A HIGH-KING FOR THE OPPOSITION:

THE LEGACY OF DIARMAIT MAC MAÍL NA MBÓ

By

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IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE

REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF MA IN

IRISH HISTORY

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July 2024

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Abbreviations and spelling conventions

Spelling conventions have been taken from *A new history of Ireland, volume I: prehistoric and early Ireland* (2008), edited by Dáibhí Ó Cróinín. In order to avoid confusion between Diarmait mac Maíl na mBó and his more well-known descendant, Diarmait mac Murchada, the latter will be referred to as MacMurrough. Concerning ongoing debate around terminology, this thesis has opted to identify the inhabitants of Dublin and similar towns as Hiberno-Scandinavian, though they are also known as Hiberno-Norse, Foreigners, Vikings or Ostmen. All maps have been hand drawn and then digitally edited by the author. Below are abbreviations for primary materials found within this thesis.

AFM	John O'Donovan, 'Annals of the Four Masters: volume 2', eds Myriam Priour and Stephen Beechinor, online at *celt.ucc.ie*, 2008 (https://celt.ucc.ie/published/T100005B/index.html) (1 Jan. 2024).
ACl.	Denis Murphy, *The Annals of Clonmacnoise, being annals of Ireland from the earliest period to AD1408* (Dublin, 1896).
AI	Seán Mac Airt, *Annals of Inisfallen (MS Rawlinson B503)* (Dublin, 1951).
ALC	William M. Hennessy, *The Annals of Loch Cé* (London, 1871).
A-SC	Dorothy Whitelock, David C. Douglas and Susie I. Tucker, *The Anglo-Saxon chronicle: a revised translation* (London, 1961).

AT	Whitley Stokes, *The Annals of Tigernach, two volumes*, trans. Whitley Stokes (Felinfach, Wales, 1993).
AU	Seán Mac Airt and Gearóid Mac Niocaill, *The Annals of Ulster (to AD1131): Text and translation* (Dublin, 1983).
Banshenchas	Margaret E. Dobbs, 'The Ban-shenchus [part 2]' in *Revue Celtique*, xlviii (1931), pp 163–234.
Book of Leinster	R.I. Best, Osborn Bergin, M.A. O'Brien and Caoimhín Ó Domhnaill, *Book of Leinster, formerly Lebar na Núachongbála* in *celt.ucc.ie* (Cork, 2006) (https://celt.ucc.ie/published/G800011A/index.html) (1 Jan. 2024).
CS	William M. Hennessy, *Chronicum Scotorum. A chronicle of Irish affairs from the earliest times to AD1135; with a supplement containing the events from 1141 to 1150* (London, 1866).
Expugnatio Hibernica	Giraldus Cambrensis, *Expugnatio Hibernica: the conquest of Ireland*, trans. A.B. Scott and F.X. Martin (Dublin, 1978).
Gwentian Chronicle	Caradoc of Llancarvan, *Brut y Tywysogion; the Gwentian Chronicle of Caradoc of Llancarvan*, trans. J. Russell Smith (London, 1864).
Heimskringla	Snorri Sturluson, *Heimskringla: volume III*, trans. Alison Finlay and Anthony Faulkes (London, 2015).

Peniarth Chronicle	Thomas Jones, *Brut y Tywysogion, or Chronicle of Princes: Peniarth MS 20 Version*, trans. Thomas Jones (Cardiff, 2015).

Acknowledgements

There are many people I would like to thank as part of the completion of this thesis. The first is my supervisor Dr Michael Potterton, who was an invaluable source of friendship and support over the duration of this experience. I would also like to thank Dr Seán Ó Hoireabhárd for selflessly taking the time to provide constructive feedback and humour my ideas during this process. I also wish to express a great deal of gratitude to Professor Marian Lyons, who throughout both undergraduate and postgraduate studies remained a constant source of guidance and reassurance, as well as all of the History Department for their assistance throughout the MA. Finally, I could not have completed this thesis without the love and support of my family, all of whom were forced to listen to early-morning and late-night medieval ramblings over the past few months, yet did so unconditionally.

Introduction

The 1014 battle of Clontarf and the 1169–71 Anglo-Norman invasion were two defining moments of medieval Irish history. Clontarf in the popular consciousness marked an end to both the high-king of Ireland Brian Boru and Ireland's Viking Age. Meanwhile, the Anglo-Normans originally arrived on Irish shores to support their ally, King Diarmait MacMurrough of Leinster, but MacMurrough has since been scapegoated as the man responsible for beginning the wider Anglo-Norman conquests of Ireland.[1] These two figures remain highly controversial, but too much emphasis on them has overshadowed who and what came between, demoting the intermediate period to a 'snappy epilogue or a lengthy prologue'.[2] To correct this issue, it is imperative to utilise a ruler who not only arose in post-Clontarf Ireland but interacted with early Norman England, and that figure is the eleventh-century King Diarmait mac Maíl na mBó (*c.*1000–72).

Diarmait belonged to the Uí Cennselaig of Leinster, a dynasty in subordination to the ruling Uí Dúnchada, Uí Muiredaig and Uí Fáeláin,[3] families who made up branches of the Uí Dúnlaigne dynasty that ruled Leinster (see Figure 1). Their combined dominance ensured that the Uí Cennselaig were no longer in contention for the Leinster kingship,[4] having last held it in 738.[5] This meant that the Uí Dúnlaigne were obligated to deal with threats both within and beyond the province, and arguably the largest threat came from the high-king aspirations of Brian Boru. Brian subjugated Leinster in 984,[6] and used these Leinstermen in campaigns against the northern Uí Néill, Airgíalla and Ulaid in 1006.[7] Leinster soon co-rebelled with their ally King Sitric Silkbeard of Dublin in 1013,[8] borne out of a desire for independence,

[1] Caitlin Ellis, 'Ireland and the Anglo-Normans within the Irish Sea world: rebels, mercenaries, allies, 1066–1169' in Dan Armstrong, Áron Kecskés, Charles C. Rozier and Leonie V. Hicks (eds), *Borders and the Norman world: frontiers and boundaries in medieval Europe* (Woodbridge, Suffolk, 2023), pp 17–42 at p. 35.
[2] Seán Duffy, 'Ireland, c.1000–c.1100' in Pauline Stafford (ed.), *A companion to the early middle ages* (London, 2009), pp 285–302 at p. 285.
[3] Michael Richter, *Medieval Ireland* (Dublin, 2005), p. 114.
[4] Richter, *Medieval*, p. 114.
[5] *AU*, 738.4.
[6] *AI*, 984.2.
[7] *AI*, 1006.2.
[8] *AU*, 1013.12.

resource-control and 'overseas interests'.[9] This culminated with the battle of Clontarf in 1014, leading to key figures including both King Brian and King Maíl Mórda of Leinster dying,[10] leaving power-vacuums in their wake. Sitric took notice and turned against Leinster, blinding its new king Bran of the Uí Fáeláin, to disqualify him from kingship in 1018,[11] but further attempts of subjugating Leinster failed when Úgaire of the Uí Muiredaig repelled Sitric at the battle of Delgany, Wicklow, in 1021.[12] Úgaire as king of Leinster then sought to bring the Uí Cennselaig into the fold in 1024, but instead their king, also called Maíl Mórda, his son and Úgaire were trapped in a house and burned alive by Donnsléibhe of the Uí Fáeláin.[13] Leinster would remain divided and power struggles continued, even within the Uí Cennselaig themselves.

Hailing from their southern homeland of Ferns in Wexford along the River Slaney (see Figure 1),[14] the Uí Cennselaig occupied a naturally 'inaccessible' territory,[15] which led to it becoming politically unimportant at this time.[16] Previously, the dynastic kingship had passed to Diarmait's grandfather and namesake *c.*996–8,[17] then to his father Donnchad, also known as Maíl na mBó. For unknown reasons, Donnchad killed a kinsman, Áed, in the oratory of Ferns in 1003,[18] but this was reciprocated in 1006 as Donnchad was murdered 'by his own people'.[19] Although this death occurred early on, Diarmait does not appear in the annals until 1032,[20] and this gap in our understanding is one of several reasons that make Diarmait a figure worth investigating. The purpose of this thesis is to use Diarmait as a case study to

[9] Donnchadh Ó Corráin, 'Ireland, Wales, Man and the Hebrides' in Peter Sawyer (ed.), *The Oxford illustrated history of the Vikings* (Oxford, New York, 2011), pp 83–109 at p. 101.
[10] *AI*, 1014.2.
[11] *ALC*, 1018.1.
[12] *AT*, 1021.1; *ALC*, 1021.1.
[13] *AFM*, 1024.3; *CS*, 1024; *AT*, 1024.1; *ALC*, 1024.1.
[14] Michael Potterton, 'From caput to caput: the rise and fall of medieval Ferns, c.600–c.1600' in Stephen Mandal, Michael Potterton and Denis Shine (eds), *Discovering medieval Ferns, County Wexford* (Dublin, 2023), pp 16–66 at p. 16.
[15] *Expugnatio Hibernica*, p. 18.
[16] F.J. Byrne, *Irish kings and high-kings* (Dublin, 2001), p. 271.
[17] *AT*, 996.2; *AU*, 996.2; *CS*, 998.
[18] *AI*, 1003.5; *AT*, 1003.4.
[19] *AU*, 1006.6; *AFM*, 1005.9; *CS*, 1007.
[20] *AFM*, 1032.18.

broaden the understanding of mid-to-late eleventh-century Ireland while keeping the importance of 1014 and 1169–71 in mind. This will entail answering questions over three chapters that cover the life of Diarmait, not only as a cog in the political developments of eleventh-century Ireland and Europe, but to also identify the legacies that this underutilised individual left behind.

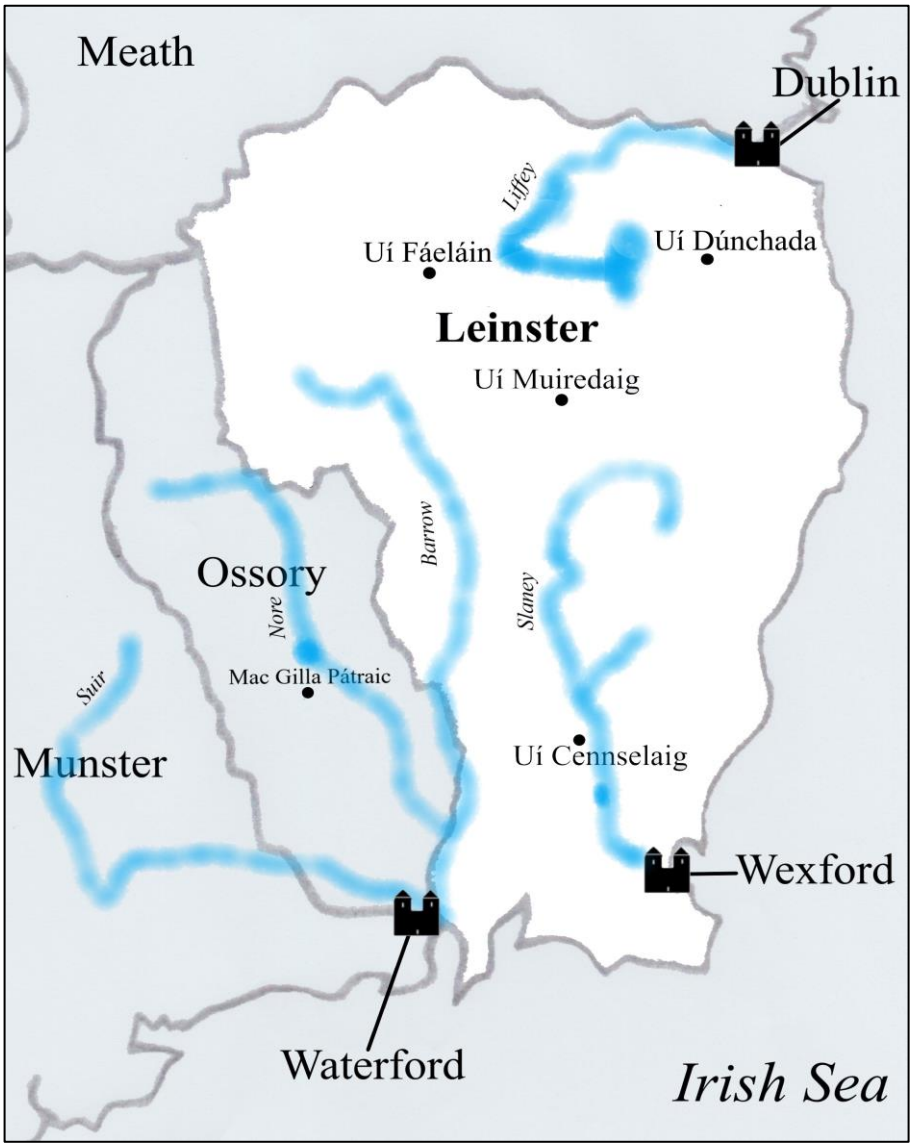

Figure 1. Map detailing the approximate positions of major families within Leinster and Ossory as well as major waterways and Hiberno-Scandinavian towns.

Chapter one studies the ascension of Diarmait during the chaos of post-Clontarf Ireland, including his rise from obscurity to high-kingship. This chapter challenges the authority of the traditionally lauded houses, the Dál Cais successors of Brian in Munster, and the southern Uí Néill of Meath, in order to propose what the significance of Diarmait rising meant in the wider framework of Irish politics. This chapter will primarily refer to the Irish annals and other Irish sources when discussing the domestic career of Diarmait.

Chapter two explores an overlooked aspect of pre-Norman Ireland, which is Ireland on the international scene. Diarmait and his son Murchad (d. 1070) ruled during a time of major events elsewhere, particularly the battle of Stamford Bridge and the battle of Hastings in 1066, but what did these events mean to Ireland? This chapter is tasked with not only establishing how Diarmait was involved in European politics, but in turn addresses how historians have interpreted his presence. The main sources for this chapter will comprise non-Irish primary material from across the isles and the works of key historians in this field.

Chapter three merges elements from the previous chapters to build a case for the impact Diarmait left on Irish society. Diarmait's holding of Dublin, Waterford and Wexford showed a drive to not just unite Gaelic Irish with Hiberno-Scandinavians, but to adopt an ideology that had not been thoroughly tapped into by previous Irish kings. This chapter will use a combination of sources including archaeology to demonstrate how Diarmait oversaw changes in Ireland through strategic expansion, commercialisation, societal reform and modifying the approach to Irish high-kingship and succession.

Literature review

Diarmait mac Maíl na mBó has not commonly featured as the focal point of medieval Irish studies. Two key historical works that have placed Diarmait in this role are articles by Donnchadh Ó Corráin: 'The career of Diarmait mac Máel na mBó, king of Leinster, part I' (1970) and 'part II' (1972). Ó Corráin relied on the annals to map the trajectory of Diarmait from his first mention in 1032,[21] to his later domination of southern Ireland.[22] Ó Corráin also explored supporting figures in the life of Diarmait such as his allies in Ossory,[23] his son Murchad, who aided his father by controlling the east while Diarmait moved westward,[24] and his foster-son Toirrdelbach ua Briain, who was used to subjugate Munster.[25] These articles left several aspects of Diarmait unanswered, particularly the void between the death of his father and his first annals reference, as well as the foreign endeavours of Diarmait.

Benjamin Hudson published several works involving Diarmait and the foreign world, among the most important of which was 'The family of Harold Godwinson and the Irish Sea province' (1979), detailing a friendship that existed between Diarmait and Harold in England.[26] Hudson believed this friendship was what brought Diarmait in opposition to the Normans, particularly by aiding the sons of Harold after Hastings.[27] Hudson also explored the relationship between Diarmait and King Gruffudd of Wales in 'The destruction of Gruffudd ap Llywelyn' (1990), proposing that Diarmait involved himself in Welsh affairs due to commercial and political enticement, particularly due to the presence of an Irish colony in Anglesey, Gwynedd.[28]

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[21] Donnchadh Ó Corráin, 'The career of Diarmait mac Máel na mBó, king of Leinster, part I' in *The Journal of the Old Wexford Society*, iii (1970), pp 27–35 at p. 27.
[22] Donnchadh Ó Corráin, 'The career of Diarmait mac Máel na mBó, king of Leinster, part II' in *The Journal of the Old Wexford Society*, iv (1972), pp 17–24 at p. 24.
[23] Ó Corráin, 'part I', p. 32.
[24] Ó Corráin, 'part II', p. 19.
[25] Ó Corráin, 'part I', p. 35.
[26] Benjamin T. Hudson, 'The family of Harold Godwinson and the Irish Sea province' in *The Journal of the Royal Society of Antiquaries of Ireland*, cix (1979), pp 92–100 at p. 93.
[27] Hudson, 'The family of Harold', p. 93.
[28] Benjamin T. Hudson, 'The destruction of Gruffudd ap Llywelyn' in *The Welsh History Review*, xv, no. 1 (1990), pp 330–50 at p. 346.

Marie Therese Flanagan is among the few historians who discussed both the national and international endeavours of Diarmait. In *Irish society, Anglo-Norman settlers, Angevin kingship* (1989), Flanagan explored Diarmait's authority in a foreign context, believing his approval was needed to loan Irish fleets to English exiles such as Harold in 1051,[29] and that Diarmait may have been part of a wider alliance with Denmark to coordinate attacks on Norman-England.[30] Flanagan has also supported claims that Diarmait was an instigator of change in Irish society, particularly succession,[31] suggesting in 'Mac Dalbaig, a Leinster chieftain' (1981) that this led to the Uí Cennselaig splitting between Diarmait's direct descendants and those of his brother Domnall,[32] and the ensuing conflict lasted from the time of Diarmait up until the emergence of his great-grandson, MacMurrough.[33]

Another historian important for this topic is Seán Duffy. Duffy discussed both Diarmait and his son Murchad at length in 'Irishmen and Islesmen in the kingdoms of Dublin and Man, 1052–1171' (1992), and made a clear argument that both men assimilated the Hiberno-Scandinavians differently than their predecessors.[34] Duffy tied this into the fallout of Clontarf, having suggested that Diarmait and King Donnchad of Munster were both equally backed by Hiberno-Scandinavian forces,[35] and that it was only after defeating Donnchad that Diarmait wielded full control over these warriors.[36] While Duffy is mostly fair toward Diarmait, there is an element of predisposition to the Dál Cais across many of his works having written books such as *Brian Boru and the Battle of Clontarf* (2014). This meant that although Duffy remained a key historian to engage with, some claims made by him would inevitably offer different interpretations than those espoused in this thesis.

[29] Marie Therese Flanagan, *Irish society, Anglo-Norman settlers, Angevin kingship* (Oxford, 1989), p. 58.
[30] Flanagan, *Irish society*, pp 59–60.
[31] Flanagan, *Irish society*, pp 87–88.
[32] Marie Therese Flanagan, 'Mac Dalbaig, a Leinster chieftain' in *The Journal of the Royal Society of Antiquaries of Ireland*, cxi (1981), pp 5–13 at pp 5–6.
[33] Flanagan, 'Mac Dalbaig', pp 6–7.
[34] Seán Duffy, 'Irishmen and Islesmen in the kingdoms of Dublin and Man, 1052–1171' in *Ériu*, xliii (1992), pp 93–133 at p. 94.
[35] Duffy, 'Irishmen and Islesmen', pp 96–7.
[36] Duffy, 'Irishmen and Islesmen', p. 97.

Finally, a key historian to discuss Diarmait and his impact on Irish politics was F.J. Byrne, particularly through his work, *Irish kings and high-kings* (2001). Byrne was of the opinion that Brian Boru set a standard for chasing Irish high-kingship that Diarmait similarly tried to pursue,[37] but that Diarmait was also compelled by his own desire to chase both dynastic kingship as well as the kingship of Leinster.[38] Byrne also believed Diarmait had long-lasting influences over political alliances even after his death, believing that the Ulaid refused to attack Leinster on the orders of the later high-king, Muirchertach Ua Briain, as a result of the friendship between Diarmait and the Ulaid.[39]

[37] Byrne, *Irish kings*, p. 270.
[38] Byrne, *Irish kings*, p. 143.
[39] Byrne, *Irish kings*, p. 146.

Chapter one: Kings, killers and crowns

Prior to examining Diarmait as high-king, it is necessary to answer the following: did his upbringing have any bearing on his later life? This may seem problematic given that the early life of Diarmait has been neglected by historians, however, this thesis will present a plausible case for Diarmait's upbringing. Ferns may have been his ancestral homeland, but after the murder of his father there is little reason to believe that Diarmait remained there. Instead, it is necessary to look west to Ossory, a neighbouring kingdom positioned near the River Suir and the Hiberno-Scandinavian town of Waterford (see Figure 2).[40] Ossory was ruled by Donnchad son of Gilla Pátraic of the Dál Birn since *c.*996,[41] who Ó Corráin stated was one of the first sources of support for Diarmait.[42] What Ó Corráin perhaps overlooked was evidence in the *Banshenchas*, a text that discusses the lore of women, and in particular the presence of Aoife, a daughter of Gilla Pátraic, the wife of Maíl na mBó and the mother of Diarmait and his brother Domnall Remair.[43] So Ó Corráin was correct, Donnchad was cordial with Diarmait, not just as an ally but because Diarmait was his nephew.

But how does acknowledging this familial circumstance provide answers for Diarmait's childhood education? Kelly noted that Irish women remained close to their families even after marriage,[44] and under normal circumstances there was an expectation that maternal uncles would help rear their nephews.[45] Should Aoife have felt the need to flee Ferns with her children, Ossory would have been an ideal destination for sanctuary, though it must also be suggested that Diarmait may have already been there through the practice of fosterage. Fostering children was a tactic used in medieval Ireland to strengthen political bonds between

[40] Clare Downham, *No horns on their helmets? Essays on the insular Viking-age* (Aberdeen, 2013), p. 138.
[41] *AT*, 996.2; *AU*, 996.2.
[42] Ó Corráin, 'part I', p. 28.
[43] *Banshenchas*, p. 228.
[44] Fergus Kelly, *A guide to early Irish law* (Dublin, 2016), p. 14.
[45] Kelly, *Irish law*, p. 15.

families,[46] and it is therefore reasonable to believe that asides from Aoife and Maíl na mBó being married, another gesture of good faith between the Uí Cennselaig and Dál Birn may have entailed Diarmait being fostered by Donnchad. This would explain the unwavering loyalty Diarmait showed not only to his uncle, but also to his cousin Gilla Pátraic, as while the ties between cousins are difficult to prove, the bonds of foster-siblings were well-known for their endurance.[47] Another point to consider is the other instances of Uí Cennselaig being reared in Ossory, as through the case of MacMurrough being fostered by the Uí Cháellaide.[48] The Uí Cháellaide not only supported the claims MacMurrough had for kingship,[49] but were committed to his cause even when it led to their execution by the high-king Ruaidhri ua Conchobair in 1170.[50] From this example, there is further reason to believe Diarmait too was a product of fosterage and benefited under the tutelage of his uncle.

Donnchad also stood to gain from this arrangement, particularly as his kingdom had been dealing with a reinvigorated Munster (see Figure 2 for borders). Munster attempted to subjugate Ossory in 1027 and 1031,[51] and although Donnchad repelled them, he may have looked elsewhere to bolster his forces. To the east was an unstable Leinster, and all Donnchad needed to do to justify a campaign there was support the claims of his nephew, Diarmait. Considering that Diarmait first appears in the annals after killing Tadgh Ua Guaire of the Uí Dúnlaigne in 1032,[52] this may have been not only part of a plan to re-establish Diarmait within Leinster, but also provided Donnchad a reason to then invade and capture the kingship of Leinster in 1033.[53] This strategy is given further credence when considering the actions Donnchad undertook as king, not only blinding an Uí Dúnlainge claimant to the throne in

[46] Bronagh Ní Chonaill, 'Fosterage: child-rearing in medieval Ireland' in *History Ireland*, v, no. 1 (1997), pp 28–31 at p. 31.
[47] Kelly, *Irish Law*, p. 90.
[48] Donnchadh Ó Corráin, 'The education of Diarmait Mac Murchada' in *Ériu*, xxviii (2017), pp 71–81 at p. 76.
[49] Ó Corráin, 'The education of Diarmait', p. 78.
[50] *AU*, 1170.4.
[51] *AT*, 1027.3; *AI*, 1027.4; *AI*, 1031.7.
[52] *AFM*, 1032.18.
[53] *AT*, 1033.3; *ALC*, 1033.3.

1036,[54] but also handing over Ruadhri of the Uí Cennselaig to Diarmait so that he could be blinded around the same time.[55] The implication here was that Donnchad was setting the stage for Diarmait to one day takeover as the next leader of Leinster, but for now Diarmait had to settle for being the new king of the Uí Cennselaig, as it is after these events that he is referred to by this title.

Having obtained his first taste of power, an upbringing in Ossory may have led Diarmait to a nearby target, Waterford. In 1037, Diarmait plundered the town, with evidence of other 'foreigners' being present hinting that Diarmait already had his own cohort of Hiberno-Scandinavians by this time.[56] The fact that two kings of Waterford, Ímair and Cú Inmain,[57] were subsequently overthrown implicates Diarmait in their demise, and would explain claims he controlled the town thereafter as purported by both Byrne,[58] and Hudson.[59] Diarmait held an affinity for the Hiberno-Scandinavians, not just as conquered personnel but as people with significant value to his domain as will be shown in due process. This differed from other Irish kings who viewed these people as outsiders,[60] particularly due to the growing Irish national identity at the time.[61] When considering that post-Clontarf Ireland may have exacerbated this alienation, perhaps the Hiberno-Scandinavians saw Diarmait as the lesser of two evils and acknowledged his overlordship without resistance.

[54] *AT*, 1036.1; *CS*, 1036; *ALC*, 1036.6.
[55] *AFM*, 1036.12; *AU*, 1036.6; *ALC*, 1036.8; *AFM*, 1037.17.
[56] *AFM*, 1037.9; *AT*, 1037.3; *AI*, 1037.2. The entry from the *Annals of Inisfallen* states the attack was perpetrated by either the 'Laigin' or 'foreigners'. As the other annals blame Diarmait, it is possible that the 'foreigners' present were forces from Wexford town that Diarmait enlisted after taking control of the Uí Cennselaig (see Figure 1 for the proximities of Ferns and Wexford town).
[57] *AFM*, 1037.15; *AU*, 1037.4; *ALC*, 1037.4.
[58] F.J. Byrne, 'Ireland and her neighbours, *c*.1014–1072' in Dáibhí Ó Cróinín (ed.), *A new history of Ireland, volume I: prehistoric and early Ireland* (Oxford, 2008), pp 862–98 at p. 892.
[59] Hudson, 'The destruction of Gruffudd', p. 348.
[60] Clare Downham, 'Coastal communities and diaspora identities in Viking Age Ireland' in James H. Barrett and Sarah Jane Gibbon (eds), *Maritime societies of the Viking and medieval world* (Leeds, 2015), pp 369–83 at p. 379.
[61] Downham, 'Coastal communities', p. 380.

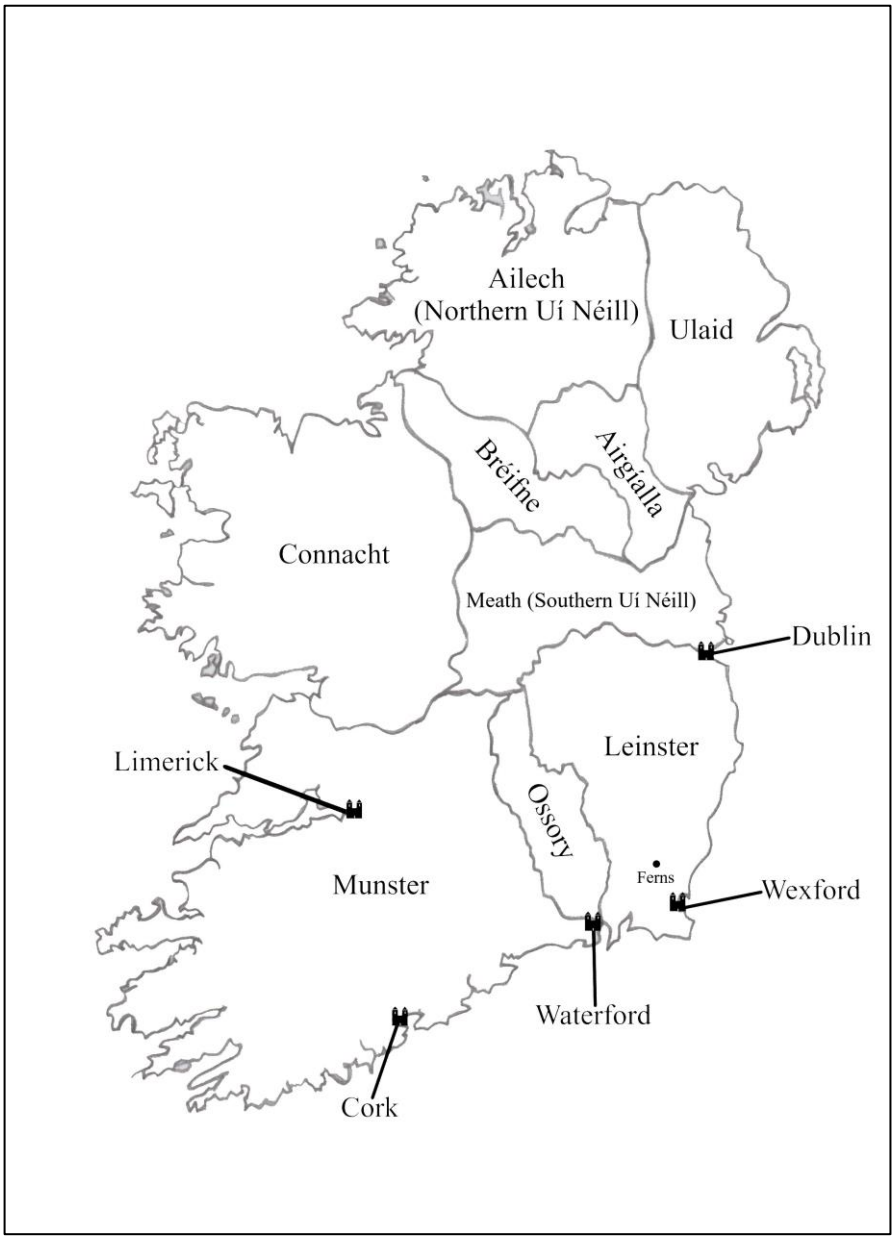

Figure 2. Map showing the major kingdoms of post-Clontarf Ireland *c.*1036. After capturing the Uí Cennselaig kingship based in Ferns, this too has been identified to demonstrate the starting point of Diarmait in Irish politics.

After an ambush killed Donnchad in 1039, which was likely devised by the succeeding king, Murchad of the Uí Muiredaig,[62] the following year saw Diarmait challenge the new king by attacking their religious holdings in Kildare: Moone, Castledermot, Dunmanoge and the church at Clonmore, Carlow.[63] Bhreathnach believed that asides from gaining material wealth, Diarmait deliberately targeted these ecclesiastical hubs to regain influence that the Uí Cennselaig had lost there.[64] It is likely that his brother and heir Domnall strived to emulate this tactic with his own raid on Kilmolappoge in Kildare in 1041, but this time was caught and killed by Murchad.[65] Murchad clearly took the threat of Diarmait seriously, and responded to this challenger by burning and plundering his homeland of Ferns,[66] supported by his new ally, the high-king Donnchad of Munster.[67]

The world of post-Clontarf Ireland had been troublesome even for a son of Brian Boru, as Donnchad was partially maimed after an assassination attempt in 1019.[68] Donnchad resolved to secure his position, first through an alliance with the southern Uí Néill in Meath led by King Máel Sechnaill II,[69] and then conspired with the kingdom of Eili to murder his own brother Tadhg in 1023, likely to ensure his status as the next high-king.[70] As with Diarmait, Donnchad valued the support of the Hiberno-Scandinavians, and prior to Diarmait's assault on the town Donnchad had married a princess of the Uí Ímair nobility of Waterford *c.*1032.[71] While these steps indicate Donnchad was prepared to do anything to retain his prominent status, he showed little interest or urgency in quelling upstarts such as Diarmait. Instead, Donnchad opted to restrain this newcomer by marrying him to his daughter, Derbhforgaill.[72]

[62] *AT*, 1039.7.
[63] *AFM*, 1040.10; *AT*, 1040.2.
[64] Edel Bhreathnach, 'Columban churches in Brega and Leinster: relations with the Norse and the Anglo-Normans' in *The Journal of the Royal Society of Antiquaries of Ireland*, cxxix (1999), pp 5–18 at p. 14.
[65] *AFM*, 1041.12; *AT*, 1041.3; *AU*, 1041.3; *ALC*, 1041.3.
[66] *CS*, 1041; *AT*, 1041.5; *AFM*, 1041.15.
[67] *ALC*, 1042.1.
[68] *AI*, 1019.6.
[69] *AT*, 1020.2.
[70] *AT*, 1023.6.
[71] *AI*, 1032.6.
[72] *AU*, 1080.4.

The *Banshenchas* stated Derbhforgaill was the mother to Diarmait's son Murchad,[73] but it is unclear if she mothered Glún Iairn (d. 1070), Enna (d. 1092) and Aoife,[74] or if these children came from other spouses.

If this was part of a grand stratagem by Donnchad it failed to dissuade Diarmait, who after losing his brother and suffering an attack on his homeland, responded abruptly. In 1041 Diarmait travelled to Killeshin in northern Leinster, and while the annals differ on detailing the extent of damage, what can be stated is that Diarmait killed at least a hundred people and captured more as captives along with significant numbers of cattle.[75] This was not just an act of vengeance, however, and instead the seizing of these people and livestock as commodities were done to bolster the claims Diarmait had on the kingship of Leinster. But Diarmait was not alone in his attempts to take the crown, as his foster-brother and son of Donnchad, Gilla Pátraic, also entered the fray to both support his cousin and avenge the death of his father. Gilla Pátraic and the other co-ruler of Ossory Mac Raith of the Eochnachta engaged Murchad in combat in 1042, eventually defeating the king and his allies in battle.[76] Although Diarmait was not mentioned as a participant, this led to his coronation as king within the year,[77] and as Gilla Pátraic never challenged Diarmait for this title, it can be presumed that the two men were collaborators in this endeavour. This shows the long-term benefit that fosterage had for Diarmait, after starting out life as an outsider he had now attained a noteworthy and powerful standing in Irish society (see Figure 3), but this was not enough for him.

[73] *Banshenchas*, p. 190.
[74] *AT*, 1070.3; *AU*, 1092.8; *Banshenchas*, p. 194.
[75] *AT*, 1041.5; *AFM*, 1041.15; *ALC*, 1042.2; *CS*, 1041.
[76] *ALC*, 1042.3; *AT*, 1042.3; *CS*, 1042.
[77] Flanagan, 'Mac Dalbaig', p. 6.

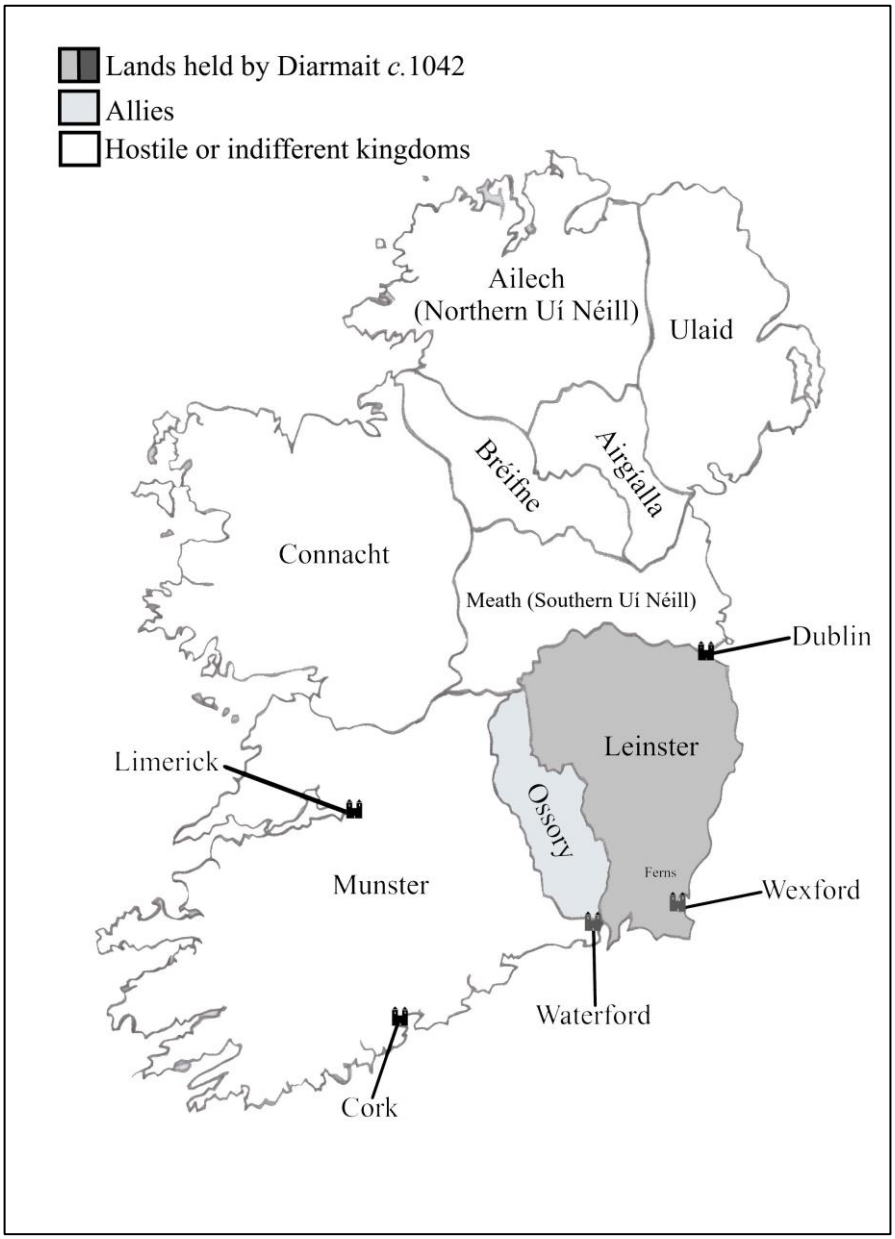

Figure 3. Updated map showing the political progress of Diarmait had made by *c.*1042. Waterford and Wexford have switched from black to dark grey (see Figure 2 for comparison) to highlight their assimilation.

As Donnchad had failed to prevent Diarmait from taking over Leinster, Diarmait sought out new allies with other rulers across Ireland. This led to a rekindling of ties with the Ulaid, who were forced to fight Leinster only due to Brian Boru's island-wide circuit in 1006.[78] Prior to this, both kingdoms were convivial with one another, having had pseudo-historical ties between Crimthann Uí Cennselaig of Sleaty, Kildare, and St Patrick of Armagh.[79] Ó Cróinín proposed that another link which persisted connected the monastic sites of Bangor in Down and Castledermot in Kildare,[80] which as discussed was targeted by Diarmait in 1041. The Ulaid were ruled by Niall son of Eochaid since *c.*1012,[81] but Niall had mixed success as king, prevailing over Dublin in naval combat in 1022,[82] but failing in an invasion of Brega in 1044.[83] The alliance with Diarmait likely coincided after he became a surety for the Ulaidian Conchobar Ua Loingsigh in 1046,[84] a strategic gesture that Diarmait used repeatedly to obtain allies. On this occasion Diarmait failed to protect Conchobar, who was instead assassinated in Leinster *c.*1046,[85] causing the Ulaid to arrive the following year to kill the culprits, Murchad and Cellach of the Uí Fáeláin, and as the annals state, to 'annoy' Diarmait.[86] As both kingdoms remained receptive of one another, it is presumable that Diarmait was either aware this would transpire, or at least tolerated the outcome for the greater good of the alliance.

Donnchad finally took notice of the smaller kingdoms beginning to band together and moved to suppress it, supported in these endeavours by another prominent king, Conchobar of Meath. In 1048, Donnchad moved unimpeded through Meath and Brega suggesting all

[78] *AI*, 1006.2.
[79] Edel Bhreathnach, *Ireland in the medieval world, AD 400–1000: landscape, kingship and religion* (Dublin, 2014), p. 199.
[80] Dáibhí Ó Cróinín, 'Ireland, 400–800' in Dáibhí Ó Cróinín (ed.), *A new history of Ireland, volume I: prehistoric and early Ireland* (Oxford, 2008), pp 182–234 at p. 194.
[81] Byrne, 'Ireland and her neighbours', p. 884.
[82] *ALC*, 1022.4; *AT*, 1022.6.
[83] *AT*, 1044.3.
[84] Ó Corráin, 'part I', p. 30.
[85] *AFM*, 1046.6.
[86] *AFM*, 1047.11; *CS*, 1047.

three were allies or at least cordial with one another, and took hostages from both Dublin and Leinster, and demanded their submission.[87] As the grandson of Maíl Sechnaill II, King Conchobar also sought to flex his might by raiding the lands of the Uí Fáeláin, who responded with their own incursion into Clonard in 1048,[88] yet the actions of Conchobar goaded Diarmait to retaliate as the protector of all Leinster.[89] It is possible that Conchobar was fuelled by a wounded ego, having failed to subjugate Dublin in 1031 as part of an indecisive series of hostilities against Sitric that ended *c.*1035.[90] Failing to take Dublin may questioned his capabilities as king, and this would justify why Conchobar sought to eliminate rival claimants such as his uncle Murchad Ruad in 1039.[91] As both Donnchad and Conchobar were facing challenges from both within and beyond their borders, this suggests that the alliance was borne out of desperation to maintain a status quo established by their forebears, that was now threatened by these upcoming kingdoms.

Diarmait may have sensed this and called their bluff, launching an attack on the Déise of Munster and in quick succession joined Niall to attack Meath and burn many of its churches in 1048.[92] Diarmait and Niall were clearly emboldened by their success and pressed Conchobar to submit hostages the following year, but in defiance Conchobar killed their hostages instead, provoking the duo into a frenzy of incinerating churches and fortresses alike across Meath.[93] The fallout of this onslaught may have once again casted doubt on Conchobar, and may justify why he killed another of his uncles, Muirchertach, shortly after Leinster and Ulaid invaded in 1049.[94] Donnchad should have intervened to repress Diarmait, but instead postured once more by going to Ossory and Leinster and taking hostages.[95]

[87] *CS*, 1048; *AT*, 1048.2.
[88] *AT*, 1048.10.
[89] Ó Corráin, 'part I', p. 30.
[90] *AT*, 1031.7; *AU*, 1035.6; *AFM*, 1035.4.
[91] *AT*, 1039.9.
[92] *AT*, 1048.9; *AFM*, 1048.13; *AT*, 1048.11; *CS*, 1048.
[93] *AFM*, 1049.9; *AT*, 1049.2.
[94] *AU*, 1049.4.
[95] *AT*, 1049.3.

Donnchad may have wanted to present himself as a confident high-king, but any lasting impression withered after a botched attempt to subjugate King Áed Ua Conchobair of Connacht in 1051, in which Donnchad 'brought back neither hostages nor sureties'.[96]

With Donnchad and Conchobar in political remission, Diarmait undertook a challenge which Conchobar had failed to achieve, capturing Dublin. King Echmarcach mac Ragnaill of Dublin was the brother-in-law of Donnchad, and had usurped the previous ruler Ímair in 1046.[97] If Diarmait was aware of this connection between Munster and Dublin, it may have stoked his ambitions instead of inducing a fear of repercussions. Diarmait arrived outside the town with his Irish and Hiberno-Scandinavian forces in 1052, scorching the countryside of Fingal but not taking its cattle,[98] signalling that Diarmait was not here for the spoils of Dublin, but for Dublin itself. Echmarcach decided to fight Diarmait in the surrounding area, but was defeated and fled to the Isle of Man.[99] Diarmait assumed the kingship of Dublin and earned the moniker as 'king of the foreigners' of Ireland.[100] Diarmait did what the Uí Néill in Meath could not, and went a step further in securing his legacy by placing his son Murchad as the ruler of Dublin.

Donnchad and Conchobar responded frantically in what was likely a last-ditch attempt to subdue this parvenue, travelling to Fingal in 1053 to take hostages from Diarmait and his Hiberno-Scandinavian subjects.[101] One unfortunate hostage taken was Mór, the daughter of Conghalach Ua Conchobair, who Ó Corráin believed was betrothed or married to Gilla Pátraic,[102] while Candon proposed she was a hostage in the custody of Gilla Pátraic on

[96] *AI*, 1051.7.
[97] *AFM*, 1046.8; *AT*, 1046.6.
[98] *CS*, 1052.
[99] *AT*, 1061.3.
[100] *AT*, 1052.2; *AFM*, 1052.8; *AU*, 1052.8.
[101] *AT*, 1053.4; *CS*, 1053.
[102] Ó Corráin, 'part I', pp 31–2.

Diarmait's behalf.[103] Regardless, this was considered a 'violation' against Gilla Pátraic,[104] and was a provocation that Diarmait used to declare war. In 1053, Diarmait and Gilla Pátraic looted Meath,[105] and Diarmait followed this up with a consecutive assault on Meath and Brega,[106] who were then set upon simultaneously by the kingdom of Airgíalla.[107] It is plausible that Diarmait offered Airgíalla support against their historical enemies, Meath, and in return received their submission, which would explain why the *Book of Leinster* claimed Airgíalla was under the overlordship of Diarmait.[108] The importance of this is that there was no coincidence that all of Diarmait's allies so far in Ossory, Ulaid and Airgíalla, had some form of historical grievances with Meath or Munster. This indicates that Diarmait opted to meander post-Clontarf politics through subterfuge, instead of outright conquering territories as Brian Boru opted to do.

That being said, Diarmait had no shortage of military options to fall back on, and the Hiberno-Scandinavian fleets meant anywhere that was accessible by waterways was open to attack. These fleets attacked Emly in Tipperary and Duntrileague near Hiberno-Scandinavian Limerick in 1054, and the annals obscurely state that Donnchad did not respond to these incursions.[109] The fleets were undoubtedly efficient in combat, as between 1055 and 1057 they were enlisted as mercenaries abroad within the ranks of Earl Aelfgar of Mercia,[110] and in Wales under Cynan son of Iago,[111] while also being utilised by Diarmait to attack islands off the coast of Munster such as Inis Cathaigh in 1057.[112] Duffy believed that Donnchad still

[103] Anthony Candon, 'Power, politics and polygamy: women and marriage in late pre-Norman Ireland' in Damian Bracken and Dagmar Ó Riain-Raedel (eds), *Ireland and Europe in the twelfth century: reform and renewal* (Dublin, 2006), pp 106–27 at p. 124.
[104] *AFM*, 1053.12.
[105] *AFM*, 1053.12.
[106] *AT*, 1053.5; *AFM*, 1053.13.
[107] *AFM*, 1053.14.
[108] *Book of Leinster*, p. 98.
[109] *AT*, 1054.8.
[110] *A-SC*, 1055C.
[111] *Gwentian Chronicle*, *s.a.* 1055.
[112] *AI*, 1057.5.

had access to the Hiberno-Scandinavian forces from Waterford,[113] but there is no evidence of Donnchad interacting with Waterford after Diarmait ventured there or of Donnchad using fleets against Diarmait. It is more likely that Diarmait turned the Waterford forces against Donnchad during this campaign, although Donnchad may have had Hiberno-Scandinavians from Cork and Limerick within his ranks who remained loyal to his cause (see Figure 3).

Diarmait was not the only threat that Donnchad had to worry about, as others arose once again from both within and beyond his borders. In 1053, Diarmait exploited this first by allying with Áed of Connacht,[114] which led to an outbreak of 'great warfare' between Connacht and Munster.[115] Diarmait then gained another ally when the nephew of Donnchad, Toirrdelbach ua Briain, led an insurrection against the 'upper Dál Cais'.[116] Toirrdelbach was the son of Tadhg, the brother Donnchad had murdered, but was more importantly the foster-son of Diarmait.[117] Toirrdelbach was challenged by his cousin Murchad ua Briain, but sent the pro-Donnchad forces into a retreat in 1055.[118] Toirrdelbach and Connacht joining the conflict came at a critical time for Diarmait as he Gilla Pátraic died *c.*1055,[119] though Diarmait almost certainly assumed control of his cousins lands as the annals refer to him as the king of Ossory.[120] Diarmait and Toirrdelbach attacked Limerick in 1058,[121] but Donnchad anticipated Leinster would target the port and burned it himself, 'lest the other party should burn it'.[122] The major turning point of the conflict was the battle of Sliabh-Crot in 1058, when Diarmait successfully routed Donnchad and his forces.[123] Donnchad fled north and submitted

[113] Duffy, 'Irishmen and Islesmen', pp 96–7.
[114] Ó Corráin, 'part II', p. 17.
[115] *AFM*, 1053.2.
[116] *AFM*, 1053.2.
[117] *AFM*, 1063.21.
[118] *AU*, 1055.3.
[119] *ALC*, 1055.2.
[120] *AI*, 1072.2.
[121] *AI*, 1058.4.
[122] *AI*, 1058.4.
[123] *AFM*, 1058.5; *ALC*, 1058.3; *AT*, 1058.3.

to Áed in 1059,[124] possibly wanting the ally to turn against Diarmait, but as with other strategies implemented by Donnchad, this also failed.

Donnchad could not even rely on Meath to prevent his inevitable downfall, indicating that the alliance was indeed not forged out of any genuine cordiality between the kingdoms. Ó Corráin believed that the inaction of Meath was why Diarmait had left them alone during the war.[125] What changed this was Conchobar foiling a plot by Diarmait to pull the kingship of Tara from under him. It is not known how, but Diarmait had attained surety over Gallbrat ua Cerbaill, the heir to the title of Tara and perhaps a rival claimant to Conchobar. This would explain why Conchobar killed Gallbrat in 1058, and as payment for the death of his surety, Diarmait received treasure including the 'Sword of Carlus'.[126] The sword is a point of intrigue, as it was part of a newer trend noted by Valante that saw objects linked to kingship, in this case the sword was tied to Dublin itself.[127] A year later in 1059 Murchad opened hostilities with Meath and although he inflicted casualties, he was driven back.[128] According to Ó Corráin, this may have also been instigated by Uí Dúnlaigne members who expressed their support for Conchobar, therefore turning against their overlords of Murchad and Diarmait.[129] This may have provoked Diarmait to turn way from Munster and to personally lead an attack on Meath in 1059, but this too was thwarted on the border of Swords.[130] Murchad nonetheless was a skilled military commander, and despite failing in Meath he had taken control of the Isle of Man *c.*1060–1, deposing Echmarcach for a second time and further expanding Diarmait's authority as king.[131] Despite some military setbacks, Meath and

[124] *CS*, 1059; *AI*, 1059.7.
[125] Ó Corráin, 'part II', p. 19.
[126] *CS*, 1058.
[127] Mary A. Valante, 'Family relics and viking kingship in Ireland' in *Eolas: The Journal of the American Society of Irish Medieval Studies*, vi (2013), pp 88–106 at p. 106.
[128] *AFM*, 1059.20.
[129] Ó Corráin, 'part II', p. 19.
[130] *AT*, 1059.2.
[131] *AFM*, 1060.6; *AT*, 1061.3.

Munster were noticeably out for themselves, meaning all Diarmait had to do was continue the pressure and wait for them to submit.

Donnchad was the first to fold, travelling to Ferns in 1060 to surrender to Diarmait and acknowledge his rival as high-king,[132] causing Donnchad to later abdicate and travel in 1064 to Rome, where he would die.[133] It is worth stating that Munster nobles had submitted to Diarmait even before the abdication of Donnchad on the plains of Munster in 1063,[134] meaning even without Donnchad's submission Diarmait would have held sway over the kingdom. But instead of taking Munster for himself, Diarmait allowed Toirrdelbach to become its king, as this was Diarmait's plan all along.[135] This provides another clue that Diarmait approached the high-kingship by relying on obedient vassals, particularly those who's claims he fought for, Diarmait ensured that he was less likely to deal with rebellions as Brian Boru did.

Diarmait may have become high-king, but through unclear circumstances conflict then arose between Diarmait and Áed of Connacht. It may be that when Áed killed the prince of Tethbae, Conaing Ua Muiricéan, in 1066,[136] this was another individual who Diarmait held surety over, or that Diarmait was enticed into war by rival claimants to the kingship of Connacht, the Ua Ruairc dynasty of Bréifne. This is supported by the annals stating that Diarmait invaded Áed, not the other way around, with an army known as the 'great army' of Leth Moga,[137] made up of men from Diarmait's domain and allies including Toirrdelbach as well as the Ua Ruairc of Bréifne. Áed lived up to his moniker as 'the Cú Chulainn of the Irish',[138] by repelling the initial invasion,[139] causing the coalition to attack on two fronts, with

[132] *AT*, 1060.4.
[133] *CS*, 1064; *AI*, 1064.5; *AT*, 1065.6.
[134] *AFM*, 1063.19.
[135] Ó Corráin, 'part II', p. 35.
[136] *AT*, 1066.4; *CS*, 1066.
[137] *AFM*, 1067.4.
[138] *CS*, 1067. This description may also imply that Áed was a credible threat to Diarmait.
[139] *AFM*, 1067.4.

Diarmait and Toirrdelbach attacking from the west while Bréifne attacked from the east, 'so that the total destruction of the whole province resulted therefrom'.[140] The Ua Ruairc delivered the killing blow to the defending king,[141] allowing their ruler, Áed Ua Ruairc, to become the next king of Connacht.[142] Diarmait had now gained another subservient kingdom and was the undisputed high-king over most of the island; or was he?

A source of contention, asides from the still unconquered southern and northern Uí Néill (see Figure 4), was the status of Toirrdelbach. Toirrdelbach entered Leinster in 1068, bringing away valuables such as 'Brian's sword' and 'standard of the king of the Saxons',[143] a banner that likely belonged to the ally of Diarmait, Harold Godwinson. The main commentator on this deed was Duffy, who proposed this was an example of the Dál Cais achieving a 'restoration of Munster dominance'.[144] Flanagan has disputed this by stating Diarmait gave the sword willingly as an 'endorsement' of Toirrdelbach as king.[145] More evidence would imply the latter argument is more feasible, as Diarmait had already endorsed the kingship of Toirrdelbach previously by giving him hostages in 1063.[146] It could be argued that just as the Sword of Carlus legitimised Diarmait and his reign of Dublin, 'Brian's sword', as an aspect of Brian Boru, was used to legitimise Toirrdelbach as the rightful successor to Munster.

Other challenges to Diarmait were much more prevalent and serious in consequence, particularly those that came from Meath. Murchad invaded Meath in 1069, burning Longford, Meath and Fobar before being caught by the forces of Meath, who through St Fechín, made a slaughter of the Leinstermen,[147] and possibly due to injuries sustained in Meath, Murchad

[140] *AI*, 1067.2.
[141] *AU*, 1067.4; *CS*, 1067; *AI*, 1067.2; *AT*, 1067.5.
[142] *AT*, 1067.5.
[143] *AI*, 1068.5.
[144] Seán Duffy, '"The western world's tower of honour dignity": the career of Muirchertach Ua Briain in context' in Damian Bracken and Dagmar Ó Riain-Raedel (eds), *Ireland and Europe in the twelfth century: reform and renewal* (Dublin, 2006), pp 56–73 at p. 58.
[145] Marie Therese Flanagan, 'High-kings with opposition, 1072–1166' in Dáibhí Ó Cróinín (ed.), *A new history of Ireland, volume I: prehistoric and early Ireland* (Oxford, 2008), pp 899–933 at p. 899.
[146] *AFM*, 1063.21.
[147] *CS*, 1069; *AT*, 1069.2.

later died in Dublin *c.*1070.[148] His brother Glún Iairn was also killed in Meath while raiding,[149] meaning that within a year Diarmait had lost two of his three sons. Other Uí Cennselaig, specifically the descendants of his brother Domnall (the Ua Domnaill),[150] rose to challenge Diarmait in 1071, with an unnamed grandson of Diarmait defending against 'the son of Domnall Remar', in which many fell.[151] It is not clear who won, but Toirrdelbach may have settled it by taking hostages from Leinster, undoubtedly Ua Domnaill dissenters, and hostages from Meath that were then handed over to Diarmait.[152] This not only reaffirms that Toirrdelbach supported his foster-father, but the fact Toirrdelbach took hostages from Meath implies the kingdom was in a much weaker position than when the sons of Diarmait had invaded.

This may have been noticed by Diarmait, who may have been driven by desire to conquer his last rivals on the island or by wanting to avenge his sons. Diarmait led an invasion of Meath on 7 February 1072, but at the battle of Odba Conchobar with the support of an 'Ua Briain' was not only victorious, but beheaded Diarmait mid-battle.[153] On his death, Diarmait was listed by his many titles including king of Leinster and the foreigners,[154] king of Ossory,[155] king of Mog Nuadat's Half [the southern half of Ireland], king of the Hebrides and of the Britons.[156] The title that did not get bestowed upon Diarmait, unlike Brian, was high-king of all Ireland, instead, Diarmait was branded *rí Herend co fressabra*,[157] meaning 'high-king with opposition'.[158] Toirrdelbach quickly assumed the high-kingship after securing Leinster, Ossory and Dublin in 1072.[159] Dublin would briefly pass to the grandson of

[148] *AT*, 1070.1; *ALC*, 1070.2; *AFM*, 1070.7.
[149] *AT*, 1070.3; *AU*, 1070.12.
[150] Flanagan 'Mac Dalbaig', p. 6.
[151] *AI*, 1071.2.
[152] *AI*, 1071.3.
[153] *AFM*, 1072.3; *AI*, 1072.2; *ALC*, 1072.1; *AU*, 1072.4.
[154] *ALC*, 1072.1.
[155] *AI*, 1072.2.
[156] *AT*, 1072.1.
[157] *Book of Leinster*, p. 98.
[158] Byrne, *Irish kings*, p. 146.
[159] *AI*, 1072.4.

Diarmait called Domnall in 1075 but after his death,[160] Toirrdelbach took another page out of his foster-father's book by installing his own son Muirchertach as the next king of Dublin.[161] Enna, the last living son of Diarmait, did manage to take the kingship of Leinster in 1089,[162] but conflicts within the Uí Cennselaig led to his death by fratricide.[163] Nonetheless, Diarmait's lineage would survive through the descendants of Murchad known as the Meic Murchada, leading directly to MacMurrough.

[160] *AI*, 1075.3; *AU*, 1075.4; *ALC*, 1075.
[161] *AFM*, 1075.11.
[162] *AT*, 1089.3.
[163] *AFM*, 1092.9.

Figure 4. Map suggesting the largest possible extent of land controlled by Diarmait as high-king of Ireland.

Before concluding, it is worth determining the identity of the 'Ua Briain' who fought against Diarmait in Meath. Duffy pointed towards this being Toirrdelbach,[164] believing the Munsterman had already been trying to escape from Diarmait's influence.[165] This would match a description of Toirrdelbach being an 'arch-manipulator' as was suggested by Casey.[166] Others refused to implicate Toirrdelbach, as Hudson cited Toirrdelbach interceding in the Uí Cennselaig infighting as proof of the close bond between Toirrdelbach and Diarmait.[167] Ó Corráin proposed similarly, stating that no matter how much Diarmait stood in the way of his foster-sons ambitions, Toirrdelbach never 'engaged in hostilities against Diarmait'.[168] This thesis will provide further evidence to support the stance presented by Hudson and Ó Corráin.

First, the central argument of Duffy stems from the *Annals of Inisfallen*, which mentions an 'Ua Briain' being present, with no first name given.[169] The issue with this is that by 1054, King Donnchad of Munster had at least three sons alive,[170] making them all by definition ua Briain. Even if Murchad ua Briain is to be discounted as he was defeated by Toirrdelbach, that leaves two known ua Briain who would have clamoured for the death of their father's rival. Secondly, evidence from the annals suggests Toirrdelbach resented Conchobar, who died in 1073 after being fittingly killed by his own nephew, Murchad.[171] Toirrdelbach went to Meath and took Conchobar's skull 'by force out of his grave from Clonmacnoise',[172] which is important as the death of Toirrdelbach in 1086 is attributed to an illness gained following this action.[173] Therefore, it seems unlikely that Toirrdelbach was the 'Ua Briain' at the battle

[164] Duffy, 'The western world's tower', p. 59.
[165] Duffy, 'The western world's tower', p. 57.
[166] Casey, 'Politics', p. 36.
[167] Benjamin T. Hudson, 'William the Conqueror and Ireland' in *Irish Historical Studies*, xxix, no. 114 (1994), pp 145–58 at p. 149.
[168] Ó Corráin, 'part II', p. 23.
[169] *AI*, 1072.2.
[170] *AI*, 1054.3.
[171] *AFM*, 1073.4; *CS*, 1073; *AT*, 1073.1.
[172] *AT*, 1073.1.
[173] *AFM*, 1086.9.

of Odba, and this event strongly suggests that Toirrdelbach sought revenge on Conchobar by desecrating his body in the same manner as Conchobar had done to Diarmait.

In conclusion, chapter one has demonstrated how Diarmait ascended the political ranks from fostered-outsider to eventual high-king. Post-Clontarf Ireland was too unstable for one large dynasty to capitalise upon alone, as seen through the failures of Donnchad and Conchobar. Donnchad could, and should, have moved in and defeated Diarmait through military means long before he was a threat to the high-kingship. This thesis believes that the reason Donnchad did not was simply because he did not have the resources to do so, which raises questions as to how powerful Donnchad was as high-king to begin with. Conchobar similarly failed in his desire not just to take Dublin, but to regain any lost Uí Néill influence in the south, both as a result of Diarmait and the succession of Toirrdelbach to the high-kingship, further preventing any supposed Uí Néill resurgence. What the rise of Diarmait signifies was that post-Clontarf Ireland was ripe for the taking, but only for those who could forge reliable alliances and think strategically which, as evidenced, Diarmait was successful in accomplishing.

Chapter two: Mercenaries, monarchs and machinations

The prospect of an Irish king influencing events on a wider European scale may seem far-fetched, but Diarmait was able to achieve this. Determining the extent of this impact, however, is the main goal of this chapter. By presenting this evidence, we can then disclose how historians have perceived this foreign involvement as part of deciphering how Ireland faired in eleventh-century foreign politics. First it is necessary to go back to the initial period of foreign contact that occurred between Diarmait and Wales. Wales was a single day away from Leinster by boat according to Giraldus Cambrensis,[174] and it is unlikely that travel times differed drastically from the eleventh-to-twelfth centuries. The proximity of Leinster to Wales (see Figure 5) explains why Welsh history made its way into Irish annals, with one event being the death of Iago *c.*1039 as 'king of the Britons',[175] but relying on Irish accounts is unreliable, and this descriptor of Iago is not dependable when compared with other sources.

The Welsh *Gwentian Chronicle* provides further context by clarifying Iago was the king of Gwynedd who died fighting a usurper, Gruffudd ap Llywelyn, which allowed Gruffudd to become the king of all Wales.[176] The family of Iago including his son Cynan fled from Wales to Ireland in 1042, then enlisted Irish ships to partake in an unsuccessful attempt to reclaim their homeland.[177] The *Peniarth Chronicle* recorded a second attempt by Cynan, once again flanked by 'gentiles', but Gruffudd defeated them once more and drove Cynan back to Ireland.[178] Gruffudd, nonetheless, saw value in these foreign mercenaries and later went to Ireland himself to procure a fleet of thirty-six ships, which was used in *c.*1049 to route Welsh dissidents across his provinces,[179] and to defeat Anglo-Saxon forces at the battle of Hereford in 1050, during Gruffudd's campaign against Edward the Confessor.[180] This early phase of

[174] *Expugnatio Hibernica,* p. 41.
[175] *ALC,* 1039.1.
[176] *Gwentian Chronicle, s.a.* 1039–41.
[177] *Gwentian Chronicle, s.a.* 1042.
[178] *Peniarth Chronicle, s.a.* 1042–44.
[179] *A-SC,* 1049D.
[180] *Gwentian Chronicle, s.a.* 1050.

foreign involvement revolved primarily around Irish mercenaries being used against Welsh and Anglo-Saxon forces, but the 1050s complicated this matter as Anglo-Saxon nobles who were exiled found their way to Irish shores.

Prolific Anglo-Saxons arrived in Ireland seeking aid including Harold Godwinson, the son of Earl Godwine of Wessex and, in all probability, a friend of Diarmait. In 1051, Godwine was forced to flee England from King Edward, his family left to mainland Europe and Scandinavia, but Harold and his brother Leofwine instead went to Ireland and stayed there that winter.[181] In 1052, likely after Diarmait had conquered Dublin, the two brothers returned to England with the support of nine Irish ships,[182] travelling up the River Severn to plunder the towns of Somerset and Devon.[183] When Earl Godwine died in 1053,[184] Harold assumed his title and was fortunate enough to reconcile with Edward, but the door to Ireland remained open to other nobles even after this.

The next prominent dissenter at odds with Edward was Earl Aelfgar of Mercia, who travelled to Ireland in 1055 and obtained eighteen ships, joining with Gruffudd and using the combined Irish and Welsh forces to route the Anglo-Saxons once again in a battle at Hereford.[185] A key detail to observe is that within the same year the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* stated that the Irish fleet went to Chester, awaiting the payment that they had been 'promised' by Aelfgar for their services.[186] Unlike with Harold, this implies that this fleet was provided as a transactional service, and there is no other evidence of Aelfgar returning to Ireland. Around this time, Cynan who had still remained in Ireland assembled another fleet to usurp Gruffudd, but as Gruffudd was bolstered by his own Hiberno-Scandinavian forces, Cynan once again failed, and Gruffudd went on to repress mutinous families from Dyfed and the

[181] *A-SC*, 1051C.
[182] *A-SC*, 1052E.
[183] *A-SC*, 1052C & D.
[184] *A-SC*, 1053C.
[185] *A-SC*, 1055C.
[186] *A-SC*, 1055C.

Vale of Twyi.[187] From observing this second phase of activity, it shows that Irish fleets were becoming increasingly involved in political developments in both Wales and England, even when it appears that Diarmait was loaning fleets out to one or more parties who were at odds with one another.

Ireland's involvement abroad intensified in the late 1050s following the return of Scandinavian fleets to England. In 1058, Prince Magnus Haraldsson of Norway led a fleet through the Irish Sea comprised of men from the Orkney Islands, Hebrides and Dublin in a failed attempt to seize England.[188] A point to consider is that Murchad ruled Dublin at this time, so it is entirely possible that by loaning ships to Magnus, Murchad was allowed to proceed with plans to take the Isle of Man without Scandinavian interference in 1061 (see Figure 5).[189] Potential contact between the two rulers gives credibility to claims that King Margad of Dublin within the *Heimskringla* is Murchad,[190] who had been pushing for further influence over Scandinavian territories. It was also around this time that Diarmait had lost one foreign contact as Gruffudd was killed, though the identity of the culprit differs depending on the source. The *Gwentian Chronicle* claimed it was done by his own men',[191] while the *Peniarth Chronicle* pointed toward a collusion with England, as the head of Gruffudd was sent to Harold Godwinson,[192] which is somewhat corroborated by the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* which implied Harold orchestrated this to gain favour with King Edward.[193] Cynan may have also been the sole culprit as he used this death to try re-establish himself in Wales, but was rejected as people believed his family would be cruel to any opposition.[194] As the foreign contact continued, it is apparent that Diarmait and Murchad had no

[187] *Gwentian Chronicle*, *s.a.* 1055.
[188] *AT*, 1058.4.
[189] *AT*, 1061.3.
[190] *Heimskringla*, pp 103–4.
[191] *Peniarth Chronicle*, *s.a.* 1061–63.
[192] *Gwentian Chronicle*, *s.a.* 1060–61.
[193] *A-SC*, 1063E.
[194] *Gwentian Chronicle*, *s.a.* 1062–63.

reservations on cooperating with foreign rulers, although this would once again lead to complications over loyalties due to the fallout of 1065–6.

When Edward the Confessor died in 1065,[195] the succession crisis that followed was caused by Harold taking the throne over William the Conqueror. Another figure outraged was the Norwegian king and father of Magnus, Harald Hardrada, who obtained the submission of Tosti, a brother of Harold, and support from Scottish forces for an invasion of England for the throne in 1066.[196] The coalition first attacked the old Anglo-Scandinavian stronghold of York/Jorvik to resupply (see Figure 5),[197] and German chronicler Adam of Bremen reported a 'king of Hibernia' served within this army.[198] Harold, who had already been anticipating a Norman invasion in the south, went north with his army to defeat the Norwegian king at the battle of Stamford Bridge of 1066, with both Hardrada and Tosti being killed.[199] William the Conqueror arrived shortly after and the Normans defeated Harold for the kingship of England at the battle of Hastings in October 1066,[200] ensuring neither Scandinavian nor Anglo-Saxon powers would regain the throne of England. This was not the end for Diarmait and foreign politics, however, and instead an often overlooked yet important event that occurred will be discussed.

In 1067, the sons of Harold 'came unexpectedly from Ireland' with a fleet that plundered Bristol and Somerset before returning once again to Ireland.[201] Norman writers William of Jumièges and William of Poitiers claimed the sons had received help from a king of Ireland called 'Dirmet', who provided these rebels with knights and sixty-six ships for their expedition.[202] It is likely Diarmait did this not just out of loyalty to Harold but out of concern

[195] *A-SC*, 1065C & D.
[196] *A-SC*, 1066D.
[197] *A-SC*, 1066C.
[198] Adam Von Bremen, *History of the archbishops of Hamburg–Bremen*, trans. Francis Joseph Tschan (New York, 1959), p. 159.
[199] *A-SC*, 1066E.
[200] *A-SC*, 1066E.
[201] *A-SC*, 1067D.
[202] Guillaume De Jumièges and Guillaume De Poitiers, *Histoire des ducs de Normandie*, trans. M. Guizot (Caen, 1826), p. 236.

of the looming Norman threat, particularly as the *Gwentian Chronicle* recorded large numbers of Saxons flocking to Wales from 'the intrusion of the Normans' in 1068.[203] The sons of Harold returned in 1069 and sailed up the Taw, though this time they were confronted by Count Brian of Brittany who not only defeated them,[204] but is alleged to have killed 1,700 combatants which caused great mourning throughout Ireland.[205] Another threat to the Normans was the simultaneous Danish invasion under King Sweyn II, but this was defeated through bribery and the ships sailed back home in 1070, though some only made it as far as Ireland due to a storm.[206] This marked an end to the major contributions Diarmait made on foreign politics, but even in his death his impact was recognised abroad.

The Welsh *Peniarth Chronicle* recorded the death of Diarmait in 1072, stating that he was 'the most praiseworthy and bravest king of the Irish— terrible towards his foes and kind towards the poor and gentle towards pilgrims—was slain in an unforeseen and unexpected battle'.[207] Another account of his death came from the German-based Irish scribe Marianus Scotus, who found it worth recording that 1072 was 'the year in which was killed Diarmait, king of Leinster'.[208] The former holdings of Diarmait continued to remain a haven for exiles, particularly for the Dublin-born son of Cynan, Gruffudd, who arrived in Gwynedd in 1074 with a 'strong army from Ireland' to press his claims for kingship.[209] The facilitation of exiles was noticed by William the Conqueror, who according to his 1087 eulogy had planned an invasion of Ireland, 'if he could have lived two years more, he would have conquered Ireland by his prudence and without any weapons'.[210] One final primary source to note is the twelfth-century writings of Arabic cartographer Muhammad Al-Idrisi. Al-Idrisi served at the court of

[203] *Gwentian Chronicle*, *s.a.* 1068.
[204] *A-SC*, 1069D.
[205] De Jumièges and De Poitiers, *Histoire des ducs*, p. 236.
[206] *A-SC*, 1070.
[207] *Peniarth Chronicle*, *s.a.* 1070–72.
[208] Michael Clarke, 'The "Poems on World–Kingship" in the Book of Uí Mhaine' in Elizabeth Boyle and Ruairí Ó hUiginn (eds), *Book of Uí Mhaine* (Dublin, 2023), pp 79–110 at pp 109–10.
[209] *Gwentian Chronicle*, *s.a.* 1074.
[210] *A-SC*, 1087E.

the Norman king of Sicily, Robert the Fox, and was instrumental in detailing the world from sources he had collected. In one relevant finding, Al-Idrisi discussed an Irish king who had 'sought to make himself ruler over the rest',[211] in a place where the people were 'fighting to extinction' among themselves.[212] This concludes the relevant primary material and sets the context for discussing Diarmait and the foreign world, meaning that the interpretations of historians can now be examined.

[211] David James, 'Two medieval Arabic accounts of Ireland' in *The Journal of the Royal Society of Antiquaries of Ireland*, cviii (1978), pp 5–9 at p. 6.
[212] James, 'Medieval Arabic accounts', pp 6–7.

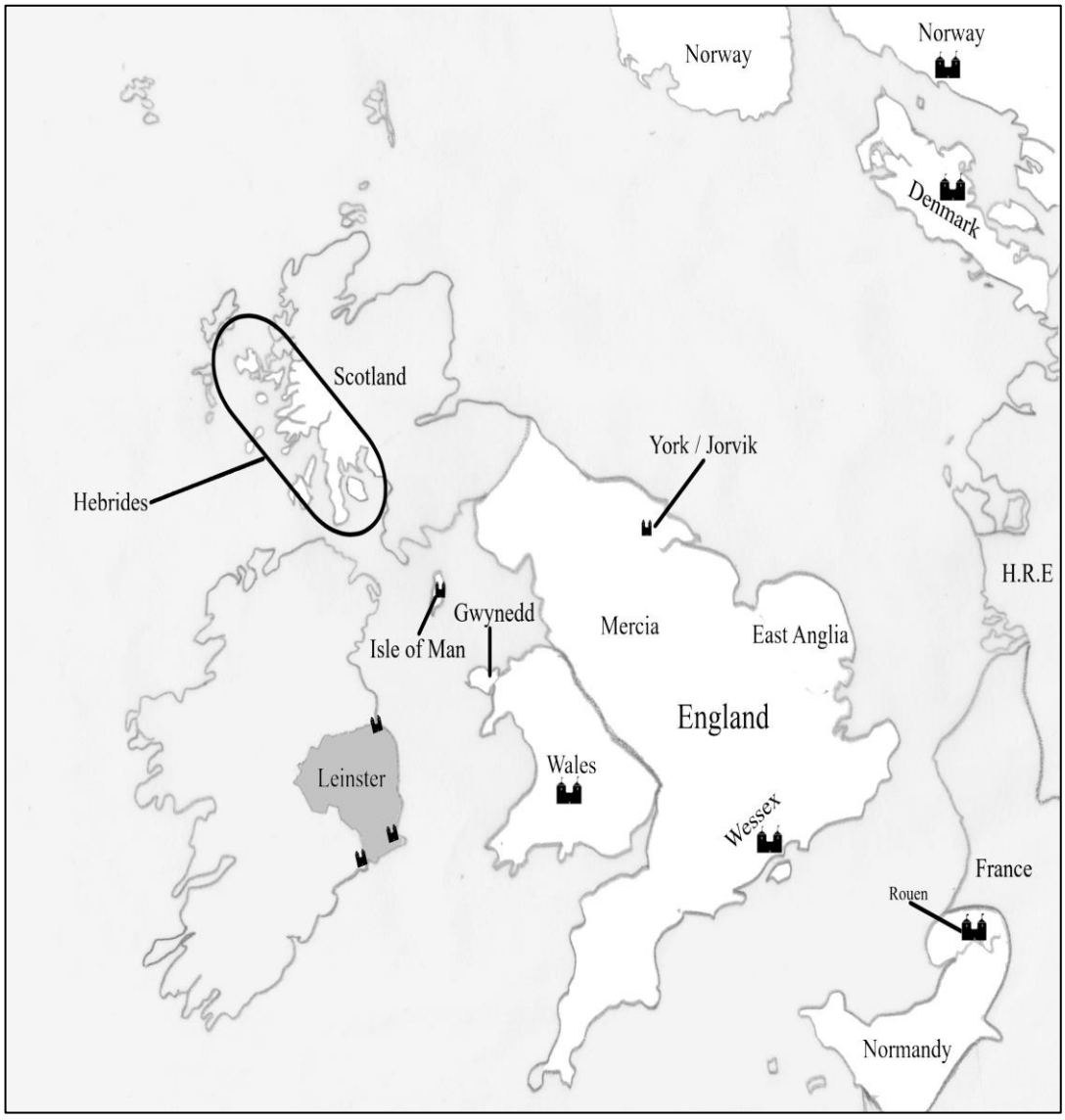

Figure 5. Map detailing Diarmait and the wider foreign world *c.*1066 including nearby kingdoms, key towns and Hiberno-Scandinavian holdings in both the Isle of Man and Hebrides.

Hudson believed that Diarmait was initially attracted to Wales to revive an Irish colony in Gwynedd,[213] and to continue the steady flow of trade between Chester and Dublin.[214] The political instability in Wales between Cynan and Gruffudd, was used by Diarmait to advance his own interests in Welsh territory.[215] Hudson believed that Diarmait remained cordial with Gruffudd due to the latter having contact with Magnus and troops from the Hebrides,[216] an area that would coincidentally pass to Murchad.[217] This implies that Diarmait did not view Gruffudd as a genuine ally, hence why Diarmait turned his back on Gruffudd and refused to provide him with more ships in case they were used against Harold Godwinson.[218] These interpretations suggest that Wales was simply a place convenient for obtaining commercial and political gain, but when larger powers caught Diarmait's attention Welsh interests fell behind.

Another aspect that was given attention was the suggestion that the friendship between Diarmait and Harold was not as straight forward as it may have seemed, citing the fact that in order for the Hiberno-Scandinavian fleet to act against England, it would have required the approval of its Irish overlord.[219] Hudson perceived the Hiberno-Scandinavian troops who partook in the battle of Stamford Bridge in 1066 did so with either the approval or awareness of Murchad and Diarmait.[220] These ties to Scandinavian interests may be why Hudson is of the opinion that Murchad was Margad from the *Heimskringla*,[221] as the leader of Dublin notably expanded his influence over the Isle of Man and the Hebrides.[222] This in turn was part of the wider ambitions of his father Diarmait, who may have been tied to King Sweyn II

[213] Benjamin T. Hudson, 'The Viking and the Irishman' in *Medium Ævum*, lx, no. 2 (1991), pp 257–67 at p. 263.
[214] Hudson, 'The destruction of Gruffudd', p. 345.
[215] Hudson, 'The destruction of Gruffudd', p. 349.
[216] Hudson, 'William the Conqueror', p. 145.
[217] Hudson, 'The Viking and the Irishman', p. 263.
[218] Hudson, 'The destruction of Gruffudd', p. 349.
[219] Hudson, 'The Viking and the Irishman', p. 262.
[220] Hudson, 'William the Conqueror', p. 146.
[221] Hudson, 'The Viking and the Irishman', p. 261.
[222] Hudson, 'The Viking and the Irishman', p. 263.

of Denmark, as both rulers facilitated the children of Harold Godwinson and both were referred the writings of Adam of Bremen.[223] Regarding Adam, however, Hudson was inclined to believe that the 'king of Hibernia' was a misplaced reference to Gruffudd and not directly a reference to Diarmait or another Irish king.[224] These claims suggest a willingness by both Diarmait and Murchad to compromise on alliances as long as it benefited their goals.

That being said, Hudson has reaffirmed that a genuine friendship did occur between Diarmait and Harold, at least for a time. This may however have been propagated by trade between Ireland and England,[225] not just through Dublin but via other ports belonging to Diarmait including Waterford and Wexford.[226] While this insinuates that Diarmait had more than one reason to abandon Gruffudd during his conflict with Harold, Hudson has proposed that Diarmait may have been too busy fighting Munster to intercede further.[227] This proposition of Diarmait putting Irish interests first is reiterated when discussing the sons of Harold, as Hudson believed that Diarmait had overstretched his boundaries in the late 1060s, meaning that he would not facilitate future invasions asides from those of 1067–69.[228] One final reason Diarmait may have remained actively involved in foreign politics was the threat of William the Conqueror's England.[229] This was a consequence of Diarmait who facilitated a 'phase of hostilities' against them,[230] which only ended after Toirrdelbach became king and had 'little taste for foreign adventures'.[231] From observing the arguments of Hudson, Diarmait held a considerable amount of influence across foreign courts, but that this was out of his own personal ambition instead of a selfless need to help allies.

[223] Hudson, 'The destruction of Gruffudd', p. 347.
[224] Hudson, 'The destruction of Gruffudd', p. 346.
[225] Hudson, 'The family of Harold', p. 93.
[226] Hudson, 'The destruction of Gruffudd', p. 348.
[227] Hudson, 'The destruction of Gruffudd', p. 349.
[228] Hudson, 'The family of Harold', p. 97.
[229] Hudson, 'William the Conqueror', p. 147.
[230] Hudson, 'William the Conqueror', p. 156.
[231] Hudson, 'The family of Harold', p. 97.

Flanagan also acknowledged the significance of Diarmait opening up Ireland to the wider world, believing that Dublin, Waterford and Wexford all benefited from the facilitation of Anglo-Saxons including Harold and his brother Leofwine in 1051 and 1052,[232] and this led to Diarmait turning Ireland into a refuge for exiles that was availed of by the likes of Aelfgar of Mercia.[233] Similar to the claims made by Hudson, another interpretation shared was that Diarmait was open to all foreign rulers, particularly with the mother of King Harold and aunt of King Sweyn II of Denmark, Gytha. Flanagan believed Gytha was the mastermind behind tying Diarmait to Denmark, proposing that Gytha orchestrated her grandsons going to Ireland to seek assistance from Diarmait,[234] and tried to coordinate attacks on Norman-England by both Irish and Danish forces.[235] The other side of this was the consequences it had for the Normans, as Flanagan also believed it was possible that William planned a Norman invasion of Ireland due to the threat it posed.[236] This is significant as it proposes that a century before MacMurrough sought aid from King Henry II of England, an Irish ruler almost caused a Norman invasion under an arguably more hostile scenario. From observing the claims of Flanagan, the reoccurring theme was that Diarmait was hospitable to the foreign world, perhaps to a point where it almost threatened Ireland itself.

Duffy has highlighted potential motivations and explanations for why Diarmait operated abroad and what this recognition meant. For instance, one proposition was that Diarmait earned the title as king of the Britons only due to his support for Cynan, though the fact that Diarmait was only the second Irish figure after Brian Boru to be glowingly represented in Welsh sources is a significance detail.[237] Another title that may have reflected this foreign activity was *rí Indsi Gall*, meaning 'King of the Isles', which recognised Diarmait as the ruler

[232] Flanagan, *Irish society*, p. 58.
[233] Flanagan, *Irish society*, pp 61–2.
[234] Flanagan, *Irish society*, p. 59.
[235] Flanagan, *Irish society*, pp 59–60.
[236] Flanagan, *Irish society*, p. 61.
[237] Seán Duffy, *Brian Boru and the Battle of Clontarf* (Dublin, 2014), p. 253.

of the Isle of Man and the Western Isles of Scotland,[238] and justified his continued control over the Hiberno-Scandinavian warships.[239] Similar to how Flanagan believed Diarmait to Scandinavian rulers, Duffy presented considerable evidence which tied Diarmait to Hiberno-Scandinavian nobility. This stems from evidence that Diarmait was close with the family of King Sitric Silkbeard of Dublin, and may be why both men have a son called Glún Iairn.[240] Duffy however did present different views from Flanagan when interpreting Diarmait's motivations for foreign involvement. While Flanagan believed it was due to an open-door policy for exiles, Duffy instead believed it was due to Diarmait being a patron for warfare, hence why he loaned his fleets abroad during the 1050s and 1060s.[241] This reframes the motives of Diarmait, perhaps not as a selfless diplomat, but as a warmonger who benefited from the instability across the Irish Sea.

Colmán Etchingham is among the few who sought to challenge the authority Diarmait exercised over the Hiberno-Scandinavian fleet during these cross-channel excursions, believing that the loyalties of these fleets were put to the test during the 1058 Scandinavian expedition to England. Etchingham presented several answers to clear up the confusion regarding this event from an Irish perspective. The first suggestion was that when Aelfgar came to Ireland to receive help he went to Donnchad instead of Diarmait. Secondly, the fleets from Ireland that aided Magnus Haraldsson were actually loyal to Echmarcach mac Ragnaill, or thirdly that for a brief moment, the influence of the Scandinavian nobility superseded that of Diarmait in Ireland.[242] Etchingham also proposed that Diarmait was so heavily involved abroad due to a hegemony that linked Dublin to both north Wales and the northern Isles, believing that this was anticipated by Brian Boru, but was only capitalised upon by

[238] Seán Duffy, 'Pre-Norman Dublin: Capital of Ireland?' in *History Ireland*, i, no. 4 (1993), pp 13–8 at p. 14.
[239] Duffy, 'Pre-Norman Dublin', p. 13.
[240] Duffy, 'Irishmen and Islesmen', p. 97.
[241] Duffy, *Brian Boru*, p. 253.
[242] Colmán Etchingham, 'North Wales, Ireland and the Isles: the Insular Viking zone' in *Peritia*, no. 15 (2001), pp 145–87 at pp 154–5.

Diarmait.[243] While Etchingham did raise doubt over how much control Diarmait had over his fleets, as with other historians the consensus was that Diarmait had overseas investments at stake and that was enough to justify his involvement beyond Ireland.

David Wyatt reiterated that Diarmait was willingly facilitating exiles and referred to the two generations of Cynan and his Dublin-born son Gruffudd, as proof of this.[244] Contrasting to what Duffy suggested, Wyatt believed Diarmait being labelled as king of the Britons was an 'indication of the intent' to rule Wales.[245] This is supported by Sean Davies, who believed Diarmait claimed surety over Cynan to obtain access to land in Gwynedd, and that when Cynan gained a foothold in Wales, he did so with Irish support.[246] The lure of commerce has also been reiterated as a motif, as Dáibhí Ó Cróinín singled out the role of Ireland in the eleventh-century slave trade (see Figure 6), believing that control of Dublin and Wexford was pivotal in accessing the prosperous trade with Bristol.[247] The prominence of this trade was echoed by Geoffrey Hindley, who claimed that ecclesiastical members from England such as Bishop Wulfstan of Worcester attempted to disrupt the practice during the 1060s and 1070s.[248] The role of national identity across the seas has been addressed by other historians. Like Hudson, Byrne believed that Murchad was Margad, and may have been referred to in Welsh sources as Mwrthach.[249] Finally, David James has interpreted the writings of Al-Idrisi as referring to Diarmait and the wider warfare he caused between Connacht, Leinster and Munster.[250]

In conclusion, this chapter has detailed the extent that Diarmait and to a minor degree Murchad operated abroad. It is apparent that Diarmait wanted to put Ireland in a position of

[243] Etchingham, 'North Wales', pp 180–1.
[244] David Wyatt, 'Gruffudd ap Cynan and the Hiberno–Norse world' in *The Welsh History Review*, xix, no. 4 (1998), pp 595–617 at p. 597.
[245] Wyatt, 'Gruffudd ap Cynan', p. 598.
[246] Sean Davies, *The first prince of Wales? Bleddyn ap Cynfyn, 1063–75* (Cardiff, 2016), p. 32.
[247] Dáibhí Ó Cróinín, *Early medieval Ireland: 400–1200* (New York, 2013), p. 277.
[248] Geoffrey Hindley, *A brief history of the Anglo-Saxons* (London, 2015), p. 183.
[249] Byrne, 'Ireland and her neighbours', p. 892.
[250] James, 'medieval Arabic accounts', pp 6–7.

opening its borders, but the reasons for this are numerous and open to interpretation. It could have been purely to extend his influence across the Irish Sea into Wales, and onto islands such as the Isle of Man and the Hebrides. But it must also be considered that Diarmait was fully intent on tapping into trade networks, using his fleets to generate wealth and favour with foreign dignitaries, or as Duffy suggested, to obtain renown as a patron of war. But what does this mean for Diarmait and Ireland in the context of foreign policy? This is of particular importance when considering the battles and fallout of 1066, which has shown that Ireland played its part. Hudson believed Diarmait had no firm alliance with the Scandinavians, Welsh or Anglo-Saxons, and was instead operating out of self-interest. Flanagan instead proposed that Diarmait facilitated exiles and funded resistance movements particularly to aid allies such as the sons of Harold Godwinson. This approach naturally drew the ire of the Normans which historians have noted, but this must be acknowledged for the threat that it was. The Normans were a threat to the commercial trade routes and overseas colonies of Diarmait and militarily. This meant that Diarmait needed to have a strong and wealthy Ireland behind him, as will be discussed in the final chapter.

Chapter three: Strategy, society and successors

After observing domestic campaigns and far-off ventures, returning to Ireland for the final chapter may seem redundant. On the contrary, the tenth and eleventh century are noted as times for major changes in Ireland, but who are these changes attributed to? Brian Boru is touted as the man who changed the political landscape of Ireland, but how long did his influence really last given the failures of Donnchad as high-king? Towns of the period are generalised by terms, including Hiberno-Scandinavian, to acknowledge their Viking origins, but is this in itself an oversimplification? By the late 1050s, many these towns lost their independence, and some were ruled directly by Gaelic rulers such as Murchad. This suggests that there is significant room to address presumptions that have been applied to the eleventh-century. The purpose of this chapter is to propose how Diarmait obtained power, how his scale of wealth can be measured, and to determine what legacies Diarmait left behind.

As Diarmait started without any titles, the first steps to gaining power were targeting places of influence. Towns were the prime targets, particularly the three Hiberno-Scandinavian towns on the east coast (see Figure 3), all of which showed development across the eleventh century. Archaeology in Dublin has revealed clusters of houses being built in places such as High Street,[251] and the area surrounding Christchurch.[252] Wexford town has similarly shown signs of urbanisation through excavated remnants of footpaths, animal pens and fifteen post-and-wattle houses laid out in an unorganised manner,[253] many of which were built after *c.*1000,[254] making it feasible that they were rushed in assembly to meet a high demand as the population grew. Waterford also showed houses were being constructed into

[251] Andrew Halpin, '1991:036 – Dublin: Francis St./Cornmarket/Back Lane, Dublin' in *excavations.ie* (https://excavations.ie/report/1991/Dublin/0001095/) (1 Jan. 2024).
[252] Linzi Simpson, '2009:326 – Dublinia (the former Synod Hall), St Michaels Hill, Christchurch, Dublin' in *excavations.ie* (https://excavations.ie/report/2009/Dublin/0020661/) (1 Jan. 2024).
[253] Edward Bourke, '1988:67 – Wexford: Bride St./South Main St., Townparks, Wexford' in *excavations.ie* (https://excavations.ie/report/1988/Wexford/0000833/) (1 Jan. 2024).
[254] Edward Bourke, 'Life in the sunny south–east: housing and domestic economy in Viking and medieval Wexford' in *Archaeology Ireland*, ix, no. 3 (1995), pp 33–6 at p. 35.

the twelfth century,[255] while the town walls were also being upgraded,[256] which may not be a coincidence given that Diarmait was able to storm it early on in his career. Another enclave that Diarmait may have developed was at Peel Castle on the Isle of Man, which revealed stone ramparts and at least one timber-framed house being constructed between the eleventh and thirteenth centuries.[257] Securing towns and overseas territories would have garnered favour with its inhabitants, and provided Diarmait with more authority over these places.

Churches may have also enticed Diarmait as another method for securing power, as was suggested by Bhreathnach.[258] In addition to churches mentioned previously, other churches that Diarmait held included those of St Brigit, St Mac Táil and Kilcullen across Kildare, St Coemgen's at Glendalough in Wicklow,[259] and Christchurch in Dublin, which was built by Sitric Silkbeard after travelling to Rome in 1028.[260] Evidence of patronage must also be considered, as Paul Duffy proposed that Diarmait, likely influenced by Sitric, implemented designs in Ferns that were based off of the Nethercross at St Canice's, Fingal, in order to exemplify his overlordship across the region.[261] This may explain why descendants of Diarmait had ecclesiastical ties, as his granddaughter Gormlaith became the female successor of Brigit prior to 1112,[262] while MacMurrough brought the continental-based Augustinians to Ferns *c.*1160.[263] It is also worth considering that Diarmait's hold over churches led to recognition abroad, as the *Peniarth Chronicle* referred to him as 'gentle towards pilgrims',[264]

[255] Maurice F. Hurley, '1990:108 – Waterford: Arundel Square, Custom House Ward, Waterford' in *excavations.ie* (https://excavations.ie/report/1990/Waterford/0001043/) (1 Jan. 2024).
[256] Sarah McCutcheon, '1997:575 – Waterford: 9 Arundel Square, Waterford' in *excavations.ie* (https://excavations.ie/report/1997/Waterford/0003124/) (1 Jan. 2024).
[257] Manx National Heritage, 'Peel Castle, German' in *Archaeology Data Service* (https://archaeologydataservice.ac.uk/archsearch/record?titleId=2789115) (2 Mar. 2024).
[258] Bhreathnach, 'Columban churches', p. 14.
[259] Howard B. Clarke, 'The topographical development of early medieval Dublin' in *The Journal of the Royal Society of Antiquaries of Ireland*, cvii (1977), pp 29–51 at p. 39.
[260] Howard B. Clarke, Sheila Dooley and Ruth Johnson, *Dublin and the Viking world* (Dublin, 2018), p. 100.
[261] Paul Duffy, 'St Canice's, Finglas, and the Hiberno-Norse churches of Dublin' in *Archaeology Ireland*, xxxvii, no. 3 (2023), pp 18–23 at p. 23.
[262] *AT*, 1112.5.
[263] Potterton, 'From caput to caput', p. 21.
[264] *Peniarth Chronicle*, *s.a.* 1070–72.

and Marianus Scotus felt the need to acknowledge his death.[265] But what of churches outside of his control? Diarmait's attacks on churches in Meath *c.*1048,[266] may indicate an attempt to gain sway over them, and the response of these Meath clergymen can be determined through the *Annals of Tigernach* invoking St Fechín against Murchad.[267] These annals were attributed to Tigernach Uí Braein (d. 1088), not only a contemporary of Diarmait but a scribe of Clonmacnoise in Meath, strongly suggesting this was a biased response against the son of Diarmait.

From towns to churches, Diarmait held a considerable amount of land and people, but how was this financed? Michael Kenny stated that Diarmait possessed no personal coin hoard despite attacking hotspots like Dublin, Waterford and Limerick,[268] believing instead Diarmait had no interest in 'monetary matters'.[269] Eleventh-century coin hoards nonetheless have been found nearby in Kildare and Wicklow,[270] and Leinster coin hoards outnumber those in the nearby kingdoms of Meath and Brega.[271] The point being that coins were still prevalent in Ireland, and the answer to Kenny's proposition may be that Diarmait did not need to mint coins because he got them from elsewhere. Excavated coins from Limerick date to *c.*1060-70 and were created with a different fabric to those from the Dublin mint.[272] If this mint was active prior to and during these dates, it is plausible that when Diarmait singled out Limerick in 1058,[273] it was to gain access to these coins. The presence of Anglo-Saxon coins found at Dublin in 1973,[274] proposes that Diarmait obtained coinage from trade (see Figure 6) or from

[265] Clarke, 'Poems on World-Kingship', pp 109–10.
[266] *CS*, 1048.
[267] *CS*, 1069; *AT*, 1069.2.
[268] Michael Kenny, 'The geographical distribution of Irish Viking-Age coin hoards' in *Proceedings of the Royal Irish Academy*, lxxxvii (1987), pp 507–25 at p. 514.
[269] Michael Kenny, 'Coins and coinage in pre-Norman Ireland' in Dáibhí Ó Cróinín (ed.), *A new history of Ireland, volume I: Prehistoric and early Ireland* (Oxford, 2008), pp 842–51 at p. 848.
[270] Kenny, 'Geographical distribution', p. 514.
[271] Marilyn Gerriets, 'Money among the Irish: coin hoards in Viking Age Ireland' in *The Journal of the Royal Society of Antiquaries of Ireland*, cxv (1985), pp 121–39 at p. 126.
[272] R.H.M. Dolley, 'Hiberno-Norse coins from the Lockett collection' in *The British Museum Quarterly*, xxiii, no. 2 (1961), pp 45–8 at p. 47.
[273] *AI*, 1058.4; *AT*, 1058.3; *AT*, 1063.4; *AFM*, 1063.15.
[274] A.B. Ó Riordain, '1972:0014 – Dublin City, Dublin' in *excavations.ie* (https://excavations.ie/report/1972/Dublin/0000116/) (1 Jan. 2024).

Hiberno-Scandinavian fleets returning from abroad. Another reason for not having found any coin hoards which belonged to Diarmait may be as a result of them being spent outside of Ireland. The presence of Irish coins found on the Isle of Man alongside Norman deniers at Ballacannell,[275] along with others elsewhere on the island dated to *c.*1060,[276] indicates that Irish-based currency was being used not just on the Isle of Man but likely elsewhere across Europe.

[275] Manx National Heritage, 'Ballacannell' in *Archaeology Data Service* (https://archaeologydataservice.ac.uk/archsearch/record?titleId=2901021) (2 Mar. 2024).
[276] Manx National Heritage, 'Peel Castle, German' in *Archaeology Data Service* (https://archaeologydataservice.ac.uk/archsearch/record?titleId=2789115) (2 Mar. 2024).

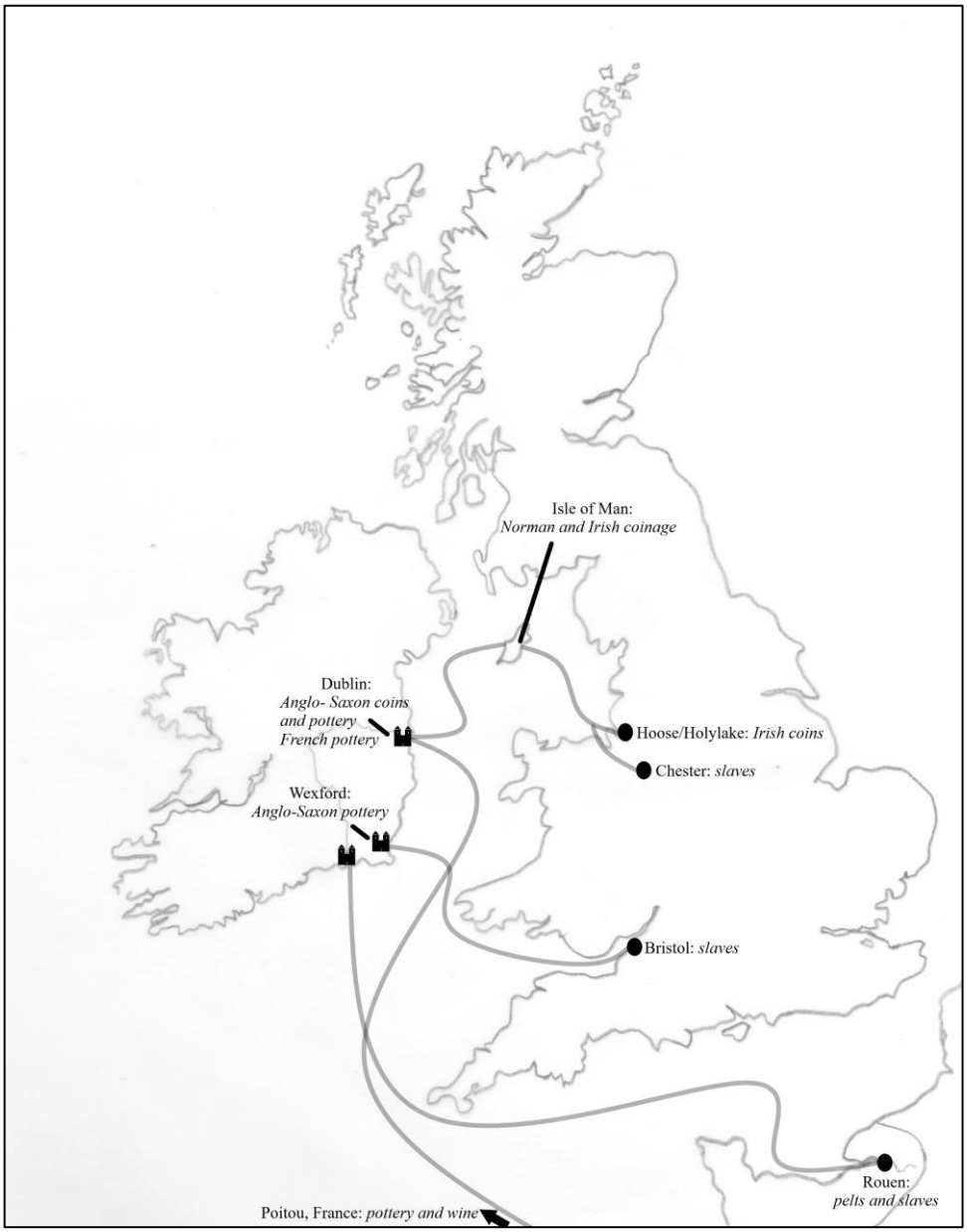

Figure 6. Map proposing the routes of trade based on evidence provided in this chapter.

It is perhaps even more probable that Diarmait did not need coins to signify his wealth given that his domain contained many in-demand industries and commercial produce. Industries such as carpentry were crucial in the eleventh century, as shown by the use of wood in constructs near Church Street,[277] and for maintaining ships, as Byrne believed a reliable access to oak is what turned Diarmait into a powerhouse to begin with.[278] Other industries that were almost certainly present included scrimshaw, or bone-carving, based on the presence of whale bones found in Waterford from the tenth century,[279] which through evidence from excavated knives, showed metallurgy was also present.[280] Both Dublin and Waterford had knives believed to have been smithed between *c.*1050 and 1100,[281] forged in a practice different than those of Gaelic origin.[282] From observing the array of industries, it must be presumed that Diarmait and Murchad were more than capable of earning wealth from other means beyond a reliance on mints.

Another source of wealth that would have been coveted by Diarmait was access to livestock. Horses in particular would have been in high-demand, and evidence indicates some horses were imported from abroad. An annals entry from 1029 discusses Welsh horses being imported to Ireland by Sitric and/or his son Amlaíb to pay a ransom,[283] and findings of spurs and horseshoes from the period may suggest horses were a viable commodity.[284] It is possible that Murchad himself either continued this practice or found another way of accessing horses as a commodity, as one of his accolades in his eulogy was that he 'bestowed horses'.[285] As

[277] Sinéad Phelan, '2006:623 – 3–15 Hammond Lane/161–168 Church Street, Dublin, Dublin' in *excavations.ie* (https://excavations.ie/report/2006/Dublin/0015368/) (1 Jan. 2024).
[278] Byrne, 'Ireland and her neighbours', p. 890.
[279] Stuart Elder, '2002:1790 – Shandon, Dungarvan, Waterford' in *excavations.ie* (https://excavations.ie/report/2002/Waterford/0009108/) (1 Jan. 2024).
[280] Ian Russell, '2004:1705 – Woodstown 6, Waterford' in *excavations.ie* (https://excavations.ie/report/2004/Waterford/0012825/) (1 Jan. 2024).
[281] Mark E. Hall, 'The metallography of Hiberno-Norse knife-edges from Dublin and Waterford—a summary' in *Journal of Irish Archaeology*, xxxi (2022), pp 81–91 at p. 81.
[282] Hall, 'The metallography of Hiberno-Norse', p. 88.
[283] *AU*, 1029.6; *ALC*, 1029.6.
[284] Rhoda M. Kavanagh, 'The horse in Viking Ireland' in John Bradley (ed.), *Settlement and society in medieval Ireland: studies presented to F.X. Martin, O.S.A.* (Kilkenny, 1988), pp 89–121 at pp 112–3.
[285] *AFM*, 1070.7.

demonstrated in chapter one, Diarmait was renowned for his cattle raiding, which as a resource was almost as valuable as land itself,[286] but other domesticated animals taken through raids or already present in towns like Wexford included dogs, pigs and sheep.[287] Access to the wilderness meant that hunting was another way of acquiring food, and evidence of hunted animals from the period included seals, porpoises and white deer.[288] Asides from meats, foraging would have been another dependable asset for a growing population, and the presence of apples, hazelnuts, berries and figs in Wexford showed a variety of edible produce,[289] and could have served to fill markets across the towns belonging to Diarmait.

Holding a large swathe of land enabled Diarmait to access these resources, but it was control of the sea and rivers which placed him above his competitors. As Dublin, Waterford and Wexford were all located along rivers (see Figure 1), this meant Diarmait could not only use these waterways for defensive and offensive purposes, but could avail of the abundance of watermills found across Ireland, including those in Dublin such as the tenth-century mill at Chapelizod.[290] Overseas trade provided another form of wealth as evidenced through pottery from south-west England found in Wexford,[291] French wares found in Dublin,[292] and wine being imported from Poitou in west France.[293] Dublin was at the front line of a 'flourishing slave trade' with Britain and mainland Europe,[294] with slaves being sent to Rouen from *c.*1000 onward,[295] and given the record of Diarmait taking captives it is probable he funded this trade too (see Figure 6 for trade routes). Mercenaryism was another resource that

[286] Byrne *Irish kings*, p. 28.
[287] Bourke, 'Life in the sunny south-east', p. 35.
[288] Bourke, 'Life in the sunny south-east', p. 35.
[289] Bourke, 'Life in the sunny south-east', p. 36.
[290] Colin Rynne, 'A medieval watermill at Ballyine, County Limerick' in *Journal of the Cork Historical and Archaeological Society*, cxii (2007), pp 23–8 at p. 27.
[291] Edward Bourke, '1988:67 – Wexford: Bride St./South Main St., Townparks, Wexford' in *excavations.ie* (https://excavations.ie/report/1988/Wexford/0000833/) (1 Jan. 2024).
[292] Sinéad Phelan, '2006:623 – 3–15 Hammond Lane/161–168 Church Street, Dublin, Dublin' in *excavations.ie* (https://excavations.ie/report/2006/Dublin/0015368/) (1 Jan. 2024).
[293] Charles Doherty, 'Exchange and trade in early medieval Ireland' in *The Journal of the Royal Society of Antiquaries of Ireland*, cx (1980), pp 67–89 at p. 84.
[294] Kenny, 'Coins and coinage', p. 847.
[295] Doherty, 'Exchange and trade', p. 84.

relied on access to the waterways, and enabled Diarmait to garner favour with both Wales and England,[296] and left a reputation that outlived Diarmait and passed down to MacMurrough, who also loaned these fleets to King Henry II of England against Welsh rebels.[297] Waterways were among the most important facilitators of Diarmait's continued success and meant that he had a significant advantage over his domestic rivals.

With influence over territories established and commerce booming, it is worth investigating to see if this allowed Diarmait to implement changes on Irish society. One people who would have benefited from Diarmait's form of rule were the Hiberno-Scandinavians, but with the untimely death of Diarmait they were never truly integrated. Although Toirrdelbach married into Hiberno-Scandinavian nobility,[298] and his son Muirchertach made some efforts of allying with the Dubliners in the 1090s,[299] any hopes Diarmait had of weaving these people into the Irish fabric were diminished by the time of the Anglo-Norman invasion. This was apparent as high-king Ruaidrí Ua Conchobair offered Dublin, Waterford and Wexford to Henry II in peace-terms, as these towns were still viewed as foreign enclaves.[300] It is possible that the association of Diarmait as king of the foreigners was then gleefully placed on his descendant MacMurrough,[301] to distinguish both men as associates of outsiders which did not fit into the nationalist identity of the time.

Diarmait was more successful in achieving a different social change by moving the capital of Ireland to Dublin. Those who were most impacted by this were the southern Uí Néill, who had not only failed to take Dublin themselves but had been greatly diminished politically by Diarmait and the Ulaid,[302] which contributed to their insincere alliance with Munster.[303] By

[296] *Gwentian Chronicle*, *s.a.* 1050; *A-SC*, 1067D.
[297] Byrne, *Irish kings*, p. 272.
[298] Candon, 'Power, politics and polygamy', p. 116.
[299] *AT*, 1090.6.
[300] James Lydon, *The lordship of Ireland in the middle ages* (Dublin, 2023), p. 39.
[301] *AU*, 1052.8; *ACl., s.a.* 1136.
[302] Byrne, 'Ireland and her neighbours', p. 892.
[303] Denis Casey, 'A man of no mean standing: the career and legacy of Donnchad mac Briain (d. 1064)' in *Peritia*, xxxi (2020), pp 29–57 at pp 56–7.

Diarmait moving the capital to Dublin, it proposes that high-kingship was now determined by whoever held the wealth, a far cry from the traditional capital of Tara established by the Uí Néill.[304] This was apparent even a century later, as when the Ruaidrí Ua Conchobhair targeted Dublin in 1166, Duffy believed it legitimised his claim 'to the kingship of Ireland'.[305] That being said, it is important to question whether or not the Uí Néill held any meaningful levels of power to begin with. Although Brian Boru is touted as the man who brought down the Uí Néill dominance it should be challenged whether this is accurate. Challenging this belief means that all Diarmait did by preventing their 'resurgence' was in actual fact state the obvious, that the Uí Néill were no longer a key player in the politics of Ireland.

Diarmait was also successful in challenging the understanding of succession and perceptions of high-kingship. He appeared to move away from the elective system orientated around the *derbfine*, similar to the tanistry system which elected distant family members over close kin.[306] This would explain how Domnall was named as heir to the Uí Cennselaig kingship prior to his death,[307] and why Murchad was given the kingship of Dublin as the 'lord of the foreigners and of Leinster under his father'.[308] Duffy believed Diarmait caused a 'minor revolution' in Irish politics and stated that over the next seventy-five years, the most successful rulers of Dublin all adopted this strategy of installing their sons as heirs.[309] This eye for choosing successors must also be considered outside of Leinster, as through the likes of Toirrdelbach, Gallbrat in Meath, Áed Ua Ruairc in Connacht, Cynan of Wales and Harold Godwinson and his sons, the numbers of claimants to thrones which Diarmait facilitated indicates he viewed himself as a king-maker.

[304] Duffy, 'Pre-Norman Dublin', p. 18.
[305] Duffy, 'Irishmen and Islesmen', p. 133.
[306] Donnchadh Ó Corráin, 'Irish regnal succession: a reappraisal' in *Studia Hibernica*, no. 11 (1971), pp 7–39 at p. 29.
[307] *AFM*, 1041.12.
[308] *AFM*, 1070.7.
[309] Duffy, 'Pre-Norman Dublin', p. 18.

Succession aside, this leads to determining what kind of king Diarmait mac Maíl na mBó was. Unification was at least one ideological motif of Diarmait as a king, likely influenced by his uncle Donnchad who had similarly sought to unify Ossory and Leinster in 1039.[310] Diarmait adopted this approach when he became king of Leinster in 1042,[311] and his proficiency in diplomacy justifies why in his final outing Diarmait was joined by the Fortuatha of Leinster,[312] a group who operated outside of normal caste jurisdictions and were considered 'extern tribes'.[313] But as a high-king, this theme of unification went far beyond uniting provinces, and this warrants an investigation of what his moniker as 'king of the foreigners' and high-king 'with opposition' really meant.[314] In comparison, Brian Boru was acknowledged as high-king of all Ireland,[315] as well as *imperator Scotorum*, meaning 'emperor of the Gaels'.[316] While Diarmait did not become high-king over the entire island, the reality is that Diarmait only failed to subjugate the Uí Néill territories (see Figure 4), meaning in reality his only 'opposition' was the Uí Néill. As for *imperator Scotorum*, Byrne proposed that this had a more international scope attached as it applied to Gaelic people in both Ireland and Scotland.[317] Even still, Diarmait operated across several foreign kingdoms and much of that involved the facilitation of exiles. If Brian's title is an indicator of the scope of his ambitions for Gaels, then perhaps Diarmait aimed to serve as a leader for outcasts and people of various cultures, emphasising a further level of determination to ascend beyond just being high-king.

Perhaps Diarmait did not consider high-kingship as his major goal, and instead saw that only from embracing the wider world could his kingship mean something. If this was the case, it left no mark on any other Irish kings who proceeded him except for one,

[310] *AT*, 1039.7.
[311] *ALC*, 1042.3; *AT*, 1042.3; *CS*, 1042.
[312] *AI*, 1072.2.
[313] Byrne, *Irish kings*, p. 45.
[314] *Book of Leinster*, p. 98.
[315] *AU*, 1014.2.
[316] Casey, 'A man of no mean standing', p. 57.
[317] Byrne, 'Ireland and her neighbours', p. 862.

MacMurrough. The influence Diarmait had on his great-grandson has often been disregarded, as even on a smaller scale the fact that MacMurrough named his daughters Derbhforgaill and Aoife is considered an homage to the wife and daughter of his namesake.[318] MacMurrough embraced not only the Hiberno-Scandinavians, but also the wider world, which benefited him greatly after he was forced into exile and travelled to England in 1166.[319] While Diarmait sent Irish troops to overthrow the Normans, the irony of MacMurrough was that the roles were now reversed, so that now the Anglo-Normans were enlisted to aid a deposed Irish king against his rivals.[320] When MacMurrough returned in 1169 supported by Norman mercenaries,[321] it is significant to acknowledge that, according to Cambrensis, he was driven by ancestral claims to both Connacht and the high-kingship of Ireland.[322] Clearly MacMurrough was inspired by the past deeds of Diarmait, and while the crosshairs of English invasions have remained largely on MacMurrough, one could feel justified in implicating Diarmait as well.

In conclusion, this chapter has demonstrated the scale of development that Diarmait oversaw as a king in eleventh-century Ireland. Diarmait was able to think objectively in his expansion, focusing on towns and ecclesiastical centres to grow his influence throughout his career. By capturing and utilising the port towns of Dublin, Waterford and Wexford, Diarmait not only obtained access to fleets and foreign trade, but also to domestic urban markets and nearby hinterlands, ensuring that as his powerbase grew so too did his abilities to finance it. While Diarmait had no known coin reserve, this chapter has shown that Diarmait in actuality did not need to mint coins to begin with due to the vast wealth he already controlled. Changing succession laws and the capital of Ireland to Dublin indicated Diarmait sought to

[318] Freya Verstraten, 'Naming practices among the Irish secular nobility in the high middle ages' in *Journal of Medieval History*, xxxii, no. 1 (2006), pp 43-53 at p. 48.
[319] *AU*, 1166.9.
[320] Ellis, 'Ireland and the Anglo-Normans', p. 20.
[321] *AU*, 1169.5.
[322] *Expugnatio Hibernica*, p. 69.

not only centralise his rule around his dynasty, but also placed significant value on resource control and keeping Ireland involved with foreign kingdoms. What this meant was as high-king, Diarmait arguably eclipsed Brian through the scope of his ambitions, yet it cannot be denied that the blueprint left behind encouraged MacMurrough to follow in his ancestors footsteps, for better or worse.

Conclusions

Focusing on Diarmait mac Maíl na mBó as a figure set between post-Clontarf and pre-Norman Ireland has led to several key findings. Chapter one emphasised the chaos in which Diarmait rose from, beginning with local ambitions and then went on to achieve the high-kingship. This ascension not only derailed any attempts by the Dál Cais or the Uí Néill to regain relevancy, but it showed how the strategy Diarmait had for gaining sureties and vassals to build his claim for high-kingship was a successful strategy in the long run. Chapter two detailed just how far Diarmait brought Ireland into the wider foreign world. The fact that King Murchad of Dublin was referenced in Scandinavian literature, and that Diarmait was acknowledged by Welsh, Norman and Arab-Norman sources as well as the German-based Marianus Scotus, shows the extent to which an Irish king could have achieved notoriety in this time. While historians proposed several reasons Diarmait pursued these foreign ventures, whether it be due to a desire for land, commercial gain, allies or influence, what it showed was that leading up to and beyond the pivotal battles of 1066, Ireland was firmly involved in these political developments. Chapter three nonetheless evaluated just how much of an impact Diarmait had on Irish society. Arguably the most impactful action was making Dublin the capital of Ireland which despite lasting to this day has resulted in no recognition for Diarmait for this feat. Diarmait's control of resources both internally and from overseas trade made him untouchable on society, but his reign also raises questions over just how important high-kingship really was to Diarmait, and whether or not his ties to foreign lands superseded any form of national interest.

Overall, fosterage was a critical part of medieval Irish society, particularly for those who would go on to achieve political power. Fosterage meant that Diarmait not only gained three key allies in his lifetime, Donnchad, Gilla Pátraic, and his own foster-son Toirrdelbach ua Briain, but also gained exposure to the outsiders of Irish society, the Hiberno-Scandinavians. Diarmait embraced these outcasts and those who came in exile from abroad, gave his son

Glún Iairn a name tied to that of Sitric Silkbeard's, and earned the title of 'king of the foreigners'; all of which indicate long-term effects from being fostered near multicultural locations. While his descendant MacMurrough channelled many of the open borders sentiments, this played a part in the Anglo-Norman invasion of Ireland. That being said, just as it had endured and outlasted the Viking invasion of Ireland, fosterage remained a prominent feature within not just Gaelic Irish lands but also in the lands of the Hiberno-Normans. Therefore, there is considerable room to engage with this topic on a wider level, particularly to determine how many other lords and kings of Ireland were shaped by a multicultural upbringing just as Diarmait had been.

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