



Charlemont grant report

Recipient name:	Dr Ciaran McDonough	
Discipline and subject area:	Humanities and Social Sciences; Irish Language, Literary and Cultural Studies	
Amount and year awarded:	€1,455	
Title of project:	Mid-nineteenth century Translations of Medieval Law Tracts: The Nordic Evidence	

Summary of findings:

The grant enabled me to travel to Bergen to meet with the PI and research team of the 'Transformations of Medieval Law: Innovation and Application in Early Modern Norwegian Law Books' project. This project, led by Dr Helen Leslie-Jacobsen, examines the uses of the 1274 Norwegian Landslov after it was applied in Norway. This includes how, in 1281, it became the national law of Iceland, known as Jónsbók, and in 1604, the Landslov was translated into Danish. This has parallels with the way early Irish law was considered in the nineteenth century - that it could be a national law code in an imagined free state and that the corpus was translated partly because it would give insights to the colonial rulers about the nature and state of the people. The translations of medieval Nordic law texts were known to Irish antiquarians working on the translation of the Irish material, so knowing more about the Nordic material was of great benefit to my current Irish Research Council funded project 'Antiquarianism, Politics, and Sectarianism in Nineteenth-Century Ireland: A Study of the Ancient Laws and Institutes of Ireland (1852-1901)'.

Because of the visit, I now know much more about medieval Norwegian and Icelandic law and their later translations, which helps in making comparisons in my own work and also in helping me to think about the Irish material in a different way. By having access to a library with much more Nordic material, I was able to get a better grasp of the Nordic legal material, which was supplemented with meetings with the members of the Research Group for Medieval Legal Culture.

Plans for continuing collaboration:

Helen Leslie-Jacobsen and I are currently arranging a workshop/conference to be held on 10-11th called 'Motivations and Methods: The Later Translation of Medieval Texts' to be held in Bergen, which will bring together a group of scholars working on post-medieval translations of medieval texts to discuss both motivations for later translators working with medieval material, and for translators themselves to reflect on the methods they use when working on this material.

It is also my intention to apply for an European Research Council Starter Grant to be hosted at Universitet i Bergen which will look at nineteenth-century translations of medieval law texts.



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Published work and publication plans:

I intend to write an article on the various nineteenth-century translations of medieval law texts, which will examine both the Irish and the Nordic material. I intend to draw parallels with the Nordic material and discuss its influences on the translation of the corpus of medieval Irish law in my monograph resulting from my IRC-funded project.

Dissemination and plans for future dissemination:

While in Bergen, I gave a lecture to the Research Group for Medieval Legal Cultures on early Irish law, the project to translate the corpus in the nineteenth century, and the post-medieval uses of early Irish law.

Outreach and engagement activities:

I have not yet had the chance to do this, but I intend to write a piece for RTÉ Brainstorm on why medieval law captured the public imagination in the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, and why it continues to do so today.