

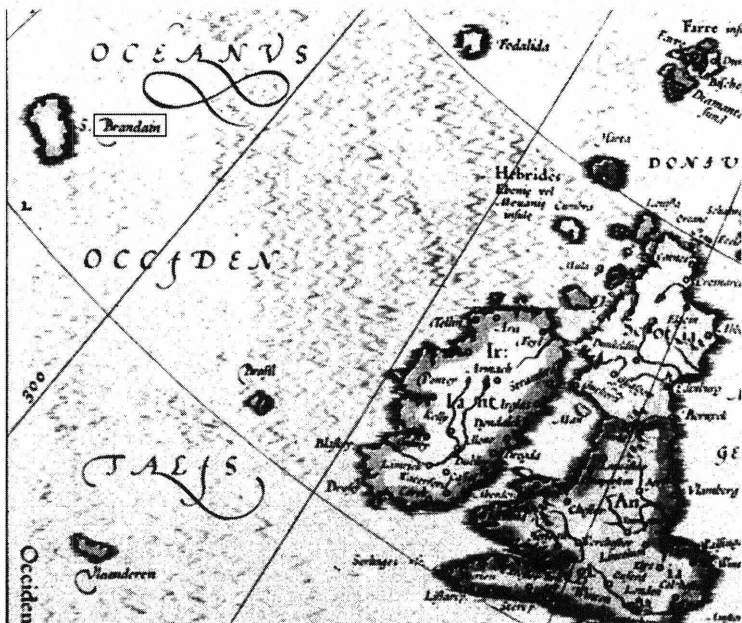
Title	The promised land of the Saints in the Navigatio Sancti Brendani
Sub Title	
Author	辺見, 葉子(Henmi, Yoko)
Publisher	慶應義塾大学藝文学会
Publication year	1997
Jtitle	藝文研究 (The geibun-kenkyu : journal of arts and letters). Vol.73, (1997. 12) ,p.48- 67
JaLC DOI	
Abstract	
Notes	安藤伸介, 岩崎春雄両教授退任記念論文集 目次のタイトル : The promised land of the Saints in the Navigano Sancti Brendani
Genre	Journal Article
URL	https://koara.lib.keio.ac.jp/xoonips/modules/xoonips/detail.php?koara_id=AN00072643-00730001-0048

慶應義塾大学学術情報リポジトリ(KOARA)に掲載されているコンテンツの著作権は、それぞれの著作者、学会または出版社/発行者に帰属し、その権利は著作権法によって保護されています。引用にあたっては、著作権法を遵守してご利用ください。

The copyrights of content available on the KeiO Associated Repository of Academic resources (KOARA) belong to the respective authors, academic societies, or publishers/issuers, and these rights are protected by the Japanese Copyright Act. When quoting the content, please follow the Japanese copyright act.

The Promised Land of the Saints in the *Navigatio Sancti Brendani*

Yoko Hemmi



(fig. 1)

The map here [fig. 1] shows the legendary Isle of St. Brendan off the west coast of Ireland. Incidentally, the Isle of Brasil (Hy-Brasil), another legendary island which is said to be visible once every seven years, also appears in the western sea. This map was drawn by Rumold Mercator in France in the 1590s.⁽¹⁾ The fame of the Isle of St. Brendan, that is, the Promised Land of the Saints, was spread over Europe through the *Navigatio Sancti Brendani Abbatis (Navigatio)*.⁽²⁾

The popularity of the *Navigatio* in the Middle Ages was outstanding: besides the extant Latin manuscripts that amount to more than 120 in Europe,⁽³⁾ there are numerous translations and adaptations into medieval vernacular tongues,⁽⁴⁾ of which Benedeit's Anglo-Norman version is the most renowned. Benedeit's version faithfully follows the *Navigatio* in that it places the Promised Land in the west, while on the other hand the Middle English versions, as will be examined below, changed the location of the Promised Land. Moreover, if we turn to the modern English translations of the *Navigatio*, we find yet another alteration of the position of the Promised Land. This paper seeks to clarify the entangled concepts behind the problems brought about by the location of the Promised Land in the *Navigatio*, and to discern the nature of the Celtic Happy Otherworld in the west.

[I] St. Brendan and the *Navigatio*

The historical Brendan was a saint born in County Kerry in south-west Ireland around A.D. 498.⁽⁵⁾ He is said to have founded several abbeys, among which the one at Clonfert in County Galway is the most famous. The legendary Brendan was a celebrated voyager. He allegedly visited the Isle of Iona to see St. Columba, founded monasteries in Wales, and made voyages to Brittany and the Orkney and Shetland Islands.⁽⁶⁾ The legendary Brendan figure as a voyager was supposedly formed when "various legendary elements, mostly relating to seafaring exploits and adventures, came to be associated with his name."⁽⁷⁾

As for the date of the composition of the *Navigatio*, while Carl Selmer, the editor of the Latin text, postulates "the first half of the tenth century" based on the manuscript tradition,⁽⁸⁾ James Carney, in reviewing Selmer's edition, suggests "the year A.D. 800 or, at most, about a half-century later."⁽⁹⁾ It is presumed from other sources that the

legendary voyage tales of St. Brendan, which reflected the Irish trend of pilgrimage abroad, were current by the beginning of the ninth century.⁽¹⁰⁾

The Brendan tales have two principal texts: one, the ninth-century Latin prose *Vita sancti Brendani* (*Vita*) and the other, the *Navigatio*, also in Latin prose which will be discussed in this paper. The *Vita* follows the traditional pattern of lives of saints, containing abundant episodes of Brendan's birth, childhood, education, and his genealogy. On the other hand, the *Navigatio* belongs to the tradition of Irish voyage tales, *immrama*. *Immram* means "rowing about/voyage" in Irish Gaelic⁽¹¹⁾ and deals with voyages to the Otherworld.

In the opening scene of the *Navigatio*, the Abbot called Barrind visits Brendan at Clonfert Abbey. Barrind talks about his visit to his godson Mernóc who went to seek a life of solitude on the Delightful Island and lived there as the abbot leading ascetic life of prayer and contemplation with his fellow monks. Mernóc takes Barrind to the seashore facing west, and invites him to go to the Promised Land of the Saints, as Mernóc has already been there several times. They set out in a boat towards *west*, and after traveling about an hour in the thick mist, they arrive at the bright land full of flower, fruits, and jewels. After walking for fifteen days, they come to a river that divides the country, and meet the messenger of God there. The messenger angel says they are in the land which the Lord will give to the saints. He also reveals to them that a year has already passed since they landed in that country. In that land, it is always day without night and they need no food, drink, or sleep because Christ is the light of that land. On their return to the Delightful Island, other monks notice by the fragrance of their clothes that Barrind and Mernóc have been in God's Paradise. When St. Brendan heard this story, he decides to seek the Promised

Land of the Saints himself. With his fellow monks, “Saint Brendan then embarked, the sail was spread and they began to steer *westwards* into the summer solstice” (my emphasis).⁽¹²⁾

[II] The Promised Land of the Saints as Eden

In the *Navigatio*, the Promised Land (or God’s Paradise) is explained as the land the Lord will give to the saints, which is interpreted as the Garden of Eden, according to the Christian tradition. The association between the Garden of Eden and the saints is found as early as in the writing of the Christian theologian Tertullian (A. D. 160 -225) : he defines Paradise as “a place of divine beauty appointed to receive the spirits of the saints.”⁽¹³⁾ As Howard Patch puts it, it “was supposed still to be waiting for the saints before their ascent to Heaven.”⁽¹⁴⁾ Just as *terra repromissionis* of Genesis (Canaan) is appointed to Abraham and his descendants, the Garden of Eden is appointed to the saints. It may therefore have been regarded, through association, as “the Promised Land” as well. Thus the name *terra repromissionis sanctorum* (the Promised Land of the Saints) in the *Navigatio* can be explained by the concept that the Garden of Eden is a promised land to receive the saints.

But here we notice an anomaly : if the Promised Land of the Saints is interpreted as the Garden of Eden, it should be located in the east, not the west. The idea that “the Garden of Eden is located in the east” is ultimately derived from the description in Genesis : “Then the Lord God planted a garden in Eden away *to the east*” (Genesis, 2.8, my emphasis). This Earthly Paradise given to Adam and Eve has become a symbol of life and fertility. It is a land of eternal spring with its trees ever-blooming and laden with fruits. As Patch points out “the Garden of Eden was universally believed to exist,” and although it refused

ordinary approach, it was “not of ‘the stuff of dreams’ but was quite materially real” to the minds of medieval people.⁽¹⁵⁾ Based on the description in Genesis, which was very influential in the Middle Ages,⁽¹⁶⁾ the idea of the Earthly Paradise, including its locality, was fairly well established by the twelfth century.⁽¹⁷⁾ That it is located in the east is consistent with the features shared by the early and later authors, encyclopedists, and map makers.⁽¹⁸⁾ The theological interpretation of Eden may have varied, but its position in the east was a firmly set tradition throughout the Middle Ages.⁽¹⁹⁾ Against this Christian tradition, St. Brendan set sail towards west from his native region in the west of Ireland.

[III] *Tír tairngire* (the Land of Promise)

In addition to this ecclesiastical Promised Land, we have a secular Land of Promise in Irish literature. *Terra repromissionis* of Genesis is translated into Gaelic as *tír tairngire* (the Land of Promise) and is used to denote the Celtic Otherworld island.⁽²⁰⁾ This does not mean, however, that *tír tairngire* in the Irish traditional literature is essentially identical to the biblical *terra repromissionis*. In the *Adventure of Cormac* (*Echtrae Cormaic*),⁽²¹⁾ for example, it is a land in which the sea god Manannán mac Lír resides. In the *Nurture of the Houses of the Two Milk-Vessels* (*Altram Tige Dá Medar*),⁽²²⁾ it is the land of Manannán and “the nobles” who are considered to be of a superior race to the pagan gods Tuatha Dé Danann. In this story, Manannán distributes the fairy mounds of Ireland among the lords of the Tuatha Dé after their defeat in battle against the Milesians (i.e., the Irish of later times). He instructs the Tuatha Dé to lay out their fairy-mansions and to arrange their strongholds “in the manner of the houses of the beautiful-sloped Land of Promise and beautiful Emhain

Ablach.”⁽²³⁾ The Land of Promise is here equated with Emhain Ablach, “Emhain of the Apple Trees,” which is also mentioned in the *Voyage of Bran (Imram Brain)* as the name of the Happy Otherworld.⁽²⁴⁾ However, although the dwellings of the Tuatha Dé are similar in their appearance to those of the Land of Promise, the two are distinguished from each other by their stance to the Christian God. The Land of Promise in this story is related to a Christian God, who is considered to be higher in order than the pagan gods of the Tuatha Dé. Manannán plays the role of an intermediary between the pagan and Christian worlds, and his land, the Land of Promise, is reminiscent of the Christian Earthly Paradise. However, it is evident that *tír tairngire* (the Land of Promise) is not completely equated with Eden. For example, Manannán explains that the heroin Ethne refuses to eat any food but the milk of the speckled cow from India, “a righteous land” because “her accompanying demon went [from] her heart and an angel came in its stead” and that “it is the . . . three-personed Trinity which will be the God of worship for that maiden.”⁽²⁵⁾ It is also noted that India is called “a righteous land” here. India was believed to be one of the possible locations of Eden in the Middle Ages.⁽²⁶⁾ In this story, therefore, the Christian Paradise is presented as being in the east, in India, and is differentiated from *tír tairngire* (the Land of Promise) which retains an association with the pre-Christian Celtic gods.

[IV] The *Navigatio* and its Middle English Versions

In England, the Brendan legend penetrated into the tradition at an early time, as the nomenclature of English villages, churches and landmarks proves.⁽²⁷⁾ St. Brendan was so familiar in England as to be regarded as a native saint that William Caxton added him to the list of the “English Saints” in his translation of *The Golden Legend*.⁽²⁸⁾ There

are two twelfth-century Latin manuscripts of the *Navigatio* in England, but the translation into Middle English began after the lives of saints appeared in English literature in the fourteenth century.⁽²⁹⁾

The comparison between the *Navigatio* and its Middle English translations seems to illustrate the different views on the Promised Land. The Middle English versions to be examined are as follows :

A) Carl Horstmann, "Sanct Brandan," *The Early South-English Legendary or Lives of Saints, EETS* 87 (London, 1887) 220-240. (Bodleian 1486 [Laud. 108] ff. 104a-110a ; end 13th cent.)

B) Thomas Wright, *Sanct Brandan : A Medieval Legend of the Sea, in English Verse and Prose*, Percy Society, 14 (London, 1844) 1-34. (Harley 2277, ff. 41^b-51^a ; ca. 1300)

C) D'Evelyn and Mill, "Sein Brandan," *The South English Legendary, EETS* 235 (London, 1956) 180-204. (Corpus Christi College, Cambridge 145, ff. 67^b-77^a ; early 14th cent.)

D) William Caxton, "The Life of St. Brandon," *The Golden Legend or Lives of the Saints as Englished by W. Caxton*, VII (London : The Temple Classics, 1900-35) 48-66.

---, "Prose Life of St. Brandan." Rept. from Wynkyn de Worde's English version of *The Golden Legend* of the year 1527, in Percy Society, 14, 34-56.

First, let us compare the accounts of Barrind's embarkment related at the outset of the story (emphases are all mine) :

The *Navigatio* : "Father, embark in the boat and let us sail *westwards* to the island which is called the

Promised Land of the Saints which God will give to those who come after us at the end of time.”⁽³⁰⁾

A) And in a schip we duden us sone: and *Astward* euere kenden / In þe .se. of Occean: as ore louerd is grace us sende. / toward þe *est* so fer we wenden: . . . (ll. 33-35)

B) So that we dude ous in a schip, and evere *est-ward* we drowe / In the see of occian with turmentz y-nowe. (ll. 34-36)

C) So þat [w] e dude us in a ssip . and *estward* euere drowe / In þe se of occean . wip tormens inowe / Toward þen *est* so ver we wende. . . . (ll. 33-35)

D) And then Birinus saw in a vision that this monk Mervok was sailed right far *eastward* in the sea, . . . (p. 49)

Likewise, compare the accounts of St. Brendan’s embarkment (emphases are all mine) :

The *Navigatio* : Saint Brendan then embarked, the sail was spread and they began to steer *westwards* into the summer solstice.⁽³¹⁾

A) As þe wynd hem drof *est* forþ : wel euene þe schip hem drou3 / Euene a3e þat þe sonne ariseP: a-midsomeres day- - (ll. 110-11)

B) As the wynd hem drof *est* forth, wel evene the ship hem drou3 / Evene a3e that the sonne ariseth a midsomeres day : (ll. 108-09)

C) As þe wind hom drof *est norþ* . wel euene hore

ssip drou / Euen azen þat þe sonne ariseþ. a Mid
Somers day

(ll. 108-09)

D) And then S. Brandon bade the shipmen to wind up
the sail and forth they sailed in God's name, so that on
the morrow they were out of sight of any land. And
forty days and forty nights after they sailed plat *east*,
. . . (p. 50)

As is obvious from the quotations above, while every Middle English text largely follows the *Navigatio*, the location of the Earthly Paradise is changed from the west to the east. The Middle English translators are without doubt responsible for this emendation. In all the Middle English versions above, "The Land of Behest (=Promise)" was clearly identified as the Garden of Eden from which Adam and Eve were expelled. For instance in D), the Land of Behest is explained as follows: "... and this place is called Paradise terrestrial And the young man told them that this is the place that Adam and Eve dwelled here, if that they had not broken the commandment of God"(p.49). Thus, the Middle English versions present the destination of St. Brendan specifically as Eden. On the other hand, the *Navigatio* does not mention Adam and Eve, but merely states that it is the land for the saints to go after death.

Now let us specify the location of the Promised Land with reference to the voyage routs as described in the *Navigatio* and the Middle English versions. According to the opening scene of the *Navigatio*, Barrind sailed for three days westwards from Ireland to the Delightful Island, and then a further hour westwards to the Promised Land of the Saints. We may not take the time in the *Navigatio* which contains ample wonder-tale elements literally, but the text suggests

that the Promised Land of the Saints is situated in the western ocean close to Ireland. Yet, St. Brendan, in his voyage to seek this very island, wandered the western ocean far beyond his destination for seven years. First, Brendan and his comrades went westward from Ireland for fifteen days. Then, though the direction is not specified, we can assume they sailed further westwards for twenty five days, because this total of forty-day journey westwards corresponds symmetrically to the journey of forty days eastwards later in the story.

After therefore sailing presumably for forty days westwards, they arrived at the first island, “the Uninhabited House.” From then on for seven years, they were to go on pilgrimage in the westernmost ocean. In contrast to “the Island of Smith” and “Unhappy Judas,” for example, with hell/purgatory features, the islands such as “the Island of Grapes” and “the Paradise of Birds” are depicted with the traditional expressions used in the description of a Happy Otherworld. St. Brendan and his companions visited “the Island of Grapes,” “the Paradise of Birds,” and “Jaconius,” a fish as great as an island, three times each during the following seven years.

After visiting these and other islands in the westernmost ocean, they sailed from “the Paradise of Birds,” which is situated at the furthest west, for forty days eastwards and arrived at their destination, the Promised Land of the Saints. As already noted, since the Promised Land of the Saints is located much closer to Ireland, they needed to travel eastwards.

On the other hand, in the Middle English versions they first set sail eastwards from Ireland, and after wandering among the islands in the ocean just as in the *Navigatio*, they sailed another forty days eastwards from “the Paradise of Birds” to the Land of Behest. The destination is placed at the furthest east. We may perceive in the

Middle English versions a more rational sense of direction in that the voyage rout from Ireland to the destination is basically linear, as opposed to the circular one in the *Navigatio*.

Unlike the Middle English versions, the *Navigatio* contains reference to the western coast in St. Brendan's native region, exhibiting a realistic sense of the geography of Ireland. It must have been considered unnatural to make St. Brendan set sail for the east, who was brought up in the western coast region among the sea-faring dwellers.⁽³²⁾ However, there must have been more than mere geographical demand for the *Navigatio* to place the Promised Land in the west against the well-established Christian tradition, and also to make the western ocean far beyond their destination the stage of his wondrous seven-year voyage.

[V] Modern English translations of the *Navigatio* and the problems of the location of the Celtic Happy Otherworld

Many of the modern English translations of the *Navigatio* form a striking contrast to the Middle English translations. The modern translators followed the *Navigatio* when letting St. Brendan embark for the west, but after the seven-year voyage in the western sea, they ignored the *Navigatio* text and made St. Brendan sail further westwards for forty days from "the Paradise of Birds" to reach the Promised Land.⁽³³⁾ In the first English translation in 1893, although the translator Denis O'Donaghue claimed that he would "give a literal and complete translation,"⁽³⁴⁾ he changed the original *Navigatio* text and put St. Brendan's destination further west to "the Paradise of Birds."⁽³⁵⁾ When the translators into Middle English transferred the Land of Promise of the *Navigatio* from the western sea near Ireland to the easternmost sea, they were under the influence of medieval tradition concerning the

Garden of Eden. What is there, then, behind the modern English translators' alteration?

O'Donoghue, in his "Notes on the Irish Life" quotes from "The Poem of Oisín"⁽³⁶⁾ to explain St. Brendan's longing for the island in the western sea. "Often, perhaps, sauntering on the shore near the home of his [Brendan's] parents, when the sun was sinking in the west, he may :

Have watched the line of light that plays
Along the smooth wave, tow'rd the burning west,
And longed to tread that golden path of rays,
And thought 'twould lead to some bright isle of
rest."⁽³⁷⁾

This quotation obviously reflects O'Donoghue's conviction that the sentiment towards "the west" is essential in discussing the Celtic Otherworld. Modern translators like O'Donoghue must have regarded the *Navigatio* essentially as what they believed to be a pre-Christian Celtic voyage-adventure story to the Otherworld, with the overlaid Christian framework as the life of a saint. Stories such as the *Voyage of Bran (Immram Brain)*⁽³⁸⁾ and the *Adventure of Conle (Echtra Chondle)*⁽³⁹⁾ are generally mentioned as examples to justify the location of the Celtic Happy Otherworld islands in the western sea. In the *Voyage of Bran*, a woman from the Otherworld depicts the country of everlasting joy, without death, without sorrow. She says "There are thrice fifty isles / In the ocean to the west of us."⁽⁴⁰⁾ In the *Adventure of Conle*, the Land of the Living is likewise an island in the western sea without death or sin, enjoying lasting feasts. That the concept of the Happy Otherworld perceived in these stories reflects the pre-Christian oral tradition was generally accepted, at least in the time of O'Donoghue.

However, here we face a problem: “to what extent does the literature written in a Christian environment in the Old Irish period truly reflect the traditions and institutions of an earlier time when Ireland was still innocent of Christianity and of writing?”⁽⁴¹⁾ O’Donoghue’s attitude seems too naïve, since, as Mac Cana points out, “written Irish ... dates from the sixth century. It originated in a monastic milieu and to all intents and purpose it remained a monastic monopoly for the next six hundred years.”⁽⁴²⁾ Opinions are divided among Celticists as regards this problem. James Carney, who represents one school, endeavors to demonstrate that the written literature of Old Irish was mostly a monastic innovation. Carney refutes scholars such as Van Hamel and Myles Dillon who presuppose oral traditions and regard the medieval Irish literature like the *Voyage of Bran* as “essentially an expression of pagan ideas.”⁽⁴³⁾ He denounces such scholars, calling them “nativists.”⁽⁴⁴⁾ In Carney’s opinion, the *Voyage of Bran* and *the Adventure of Conle* are patent monastic exemplary tales.⁽⁴⁵⁾ By contrast, scholars like Alwyn Rees, from the anthropologist-mythologist point of view, observe that Celtic scholars in general “seem to have a predisposition to minimize the *continuity* of the native tradition ... into historical times.”⁽⁴⁶⁾ Mac Cana warns that such polarized argument may distort the questions at issue.⁽⁴⁷⁾ He calls our attention to the fact that “... the considerable interaction and collaboration evidenced from the sixth century onwards between vernacular and monastic learning and between *filidh* and *litterati* must inevitably have left its mark on the matter as well as the form of written secular narrative.”⁽⁴⁸⁾ The traditions of *filidh* and *litterati* were, then, not discontinued, but there existed “the substantial continuity from pre-literate and Pre-Christian tradition.”⁽⁴⁹⁾

The stories of Bran and Conle may have been monastic

exemplary tales indeed relating the invitation to the ever-lasting life through salvation by Christian faith. However, it is equally possible that the material used in these stories were taken from the oral tradition which people were familiar with, because if, as Carney argues, the Otherworld islands depicted in these stories were created anew by the monastic authors and were completely identified with Christian Paradise, they should be situated in the east, not in the west. We can assume that although the authors attempted to incorporate the pre-Christian Otherworld into the Christian Earthly Paradise, they did not dare change the location because they were familiar with and put a high value on the pre-Christian Celtic oral tradition of the Happy Otherworld in the western sea.

[VI] *The Navigatio* and the problematic “west”

The following three points require examination in discussing the location and the nature of the Land of Promise in the *Navigatio* :

- 1) The historical situation and intention of the monasteries
- 2) The concept of the Celtic Happy Otherworld as island(s)
- 3) The mythological aspect of “the west”

First, it must be noted that Clonfert, the burial place of the founder St. Brendan, was regarded as “the place of the saint’s resurrection” and therefore “the place of salvation, connected to Heaven.”⁽⁵⁰⁾ Thus Clonfert Abbey attracted pilgrims who desired to visit and be buried in the saint’s burial place, hoping for their own resurrection and salvation.⁽⁵¹⁾ Secular law obliged people to contribute property to the church/monastery on the occasion of burial of the dead. *The Register of Clonmacnoise* has a record of contributed estates to the

church/monastery as the price for “the prayers for burial and intercession” made by generations of lords and nobles.⁽⁵²⁾ The contribution of the estates on the occasion of burial certainly expanded the power and wealth of the church/monastery.⁽⁵³⁾ In the *Navigatio*, the islands spotted in the western sea reflect the actual small islands off the western coast of Ireland. In these islands the monks led ascetic life praying for redemption. For the purpose of providing the legend of the Abbot of Clonfert with a realistic geographical basis, it was of absolute necessity to make him set sail towards the west.

Now let us turn to the second point, that is, the concept of the Celtic Happy Otherworld as an island(s). Carney does not agree with the assumption that the pre-Christian Celtic Happy Otherworld was traditionally located beyond the seas. Instead, he suggests that the location of the Otherworld under lakes or in mountains reflects “primitive” Irish ideas.⁽⁵⁴⁾ However, it seems only natural that Ireland which has the open Atlantic Ocean to the west developed a concept of the Otherworld beyond the western sea, while it is beyond dispute that the *Navigatio* was influenced by the Latin learning of the monastery authors on Elysium and *Oddessay* for instance.

The Celtic Otherworld depicted in Irish literature displays multi-formed and fluid characteristics. It is not confined to one settled state, but continuously transforms itself. In the *Wasting Sickness of CúChulainn* (*Serglige Con Culainn*), the Otherworld is called the sídh (“fairy mound”) on the one hand, but is described as an island “upon clear water” on the other.⁽⁵⁵⁾ The land under the hill/mountain and the island over the sea overlap with each other. In the *Voyage of Bran*, Manannán mac Lír sings that the sea is to Manannán “a flowery plain.”⁽⁵⁶⁾ In *Oisín in tír na n-óg*, the fairy white steed carrying Oisín to *tír na n-óg* (the Land of Youth) gallops over the ocean as if it were a

plain.⁽⁵⁷⁾ If the sea and a plain are interchangeable, an island on the sea or lake can be transformed into a hill/mountain in a plain; an underground realm becomes in turn a country under water. Therefore, the concept of the Otherworld as an island(s) should not be treated as disconnected from the one under water or in mountains, which Carney claims to be a “native” tradition, but it must be regarded rather as one tradition with varied phases.

Finally, the third point to be taken into account is the mythological aspect, so as to say, of “the west.” The orientation of the Otherworld, whether it is in the east or in the west, is a significant question on the mythological level. Since the sun moves from the east to the west, the east of the rising sun is associated with birth of life whereas the west of the setting sun cannot be dissociated from death. In the classic literature, the journey to Hades “seems to be westwards for any voyager in the Mediterranean”⁽⁵⁸⁾ By contrast, the Earthly Paradise, located in the east, is connected with life. It is interesting to note that the same mentality to discern the cycle of Nature including men—birth, death, and rebirth—in the celestial orbit is found in the statement of Pope Severianus in the seventh century. He writes that the Lord placed Eden in the east because “the course of heaven’s luminaries is from the east to the west. The east is the beginning of life for men, and thus God signifies the future : the resurrection from the dead. In the west, therefore, where the stars set, is the place of death.”⁽⁵⁹⁾

In Ireland, the Happy Otherworld is the land of eternal youth and joy, as their designations such as *tír na mBeo* (the Land of the Living) and *tír na n-óg* (the Land of Youth) suggest. However, since its location is in the west, which represents the topos of the dead, it inevitably encompasses the shadow of the Land of the Dead. The Celtic Otherworld is thus the Land of the Living and the Land of the Dead at

the same time. This dual nature of the Celtic Otherworld realm seems to be vividly represented in the stories such as the *Voyage of Bran* and *Oisín in tír na n-óg*. In these stories, a year/three years in the Otherworld turns out to be a couple of hundred years in this world, and the instant someone touches the ground of this world, the time of this world overwhelms them and turns them into a heap of ashes. The heroes who live in the ever-lasting youth in the Otherworld are spared from the time that dominates the people of this world. As long as they stay in the Land of Youth, it remains the Land of the Living to them, but once they come back and expose themselves to the time of this world, that same Land of the Living transforms itself into the Land of the Dead. From the viewpoint of the people of this world, the dead and the heroes who departed to the Land of Youth for good are one and the same. The idea of equating the Land of the Living and the Land of the Dead is symbolically represented by the location of the Happy Otherworld in “the west”.

In the *Navigatio*, the Land of Promise of the Saints is located in the west, not in the east. By this location, the Christian Paradise seems to have undergone the transformation peculiar to Ireland, and encompassed as a result the shadow of the Land of the Dead. When compared to its Middle English versions, which placed the Earthly Paradise in the east faithfully to the Christian tradition, the *Navigatio* distinguishes itself with the coexistence of the pre-Christian Celtic Otherworld views and the Christian tradition.

NOTES

- (1) R.V. Tooley, C. Bricker, G.R. Crone, *A History of Cartography : 2500 Years of Maps and Mapmakers* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1969) 66.

- (2) Carl Selmer, ed., *Navigatio Sancti Brendani Abbatis : from Early Latin Manuscripts* (1959; Dublin: Four Courts Press, 1989). *The Voyage of Saint Brendan*, trans. John J. O'Meara (Mountrath: Dolmen Press, 1976).
- (3) Selmer, *Navigatio*, xxvii; Benedeit, *The Anglo-Norman Voyage of St. Brendan*, ed. Ian Short and Brian Merrilees (Manchester: Manchester Univ. Press, 1979) 3.
- (4) Selmer, *Navigatio*, xxxi; Short and Merrilees, 3.
- (5) O'Meara, ix; Selmer, *Navigatio*, xvii; Short and Merrilees, 1.
- (6) Selmer, *Navigatio*, xviii-xix.
- (7) Short and Merrilees, 2.
- (8) Selmer, *Navigatio*, xviii.
- (9) James Carney, rev. of *Navigatio sancti Brendani Abbatis*, ed. Carl Selmer, *Medium Ævum* 32 (1963) : 40.
- (10) Setsuko Mori, "Irish Monastery Culture and the Concept of Life and Death; Salvation and Pilgrimage," *The Celts; Transformation of Life and Death*, ed. Chuo University Research Center for the Humanities (Tokyo: Chuo Univ. Press, 1996) 59. (In Japanese)
- (11) Kuno Meyer, ed. and trans., *The Voyage of Bran Son of Febal to the Land of the Living I* (1895-97; New York: AMS Press, 1972) 2.
- (12) O'Meara, 9.
- (13) Tertullian, *Apologeticus*, xlvi, 13, The Loeb Classical Library, no. 250, 211.
- (14) Howard Rollin Patch, *The Other World : According to Descriptions in Medieval Literature* (1950; NY: Octagon Books, 1970) 134.
- (15) Patch, 134.
- (16) Patch notes that the Book of Genesis was very influential because it "found its way, through paraphrase, into vernacular languages." Patch, 146.
- (17) Patch, 148.
- (18) Patch, 153-54.
- (19) Patch, 134-74 ; S. Baring-Gould, *Curious Myths of the Middle Ages* (London, Oxford, and Cambridge: Rivingtons, 1874) 250-65.
- (20) Myles Dillon, *Early Irish Literature* (Chicago & London: Univ. of Chicago Press, 1948) 101.
- (21) Dillon, 110-12.
- (22) "Altram Tige Dá Medar," trans. Lilian Duncan, *Eriu* IX (1932) 184

-225 ; Dillon, 68-72.

- (23) Duncan, 207.
- (24) Meyer, 4.
- (25) Duncan, 216.
- (26) Patch, 153.
- (27) Selmer, "The Vernacular Translations of the *Navigatio Sancti Brendani : A Bibliographical Study*," *Mediaeval Studies* 18 (1956) : 148.
- (28) Selmer, "Vernacular Translations," 148, n. 15.
- (29) Selmer, "Vernacular Translations," 148.
- (30) O'Meara, 4.
- (31) O'Meara, 9.
- (32) Denis O'Donoghue, *Lives and Legends of Saint Brendan the Voyager* (1893 ; Felinfach : Llanerch Publishers, 1994) 46.
- (33) O'Meara, xx.
- (34) O'Donoghue, 109.
- (35) O'Donoghue, 173.
- (36) O'Donoghue, 43.
- (37) O'Donoghue, 46-47.
- (38) Meyer, 2-35.
- (39) Dillon, 102-104.
- (40) Meyer, 12.
- (41) Proinsias Mac Cana, "Mythology and the Oral Tradition : Ireland," *The Celtic World*, ed. Miranda J. Green (London & New York : Routledge, 1995) 779-780.
- (42) Mac Cana, 780.
- (43) James Carney, *Studies in Irish Literature and History* (1955 ; Dublin : Institute for Advanced Studies, 1979) 280-81.
- (44) Cf. Carney, *Studies*, 298, 305-06.
- (45) Carney, *Medium Ævum* 32 (1963): 40.
- (46) Alwyn Rees, "Modern evaluations of Celtic narrative tradition," *Proceedings of the Second International Congress of Celtic Studies* (1963 ; Cardiff, 1966) 31-61 at 39, qtd. in Mac Cana, 780.
- (47) Mac Cana, 780.
- (48) Mac Cana, 781.
- (49) Mac Cana, 782.
- (50) Mori, 91.

- (51) Mori, 93.
- (52) Mori, 98.
- (53) Mori, 98.
- (54) Carney, *Medium Ævum* 32 (1963) : 40.
- (55) Dillon, 120-122.
- (56) Meyer, 18.
- (57) P.W. Joyce, *Old Celtic Romance* (Dublin: The Educational Co.; London: Longmans, Green, 1920) 389.
- (58) Patch, 20.
- (59) Patch, 143.