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Review of King of Mysteries: Early Irish Religious Writings

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recent textual discoveries and their import for Manichaean studies into the revised form of these essays. Particularly important too are the author's numerous references to and summaries of contemporary Chinese and Japanese scholarship on Manichaeism in China, sources that would otherwise remain unknown to many western scholars.

The seventh and final essay—a "Working Catalogue of Published Manichaean Texts" (196–246)—is an especially valuable annotated index of the published primary sources and *testimonia* relevant to Manichaeism that appear in Syriac, Greek, Latin, Coptic, Middle Iranian, Old Turkish, and Chinese. This exhaustive recitation possesses obvious utility and promises ample rewards for those scholars interested in the textual study of the Manichaean scriptures across multilingual boundaries. It is, however, regrettable that the rich corpus of Arabic and New Persian citations of Manichaica remains largely absent from this list. The student of Manichaeism in the Islamic world will still have to rely upon the now outdated compendium of Taqizadeh and Shirazi (S. H. Taqizadeh and A. A. Shirazi, eds., *Mani va din-e-u* [Teheran: Anjuman-e Iranshinasi, 1956]) for an initial collection of these sources. Nevertheless, the bibliographic labor that Lieu has publicly shared in this article is immeasurably superior to the scattered and outdated listings heretofore available, and he is to be congratulated on his splendid achievement.

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King of Mysteries: Early Irish Religious Writings. Translated with introduction by **John Carey**. Celtic Studies. Dublin: Four Courts, 1998. 304 pp. \$55.00 cloth.

This is a collection of Irish religious writings from both vernacular and Latin sources of the early medieval period, many translated into English for the first time, which thus expands the range of texts for study especially for the many medievalists who do not read Old Irish. The earliest work is *On the Miracles of Holy Scripture* by an exegete known as Augustinus Hibernicus.

Carey provides a general introduction to the collection and separate introductions to the individual selections. The general introduction is very well done, situating the texts in Irish history and explaining how they were used or ignored and how politics and religious confessionality impacted their reception and understanding.

The volume offers a variety of texts: exegesis, hymns, visions, and hagiography. Many deal with the relation of humans to the natural world and with the goodness of creation. Others demonstrate the allegiance of the Irish Christians to the see of Rome. The hagiographical texts deal with the tenth-century Irish reforming monks, the Culdees, and the Vision of Adomnan is the most important Irish apocalyptic work. Some of the texts are repetitive and boring, as are the medieval commentaries that accompanied the texts in the manuscripts, although the occasional gem appears.

The introductions are sometimes deficient as when Carey prints a martyrology prepared by Oengus the Culdee without relating the text to the Culdees' reforming program.

Students of medieval Irish ecclesiastical history will find this a useful volume.

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