah*, and devotes another essay to extolling Pope's translation of the *Iliad*, which he says enriched the English language, and which he considers superior to translations by Tickell, Cowper, and the Earl of Derby.[33] As for English prose, Dinneen cites Macaulay's *History of England*, referring to the author in domesticating terms as 'an Tighearna Mac Amhlaoibh' ('Lord

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[29] Ua Duinnín (1931: 102, 132).

[30] Ua Duinnín (1931: 102, 105). 'Albanach' [sing.] is evidently a word of elastic significance for Dinneen, as we see from his dictionary entry (1927: 34): it primarily denotes a Scotsman, and (by extension) 'a Presbyterian or Protestant', but it may also refer to 'a species of puffin (so called possibly from its solemn expression and black drapery)'.

[31] Ua Duinnín (1931: 4).

[32] Friel (1981: 23, 50).

[33] Ua Duinnín (1929: 98 and 15–18, respectively).

Macaulay'), and to his work as 'Stair Shasana' ('History of England').[34] Dinneen's point, incidentally, in invoking Macaulay's work is to illustrate how oratory in classical historiography has given way to a non-oratorical but still highly rhetorical style among modern historians.[35]

After vigorous debate, the Gaelic League had opted for the Gaelic typography inspired by Irish manuscripts rather than the roman letters with which even most Irish speakers would have been familiar. This choice has its own fascinating and controversial history: on the one hand, the Gaelic font had sometimes been associated with nationalism, even though many in the Gaelic League advocated roman type for practical reasons; on the other hand, the Gaelic font had been cultivated by evangelical Protestants, and went back to a typeface sent over to Ireland by Queen Elizabeth I for the printing of vernacular bibles that would assist in converting the Irish.[36] Readers of Dinneen's Irish Texts Society edition of Aogán Ó Rathaille (1901) will have been struck by the contrast between the original Irish text printed in Gaelic typeface and the facing English translation and other English-language material printed in roman. But even more striking is the visual effect of Dinneen translating foreign names into inflected Irish and printing them in Gaelic type. A cluster of examples occurs on the first page of Dinneen's essay on Virgil and Maecenas (Fig. 7.1).

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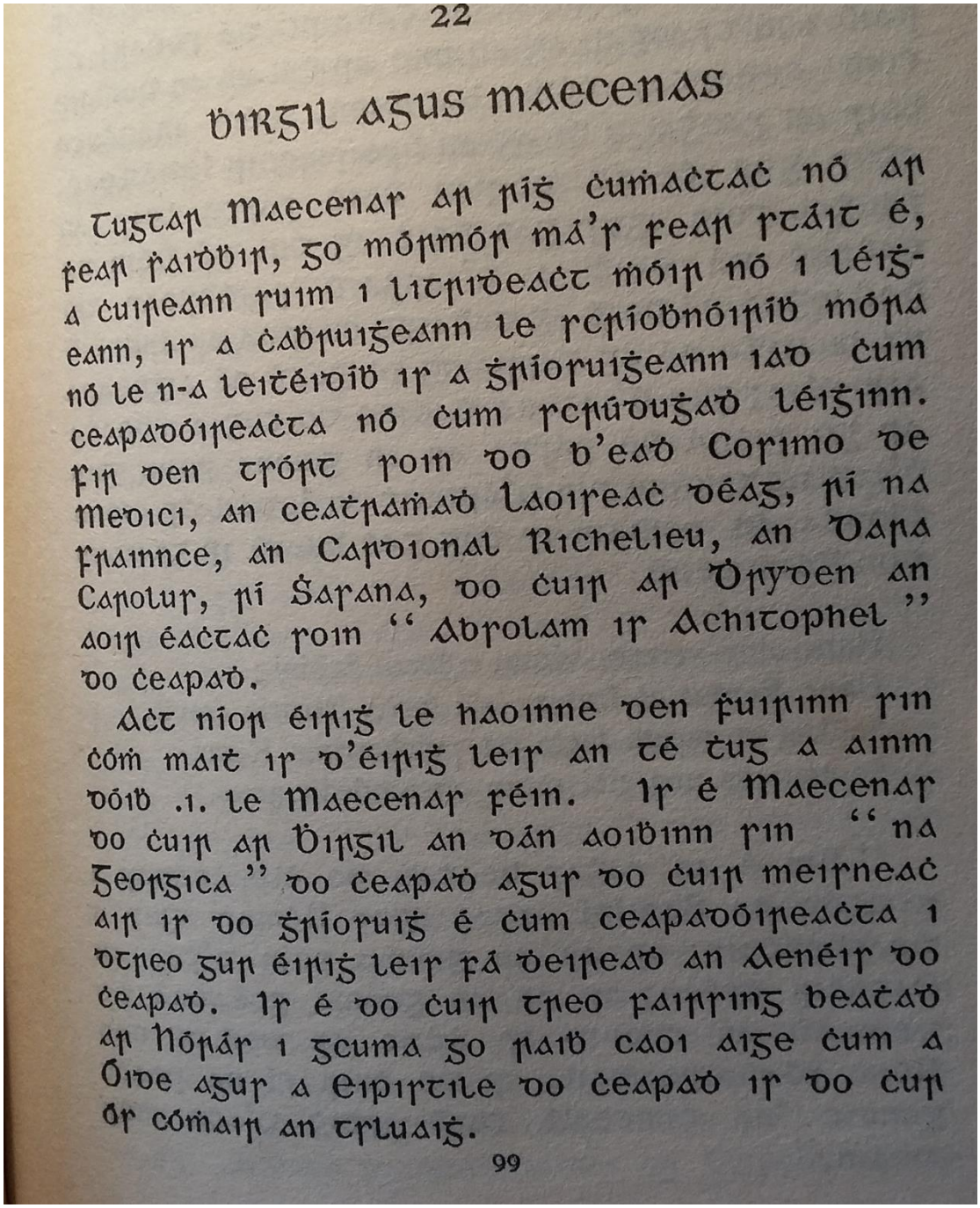
[34] Ua Duinnín (1929: 60).

[35] See Ó Conluain and Ó Céileachair (1976: 84–92, 98–100) on Dinneen's love of English literature.

[36] See Ó Cadhain (1971: 141); Ó Ciosáin (2004–6: 90); McGuinne (2010: 163–93).



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Ḃirgil agus Maecenas

Tugtar Maecenar ar ríġ ċumaċtaċ nó ar ḟear ḟaiḋḃir, go mórmór má'r ḟear rtáit é, a ċuirfeann ruim i litriḋeaċt móir nó i léiġ-eann, ir a ċabhruiġeann le rcríoḃnóiriḃ móra nó le n-a leiṫéiḋiḃ ir a ġríoruiġeann iad ċum ceapadóireaċta nó ċum rcrúduġaḋ léiġinn. Fir den tróit roin do b'eaḋ Corimo de Medici, an ceathramhaḋ Laoireaċ déag, rí na Fraince, an Cardinal Richelieu, an Dara Carolur, rí Sarana, do ċuir ar Ḋryden an aoir éaċtaċ roin "Abrolam ir Achitophel" do ċeapaḋ.

Aċt níor éirig le haoinne den ḟuirinn rin cóm maiṫ ir d'éirig leir an té ċuig a ainm dóiḃ .i. le Maecenar féin. Ir é Maecenar do ċuir ar Ḃirgil an dán aoiḃinn rin "na Geoirgica" do ċeapaḋ agur do ċuir meirneaċ air ir do ġríoruiġ é ċum ceapadóireaċta i dtreo gur éirig leir fá deireaḋ an Aenéir do ċeapaḋ. Ir é do ċuir treo fairring beaṫaḋ ar hóraṙ i gcuma go raiḃ caoi aige ċum a Ódhe agur a Epirtile do ċeapaḋ ir do ċur ór cómair an trluaiġ.

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Fig. 7.1: Foreign names translated into Irish and printed in Gaelic typeface.
Ua Duinnín (1929: 99).

Again the 'V' of Virgil is transliterated with an aspirated B as Ḃirgil. Other foreign names are rigorously nativized to reflect Gaelic usage and phonetics. 'Cosimo de Medici' is straightforwardly transliterated into the Gaelic typeface, and 'Absalom and Achitophel' is lightly domesticated into 'Absolam is Achitophel'. Louis XIV is translated into 'an ceathramhadh Laoiseach déag' ('the

fourteenth Louis'), but 'Laoiseach' is also the adjective derived from 'Laois', or 'Laoighis' in the spelling of Dinneen's day, an Irish county and ancestral kingdom in Leinster, and so like 'Albanach' (above) the translation has indigenous resonances. Charles II of England is given half in Irish and half in Latin as 'an Dara Carolus' ('the second Carolus'). The initial D of Dryden is aspirated, with implications for pronunciation, into an Irish dative. (Incidentally, there is a discreet code-switch in the typesetting which allows Dryden to retain his y, a letter not present in the Irish alphabet.) The practice of translating proper names was to find more fervent expression: in a note on the spelling of Virgil's name—Virgilius or Vergilius?—Liam Mac Philibín, a slightly later commentator, even proposed that the poet should probably be called 'Fearghal' in Irish, since that had been the name of the saint who was named 'Virgilius' in Latin, Virgil of Salzburg, the Irish saint who was excommunicated for suggesting that the earth was round and positing the existence of the antipodes.[37] Dinneen himself does not go so far, but his spelling and typography still give a strong paratextual signal of native ownership of the material. It is the reverse of the cultural procedure enacted in Friel's *Translations*: there, the translation of place names from Irish into English was an imperial stratagem, assimilation through linguistic erosion; here the appropriation of European culture in Irish is a statement of national resurgence and independence.

There is no full translation of the *Aeneid* in modern Irish, even though the earliest vernacular version of the poem was the twelfth-century *Imtheachta Aeniasa* ('The Wanderings of Aeneas'), which is sometimes mentioned with pride in Irish-language Virgil editions.[38] But there are fragments of Virgil translations scattered through Dinneen's works, which are not the least of his

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[37] Mac Philibín (1942: 1) 'Is dócha gur "Feargal" ba chóir a thabhairt air in nGaedhilg, mar b'in é ainm an naoimh ar ar baisteadh "Ḃirgilius" sa Laidin.' On Virgil of Salzburg see Grosjean (1963) and Ó Fiaich (1985).

[38] On *Imtheachta Aeniasa* see Calder (1907), now Calder and Poppe (1995); Poppe (1995) and (2004); Miles (2011: 57-76); McElduff (2014). It is mentioned by Mac Philibín (1942: 15) and Ó Concheannain (1956: 20-23; 30). In the early nineteenth century, a schoolteacher Thady O'Conolan declared an intention to translate the *Aeneid* into Irish; see O'Higgins (2017: 128). For partial translations of the *Aeneid* see, e.g., the school editions of Ó Concheannain (1971) and Carey-Ó Riain (1978). Fragments of Margaret Heavey's Irish translations of the *Georgics* survive in her archive at NUIG; I thank Michael Clarke and Pádraic Moran for sending me a copy. On Margaret Heavey's Irish translations and editions of classical material, see Moran (Ch. 6).

accomplishments, in that they exhibit simple poetic beauty and interpretative acumen. Let us examine for example the translation of the statesman simile from *Aeneid* 1.148–53, and Dinneen's comment on the passage:

> ac ueluti magno in populo cum saepe coorta est
> seditio saeuitque animis ignobile uulgus
> iamque faces et saxa uolant, furor arma ministrat;
> tum, pietate grauem ac meritis si forte uirum quem
> conspexere, silent arrectisque auribus astant;
> ille regit dictis animos et pectora mulcet:
>
> 'Agus fé mar, nuair éirigheann go minic coimheascair idir shluaightibh móra daoine agus bíonn an gráscar gan mheas ar buile le mío-iomchar, fá dheoidh bíonn tóirsí is clocha dá raideadh (soláthruigheann buile urchair), má thagann leo a súile do leagadh ar fhear go bhfuil creideamhaint aige de bhárr cráibhtheachta is deigh-ghníomhartha, ciúnuighid agus cuirid cluasa le héisteacht ortha féin; seolann seisean a n-aigne le n-a bhriathraibh agus séimhigheann a gcroidhe.'
>
> San tsamhlaoid sin, an chéad shamhlaoid san Aenéis, cuireann an file i n-umhail dúinn an meas a bhí ag Rómhánachaibh ar an ndlighe, ar chiuineas phuiblidhe agus ar fhearaibh cráibhtheacha creideamhnacha.[39]
>
> 'And as a melée often arises between large crowds of people and the unesteemed mob is in a disorderly rage, in the end torches and rocks are being hurled (madness provides weapons), if they chance to set their eyes on a man who has credit due to his religious devotion and good deeds, they fall silent and they prick up their ears to listen; he directs their minds with his words and calms their hearts.'
>
> In that simile, the first simile of the *Aeneid*, the poet conveys to us the Romans' respect for laws, for public quiet, and for men of religious devotion and good repute.

As one might expect from a lexicographer, the language is rich and refined, and he manages to stay very close to the Latin while remaining natural in Irish. The idiom, as so often from the mouths or

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[39] Ua Duinnín (1931: 85).

pens of Kerry people, seems effortlessly poetic, and it is easy to be persuaded of Dinneen's claim as to the superiority of Irish over English for the appreciation of Latin. An Irish readership would be proudly heartened by such a translation, in which Virgil speaks to them in their own language. Beyond style, there are contemporary resonances in 'urchar' ('arma'), a word which suggests gunfire or even artillery. The reference to the unruly mob seems to seethe with the contempt that Dinneen might initially have felt in Easter week 1916 as the plates of the first edition of his dictionary were destroyed in the burning city of Dublin.[40] The translation and comment emphasize the Romans' respect for religious devotion and public order, as against the mob's fury. In one of his essays, 'Curadh ionnraic dílis' ('An upright loyal hero'), Dinneen discusses Aeneas' *pietas* as his main defining characteristic. Responding to the complaint of unnamed German scholars who maintain that Aeneas' *pietas* is overplayed by the poet and by Aeneas himself, Dinneen regards the quality as more important than bravery or deeds of valour or eloquence or wisdom, in that *pietas* is, according to Cicero, what gave Roman rule its durability and commanded respect, and thus an appropriate value for Virgil to privilege in the model of Roman leadership.[41]

CELTIC VIRGIL

A further move in Dinneen's Irish appropriation of Virgil was to foreground his supposed Celtic origins, but he achieved this in a way that was benign rather than divisive:

> Do réir gach cunntais Ceilteach do b'eadh é de bhunadhas, i dtreo gurab ionann cine bunadhasach dó is do Ghaedheal-|aibh. Atá deallramh áirithe ag a shaothar filiota le litridheachta na Sean-Ghaedheal do réir ughdar áirithe; acht, dar liom-sa, is deacair an deallramh soin do dheimhniughadh.[42]
>
> According to all accounts he was a Celt by origin, such that he and Gaels share the same race of origin. According to certain authors his poetry bears a certain resemblance to ancient Gaelic literature; but in my opinion it is difficult to confirm that resemblance.

[40] See Riggs (2016) for the destruction of the plates of Dinneen's dictionary in the 1916 Rising.

[41] Ua Duinnín (1929: 143–6).

[42] Ua Duinnín (1929: 87–8).

There are three interrelated points here: (i) Virgil was a Celt; (ii) this meant that he was of the same basic race as the Gaels of Ireland; and (iii) there may therefore be kinship between Virgil and Gaelic literature on the level of *mentalité*. The somewhat elastic claim was to become a staple of Irish school editions of Virgil and Caesar.[43] As John Gallagher put it in a 1945 introduction to Caesar's *Gallic War*, 'We need mention only Catullus, the Celt, and Virgil, born in Celtic Mantua, son of a Celtic mother, Magia, to realise the extent of the influence which Gaul exercised on the development of Latin literature.'[44] The idea of Virgil's supposed Celticity had in fact been hotly debated since the end of the nineteenth century, at least since Nettleship's observation that the names Andes, Virgil's birthplace, and apparently also Vergilius, were Celtic. The truth is beyond verification for lack of evidence, but that did not stop scholars arguing for or against the Celticity of Virgil, either by reading his family's names against the epigraphic record of Gaul and Italy, or by identifying a Celtic note in the Romantic and tragic sensibility of his poems.[45] One hard-bitten naysayer, Leonora Reilly Furr, concludes that the 'notion' of Virgil's Celticity 'rests on sentiment rather than on logic'.[46]

The academic debate about Virgil's Celticity can hardly be separated from a wider racial and political discourse about the place of the Celts in Britain and Ireland, especially as far as Dinneen's claims are concerned. On the positive side, from the mid nineteenth century onwards, Celtic identity, including language revival movements, was associated with nationalism.[47] On the negative side, social theory and Unionist historiography by the likes of John Anthony Froude were inflected with racial theorizing about the inferiority of the Celtic race.[48] On this view the Celt was disparaged as impulsive, emotional, and incapable of self-government, a gambit familiar in Ireland since Giraldus Cambrensis put cultural belittlement in the service of political disenfranchisement. The connection between culture and politics emerges clearly in Mommsen, for whom the feckless Celt,

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[43] See also Ua Duinnín (1931: 7); Mac Philibín (1942: 5); Gallagher (1945: xlix).

[44] Gallagher (1945: xliv).

[45] For: Nettleship in Conington and Nettleship (1881: I, xviii); Garrod (1912); Braunholtz (1915); Conway (1931); Mac Philibín (1942: 13); against: Frank (1922); Furr (1930); overall see Vance (1997: 145–6).

[46] Furr (1930: 341).

[47] See De Barra (2018) and Williams (2001: 9–10).

[48] See Ó Síocháin (2009), especially the contributions by Brady, Bowler, and Watson. See also Kiberd (1995: 29–31, 52–3); on anti-Celtic prejudices during the Irish literary revival see Macintosh (1994: 1–18).

whether Gaul or Irish, was condemned to be the leaven in the polity of superior nations.[49] Matthew Arnold's re-evaluation of the Celtic note in English literature, ostensibly an olive branch to Ireland, did not extend its sympathies to the Irish nationalist cause, but rather sought to reconcile Ireland and bind her more closely to mother England, in this respect reversing the more nationalistic tendency of his main source, the Breton French anthropologist Ernest Renan's essay on the qualities of Celtic literature.[50] There were, of course, other formulations about the place of the Celt in the Irish nation. Thomas Davis' poem 'Celt and Saxon' had celebrated the hybrid heritage, and the rights of all Irish-born to title in the land, be they Celts, Danes, Normans, Milesians, or Saxons, noting that these peoples were all migrants, irrespective of the circumstances of settlement. Douglas Hyde, in his 1892 lecture 'On the necessity for de-Anglicising Ireland', asserted that Ireland always had been and always would be Celtic to the core, a view which ended up alienating some, including Ulster unionists.[51]

Dinneen himself occupied an ecumenical middle ground between extreme views. He implicitly acknowledged the division of Irish society into 'tribes', including his own Celtic people the Gaels, and 'West-Brits', who ape English manners and customs.[52] But he does not insist on any systematic correlation between culture and ethnicity; indeed, if it came to it, many of the 'West-Brits' would be lapsed Celts. On the other hand, he writes of the Gael's ability to absorb foreign people and influence,[53] and of the importance of working, as Virgil had done, for national unity, and not simply for the good of one particular people or tribe. This view emerges most clearly in a lecture on Virgil which he delivered to the Celtic Society of University College Cork (UCC) in 1923, which is

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[49] Mommsen (1866: IV, 286) concludes as follows a lengthy tirade on the Celts (which is worth reading in its entirety): '[the Celtic people] is, and remains, at all times and all places the same indolent and poetical, irresolute and fervid, inquisitive, credulous, amiable, clever, but – in a political point of view – thoroughly useless nation; and therefore its fate has been always and everywhere the same.' My thanks to Rónán Mac Góráin for drawing my attention to this passage.

[50] Arnold (1867); Renan (1970), first published in French in 1854; see also Yeats (1898).

[51] See Stewart (2000) and Delaney (2003).

[52] Ua Duinnín (1929: 142).

[53] Ua Duinnín (1905: introduction).

reprinted in the *Aistí*.[54] I quote extensively from this lecture, as it exemplifies the richness of tightly interwoven connections in Dinneen's thought between Virgil and Irish experience:

> [I]s é Bhirgil oide scoile is béasmhúinteoir na hEorpa le dhá mhíle bliadhan agus tá gach aon deallramh air go leanfaidh sé dá chuid múinteoireachta go deireadh na scríbe. Is fearrde d'aon mhac léighinn Gaedhealach aithne do chur ar fhilideachta Bhirgil agus stuidéar do dhéanamh ar chuid dá dhántaibh. Tá brath ag Gaedhealaibh Éireann go mbeidh ar a gcumas litridheacht fheidmeamhail do cheapadh 'na dteangain dúthchais, ceapadóireacht go mbeidh baint aice leis an dtreibh Ghaedhealaigh agus le n-a seanchas, le n-a huirscéaltaibh, le n-a finnscéaltaibh; agus ní miste dhúinn a thabhairt fá ndeara cionnus a chuir file mór de leithéid Bhirgil bunadhas is stair is seanchas is finnscéalaidheacht na Rómha go fuinte daingean i ndán caithréime a mhairfidh go bráth.[55]
>
> Virgil has been Europe's schoolteacher and teacher of manners for two thousand years and it seems that he will continue with his teaching all the way to the end. Any Gaelic student would benefit from acquiring knowledge of Virgil and studying some of his poems. The Gaels of Ireland hope to be able to compose a useful literature in their native tongue, production which will be connected to the Gaelic tribe, and with their folklore, with their novels, with their legends; and we would do well to observe how a great poet of Virgil's calibre wove together tightly the Roman foundation and history and oral traditions in an epic poem which will live forever.

This was over twenty years before T. S. Eliot dubbed Virgil 'the classic of all Europe'. Although Dinneen does not use any word cognate with 'classic' he admires the durability of the *Aeneid*, a poem that combines many native traditions. In turn he connects Virgil's achievement with the need of the Gaels to produce a national literature from their own traditional materials.

As he concludes the lecture, Dinneen anchors his message in the fortunes of his own family. Before Dinneen was born, they had been evicted from their land in Co. Kerry. Dinneen clearly inherited a dispossession complex, and often refers to the phenomenon in his studies of Munster history and the Munster poets. The landlord's eviction agent (a motif in narratives of landlord–

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[54] Ua Duinnín (1929: 75–86).

[55] Ua Duinnín (1929: 76).

tenant relations, and often satirized)[56] was a distant kinsman of the family, Pádraig Ó Murchú. Dinneen recalls in an unpublished autobiographical manuscript how as a child he raced after this agent, rebuking him for having been instrumental in evicting his own kith and kin.[57] As a result, Dinneen identifies closely with the story of Virgil's dispossession from his land, which he mentions several times in the *Aistí*.[58] Biographical interpretation had been central to his work on the Munster poets,[59] and not surprisingly it resurfaces in his essays on Virgil. Turning back now to the peroration of the lecture to the UCC Celtic Society, Dinneen makes a veiled reference to his family's dispossession and extracts a rousing protreptic from aligning himself with Virgil:

> Ní miste dúinn sampla Bhirgil do bheith ós ár gcomhair i nÉirinn indiu. Is iomdha mac léighinn éirimeamhail i nÉirinn agus i gCúige Mumhan féin gur ruaigeadh a athair as a chuid talmhan go héagcórach agus go mb'éigean dó féin a cheantar dúthchais go thréigean agus dul i leith a scolaidheachta agus an saoghal go buaidheartha 'na thimcheall mar gheall ar an atharrughadh mór atá ar siubhal ar fuaid na tíre go léir. Má leanann sé lorg Bhirgil, leanfaidh sé dá chuid foghluma i n-aimhdheoin a mbíonn ar siubhal 'na thimcheall agus tumfaidh sé a aigne i dteangain | agus i seanchas a thíre, agus ní bheidh uaidh achta a intleacht agus a cháilidheacht do chur i bhfeidhm ar son na tíre uile agus ní amháin ar son cumainn fé leith ná treibhe fé leith acht chum tír na hÉireann uile do neartughadh agus do mhórughadh agus chum a seanchas, as stair, a húirscéalta, a heachtraí d'fhighe i ndán nó i n-uirscéal a chuirfidh i n-umhail don domhan uile mais is mórdhacht is síbhialtacht na nGaedheal. Ní miste dhúinn go léir ár gcuid féin den obair sin do dhéanamh is í dhéanamh i n-am.[60]
>
> We would do well to keep the example of Virgil before us in Ireland today. Many's the intelligent student in Ireland and even in Munster whose father was unjustly banished from his land, and who himself had to desert his native district and go about his schooling with the world harried around him because of the great upheaval that is

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[56] See Ua Duinnín (1905: 32–8).

[57] Ó Conluain and Ó Céileachair (1976: 32–4); NLI MS 8628.

[58] Ua Duinnín (1929: 83–4, 88–9).

[59] See Ó Buachalla (2004: 28–30).

[60] Ua Duinnín (1929: 85–6).

> in train in the whole land. If he follows in the footsteps of Virgil, he will pursue his learning despite what is happening around him and he will immerse his mind in the languages | and the lore of his country, and his only desire will be to apply his intellect and ability on behalf of the whole country, and not merely for a particular society or for a particular tribe, but to strengthen and exalt the entire country of Ireland, and to weave her traditions, her history, her novels, her adventures into a poem or a novel which will convey to the whole world the gravity and grandeur and civilization of the Gaels. We would all do well to do our share of that work, and to do it in time.

Virgil stands as an example for the Irish people. The analogy which Dinneen implies between himself and Virgil is unmistakable: the scholar whose family lost their land, but who still pursued learning and put his talents to the service of the whole country and national unity. There are shades here, too, of the itinerant scholar-schoolmaster who spreads his learning throughout the community.[61] Like Virgil, Irish people should apply their skills and intellect not only on behalf of their own tribe, but for all the people of Ireland, in order to produce a poem or novel of national significance. One year after the civil war of 1922 which was fought over the Anglo-Irish Treaty, Dinneen urges national unity, regardless of tribal affiliation. He harnesses Virgil's biography (and his own) and the *Aeneid*'s interweaving of traditions in support of this idea. One might invoke Virgil's lines on how the war in Latium was fought between Trojans and Italians, peoples supposedly destined to live in eternal peace (12.503–4: *tanton placuit concurrere motu,* | *Iuppiter, aeterna gentis in pace futuras?*). Virgil's supposed Celtic origins dissolve into the background amid Dinneen's emphasis on each Irish person following Virgil's example of working for the common good, not just their own tribe.

VIRGIL AND IRISH HISTORY

An anecdote illustrating Dinneen's legendary secretiveness has it that he once recited to a friend the first line of *Aeneid* book 2, *Conticuere omnes intentique ora tenebant* ('They all fell silent and, rapt, kept their faces turned towards him'), and translated it as, 'Ciarraígh mhaithe a bhí iontu go léir agus d'fhanadar ina dtost.'[62] ('They were all good Kerry people, and so they remained silent.') Virgilian poetry has for Dinneen the quality of a touchstone for Irish affairs. In the remainder of this

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[61] See O'Higgins (2017), esp. chs. 4 and 5.

[62] Ó Conluain and Ó Céileachair (1976: 61).

chapter I shall survey Dinneen's ideas about Virgil as national poet, and some of his views on female heroism, empire, and language, as they emerge in his Virgilian essays.

Dinneen believed that the government of the new Irish state should sponsor the creation of a national literature. He had in mind two models of patronage: the Irish bardic system, which collapsed when Irish chieftains were deprived of their ancestral heritage by foreign violence, and which he hopes will now return in some form, and Maecenas' patronage of Virgil and Horace.[63] He suggested that one native poem composed during his time would be more effective than twenty foreign poems which would be examined in schools. Accordingly, the government should take an interest in literature, and especially in poetry.[64] In the essay on Virgil and Maecenas, he rehearses a conventional narrative about how Maecenas persuaded Virgil to write the *Georgics* to encourage Italian farmers to return to working the land after the ravages of civil war.[65] He emphasizes the beauties of Italy, as praised by Virgil in the *laudes Italiae*, and concludes the essay as follows:

> Ní ar lucht na hIodáile amháin do chuir an file órdha céanna comaoin, acht ar an gcine daonna go léir ó shoin anuas. Mar d'oir a chainnt do gach aon tír is do gach aon treibh daoine; agus oireann an chainnt sin go gach aon tír san Eoraip is ar fuaid an domhain indiu féin; agus ní dóigh liom go n-oireann sí d'aon tír chómh mór is oireann do thír na hÉireann.
>
> Níl tír fá'n spéir níos áilne ná níos saidhbhre 'ná tír na hÉireann. Le déidheannaighe agus le roinnt mhaith de bhliadhantaibh bhí bruigheanta ar siubhal eadrainn, i dtreo go rabhamar ag déanamh faillighe i saothrughadh an tailimh agus go rabhamar ag éirghe mío-shásta le n-ár dtír dúthchais agus fonn ar ár n-aos óg í thréigean. Is mithid dúinn claoidhe léi agus feidhm do bhaint aiste aguis bruighean is coimheascair do shéanadh.[66]
>
> That same golden poet obliged not only the people of Italy, but the entire human race since that time. For what he said was appropriate of every single country and of every single tribe of people; and what he said was appropriate of every country in Europe

[63] Ua Duinnín (1929: 90 and 85, respectively).

[64] Ua Duinnín (1929: 94).

[65] Ua Duinnín (1929: 100), and see Ua Duinnín (1931: 9) for a similar view.

[66] Ua Duinnín (1929: 102).

> and even all over the world today; and I do not think it is as appropriate of any country as it is of the country of Ireland.
>
> There is no country under the sun more beautiful or richer than Ireland. Recently and for quite some years there was strife ongoing between us, such that we were neglecting the cultivation of the land, and becoming dissatisfied with our native country, and that the youth was inclined to desert her. We must stand by her and make use of her and say no to struggle and strife.

We see here another version of the 'classic of all Europe' motif, which Dinneen finds particularly relevant to the Irish case because of recent history—the famines and land agitation of the nineteenth century, Irish participation in the Great War,[67] the struggle for independence and the civil war of 1922, all of which have overshadowed the riches and beauty of Ireland. Dinneen draws on the *Georgics* to encourage Irish people to enjoy the land after warfare. One thinks of the French and English translations of the *Georgics* which were done during and after the Second World War. As Wilkinson comments, 'It was surely a yearning to escape from the horror and chaos of a distracted generation into the timeless peace and routine of agriculture that drew these to the *Georgics* in that crisis.'[68]

Virgil himself was an exemplary figure, but so, too, were his characters. As we have seen, Dinneen endorsed Aeneas' *pietas* as more essential than his martial or other heroic values. As a man of the cloth, Dinneen shies away from praising or even commenting on bloodshed in the *Aeneid*.[69] He prefers to focus instead on the epic's civic, religious, and family values. In one essay, 'Ban-churadh Ghaelach' ('A Gaelic heroine'), he parallels Aeneas' *pietas* in carrying his father from the burning city of Troy with the exemplary goodness of a poor Irishwoman whom he knew in his youth. To paraphrase, this woman, though evicted from her land, relying only on her husband's daily wage, who had only a tiny abode and many children to feed, still insisted on carrying her aged mother home to her shack, across the hills and the mountains on her own shoulders, with no men to help her, her aged, ailing, and destitute mother, who had become dependent on the neighbour. This

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[67] Dinneen's *Leader* articles on the Great War are assembled with introduction and notes by Mac Annraoi (2016).

[68] Wilkinson (1969: 2).

[69] For his views on war and its necessity see O'Leary (2013: xix–xx).

woman's noble deed is cited as an example for the Gaels of Ireland.[70] Also in *The Queen of the Hearth* (probably written 1915–18), Dinneen regards a mother's domestic self-sacrifice as a form of heroism; he is prepared to countenance women bearing arms in exceptional circumstances, as Inghinidhe na hÉireann ('Daughters of Ireland'), which merged with Cumann na mBan ('The Women's Association'), had done in the struggle for Irish independence, though he expresses distaste for public female zealotry and women's participation in violence and warfare, drawing as he does so on the classical analogue of the Amazons.[71] 'But,' he says, 'we have an instinctive loathing for a plague of pseudo-Amazonian fury. We detest the race of pygmy martial women that jostle us in the streets, that make night hideous with their brawls, that violate the sacred sanctity of home life, that engage in unequal contests with men.'[72]

Despite his family's experience of land dispossession, Dinneen's view of the Roman Empire appears to be broadly favourable. At one point he explicitly buys into Roman imperial rhetoric, quoting Cicero on the *pietas* of Roman imperialism, and elsewhere he emphasizes how the Empire spread civilization and Christianity.[73] Dinneen's use of Virgil as a figure of Irish national unity *against* empire, which we traced above, conflicts with the endorsement of empire on the basis of its *pietas* and certainly involves a sleight of hand. It is fascinating to observe the parallels in Dinneen's thought between Roman imperialism and the missionary zeal of the Church of Rome, and the inevitable contradiction which arises between Dinneen's nationalism and his approval of the empire which Virgil ostensibly supported. (Similar ironies attend the presence of the *Aeneid* in Friel's *Translations*, where in a game of intertextual substitutions the English play the role of the imperial Romans.[74]) Dinneen addresses the subject of empire and its malcontents, even if he does not quite resolve this contradiction, in an essay on punishments and rewards in the underworld entitled 'Grá

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[70] Ua Duinnín (1929: 147–50). Compare Brendan Kennelly's assertion that his *Trojan Women* was inspired by the 'Trojan' women of rural mid-twentieth-century Ireland, a reference to their powers of endurance; see further Torrance (Ch. 13) on Irish adaptations of *Trojan Women*.

[71] O'Leary (2013: 92).

[72] For Dinneen's essay on the effects of the Great War on Irish women (*Leader* 13 November 1915) see Mac Annraoi (2016: 72–4).

[73] Ua Duinnín (1929: 144–5, 154).

[74] See n. 4 above, esp. Arkins (1991: 208).

tíre agus a mhalairt' ('Love of country and its opposite').[75] Dinneen infers Virgil's great patriotism from the prominent rewards given to those who were wounded for their country, and the punishments given to those who accepted bribes to revoke laws or who sold their country to a foreign ruler. 'But,' he continues, 'even though Virgil's pride in the Roman Republic and Empire was great, he knew precisely that neither the Republic nor the Empire prospered without injustice and without oppression of weaker states, and without evil people belonging to those weak states who sold them for gold and who by their treachery placed the larger state above them; and the poet conveys to us his hatred and contempt towards such people.'[76] In Ireland's case there is a parallel in Patrick Pearse's poem *Mise Éire*: 'mór mo náir – mo chlann féin do dhíol a máthair' ('great my shame – my own family sold their mother'), of Irish collaborationists; another parallel is Owen in Friel's *Translations*, a quisling for most of the play who assists the English with their imperializing cartography, until the violence of the mission becomes manifest. In all three cases the conversion to empire happens from within. Dinneen ascribes Virgil's hatred of these traitors to his own experience of unjust dispossession,[77] and turns next to Anchises' lesson on empire:

> Agus dá mhéid molta thugann sé d'impireacht na Rómha san chunntas so, ní miste leis i ndeireadh an chunntais a mholadh don impireacht chumhachtaigh sin gur cheart dí gan bheith dian ar na státaibh do cuireadh fá chois agus dlighe na síothchána do chur 'na measc, agus nár mhiste dhí stáit an díomais do smachtughadh:
>
> Tu regere imperio populos, Romane, memento,
>
> (Hae tibi erunt artes) pacisque imponere morem,
>
> Parcere subjectis et debellare superbos.
>
> 'Cuimhnigh, a Rómhánaigh, gurab é do dhualgas-sa na náisiúin do riaghlughadh fáth smacht (sin iad na healadhanta is dual duit), agus dlighthe na síothchána do chur i bhfeidhm, truagh do bheith agat don druing atá faoi chois agus drong an díomais do mhíniughadh.'[78]

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[75] Ua Duinnín (1929: 135–8).

[76] Ua Duinnín (1929: 137).

[77] Ua Duinnín (1929: 137–8).

[78] Ua Duinnín (1929: 138).

> And for all his praise for the Roman Empire in this account, he does not hesitate at the end to recommend to that powerful empire that she should not be harsh on those states which were subjugated and to spread the laws of peace among them and that she should not mind bringing arrogant states to heel:
>
> Tu regere ... superbos.
>
> 'Remember, Roman, that it is *your* duty to rule the nations under the yoke (those are the arts which come to you), and to put in place the laws of peace, to have pity for the throng that is downtrodden, and to tame those who practise arrogance.'

The emphasis here is on the duty of empires to be mild to their subject nations. The verb 'míniughadh' ('smooth', 'polish', 'tame', 'subdue', 'soothe' > 'mín', 'smooth')[79] tones down the violence of Virgil's *debellare* several notches. The interpretation shows up the ambivalence of Dinneen's position: on the one hand, the *Aeneid* brings with it a glorification of the empire; on the other hand, Virgil's own experience leads him to see the injustices in play, and this becomes the basis for pleading mildness.

My final example comes from Dinneen's essay on the conversation between Jupiter and Juno in *Aeneid* 12, from an essay entitled 'Béasa is teanga dúthchais' ('Native customs and language').[80] Juno has conceded defeat to the Trojans but extracted a promise from Jupiter that the Latins will not have to renounce their Latin language or customs. Dinneen builds on this passage his most extreme statement in the classical essays on the relationship between national language, culture, and sovereignty, and it seems appropriate to give him the last word:

> Thuig Iuno cúrsaí náisiúin go hálainn. Má leantar den teangain dúthchais is de sna nósaibh is de sna béasaibh dúthchais, abair is go mbeadh rí eachtrannach nó ceannphort eachtrannach i gceannas ar feadh tamail, ní raghaidh an náisiún i mbáthadh; agus ní miste dúinn, ní miste do mhuinntir na hÉireann uile, suim do chur i n-athchuinghe Iuno agus i ngeallamhaint Iupiter.
>
> Bhí eachtrannaigh 'na righthibh is na gceannphortaibh orainn do dtí le déidheannaighe; agus cé go bhfuil suathadh maith faghtha aca le tamall, ní'limíd réidh ar fad leo fós. Acht le linn iad do bheith i gceannas, tugadh suathadh mór dár dteangain

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[79] Ua Duinnín (1927: 745).

[80] Ua Duinnín (1929: 139–42).

agus dár nósaibh is dár mbéasaibh dúthchais agus is beag ná gur cuireadh ainm ceart ár dtíre ar gcúl.

Má éirigheann linn ár dteanga dúthchais do choimeád 'na beathaidh is do shaothrughadh is do chur chum críche agus ár mbéasa is ár nósa dúthchais do shaothrughadh, beidh an lá linn. Imtheochaidh na ríghthe eachtrannacha; beidh deireadh le sna ceannphortaibh iasachta; agus beidh an tír fá ghnáith-riaghail na sean áitightheoirí athuair. Tá na hIar-bhreatnaigh i n-ár measc fós; acht ní dóigh liom go mbuan-bhaistfear an Iar-bhreatain ar Éirinn úrghlais go bráth ná ní dóigh liom go raghaidh ár dteanga dúthchais i mbáthadh go deo.[81]

Juno had a beautiful understanding of national affairs. If the native language continues, and the native customs and manners, even if a foreign king or a foreign chief is in charge for a time, the nation will not be quenched; and it would be well for us, it would be well for all the people of Ireland, to take an interest in Juno's plea and in Jupiter's promise.

Foreigners were kings and chiefs over us until recently, and even though they have been given a fair shock recently we are not yet entirely done with them. But while they were in charge, a great shock was visited on our language and our native customs and manners and the rightful name of our country almost went into abeyance.

If we succeed in keeping our native language alive and in cultivating it and in bringing it to perfection, and in cultivating our native customs and manners, we will prosper. The foreign kings will leave; there will be an end to the chiefs from abroad; and the country will be under the ordinary rule of the old inhabitants once again. The West-Brits are still among us; but I do not think that fresh green Ireland will be christened West-Britain in perpetuity, and I do not think that our native language will ever be quenched.

[81] Ua Duinnín (1929: 141–2).

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