

Research plan

I am a first year PhD student of the History Department in Moscow State University. The sphere of my interests lies in the domain of Early Medieval and Medieval Irish history, culture and literature. I study Old Irish language and had already studied and translated several texts, one of them is *Forbais Druim Damhgaire* – a Middle Irish text for my first M.A. paper, and *Immrama Snedgusa ocus Mac Riagla* for my second M.Phil dissertation. I've also studied Latin, English and German.

The theme of my dissertation is connected with the power representation and its legacy in Medieval Ireland, especially in the southern half of the island – Munster, where ruled powerful dynastic groups such as Eoganachta and Dál Cais. The intended title of my research work is “Munster and Irish kingship in 10th-12th centuries. The problems of representation of power”. At this epoch major Irish dynasties had a possibility to express their self-image through the medium of written genealogical and narrative texts, compiled in monasteries which were often headed by representatives of junior branches of the dynasties. Those texts were intended to enhance the prestige of the kings and sometimes belittle the standing of other dynasties. Sometimes the Old Irish learned men falsified genealogies and tribal histories to make a king's power legitimate and lawful. Such origin stories and genealogies may be described as dynastic propaganda.

The main source for my research is an exciting text known as *Laud Genealogies and tribal histories* edited by Kuno Meyer in 1912. It is supposed that this text includes no less than three different layers, reflecting different periods of composition, so it's very difficult to date it exactly, but no part of it is later than 12th century. It was based mainly on the lost text (or manuscript) known as “Psalter of Cashel” which was mainly dedicated to Eoganachta kings, emphasizing their noble descent and valor and depicting their confrontations with other clans. *Laud Genealogies and tribal histories* contain interesting information concerning the history of Irish kingship and other historical realities in Early Medieval Ireland and they are always referred to in the historical or philological works dedicated to this period. The *Laud Genealogies* also contain many stories about dealings between different Munster's dynasties (*Do Bunag Imthechta Eoganachta*) as well as about political connections between other dynasties. I believe this text could be also a perfect source for political history in Early Middle Ages as well as for Munster historical propaganda: it allows us to study the Irish genealogical tradition from its very beginnings to the critical period of Norman invasion.

The 12th century in Ireland was the golden age for Irish historical and political writing, especially for writings tinged with propaganda that partly owed their flourishing to the Vikings' invasion. The propaganda texts created a negative image of invaders and their deeds and a positive one of Irish kings as protectors of the Irish people and Church against “heathens”. So, when the author

composed the latest part of *Laud Genealogies*, perhaps he also had in view to glorify the power and luster of the rising Southern Dál Cais dynasty.

This text gives us many opportunities to study such poorly explored subject as the king's power representation in Ireland as a political instrument – how it worked and what was its background, how it correlated with contemporary descriptions of royal power in late Merovingian and Carolingian sources.

It's really surprising, but in spite of many references to *Laud genealogies* in different historical and philological works the translation of the whole text, is, to my knowledge, non-existent as to date, and only some fragments from this text could be found in historical publications, as well as there is no one who specifically studied this text as a historical source. That's why I want to be the first to translate it in full in a modern European language (in English and in Russian as well). The language of the text is very complicated, but I still believe that a full and accurate translation of *Laud Genealogies* is possible. I find this subject very promising. I also suppose that the translation of *Laud Genealogies and tribal histories* will be very useful both for historians and philologists who are interested in this text but are not familiar with such a difficult language as Old Irish.

This theme is very important in the context of Medieval Irish history. I suppose that propaganda context in medieval Irish sources, as well as the power representation – not sacral, but political one are very significant for understanding the political reality of Medieval Ireland. As of today we have several historical monographs about Medieval Irish kingship but unfortunately they are sometimes faulty because the study of Old Irish historical sources (especially genealogies) is underdeveloped. That's why the history of Medieval Irish kingship and its self-representation leaves much to be desired. In my Ph.D. dissertation I want to look at the relations between Irish dynasties and kings from an absolutely different point of view. I'm going to take, for example, a number of texts with propaganda meaning, which were created during approximately one period of time for two dynasties in confrontation or potential confrontation, and integrate the images we have in texts to the scheme of chronological history, so we will be able to understand better the causes of a known historical event. It seems to be obvious, but in the modern historiography annalistic dates and events and images the dynasties tried to create are usually considered separately or not really thoroughly collated. That's why I want to analyze this question in detail and make clear the political picture of Medieval Ireland. Besides, I want to portray the propaganda tradition in Medieval Ireland itself and show not just the meaning it had then in political life, but also the process of its formation and further developing, and in what way it had later transformed during the Norman invasion.

I suppose that the history of Irish dynasties, political history of Medieval Ireland as well as propaganda context in Irish medieval sources and the problem of power representation will have great opportunities for future post-graduate researches in my academic career. In future I am intended to write some popular works for common readers about Irish kingship and the ways Irish élite used to falsify the history of their own kings and dynasties, as well as to publish my translation of a number of medieval sources. I want to contribute to progress of Celtic and Medieval European studies in Russia not only in the realm of academics but also for a wider audience. To reach this goal I have to work hard and be acquainted with not only Russian school of thought in medieval studies but also with the most famous international ones. The other problem I'm usually confronted with in my studying of Medieval Irish history is the lack of available data in Russia. Of course, some publications, especially periodicals, are available on the Internet, but it's also not enough to write an adequate Ph.D. dissertation that means a work on a big scale, using a lot of publications which are accessible only via a well-funded library.

I suppose that PhD and post-doctoral training school (The Dynamic Middle Ages II) will be a great opportunity for me to broaden my experience and write a valuable Ph.D. thesis which will open me the doors to the world of science and which could be a considerable contribution to Medieval Irish and European studies.