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Edited by Barry J. Lewis and Ruairí Ó hUiginn

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OLD BRETON *GUILER*, *GUILEROU*, *GUILERI*
AND OLD WELSH *GUELERI*¹

ABSTRACT

This article argues that OBr *guiler*, *guilerou*, *guileri*, OW *gueleri* ‘calendar’ are not loans directly from Lat. *uig(i)liarium* ‘festive calendar’, but are borrowed from OIr. *félire* instead. The manuscripts in which these words appear have to be studied in the wider context of the medieval Celtic glossing tradition.

RECENT RESEARCH has put a spotlight on the close relationship between several extant early medieval glossed manuscripts of the computistical works of the Venerable Bede, in particular of his *De temporum ratione*. Of particular interest for the present note are some manuscripts with vernacular glosses in medieval Celtic languages, namely Augiensis perg. 167 at the Badische Landesbibliothek in Karlsruhe, hereafter *Crb*, from the first half of the ninth century (*Thes.* ii, 10–30; *CorPH* text 22;² Bronner 2013: 19–20; *MIRA* 60)³ and a fragment of *De temporum ratione* in Vienna, Österreichische Nationalbibliothek MS Lat. 15298, hereafter *Vib*, dating to 780–820 (*Thes.* ii, 31–7; *CorPH* text 58;⁴ Dillon 1956; Bauer 2017; Bronner 2013: 54; *MIRA* 4),⁵ both with glosses in Old Irish, and Angers, Bibliothèque Municipale MS 476, dated to 926–43, and the late-ninth-early-tenth-century MS 477 (hereafter *Ang*) with Old Breton glosses (Fleuriet 1964; Lambert 1983; 1984; 2005; Bauer 2008: 9–65; Barbet-Massin 2017; *DHBM* 8⁶ and 9).⁷

The parallel glosses among these manuscripts have been commented on in articles by Pierre-Yves Lambert (1983: 120–9) and Bernhard Bauer (2017; 2019a; 2019b).⁸ The present note is concerned with a single word, already

¹This note results from the Old Welsh reading circle that was initiated by Simon Rodway as a response to the Covid-19 pandemic. In October–November 2020, the reading group studied the Old Welsh *Computus Fragment* under the direction of Simon Rodway. In the course of this, I arrived at the ideas about the origin of OBr *guiler*, OW *gueleri* set out in this article. I thank everybody in the Old Welsh reading group for their input, as well as Bernhard Bauer, Barry Lewis and a reviewer for their help. All errors are my own.

²URL: https://chronhib.maynoothuniversity.ie/chronhibWebsite/tables?page=0&limit=0&fprop=Text_ID&fval=0022&dtable=sentences&ctable=text&search=false (accessed 5 July 2022).

³URL: <http://www.mira.ie/060> (accessed 5 July 2022).

⁴URL: https://chronhib.maynoothuniversity.ie/chronhibWebsite/tables?page=0&limit=0&fprop=Text_ID&fval=0058&dtable=sentences&ctable=text&search=false (accessed 5 July 2022).

⁵URL: <http://www.mira.ie/004> (accessed 5 July 2022).

⁶URL: <https://ircabritt.nuigalway.ie/handlist/catalogue/8> (accessed 5 July 2022).

⁷URL: <https://ircabritt.nuigalway.ie/handlist/catalogue/9> (accessed 5 July 2022).

⁸Parallel glosses are defined as ‘all instances in which the different manuscripts have glosses on the same lemma at the same position within the underlying Latin text’ (Bauer 2019b: 34).

noted by Lambert (1983: 123; 1984: 204–5) and Bauer (2019a: 44). In *Crb*, *Vib* and *Ang*, the phrase *aperto codice* ‘after having opened the book’ in chapter 19 of *De temporum ratione* is glossed identically, albeit in different languages, by OIr *félire* and OBr *guilerou* respectively. In addition, these words occur several times elsewhere. OBr *guiler* and forms thereof are attested four times on fol. 57b and once on fol. 58a of *Ang*, always in hand A:

Ang fol. 57b, l. 13 in *guilerou* gl. *alfabetis* ‘with the letters of the alphabet’;

Ang fol. 57b, l. 18 *dan guileri* gl. the Latin gloss *huic libro* ‘to this book’ (Lambert 1984: 191), which itself glosses *praeposui mus eidem operi* ‘we have put at the beginning to this work’;

Ang fol. 57b, l. 26 *guilerou* gl. *aperto codice* ‘after having opened the book’;

Ang fol. 57b, l. 32 *guiler* gl. *aperi codicem* ‘open the book’;⁹

Ang fol. 58a, l. 16 *guilerou* gl. *hoc autem praecedens quod commemorauimus argumentum* ‘the matter that we have mentioned above’.

In addition, *guiler* occurs in Angers 476 (fol. 6a, l. 14) glossing *alphabetis quae in annali uidet libello* ‘alphabetical letters which he sees in the annalistic book’.

In the Old Irish glosses, the masculine *io*-stem *félire* occurs three times, twice in the Vienna Bede, once in the Karlsruhe Bede:

Crb fol. 32a1 *félire* gl. *aperto codice* ‘after having opened the book’;

Vib fol. 3a2 (no. 36) *feilere* gl. *conpotus ... annalis* ‘the calculation for the years’;

Vib fol. 4a1 (no. 43) *félire* gl. *aperto codice* ‘after having opened the book’.

In all these instances, both Breton and Irish, the glosses specify that what is variously referred to by *codex*, *alphabet* or *computus* is always the book containing the *pagina regularis* ‘the table of regulars’. The *pagina regularis* is a complicated mathematical table that allows the — comparatively easy — calculation of the moon phases for any year.¹⁰ The examples above illustrate that in these sources *guiler/félire* is used as the vernacular equivalent of Latin *pagina regularis* or of the wider concept of ‘calendar’. From there, the word *félire* develops in Irish into a general word for ‘calendar’. Outside the texts collected in *Thesaurus Palaeohibernicus*, this is already evidenced prominently around

⁹Note the address to the second singular person in the Latin, which parallels the use of second singular verbal forms in the Old Welsh *Computus Fragment*.

¹⁰For more on the *pagina regularis*, see Armstrong (1982).

the year 800 in the title and in the text of the poem *Félire Óengusso* ‘The Martyrology of Óengus’, and it has remained in use in the language as a word for ‘calendar’ until the present day.

But the interrelationship of manuscripts does not end there. Another text that belongs in this cluster of manuscripts is the early tenth-century Old Welsh so-called *Computus Fragment* (Cambridge University Library Add. 4543, edited and translated by Williams: 1925–7). Unlike the sources mentioned above, which consist of a main Latin text with vernacular medieval Celtic interlinear glosses, this single leaf contains on one side a continuous Old Welsh explanatory text relating to the very same chapter 19 of *De temporum ratione*, especially concerned with the use of the *pagina regularis*. The *Computus Fragment* is not only identical in content, but it is evident from the use of very similar and occasionally identical expressions that it, too, ultimately derives from the same source or sources on which the ‘parallel glosses’ in the manuscripts discussed above and in other related manuscripts draw. In lines 16–17 of the fragment, the phrase *in irgueleri* ‘in the calendar’ occurs twice.

The OBr words *guiler*, *guilerou*, *guileri*, OW *gueleri* and OIr *félire* are manifestly related, but what is their precise relationship? While the morphology of the Old Irish masculine *io*-stem *félire* is straightforward, the British examples require some discussion. OBr *guiler* is a singular noun, referring to singular ‘book’ in *Ang* fol. 57b, l. 32 and in *Angers* 476, fol. 6a, l. 14. *Guilerou* appears to be its grammatically regular plural, albeit also with reference to singular items, as if it were used as a *plurale tantum*. In *Ang* fol. 57b, l. 26 it corresponds to *codicem* and in *Ang* fol. 58a, l. 16 to *argumentum*. *Guileri* likewise corresponds to singular *libro*. Formally, the final *-i* could be a plural ending. However, since the plural is already supplied by the common ending *-ou*, it is preferable to interpret it as a singular abstract suffix, used for a concrete object. It is hardly an old formation, since otherwise the operation of secondary *i*-affection might be expected to have taken place in Breton like in *priti* ‘anxiety’ < **preter* + *-i*. Likewise, OW *gueleri* could be a plural of unattested **gueler*, but the analysis as a singular abstract noun seems preferable in parallel to the Breton word. An additional argument for this will be produced below.

These words are continued neither in later Welsh nor in later Breton. *Geiriadur Prifysgol Cymru* records *gueleri* under the headword *gwyleri* — a form which does not exist as such. The word is found only in a single document, namely the *Computus Fragment*. The same is true for Breton. Br *goueler* ‘calendar’, included in dictionaries of the modern language, is an artificial creation, or reanimation of the Old Breton word, dating to the early twentieth century. Unlike Irish, neither of the British words therefore has textual support for ever having been a commonly used expression.

The words ultimately reflect Middle Latin **uigliarium* ‘festival calendar’, syncopated from **uigiliarium*, formed via the addition of the collective suffix *-arium* to Middle Latin *uigilia* ‘vigil, eve of a festival’. The regular treatment of *uigilia* > **uiglia* is seen in W *gwyl*, Co *goil*, *gól*, OBr *guil*, pl. *guilou*, NBr *gouel*, and in OIr *féil*, all ‘feastday of a saint’. However, the regular outcome of Latin

-ārius, -ārium is British *-ār > OW -aur, OBr -or, not -er. OBr *guiler* and OW *gueleri* can therefore not continue *uigliarium in a phonologically direct manner. On the other hand, the Latin suffix -ārius, -ārium results directly in OIr. -(a)ire, and -iārius, -iārium in -irel-ere. OIr *félire*, *félere* is therefore the only one of the medieval Celtic words for ‘calendar’ that can be derived directly from *uigliarium.

I therefore contend that, instead of being borrowings from Latin, the British words are learned, erudite adaptations into Breton and Welsh respectively of OIr *félire*. In the case of OBr *guiler*, the lexical morpheme *fél-* was replaced by the corresponding Old Breton word *guil*, whereas the suffix -irel-ere was only roughly adapted to the phonology of the language. The ending of *guileri* looks as if an attempt had been made to match the Irish abstract suffix by a British morpheme that was outwardly and functionally similar. Phonologically, *guiler* represents /gur'ler/. In contrast, OW *gueleri* may be a purely phonological adaptation of the Irish word to Welsh. Schrijver (2011: 28) tentatively suggests that *gueleri* is a spelling for /guëri/, i.e. that the letters <ue> represent the Old Welsh diphthong /ui/. However, as far as I can see, this would be a unique instance of such a spelling in Old Welsh.¹¹ I therefore propose instead that in *gueleri* every sound of OIr *félire/félere* was mechanically substituted by a British equivalent, i.e. /gwele'ri/. It is conceivable that the author of the *Computus Fragment* only had a manuscript in front of him. In the multilingual Celtic scriptoria of the ninth and tenth centuries, it was well-known that W gw- was functionally and etymologically equivalent to OIr initial f-. All other sounds in the word have straightforward phonological substitutes. Since Welsh vowels have no phonemic opposition of length, OIr é is equated with W e, the sound closest to it. Only in the case of the final -i I believe that, like in the corresponding Breton word, a functionally equivalent abstract morpheme replaced the Irish ending.¹²

The influence of Irish manuscripts of Bede on the Breton tradition has been noted in the past. Lambert (1983: 139), Ó Cróinín (1983) and Bauer (2019b: 52) observed that Breton-speaking scholars must have copied from Irish exemplars or even suggested Irish involvement in the production of the Breton manuscripts. It seems that this dependence on Irish exemplars can also be extended to the Welsh *Computus Fragment*. Ultimately all these sources belong to one scholarly tradition extending over one or two centuries and need to be studied together.

¹¹Barry Lewis (pers. comm.) reminds me that Sims-Williams (2021: 4) discusses the rare, but genuine spelling of /u/ with <e> in Old Welsh. However, Sims-Williams provides no examples of <e> as the second element of diphthongs, but notes that <y> is used in this position in the *Computus Fragment*. Later examples of <ue> for the diphthong /ui/ are extremely rare (Sims-Williams 2021: 21 n. 64), and are possibly confined to the 3 pl. affixed pronoun.

¹²I do not regard the -i of *gueleri* as a way of representing an Irish *schwa*. In the Old Irish period, final unstressed vowels still retained their full quality and only became /ə/ in Middle Irish. For other examples of how Irish final -e and -i are represented in Welsh loans, see Haycock (2015: 471).

ABBREVIATIONS

- CorPH* David Stifter, Bernhard Bauer, Elliott Lash, Fangzhe Qiu, Nora White, Siobhán Barrett, Aaron Griffith, Romanas Bula-tovas, Francesco Felici, Ellen Ganly, Truc Ha Nguyen, Lars Nooij 2021: *Corpus PalaeoHibernicum (CorPH) v1.0, 2021*. Maynooth University. URL: <http://chronhib.maynoothuniversity.ie>.
- DHBM* Jacopo Bisagni and Sarah Corrigan 2020–2: *A Descriptive Handlist of Breton Manuscripts, c. AD 780–1100 (DHBM)*. URL: <https://ircabritt.nuigalway.ie/handlist>.
- MirA* Pádraic Moran 2021: *MirA: Manuscripts with Irish Associations*. Draft version. URL: <http://www.mira.ie>.

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DANGEROUS HEADS AND POSTHUMOUS REVENGE:
SOME PARALLELS FOR THE DEATH OF MESS GEGRA
IN *TALLAND ÉTAIR*¹

ABSTRACT

Mess Gegra is known for the role that his brain plays in the death of Conchobar mac Nessa, but the story of his own death, which is found in *Talland Étair*, is perhaps less well-known. Mess Gegra faces Conall Cernach in single combat and loses. Knowing that Conall Cernach will behead him, Mess Gegra instructs him to place his severed head on top of his own and claim Mess Gegra's honour for himself. Conall Cernach instead places the head on a nearby pillar-stone, which is pierced by a drop of blood from the head and then knocked over by its weight. Mess Gegra's attempt at posthumous revenge is thus thwarted. Two other notable deaths feature similar attempts at posthumous revenge: the death of Lugaid mac Con Ruí mic Dáire, also at the hands of Conall Cernach, and the death of Balor at the hands of his grandson Lugh. This article provides a detailed discussion of the parallels between these three deaths.

1. INTRODUCTION

THE DEATH of Mess Gegra, king of Leinster, takes place after he is forced into single combat with Conall Cernach, as described in *Talland Étair* (Ó Dónaill 2005). Mess Gegra is defeated and knows that Conall Cernach will take his head, and so he instructs Conall to place it upon his own head and thus take Mess Gegra's honour for himself. Conall Cernach instead takes Mess Gegra's severed head over to a pillar-stone, where a drop of blood falls from the head and pierces the stone, and then the weight of the head knocks the pillar-stone over. The specific sequence consisting of (1) the instruction to place the severed head on his own; (2) the head being placed somewhere else instead; and (3) the dangerous properties of the head then being revealed without causing the intended harm, also occurs in two other stories. First is the death of Lugaid mac Con Ruí mic Dáire, as related in *Brisleach Mór Maige Muirthemni* (Kimp-ton 2009).² Second is the death of Balor at the hands of his grandson Lugh, as

¹I am very grateful to the anonymous reader as well as to the editor for their numerous helpful comments and corrections. I would also like to express my thanks to Professor Joseph F. Nagy and to Dr. Helen Imhoff for their many contributions to earlier drafts of this article.

²This is the earlier version of the story of Cú Chulainn's death and the beginning of the text is fragmentary. The later version is *Aided Con Culainn*, ed. van Hamel (1933). I discuss some differences between the two texts below.

described in multiple sources including a poem from *Duanaire Finn* (MacNeill 1908: 34–8), *Cath Muighe Tuireadh* (Ó Cuív 1945), and more recent folktales.³ Mess Gegra, Lugaid, and Balor all face superior opponents in single combat, and all lose. Each acknowledges the accomplishment of the victor and indicates a desire that his opponent should gain some benefit from killing him, but what is really at stake is vengeance. All three attempt to avenge themselves against their killers by means of a trap involving the treatment and properties of their severed heads.

Posthumous revenge can take many forms, whether haunting by vengeful spirits, traps deliberately set by the deceased with the intention that they be sprung after their death, or even an unintended act by the dead or dying body which exacts vengeance. Kim McCone has described *Aided Cheltchair maic Uthechair* as ‘essentially a tale of Bláí Briugu’s posthumous revenge upon his murderer, Celtchar, since it is the three tasks imposed upon the latter in lieu of death or exile that bring about his ultimate destruction’ (1984: 1–2). There is no direct link between Celtchar’s death and Bláí Briugu himself, though, neither through Bláí Briugu’s intentions, nor his actions, nor even his body. In what follows, I will restrict the term ‘posthumous revenge’ to revenge in which the deceased plays a direct role. *Aided Cheltchair* does furnish an example of this when, as one of the three tasks imposed on him, Celtchar is forced to kill his dog Dóelchú, which has been ravaging the flocks and herds of Ulster. Celtchar runs his dog through with his spear, and we are told that *fēimid brōen fola d’fuil na con cuici ar fut an gāi co ndeachaid trūt co talmáin, co mbo marb de*,⁴ ‘A drop of the dog’s blood rushes to him along the length of the spear so that it went through him to the ground and he died from it’.⁵ In this case, the dog’s vengeance is unintended but enacted by his own body as a direct consequence of his death. Another example showing the dangerous properties of the body and its ability to self-avenge is that of the head of Máel Brigte, which was responsible for the death of Earl Sigurðr in the *Orkneyinga Saga*. After Earl Sigurðr killed Máel Brigte, he beheaded him and strapped the severed head to his saddle. Máel Brigte had the epithet *tönn* ‘tooth,’ generally translated as ‘buck-tooth’ or ‘tusk’. Later, as the text states, Earl Sigurðr ‘tried to spur on his horse with his foot, and he knocked his calf against the tusk which stuck out from Maelbrigte’s mouth, so that the skin was broken. The sore grew into a painful swelling, so that he got his death of it’ (Taylor 1938: 139–40). Here, as Bo Almqvist puts it, we have a motif in which ‘the head of a slain man

³This is the Early Modern Irish version of the text. The Middle Irish *Cath Maige Tuired* (Gray 1982) does not include this episode. Various spellings of the names Balor (Balar) and Lugh (Lug, Lui) are attested in the various texts under discussion. For the sake of clarity, I will consistently use the forms found in *Duanaire Finn*. There are many folktales concerning the conflict between Lugh and Balor. Those discussed in this article are from the following sources: O’Donovan (1856), Larminie (1893), Curtin (1894), and Laoide (1913).

⁴Text from Meyer (1906: §12). McCone (2005) includes a normalised edition of this text (pp. 169–71), where the verb *fēimid* is replaced by *memaid*, which makes for a clearer reading and which I have reflected in my translation. See Rodway (2008: 102), however, who argues that *fēimid* is the correct reading.

⁵Translations throughout this article are my own unless otherwise indicated.

avenges the former bearer of the head' (1978–81: 98). Almqvist connects this incident with the death of Conchobar mac Nessa, in which the weapon used is the calcified brain of Mess Gegra but wielded some time after his death by Cet mac Mágach. In the cases to be considered here, we have a more direct parallel for Máel Brigte's killing of Sigurðr: the vengeance intended against Conall Cernach and Lugh is more immediate in that it would have occurred soon after the deaths of Mess Gegra, Lugaid, and Balor, and in that it would have involved direct vengeance against their killers rather than remote vengeance against a symbolic third-party target.

The posthumous revenge in the texts currently under discussion is of a type that is carried out by the body of the deceased directly against their killer, as in the cases of Dóelchú and Máel Brigte. Those two acts of vengeance were clearly not intentional, however, but instead came about as the result of accidents involving the body, or part of the body, of the deceased. There is an important distinction to be made between accidental and intentional posthumous revenge, and the vengeance attempted by Mess Gegra, Lugaid, and Balor is very much intentional. Each seems to be aware of the danger that his severed head will pose after his death, and each weaponizes it as a way to avenge himself against his killer. In each case, however, this fails when the instructions about how to handle the head are disregarded. The trap here depends on expectations about how the losers' bodies will be treated after death and the assumption that the victor should gain some benefit from his victory, certainly an increase in his fame and glory, but potentially also some material benefit. Specifically, the trap depends on the certainty that the losers' heads will be taken after their deaths, and the expectation that requests about their bodies may be honoured. Within the context of the Ulster Cycle, the taking of heads is a given, and these may then either be kept as trophies or placed on display to mark the site of the combat.

Sarah Künzler's study of Cú Chulainn's treatment of the bodies of his victims in *Táin Bó Cúailnge* demonstrates the ways in which arranging the body after death in single combat can convey messages regarding both the loser and victor of the combat (Künzler 2015). On the one hand, the defeated warrior may make requests regarding his death and the treatment of his body as a way of maintaining and displaying his honour, and on the other, the body (or parts of the body) may be arranged in ways that benefit the victor and display his triumph. As an example of this first type, Künzler discusses the death of Lóch mac Mo Febis, who faces Cú Chulainn in single combat at the request of Ailill and Medb.⁶ When he loses, Lóch requests that Cú Chulainn retreat and allow him to fall facing the east rather than the west, so that it is clear that he was not fleeing from Cú Chulainn. Cú Chulainn agrees, saying *is láechda ind ascid connaigi* (ll. 2009–10) 'the request that you are making is warrior-like', i.e. it is appropriate for a warrior in such a position to make this request. In this case, it is Lóch who benefits from the arrangement of his body, rather than Cú Chulainn. Cú Chulainn himself also makes requests about his death in *Brisleach Mór*

⁶This episode occurs at ll. 1962–2011 (pp. 193–4 of the translation) of O'Rahilly (1967) and is also referred to in the following poem.

Maige Muirthemni, asking that he be allowed to get a drink of water before his death and requesting that his enemies come and get him if he does not return, so that there can be no suggestion of his having fled. He then arranges his own body by using his belt to bind himself to a pillar-stone so that he can die standing (Kimpton 2009: §21–2). These examples demonstrate how the man about to die may make arrangements regarding his death that will benefit him and reflect well upon him through the treatment and position of his body.

Other episodes show Cú Chulainn arranging the bodies of the dead, and in particular their heads, for his own benefit. Künzler discusses the deaths of Ferchú Loingsech and his followers, who jointly attack Cú Chulainn.⁷ We are told that *ní fír fer ná comlond óenfir ra damsatar dó acht imsáiset na dá feraib déc fõe fa chétóir* (ll. 2525–6) ‘it is not fair play or single combat that they allowed him, but instead the twelve men attacked him at once’. Cú Chulainn retaliates by beheading them all and displaying their heads prominently: *sádis dá lia déc leó i talmain. Acus atbert cend cach fir díb bara líic & atbert cend Ferchon Longsig ’no bar[a] líic* (ll. 2528–9)⁸ ‘he planted twelve pillar-stones in the ground, and he placed the head of each man of them on a stone, and he put the head of Ferchú Loingsech on its own stone’. While Cú Chulainn frequently displays heads by putting them on poles or stakes, we see that the use of pillar-stones to display heads is also well within the normal treatment of bodies after combat. Here the severed heads are, as Künzler says, ‘consciously installed by Cú Chulainn as “monuments” to his heroic abilities’ (2015: 40), with the result that their treatment and display reflect on Cú Chulainn and act for his benefit, rather than for the benefit of the slain. Conall Cernach’s own well-known preference is to keep the severed heads of his enemies close by, and he is said to never sleep without the head of a man of the Connachta under his knee,⁹ but it is not remarkable that we should find him making use of a pillar-stone as a place to put Mess Gegra’s head.

These and similar episodes frame the treatment of the body as something that can reflect positively or negatively on both the slain and the slayer, and with care can bring benefit to both. Mess Gegra, Lugaid, and Balor all leverage this potential benefit to attempt posthumous revenge against their killers, all appearing to ask that their heads be treated in ways that benefit their slayers rather than themselves. The pattern discussed above, in which the benefit is to the one making the request, would have occurred here as well, had their attempts at posthumous revenge succeeded. All three attempts fail, however, when Conall Cernach and Lugh opt for the more usual approach of keeping or displaying the heads.

I begin with a discussion of the death of Mess Gegra and then that of Lugaid mac Con Ruí mic Dáire, before considering some of the accounts of the death of Balor that contain this episode.

⁷This episode occurs at ll. 2510–31 (pp. 208–9) of O’Rahilly’s edition (1967).

⁸O’Rahilly notes that both instances of *atbert* in this passage should be read as *dobert*, as reflected in my translation.

⁹Stokes (1910: §19); Thurneysen (1935: §16).

2. THE DEATH OF MESS GEGRA

Mess Gegra's death is described only in *Talland Étair* (hereafter TÉ), although it is also mentioned in passing elsewhere, as in the poem *Fianna bátar i nEmain* (Stokes 1906) and in *Brisleach Mór Maige Muirthemni*, where a description of Conall mentions that *do:beba Mis Gegra gnímrathu* (l. 678) 'Mess Gegra died by his deeds'.¹⁰ The subsequent treatment of Mess Gegra's severed head also provides a crucial backstory to the various versions of *Aided Chonchobair* (Kobel 2015; hereafter AC).¹¹ TÉ consists of three main acts. First, the Ulster poet Aithirne makes a tour of Ireland during which he abuses his privileges as a guest and a poet in horrific ways. This leads directly to a war between Leinster and Ulster, during which the Ulaid are besieged at Étar until reinforcements arrive from Emain Macha and the Leinstermen are routed. Finally, Conall Cernach pursues and kills Mess Gegra to avenge the deaths of his brothers, Mess Dead and Lóegaire, who were killed during the battle. Conall Cernach beheads Mess Gegra, but the severed head then displays several extraordinary properties and, in order to bring it back as a trophy to Emain Macha, Conall Cernach must remove the brain from the skull and leave the rest of the head behind at the grave of Mess Gegra's wife Búan.

Before his encounter with Conall Cernach, however, Mess Gegra comes into conflict with his own charioteer, who avenges a perceived insult against him by cutting off Mess Gegra's hand. The loss of Mess Gegra's hand is the result of a strange incident involving a nut. Following the final battle at Étar, Mess Gegra and his charioteer are left alone while the other Leinstermen return to their homes. Meanwhile, Conall Cernach has already begun his pursuit of Mess Gegra. While the charioteer sleeps, Mess Gegra sees a giant nut floating in the nearby river. He retrieves it and splits it, eating half and keeping the other half for his charioteer. This nut is described as *méite cenn fir* (ll. 183–4) 'the size of a man's head'. In the dual context of the bloody battle that has just taken place and the knowledge that Conall Cernach is coming to kill Mess Gegra and will certainly take his head, this description of the nut evokes the phrase *mesrad Machae* 'Macha's nut-harvest', known from the Early Irish glossaries and explained as *cendae doine iarna n-airlech* 'the heads of men after their slaughter'.¹² The nut as symbol of the severed head is further at play here in the treatment of this head-sized nut, which foreshadows the treatment of Mess Gegra's own head, which will be opened like the shell of the nut and have its interior (the brain) removed. Mess Gegra's skull is then left, or 'planted', in the grave of his wife Búan, through which a hazel tree later grows. The brain

¹⁰Kimpton (2009: 67) argues that *gnímrathu* must here be taken for *gnímrathaib* as a dative of agency.

¹¹I cite the more recent edition of Chantal Kobel, but the Meyer (1906) edition will likely be more familiar to most readers. All references to *Aided Chonchobair* will be to the 'A' version of the text unless otherwise indicated. For discussion of the different versions, see Kobel (2015) and Imhoff (2012).

¹²The phrase *mesrad Machae* is found in both O'Mulconry's Glossary (813 §2), which I quote here, and the *Irsan* main text (180 §2), both ed. Moran (2019) and both available online at the *Early Irish Glossaries Database*, ed. Russell et al. (2010).

is taken back to Emain Macha, but later, like the kernel of the nut, it is divided. According to *Acallam na Senórach*, one quarter of Mess Gegra's brain was swallowed by the earth and transformed into a monster living in the lake at Glendalough.¹³ Returning to TÉ, when the charioteer wakes up, he asks Mess Gegra about the nut and whether he has saved half for him. Rather than simply answering that he has, or even giving him the remaining part of the nut, Mess Gegra displays poor judgment by instead asking his charioteer to explain the question. The charioteer rather cryptically states that *In ferán doid a mbec sechom-sa [...] no:íssad a mmór* (ll. 189–90) 'The small man who ate the small thing behind my back [...] would eat the large'. He then attacks Mess Gegra and cuts off his hand. When Mess Gegra tells him that the nut was in the hand that has now been removed, and when the charioteer sees that this is true, he kills himself. Mess Gegra is therefore left alone and one-handed to face Conall Cernach, who conveniently arrives at this point.

Mess Gegra initially seems to acknowledge that Conall Cernach's quest for vengeance is justified, saying *Cid:fil and [...] acht int-í dia ndligi fiachu, saig fair cach ní ro-t:bé* (ll. 200–1) 'What is here, [...] except the one from whom you are owed debts? Seek from him each thing that should be yours'. When Conall more specifically accuses him of having killed his brothers, however, saying *A:taat mo bráthair lat-so* (l. 201) 'You have my brothers', Mess Gegra appears to deny the charge, responding that *Ní'm chriss a:taat* 'They are not in my belt'.¹⁴ Conall seems to find this particularly upsetting, and replies *Bid ainem ón* 'That will be a blemish'. *Ainim* can have the sense of blemish or defect, but also scandal, reproach, or even calamity (*eDIL* s.v. *ainim*).¹⁵ Ó Donail suggests that Conall here is accusing Mess Gegra of lying about having the heads of his brothers (2005: 138), and that this lie is the *ainim*. It is difficult, however, to imagine that Mess Gegra could have two or more heads secreted about his person so discreetly that he could lie about their presence. It also seems unlikely that he would lie about having the heads, having just admitted that he owes a debt to Conall Cernach. It is possible that Mess Gegra is here denying having killed Mess Dead and Lóegaire, but this also seems unlikely. Mess Dead, at least, was a pre-eminent warrior and killing him would be a cause for boasting. TÉ never explicitly states who killed Lóegaire, but Mess Dead's death results from his being attacked by 300 warriors at once. There is, however, an alternate tradition in the *dindshenchas* of *Áth Clíath Cualann* (Gwynn 1913, vol. 3:

¹³Stokes (1900: ll. 2390–8); Dooley and Roe (1999: 74). In their note on this passage, Dooley and Roe state that 'According to *Talland Étair* another part of the brain fell in Co. Kildare' (p. 237). Unfortunately, they do not provide a more specific citation for this assertion, and I can find no trace of any reference to parts of Mess Gegra's brain in TÉ or anywhere outside of the *Acallam* itself. It is possible that they are referring to the part of Mess Gegra's head (the skull) that is left at Búan's grave, but TÉ makes no reference to Mess Gegra's brain being divided.

¹⁴Dr. Helen Imhoff has pointed out to me that the heads of individuals are often understood as standing in for the entire person after their death, and has called my attention to the parallel phrasing in *Scéla mucce Meic Dathó* during the scene in which Conall tells Cet that his brother Anlúan is indeed present: *Atá immurgu* (Thurneysen 1935: §16.10) 'He is indeed,' when in fact he is referring only to Anlúan's severed head. Thus *A:taat mo bráthair lat-so* is clearly to be understood as a statement about the heads of Conall's brothers rather than their entire bodies.

¹⁵All references to *eDIL* in this article were accessed on 9 April 2021.

100; Stokes 1894: 328–9) that makes specific reference to Mess Gegra killing Mess Dedad mac Amargin.¹⁶ It seems likely that Mess Gegra is saying that although he killed Mess Dead and Lóegaire, or was responsible for their deaths, he does not have their heads. Severed heads are sometimes kept in the *cris*, often translated ‘belt’. In *Scéla mucce Meic Dathó* (Thurneysen 1935: §16.11), for example, Conall confronts Cet mac Mágach with the head of his brother Anlúan (both men are Conall’s uncles), which he pulls *assa chriss* ‘from his belt’. AC describes how, after stealing Mess Gegra’s brain, Cet keeps it with him *inna chriss* (Kobel 2015: 219) ‘in his belt’ so that he can be ready to use it when the opportunity arises. The heads of high-status individuals are also particularly prized as trophies.¹⁷ Mess Gegra’s own head (or at least the brain) will be one of Conall’s greatest trophies, one which will allow him to win boasting contests against even Cú Chulainn and Lóegaire Búadach, his two great rivals to the claim of being the best of the Ulster heroes, as described in AC (Kobel 2015: 219). Mess Gegra’s statement that Conall Cernach’s brothers are not in his belt may therefore be taken as an insult, suggesting that Mess Gegra did not see any benefit in keeping their heads, and this is what Conall judges to be an *ainim*. However, it must also be remembered that Mess Gegra has just concealed half of a nut the size of a head in his hand, and that this entire episode hinges on the fact that Mess Gegra is not dealing honourably or honestly with Conall Cernach. We therefore cannot entirely rule out the possibility that he is simply lying about having the heads, and that is the insult to which Conall refers.¹⁸

The one-handed Mess Gegra then points out that, given his injury, this cannot be a fair fight, and he appeals to the concept of *fír ngaiscid*, which can be literally translated as ‘truth of arms’: *Ní fír ngaiscid [...] comrac frim-sa co n-óenláim* (ll. 202–3) ‘It is not a truth of arms [...] to battle against me with one-hand’. Other possible translations of *fír ngaiscid* here are ‘true valour’ (Stokes 1887: 59) and ‘warrior’s truth’ (Ó Dónaill 2005: 60). The entry for *fír* ‘truth’ in *eDIL* (s.v. 1 *fír*) gives several other related phrases such as *fír flatha* ‘the word of a prince, justice of a ruler’, *fír catha* ‘truth of battle, a just cause in a fight’, and *fír fer* ‘fair play (in combat), single combat’. The concept of *fír flatha*, often translated as ‘the ruler’s/sovereign’s truth’, is well-known and has received considerable attention (see, e.g., Watkins 1979 and 1995, McCone 1990), but there has been less focus on these other types of *fír*, with one important exception being Philip O’Leary’s study of *fír fer* (1987), in which he also discusses some of these other *fír* phrases.¹⁹

Many uses of *fír fer* focus on fair combat as between two individuals as opposed to uneven combat, in which multiple people attack one, as in the

¹⁶Mess Dedad is an alternative spelling for Mess Dead. For a discussion of Conall Cernach’s brothers, see Dobbs (1929: 117). It should be noted that Conall Cernach’s brother Lóegaire is not Lóegaire Búadach.

¹⁷See McCone (2021: 211–14) for a discussion of head-hunting and the taking of heads as trophies in Ireland and other Indo-European cultures.

¹⁸I am grateful to the anonymous reviewer for suggesting this alternate reading of the passage.

¹⁹See also O’Connor (2013: 87–8) for the tension between *fír fer* and *fír flathemon* in *Togail Bruidne Da Derga*.

encounter between Cú Chulainn and Ferchú Loingsech and his followers, discussed above. O'Leary discusses multiple instances in *Táin Bó Cúailnge* in which Cú Chulainn is attacked by several people at once, which is routinely condemned as a violation of *fír fer* (1987: 6). Unequal combat as a violation of *fír fer* plays a crucial role in provoking the confrontation between Conall Cernach and Mess Gegra, in that Conall Cernach's brother Mess Dead died when attacked by 300 warriors. In fact, TÉ states that *Is é forceta:immarbrath éccomlonn* (ll. 102–3) 'It is he against whom unequal combat was first plied'. As O'Leary points out though, while most of the words and phrases used to refer to single combat 'stress equality in numbers', as do those for unequal combat, *fír fer* is 'less quantitative' (1987: 7). O'Leary argues that, 'both the highest expression of heroic honour, *fír fer*, and the highest expression of kingly honour *fír flathemon*, are grounded in a sense of balance and harmony' (1987: 13 n. 48). *Fír fer* is not simply a matter of numbers then, or of one vs. one, but rather about equality in a more meaningful sense, and this can be seen in the symmetry that is imposed on the combat between Conall Cernach and Mess Gegra, who asks for *fír ngaiscid* because of his missing arm. *Fír ngaiscid* here seems to carry a meaning similar to that of *fír fer*, in that it implies that fairness is a requirement and reasonable expectation for the combat that is about to take place. Conall Cernach recognizes Mess Gegra's request for *fír ngaiscid* and binds his own hand to his side so that the fight between them will be balanced. As O'Leary observes, this and the corresponding scene with Lugaid mac Con Ruí show Conall adhering to *fír fer* in the absence of any witnesses. O'Leary argues that scenes such as these suggest that *fír fer* (and here, *fír ngaiscid*) functions as a moral heroic code that goes 'beyond the stage of unadulterated self-interest limited only by the dread of public shame' (1987: 13). That is, Conall is here behaving correctly not because he fears that dishonourable behaviour will bring him shame, but instead because of what O'Leary calls an 'internalized concept' of morality. In this episode, we find Conall's correct behaviour contrasted with Mess Gegra's incorrect behaviour, which is reflected in his physical asymmetry.

When Mess Gegra recognizes that he has lost the combat, he tells Conall Cernach that he knows that he will not leave without his head and gives him the following instruction: *tabair mo chenn fort chenn 7 m'orddan fort horddan* (l. 208) 'place my head upon your head and my honour upon your honour'. The first part of this statement is clear enough: Mess Gegra wants Conall Cernach to place his severed head on top of Conall's own. The second part suggests that Conall will derive some benefit from doing this: specifically, he will add Mess Gegra's *orddan* to his own. There are various possible translations for *orddan*, including 'dignity, honour, pre-eminence', 'raising to dignity, ordaining', 'nobility, aristocracy', and 'sovranty' (*eDIL* s.v. *ord(d)an*). Ó Dónaill opts for 'dignity' (2005: 60), while other translators of this text have chosen 'glory' (Stokes 1887: 61) or 'pre-eminence' (Ford 1999: 75). The central concept here is that by placing Mess Gegra's head on top of his own, Conall Cernach will gain some aspect of Mess Gegra's own status or be elevated in some way. This, at least, is what Mess Gegra tells him.

Once he has beheaded Mess Gegra, Conall decides to place the head on a nearby pillar-stone, which, as discussed above, constitutes a normal treatment of the head, instead of placing it on his own head. When he does this, however, Mess Gegra's attempt at posthumous revenge by means of his head is exposed and thwarted. The scene is described as follows:

Benaïd Conall a chenn dé oc Cassán Chlóenta oculus beirid Conall a cenn co:tarat forin liic for brú ind átha. Do:luid bannae a méidiu in chinn co:ndechuid i cenn in choirthi co:lluid triit co talmáin. Do:bert danó a cenn forin coirthe 7 a-t:n-aig a cenn in coirthe co talmáin co-n-id:tarlae fora béolu dochum inna habann. (ll. 209–12)

'Conall cut his head from him at Cassán Chlóenta and Conall took the head in order to place it on the pillar-stone at the edge of the ford. A drop came from the bottom of the head and went into the top of the pillar so that it went through it to the ground. Then he placed the head on the pillar and the head drove the pillar to the ground so that it knocked it on its face towards the river.'

The danger to Conall Cernach is clear, as are Mess Gegra's true intentions. The two specific dangers of the head are the drop of corrosive blood that pierces the stone and the supernatural and variable weight of the head, which would no doubt have crushed Conall had he placed it on his own. Corrosive blood and even sweat are known from other medieval Irish texts, as well as in non-Irish sources. A discussion of this motif can be found in Martin Puhvel's *Beowulf and the Celtic Tradition* (1979) in the chapter on the melting of Beowulf's sword by the blood of Grendel's mother. Parallels suggested by Puhvel include a modern Irish folktale in which Finn mac Cumáill places the severed head of an enemy on a holly bush, which is then burned to the ground, the blood that comes from the heads of Mess Gegra and Lugaid, the destruction of spears during battle by being burned and destroyed by blood, and the death of Lé Fer Flaith, son of Conaire, who is carried under the arm of the wounded warrior Mac Cécht and dissolved by his heat and sweat. One example not discussed by Puhvel is one that I have already mentioned: the drop of blood that pierces and kills Celtchar after he is forced to kill his dog. The passing of the drop of blood through Celtchar is described with the phrase *co ndechaid trít co talmáin* 'so that it went through him to the ground'. The close similarity of the phrase describing the drop of blood from Mess Gegra's head piercing the pillar-stone (*co:lluid triit co talmáin*) makes clear that Conall Cernach's death should have taken place in the same way as Celtchar mac Uthechair's. Failing this, however, the weight of the head would have struck him a blow strong enough to knock him down and most likely kill him. The fact that it is possible for Conall to lift the head at all, in spite of its previous display of great weight, suggests that the crushing blow from the head was a conscious act on Mess Gegra's part and not a permanent state of heaviness. Later events in *TÉ* make it clear that Mess Gegra's head does retain a degree of consciousness and appears to have some control over whether it can be moved or not.

TÉ here introduces what may appear to be a small digression, explaining that the women of the Ulaid have divided themselves into three groups based on which of three Ulster heroes they love: Cú Chulainn, Cuscraid Mend Machae mac Conchobar, or Conall himself. Each of these heroes has a blemish (*ainim*) and the women imitate this blemish to signal their allegiance to their hero of choice.²⁰ Conall Cernach is here described as Conall Clóen ‘the crooked’ and we are told that the women who loved him *batis clóin ocot acaldaim* (l. 216) ‘used to be crooked while talking to you’. One possible explanation for Conall’s crookedness is given in *Cóir Anmann* (Arbuthnot 2007: 69, trans. 142), where we are told that shortly after Conall’s birth his uncle Cet mac Mágach attempted to kill him by crushing his neck. Cet was stopped by Conall’s mother Finnchaím, but because of his broken neck Conall was known as *Claenbhraigdech* ‘crooked-neck’.²¹ Conall’s crookedness is introduced at this point in the narrative because he uses Mess Gegra’s head to correct it. After seeing the effect that the head has on the pillar-stone, Conall finally does follow Mess Gegra’s instruction to place the head on his own, perhaps now confident of his ability to control the force of the head: *Do:bert immurgu Conall a chenn-som fora chenn co-n-id:tarlae dara ais combo díriuch ónd úair sin* (ll. 217–9) ‘Conall then placed the head on his own head so that it knocked it backwards and from that time on it was straight’. It is worth noting, however, that the epithet *clóen* continues to follow Conall. In his death tale, *Goire Conall Chernaig i Crúachain ocus Aided Ailella ocus Conaill Chernaig*, Medb taunts him by saying, *Maith, a Chonaill, [...] Conall Cernach t’ainm-si cusaniu. Conall Cloentruag t’ainm festa* (Meyer 1897: 104, ll. 17–8) ‘Well, o Conall. [...] Conall the Victorious (*Cernach*) was your name until today. Conall the Crooked Wretch (*Cloentruag*) will be your name from now on’. This is in response to Ailill’s infidelity while supposedly under Conall’s watch. Like *ainim*, *clóen* has both physical and moral dimensions, carrying the additional meanings of ‘iniquitous, perverse, unjust, biased’ as well as conveying the sense of deception (*eDIL* s.v. *cláen*).

It is also worth noting that this confrontation between Conall Cernach and Mess Gegra takes place at Cassán Clóenta ‘Crooked Path’, which further draws attention to the tension between correct or straight and incorrect or crooked in this episode. Mess Gegra’s ill-judged behaviour toward his charioteer renders him one-handed (*óenláim*), and thus asymmetrical and vulnerable. He has been rendered unable to participate in single combat without accommodations on the part of his opponent and is therefore no longer fully functional as a warrior. He cannot face Conall Cernach without the latter being hampered artificially in order for fair combat (*fír ngaiscid*) to take place. Conall accuses Mess Gegra of *ainim* in the matter of the deaths of Conall’s brothers, but by avenging

²⁰The blemishes of these three heroes and the imitative behaviour of the women who love them are also described in *Serglige Con Culainn*, ed. Dillon (1953: ll. 39–44). For Dillon’s own translation of the text, see Dillon (1951). A less scholarly but more accessible translation can be found in Gantz (1981). See McCone (2021: 218) for a discussion of these two passages centred on Cú Chulainn’s blemish.

²¹For a discussion of alternative physical interpretations of Conall’s ‘crookedness’, see Coe (1995: 240–6).

them against Mess Gegra, Conall gains the means to rectify his own *ainim*, his crookedness (*clóen*), and become physically straight (*díriuch*). His physical crookedness is made straight through his correct behaviour, just as Mess Gegra's previously balanced physicality is rendered imbalanced through his faulty behaviour. Mess Gegra's offer to transfer his honour (*orddan*) to Conall Cernach further demonstrates his own moral crookedness and lack of honour, since this is clearly a trap, and might also be read as a betrayal of *fír ngaiscid*. Mess Gegra's fate here stands in stark contrast to that of Echu mac Luchtae, king of south Connacht, who, in the opening episode of *TÉ*, plucks out his own eye to satisfy his obligation as host to the poet Aithirne, and is rewarded for his correct behaviour when God restores his eye to him.²²

Not only has Conall Cernach defeated Mess Gegra's attempt at posthumous revenge by placing the head on the pillar-stone before placing it on his own head, he has also entirely subverted Mess Gegra's intentions by correcting the crookedness that had marked him since birth. In so doing, he also removes a physical defect that could potentially be seen as a source of shame. In this sense, Mess Gegra's promise that Conall Cernach would benefit from putting his severed head on his own has been fulfilled, despite Mess Gegra's own intentions. The full story of Mess Gegra's head is just beginning, and it goes on to display several other remarkable properties, but the theme of failed and subverted vengeance will persist. Mess Gegra's head will be divided: the brain will be removed and mixed with lime to calcify it, and then taken to Emain Macha, where it becomes a trophy of great importance. AC refers to a prophecy that Mess Gegra would avenge himself after his death: *ro bóí i tairngiriu do Mess Gegrai a dígal íarna écaib* (Kobel 2015: 219) 'there was a prophecy that Mess Gegra would have his vengeance after his death'. Cet mac Mágach knows this prophecy and steals Mess Gegra's brain, which he then uses as a weapon against Conchobar mac Nessa, who is eventually killed by it. There is a fitting symmetry here in that *TÉ* ends by describing how *Ba moídmach immurgu la Ultu rí Laigen do marbad dóib* (ll. 237–8) 'There was boasting then among the Ulaid that the king of Leinster had been killed by them', and yet that same king will later be instrumental in the death of their own king.

The prophecy that Mess Gegra will avenge his own death is fulfilled in that Mess Gegra's head acts as a vehicle for his posthumous revenge, but certainly not in the way that he had anticipated. Mess Gegra's revenge against Conall Cernach would have been deliberate, while his role in the death of Conchobar was not. Again, however, Mess Gegra's revenge is incomplete because in killing Conchobar, Mess Gegra's brain also provides his baptism and salvation. Here we must turn to the 'B' and 'C' versions of AC, which describe how, after seven years lodged in Conchobar's head, Mess Gegra's brain bursts forth accompanied by a gush of blood that baptizes Conchobar and makes him one of the first men in Ireland to enter Heaven.²³ The journey of Mess Gegra's head changes radically in this moment, and what was once a vehicle for vengeance

²²On the contrast between Echu and Mess Gegra, see further Scowcroft (1995: 146–7).

²³Kobel (2015: 346–7) for 'B' text and (379–8) for matching passage from 'C' text.

and a weapon becomes instead a holy relic.²⁴ The last known appearance of Mess Gegra's head is in *Acallam na Senórach* as a lake-monster that is bound in a show of power by Saint Cáemgen, a disciple of Saint Patrick. This episode is presented as a demonstration of Finn mac Cumail and his men deferring to the future authority of the saint and of Christianity, with Finn specifically refusing to kill the monster because of its holy destiny. We have seen that Mess Gegra's destructive intent and power are not only repeatedly denied, but also subverted in ways that benefit his enemies, and though the dangerous qualities of his head are retained even in its final form as a lake-monster, his posthumous revenge is never fully achieved.

3. THE DEATH OF LUGAID MAC CON RUÍ MIC DÁIRE

The death of Lugaid mac Con Ruí mic Dáire in *Brisleach Mór Maige Muirthemni* (hereafter BMMM) presents the closest textual parallel for that of Mess Gegra in *TÉ*, and Thurneysen suggested that BMMM likely served as the model for the episode in *TÉ* (1921: 510 and 549). In introducing her edition of BMMM, Bettina Kimpton comments that 'the theme of vengeance (*dígal*) generates the action of much of the tale' (2009: 1), which begins by describing a group of men and women who have joined together to avenge the deaths of their fathers by killing Cú Chulainn. Among these is Lugaid mac Con Ruí mic Dáire, whose father's death at the hands of Cú Chulainn is the subject of the various versions of *Aided Chon Roí*.²⁵ When Cú Chulainn is finally overcome, Erc mac Carpri urges Lugaid to take Cú Chulainn's head, saying *Is mebol dúib [...] cen chend ind fí do thabairt lib i ndígail chind m'athar-sa rucad leis* (ll. 373–4) 'It is a disgrace [...] for you not to take the head of the man in vengeance for my father's head, which was taken by him'. Lugaid eventually complies, but when he cuts off Cú Chulainn's head, the latter drops his sword and Lugaid's hand is cut off. Cú Chulainn's own hand is then taken also, but the loss of Lugaid's hand represents some measure of posthumous revenge for Cú Chulainn, enacted by his body after his death and without any intent on his part.

Full revenge against Lugaid is assured however, because, as we are then told, there exists a pact of mutual vengeance between Cú Chulainn and Conall Cernach. Specifically, Conall has promised that *A llá not:géntar [...] do dí-gail dam-sa resin fescur-sin* (ll. 421–2) 'The day you are killed, [...] I will have vengeance for you before that evening'. Lugaid now finds himself in the same position as Mess Gegra: one-handed and pursued by an avenging Conall Cernach. Again, the confrontation takes place at a ford, and like Mess Gegra, Lugaid challenges Conall to claim his debt, using almost the same phrasing: *Int-í dano dia ndligi fíachu dos:fothlaig fair* (l. 456) 'The one indeed from whom you are owed debts, demand them from him'. Whitley Stokes' edition

²⁴On Mess Gegra's brain as agent of Conchobar's salvation and later treatment as a holy relic, see Clancy (1996).

²⁵There are multiple different versions of this story, each of which has been edited and translated in various places. See Mallory and Ó hUiginn (1994) and the CODECS website for a list of editions and translations.

of the text treats this line as being spoken by Conall Cernach rather than by Lugaid (1876–8: 184) and John Carey’s translation reflects this (2003a: 142), but Kimpton’s more recent edition assigns the line to Lugaid, a choice which is supported by the parallelism between these two passages, since in *TÉ* the line is unambiguously spoken by Mess Gegra. While Lugaid acknowledges the debt for having killed Cú Chulainn, he points out that there would be no honour for Conall Cernach in killing him before he is able to reach Munster with his spoils. Conall agrees and they arrange to meet in *Mag nArgetrois*, again demonstrating that requests regarding the circumstances under which a combat is to take place are not outside the range of expected behaviours, even under conditions as heightened as vengeance for Cú Chulainn’s death. Lugaid reaches the agreed location first, and when Conall arrives he does not wait to attack. He immediately throws a spear at Lugaid and wounds him. Lugaid then goes on to *Fertae Lugdach* in *Droichit Ossairge*, where Conall meets him again. This time Lugaid points out that combat between them would be uneven as he has only one hand, appealing to *fír fer*, which, as previously discussed requires a balanced and even combat.

As in *TÉ*, Conall decides to bind his arm to his side to ensure fair combat.²⁶ Lugaid appears to offer a greater challenge than Mess Gegra, however, and Conall is unable to defeat him unaided. He seeks assistance from his horse, the *Derg Drúchtach*, who is described as having the head of a dog. She takes a bite out of Lugaid’s side, effectively ending the combat. Lugaid objects that this is not *fír fer*, but Conall responds that he had not guaranteed *fír fer* on behalf of *na robb 7 na n-écodnach* (l. 476) ‘the animals and the non-competent ones’. While *fír fer* primarily signifies fair combat and not just ‘the truth of men’, this makes it clear that it is in some sense about ‘men’, and those that are judged legally competent to enter into such a conflict. The principle of *fír fer* is, as O’Leary has argued, an ethical concept, and it here seems to relate not only to the physical status of the participants in a combat, but also their mental and perhaps even legal status. *Éccodnach* covers all those who are not legally responsible for their actions, including children and those deprived of reason (*eDIL* s.v. *éccodnach*). We find this reflected in the fact that Cú Chulainn’s youth frequently disqualifies him as a suitable opponent in single combat in the eyes of older warriors, and it is only by making himself appear older through the application of a false beard that he is accepted as an equal by these warriors. In fact, *Lóch mac Mo Febis*, whose combat with Cú Chulainn is discussed above, is one of the warriors who initially refuses to engage with Cú Chulainn because of his youth.²⁷ If those who are *éccodnach* are not capable of engaging in *fír fer*, this sheds

²⁶The combat between Conall Cernach and Lugaid is also described in the Early Modern Irish *Aided Con Culainn* (van Hamel 1933: §57), but does not contain the relevant ‘incident of the head’. An additional point of divergence is that while Lugaid does not specifically appeal to *fír fer*, he does request that Conall bind his arm. This stands in contrast to *BMMM* and *TÉ*, in which Conall is the one to initiate this. See O’Leary (1987: 4–5) for further discussion of this passage in *Aided Con Culainn*.

²⁷For further discussion see Künzler (2015: 40).

further light on the conditions of parallelism, balance, and mutual equivalency required for *fír fer*.

Like Mess Gegra, Lugaid now knows that he is doomed and that Conall Cernach will take his head, and so he gives the same instruction: *Co tardda trá [...] mo chend-sa ardo chend 7 co n-erbara mo rígi-se fordo ríge et mo gaisced fordo gaisced* (ll. 478–9). Kimpton translates this line as ‘May you take, then [...] my head on your behalf, and wield my kingship in addition to your own kingship, and my weapons in addition to your own weapons’ (2009: 45). Many translators of this text have taken this approach, interpreting the instruction to Conall Cernach as referring to the claiming of some non-corporeal aspect of Lugaid himself by means of claiming his head, rather than directions for a literal, physical action. Stokes’ original translation was ‘take my head in addition to thine own’ (1876–8: 185), although in translating the parallel phrase in *TÉ* he opted for the more physical interpretation ‘Take thou my head on thy head’ (1887: 61). The more metaphorical sense is found also in the French translation of d’Arbois de Jubainville, ‘Je te donne donc ma tête en sus de la tienne’ (1892: 352). A more literal translation is given by Carey, however: ‘Do you then put my head on your head’ (2003a: 143).²⁸ This interpretation is certainly justified from the context and consequences of the act, as well as on linguistic grounds. The preposition used in *TÉ* is *for* ‘on’, but BMM and some of the texts about the death of Balor all use *ar*. While *ar* has the primary meaning of ‘for the sake of, on behalf of, etc.’, there is nothing requiring that reading here. In Middle Irish, *for* and *ar* fall together, with *ar* as the primary form (*eDIL* s.v. 1 *ar*). While the meaning ‘on’ is more typical of this preposition with a following dative, and the meaning ‘on behalf of’ (or similar) is more typical with a following accusative, this is not a strict division, as illustrated by Kimpton’s translations of *ar* + dative as both ‘on’ and ‘for the sake of’.²⁹ The accusative is also used to convey the sense of motion toward something, which is appropriate in this passage. There is therefore no reason not to assign the meaning ‘on(to)’ to *ar* + accusative in this passage, and it is clear that we must understand Lugaid’s intention as being that Conall should literally place his severed head upon his own. This is further evidenced by the subsequent revelation of the dangerous properties of the head.

As expected, Conall Cernach does not place Lugaid’s head on his own, but instead carries it away with him. When he encounters the Ulaid, he places the head on a stone and forgets it there. Once Conall realizes that the head is missing, he and the Ulaid return to fetch it. There, we are told, they saw that *ro:berbai in cend in cloich co ndecheid treithe* (l. 487) ‘the head had melted the stone so that it went through it’. Again, this fate was clearly intended for Conall, but by not following Lugaid’s instructions he has thwarted his attempt at posthumous revenge. Like Mess Gegra though, there will be some measure of

²⁸There are several other translations of this text (see Mallory and Ó hUiginn (1994) and CODECS), but those I refer to here serve to illustrate the two ways in which this line has been interpreted.

²⁹Ll. 43–4 *Caín róg renar ar Ultaib* is translated as ‘[It is] a fair and pure one [that] is given up for the Ulstermen’, while l. 211 *arget ar crannaib* is translated as ‘silver on trees’.

vengeance gained later, since, as we are told in *Goire Conaill Chernaig*, after Conall's death, his head was severed and *rucsat sein siar a ceann do digail Conr[ó]i rucsat Ulaidh budhtuaidh* (Meyer 1897: 105, l. 40) 'They took the head westward with them to avenge Cú Rói, whose head the Ulaid took with them northwards'.³⁰ This grants some measure of vengeance to Lugaid for the death of his father.

4. THE DEATH OF BALOR

In moving on to the stories about the death of Balor, we leave the world of mortal warriors and move into the world of gods and monsters. While we have only one version each of the deaths of Mess Gegra and Lugaid, the story of Balor's death has been told and retold in many forms over centuries. As Elizabeth Gray notes in her edition of *Cath Maige Tuired* (hereafter CMT), 'the death of Balor at the hands of Lug, son of his daughter Ethne, is an important incident throughout Irish literary and folk tradition' (1982: 133). Joan N. Radner (1992) has discussed how 'the tale of the primordial conflict of Lug and Balor has changed dynamically through history to comment on the direct experience of its makers and remakers' (1992: 145).³¹ Ó Cuív has also discussed the popularity of this story and its reshaping in the folk tradition, pointing out that 'the connections with the Tuatha Dé Danann and the battle of Magh Tuireadh have been forgotten and new elements, including a magic cow called *An Ghlas Ghaibhleann*, have been introduced' (1945: 8–9). The connection to the earlier material has been so obfuscated that the original context for animosity between Balor and Lugh has been lost and consequently reinterpreted and reinvented several times. Jeremiah Curtin included two distinct versions of the story in *Hero-Tales of Ireland* (1894) and remarked that 'this was a great tale in the old time; but it is badly broken up now. If we could discover who Balor and his daughter were really, we might, perhaps, be able to understand why his grandson was fated to kill him' (1894: 554). Stories in which a hero is fated to kill his mother's father or his own father are known globally and reflect what is conventionally referred to as the 'heroic biography pattern'.³² These types of stories frequently feature explicit prophecies that a man will be killed by his daughter's son, which leads to attempts to isolate the daughter to prevent her ever conceiving a child. When she inevitably does conceive, attempts are made to kill the child, either before or after his birth. A version of the story collected from John McGinty of Achill Island, Co. Mayo and translated by William Larminie in *West Irish Folk-tales and Romances* describes how Balor's daughter was imprisoned because 'a prediction was made that she would have a son, who would kill his grandfather'

³⁰This is according to the text of TCD MS H 2. 17 (1319). The NLS Adv. MS 72.1.40 (Edinburgh codex XL) text says that *Rucsat sein leo cend Conaill a n-againd Conroi* (Meyer 1897: 105, ll. 16–17) 'They took the head of Conall with them in compensation for Cú Rói'.

³¹See also Radner (1991).

³²On the subject of the heroic biography in medieval Irish literature, see Ó Cathasaigh (1977). For a more general survey of scholarship on the pattern, see Taylor (1964). A more recent survey of work on the pattern and a discussion of how 'heroic' it truly is can be found in Pagé (2018).

(Larminie 1893: 6). In spite of his attempt to isolate her, Balor's daughter becomes pregnant, and her child is taken and hidden so that he can grow up in safety, but ignorant of his identity. He later encounters and kills his grandfather, as is typical for a story reflecting the 'heroic biography'. This story pattern is well represented by the folktale versions of the conflict between Balor and Lugh but is largely absent from the earlier sources. This is a further indication of how far the story has been removed from its earlier context in the war between the *Túatha Dé Danann* and the *Fomoirie*. Ó Cuív enumerates some of the published versions of the story up to the early twentieth century, and comments that there are also more recently recorded versions of the story in the archives of the Irish Folklore Commission (1945: 8 n. 4). A full study of the different versions of this story is well beyond the scope of the current work,³³ and many of these versions do not contain the relevant episode involving the weaponized head and attempted posthumous revenge. I will refer to only a few of the versions that do contain this incident for the purposes of examining its continued presence in this story.

While the story of the conflict between Balor and Lugh has changed in many significant ways, the main and constant motif is the destruction of Balor's eye, which we find in CMT and in most later versions of the story as well. The dangerous properties of the heads of Mess Gegra and Lugaid develop only after their deaths, but Balor's eye is his most powerful weapon and makes his head dangerous and toxic long before his death. In CMT (§133) Balor is described as having a destructive eye that is opened only during battle, at which point four men are required to lift the lid. The poisonous nature of the eye is said to be the result of contact with the fumes of a venomous potion. While it is not made explicit in CMT, this destructive eye is interpreted as Balor's only eye, making him a cyclops.³⁴ Later folktales, however, have descriptions of his eyes that vary in terms of both number and position. A folktale collected by John O'Donovan from Shane O'Dugan of Tory Island describes Balor as having 'one eye in the middle of his forehead, and another directly opposite it, in the back of his skull,' with this second eye having 'foul, distorted glances' and 'beams and dyes of venom' which could kill (1856: 18).³⁵ A different version of the tale tells us that 'Besides his two eyes Balor had a third one, an evil eye, in the middle of his forehead, with the power to burn everything in the world that it looked upon' (Curtin 1894: 304). Central to all these descriptions is the idea that the eye is in some way toxic or poisonous and that this toxin can be spread to anything that Balor looks at. Radner, in discussing the folklore about Balor, says that his 'single, poisonous eye is said to have withered permanently all the

³³See, however, Krappe (1927) and Lacey (2012).

³⁴For studies on the cyclops in Irish tradition see especially McCone (1986, 1996, and 2021). See also Krappe (1927) and Borsje (2012) for further discussion of Balor's evil eye.

³⁵Brian Lacey (2018: 43) gives the following history of this version of the story: 'The Donegal version seems to have been recorded for the first time by John O'Donovan in a then-unpublished letter written from Falcarragh on 15 September 1835. He said that his source was Shane O'Dugan from Tory Island. O'Donovan gives the tale in English but almost certainly O'Dugan would have recounted it in Irish. In 1856 O'Donovan published a slightly polished-up version of the tale in his edition of the *Annals of the Four Masters*, which I quote from here.'

vegetation on Tory and on the visible mountains of the nearby Donegal coast' (1992: 143). Radner unfortunately does not cite her source for this, but it is in keeping with the various traditions of Balor's eye and head as transforming the landscape in ways that make it dangerous and uninhabitable, as we shall see.

The earliest attested form of the episode of the weaponized head and posthumous revenge in connection with Balor's death is found in the poem numbered XVI in *Duanaire Finn* (MacNeill 1908: 34–8: hereafter DF XVI), in which Balor's death is briefly described as part of the origin story for Finn mac Cumhaill's shield. The relevant portion of DF XVI is only 4 quatrains out of 62.³⁶ Balor's instructions to Lugh here are familiar, though the reward promised is more elaborate than what Mess Gegra offered to Conall Cernach, and he appeals directly to their kinship and suggests that Lugh should be heir to his powers.

Balor do cuingidh ar Lugh
seal beg ré na dhíchennadh
cuir mo cenn-sa ar do cenn cain
7 tuill mo bhennachtain

'Balor sought out Lugh,
a short while before his beheading.
"Put my head on your fair head
and earn my blessings.

In cosgar 7 in ghráin
do bhoí oramsa ag feraibh Fáil
is maith liomsa go prap dhe
a mbeit ar mhac mh'inghine

The triumph and the horror
that the men of Fál felt for me,
I would like for them to soon
belong to the son of my daughter."

An bennacht sin a aba
nochar thuill Lugh Lamhfhada
do cuir an cenn os tuinn thsoir
a nglaic chuill ar a bhéaluibh

That blessing however
Lugh of the Long-Arm did not earn.
He put the head above the eastern surface³⁷
in the cleft of a hazel-tree in front of him.

Snídhis bainne neimhe anúas
assin crann sin go nert-chrúas
iar snídhe an uilc nar bheg ró
do sgoilt in crann ar chert-dhó

A poison drop dripped down
from that tree with strong hardness,
after the dripping of the evil – it was
no small excess –
the tree split evenly in two.'

The image of the severed head as nut is once again invoked here through the placement of Balor's head in a hazel tree, which subsequently remains at the centre of a toxic landscape for a period of fifty years before Manannán has it uprooted. Here it is not Balor's gaze that destroys the land, but instead the

³⁶I quote from the MacNeill (1908) edition of the text from UCD MS Franciscan A 20(b). Flahive (2015) provides an edition of the poem from RIA Stowe MS D ii 1, where it consists of 56 quatrains. The four containing the death of Balor episode are present and largely identical in both copies. These four quatrains are numbered 10–13 in MacNeill's edition and 7–10 in Flahive's.

³⁷*Tuinn* is the dative of *tonn*, which has the primary meaning of 'wave', and MacNeill translates this line 'he set the head above an eastern wave'. However, *tonn* is also attested with the meaning 'surface' (*eDIL* s.v. *tonn*) and I believe that this is a better interpretation in this context.

presence of his head. The land remains so poisonous that its vapours kill eighteen workmen and blind another nine when the tree is uprooted. While Balor's posthumous revenge against Lugh fails, his head spreads its poison so effectively that it can kill even decades after Balor's death. From the wood of the tree, a shield is made for Manannán that cannot be touched in battle and that routs all before it. The poem goes on to describe the history of the shield and its various owners before explaining how it finally comes into the possession of Finn.

In the older version of CMT, Balor's death is not made explicit but is assumed to occur due to his being struck in the eye by a sling-stone cast at him by his grandson Lugh (CMT §135). In his discussion of the differences between the earlier and later version of *Cath Muighe Tuireadh* (hereafter CMT²), Ó Cuív notes that one of the more significant variations is the inclusion in the later version of what he calls 'The Incident of the Head' (6), which takes place after Lugh has knocked out Balor's eye with his sling-stone. After being struck, Balor flees and is pursued by Lugh. Balor points out that he is already wounded and asks that Lugh cause him no further injury, but Lugh refuses. Before their final combat begins, Balor gives familiar instructions to Lugh regarding his head, though these are more specific regarding the physical act required. The fact that Balor makes this request before their combat, instead of after, as in the cases of Mess Gegra and Lugaid, suggests that he already knows that he has been injured in a way that weakens him too severely to gain a victory over Lugh. In contrast to the episodes with Mess Gegra and Lugaid, there is no way that Lugh could hinder himself in a manner that would match Balor's injury, even if he were inclined to do so. As in DF XVI, Balor offers Lugh his own powers and attributes, even echoing the specific offer of his *gráin* 'terror/fearsomeness', and he also acknowledges their kinship.

'Madh cosgrach thusa orm-sa,' ar Balar, 'an tan beanfair mo cheann díom a chur ar mullach do chinn féin 7 a mhéidhe do chur red cheann ar dháigh go ndeach mo rath 7 mo rochonách, mo ghráin 7 mo ghaissgeadh sa ort-sa. Uair ní fhāgbhuim dar mh'éisi neach is caradraighe dhamh inā thusa.' (ll. 1318–23)

"If you are victorious over me," said Balor, "when you cut my head from me, put it on top of your own head and put the neck against your head so that my success and my great prosperity, my fearsomeness and my acts of valour will go to you. For I do not leave behind me anyone who is more closely related to me than you".³⁸

Naturally, Lugh places the head elsewhere, but this version is closer to the story of Mess Gegra's death in that the head is placed on a pillar-stone rather than on a tree, at least initially.

Beanuis Lugh a cheann de, 7 téid risin cceann iar sin, 7 cóirighis ar cholamhain chartha cloichi móire baoi a n-athfhogas dó é. Goirid

³⁸I am grateful to Dr. Gregory Darwin for his many helpful and insightful comments on my readings of the Early Modern Irish text.

do vhf ann asa h-aithle an tan do sgoilt 7 do sgaoil an cartha cruaidh
coimhreamhar cloichi i cceathra leathsgoilténuibh lánmhóra go lár.
(ll. 1336–40)

‘Lugh cut his head from him, and after that he went to the head,
and he placed it on the column of a large pillar-stone that was near
him. It was there a short while until the hard, very thick pillar-stone
split and scattered in four great, equal fragments on the ground.’

Lugh then verbally acknowledges the trap that Balor had set for him, saying that he had been given bad advice and his head would now be like the pillar-stone if he had put Balor’s head on his own. Lugh next removes the head from the remains of the pillar-stone and places it, as he did in DF XVI, *a nglai chuill* (ll. 1344–5) ‘in the cleft of a hazel tree’. There is no indication that the head causes further destruction at this point, but Lugh, needing another trophy, removes Balor’s leg at the knee and takes that with him. Here the motivation for taking Balor’s head, and then leg is made explicit with the statement that Lugh needs a *comhartha cosgair do-bhéradh lais do dheimhniughadh a ēchta do T. D. D* (ll. 1346–7) ‘sign of victory he could bring with him to affirm his deed to the Túatha Dé Danann’, and since he cannot take the head, he will take the leg instead. In fact, he does pick up the head again, but the text is not entirely clear on this point or what subsequently happens to the head. Like the head, the leg shows obstructive and even toxic properties. It becomes too heavy for Lugh to carry, and he is forced to abandon the foot itself and proceed with only the shinbone. When this also becomes too heavy, he drags it behind him from his chariot. The shinbone is rotting, and its putrefaction fills a ditch in the plain that Lugh is driving over, again spreading the toxicity of Balor’s body to the landscape. When Lugh is finally forced to drop the shinbone, we are told that a worm (*dorb*) burrows into it, eats the marrow, and becomes what the text calls a *smirrdris*, which is a late form of *muirdris* (*eDIL* s.v. *smeirdris*), a type of sea or lake monster. This *smirrdris* takes up residence in Loch Lurgan, where it remains until it is destroyed by Finn, who drains the lake until it becomes too small for the monster, as described in *Acallam na Senórach*.³⁹ After losing the shinbone, Lugh returns to retrieve the foot, which, presumably together with the head, he takes back to the Túatha Dé Danann at Magh Tuireadh.

Calvert Watkins (1995: 447) discusses the etymology of the earlier form *muirdris*, which is known from ‘The Saga of Fergus mac Léti’ (Binchy 1952). There it is described as *peist uiscide [uathmar]* ‘a [terrible] water monster’.⁴⁰ Watkins suggests that since the *muir* element clearly means ‘sea’, the element *-dris* must mean something like ‘monster,’ and he further argues that this form

³⁹This episode with Balor’s leg and the *smirrdris* may constitute an aetiological tradition about the lake, as the name Loch Lurgan can be interpreted as ‘the lake (*loch*) of the shin-bone (*lurgan*)’. Ó Cuív (1945: 66) notes that the origin of Loch Lurgan is explained in *Acallam na Senórach*. There we find mention of the *smirrdris*, but it is not connected to Balor in any way (Stokes 1900: 123; Dooley and Roe 1999: 127). As mentioned above, the *Acallam* is also where we learn that part of Mess Gegra’s brain turned into a monster (*peisd*) living in one of the two lakes at Glendalough.

⁴⁰Binchy (1952: §6). The word *uathmar* ‘terrible’ appears in the TCD MS H 3. 18 (1337) copy of the text but not the LL text.

is connected with the verbal noun used to describe Fergus mac Léti seeing the *muidris*: *diuderc* ‘gazing.’ The relationship between the *muidris* and the act of seeing or looking becomes clear when we consider that it is seeing the *muidris* that causes Fergus mac Léti to become disfigured. Watkins compares this with the Greek story of the Gorgon, who turns those who see her to stone and — it should be noted in the current discussion — whose head is severed and weaponized by Perseus. The Gorgon is described as having snakes for hair, but in Greek the word used to describe her hair is *drakóntōn*,⁴¹ derived from *drákōn*, which is the source of English ‘dragon’. Watkins treats *-dris* as cognate with *drak-*, and both as derived via a zero-grade **dṛǵ-* formation from the Proto-Indo-European verb **derǵ-* ‘see’, also the second element in *diuderc*. Watkins concludes his discussion by stating that:

Both branches then, Greek and Celtic, would attest both the verbal root **derǵ-* ‘see’ and a word for ‘dragon, serpent’ **dṛǵ-*. If the latter two should turn out not to be cognate — which I doubt — the folk etymology itself could be of Indo-European date, since the danger of the sight of the dragon is found in both traditions, Greek and Irish. (1995: 447)

In these linguistic forms and the stories that link them, we have an association between dangerous, even deadly, sight and a serpent or serpentine creature, though embodied in a single being. In Balor and the *smirrdris* that grows from the *dorb* that eats the marrow of his leg, we again find a connection between dangerous sight and a serpent-like monster.⁴²

While there is no reference to Balor losing his hand at any point, as Mess Gegra and Lugaid do, he is nonetheless already wounded before his final confrontation with Lugh and for this reason tries to avoid further combat. It is significant that his wound consists of the loss of his eye, and the post-mortem removal of his leg should also be read in this context. There is a well-established connection between one-eyed and one-armed figures in various Indo-European mythological traditions, as discussed by Georges Dumézil in *Mitra-Varuna* (1948). A discussion of these figures (generally referred to using the French terms *le borgne* ‘the one-eyed one’ and *le manchot* ‘the one-handed one’) in Irish sources can be found in Richard Mark Scowcroft (1995: 140f.), which argues that while Dumézil’s original conception of the relationship between the two figures and his interpretations of their physical attributes do not always hold for the Irish sources, a survey of one-eyed and one-armed figures makes it ‘obvious that the collocation of *borgne* and *manchot* is widely attested in Irish literature’ (1995: 146).⁴³ As Dumézil, Scowcroft, and McCone (2021) have

⁴¹ Watkins here cites Pindar’s *Pythian* 10.46–8. For a full edition and translation of this ode, see Race (1997).

⁴² On the connection between *dorb* and serpents or serpentine creatures, see Pagé (2014: 149–50).

⁴³ Scowcroft argues that Dumézil’s conception of *le borgne* and *le manchot* as associated respectively with hidden knowledge and broken contracts is perhaps best represented by *Talland Etair* (1995: 147).

noted, there is also a connection to be made with the passage in CMT in which Lugh performs a satire against Balor with one eye closed while holding one arm behind him and standing on one foot (CMT §129). McCone (2021: 215) in fact argues that to the collocation of one-handed and one-eyed we should add one-legged or one-footed, and that all three disfigurements pertain to the function of the warrior and not that of the sovereign, as originally suggested by Dumézil.

There are multiple difficulties in interpreting the state of Balor's body. We have seen already that while Balor has an evil eye, the exact position and powers of which can vary considerably, Lugh's destruction of that eye is a fixed point in the narrative in almost all cases.⁴⁴ As Scowcroft puts it: 'Balor himself may have one, two or three eyes, one of which is poisonous, incendiary, or otherwise malignant; he may have two eyes in front, one each in front and back, an extra eye in the middle of his forehead or one eye only. Lug always puts the evil eye out' (1995: 143). In considering the asymmetries of Balor's body, we must also bear in mind that he is one of the Fomorians, who are sometimes described as one-armed and one-legged and sometimes one-eyed, as in *Lebor Gabála Érenn*, which calls them *fir con āen-chossaibh 7 con āen-lāmaibh* (Macalister 1937: 12–13, §216, R³ text) 'men with one leg and with one arm', in one recension, while another describes a battle in which they were involved as being fought *for āen-cossaib 7 āen-lāmaib 7 āen-sūilib* (Macalister 1937: 12–13, §216, R² text) 'on one foot and one hand and one eye'. Though the exact nature of the imbalance of Balor's body may be difficult to determine and even variable, it can certainly be said that he is asymmetrical, and, like Mess Gegra and Lugaid, he enters his final combat not merely wounded, but injured in a way that deprives him of his core defence. The damaging or destruction of his eye removes his power as a cyclops/giant/monster/Fomorian, just as losing a hand reduces Mess Gegra's and Lugaid's ability to function as warriors. It is also worth noting that Lugh's slaying of Balor in CMT and his initial wounding of Balor in CMT² both immediately follow Balor's killing of Núadu, himself a (temporarily) one-handed warrior, whom Dumézil associated with the figure of *le manchot*. As Scowcroft observes, there is an episode in *Cath Maige Tuired Cunga*, known as the 'First Battle of Mag Tuired' (Fraser 1916), in which Núadu is challenged to combat by Sreng, the warrior who had previously cut off his arm. Núadu points out that, because he has lost one arm, for their combat to be fair Sreng should bind his own arm (Fraser 1916: §58). Sreng refuses, but the parallel to Mess Gegra's and Lugaid's combats with Conall Cernach is striking and suggests that Núadu may indeed stand in as the one-armed warrior in CMT².

This allows for two interpretive possibilities. The first is to treat the figure of *le manchot* in this episode as replaced by the figure of *le borgne*, Balor himself, who also loses his leg. The second is to view Núadu as an indirect participant in this episode, fulfilling the role of *le manchot* through his association with Balor, *le borgne*. Given the common collocation of one-handed and one-eyed

⁴⁴The version of the story published in Larminie (1893) is the only variant that I am aware of that makes no reference to Balor's eye.

figures in medieval Irish literature, both scenarios are certainly possible. However, if we widen our focus and consider not just the ‘incident of the head’ but the totality of TÉ, BMMM, and CMT/CMT², we find that one-eyed and one-handed figures are present and paired in all three. As noted above, Mess Gegra’s behaviour in TÉ can be contrasted with that of Echu mac Luchtae, who plucks out his own eye and who, as Scowcroft has argued, represents the figure of *le borgne* corresponding to Mess Gegra as *le manchot*. These two kings are the first and last that Aithirne visits during his tour of Ireland. While Echu indulges Aithirne’s monstrous requests without objection and is rewarded for it, Mess Gegra only grudgingly satisfies his guest’s demands. As a result, Aithirne prophesies that Mess Gegra will lose his head, and war with the Ulaid ensues. Further, as Scowcroft argues, if we consider the descriptions of Cú Chulainn as *goll* ‘purblind, squinting’, and the many descriptions of his *ríastrad* that describe one eye retreating so far into his head that a crane cannot pluck it out,⁴⁵ then we find both the figure of *le borgne* and that of *le manchot* in Cú Chulainn himself, who makes Lugaid one-handed after his death, and loses his own arm at the same time, a post-mortem injury that matches the removal of Balor’s leg. To this we should add that Cú Chulainn enters his final battle with damage to his foot, hand, and left leg. He is first injured when his brooch drops and pierces his foot while he is dressing for battle (Kimpton 2009: ll. 62–4), and then further weakened when he is presented with dog meat, which he hides under his left thigh. The hand that took the meat and the leg under which he hid it then lose their strength (Kimpton 2009: ll. 241–3). This damage to his hand and foot is significant enough that, in her lament after his death, Emer refers to Cú Chulainn as going into battle *óenchossid óenlámaid* (ll. 634) ‘with one foot and with one hand’. The damage to a leg or foot is therefore clearly integrated into the schema of the one-handed one and the one-eyed one, and the removal of Balor’s leg can thus be treated as representing this third injury rather than as a substitution for *le manchot*.

In TÉ, BMMM, and CMT², at least, we can say that the ‘incident of the head’ is entangled with the collocation of *le borgne* and *le manchot*. Once we move on to the later stories about Balor, however, the connection with Núadu, and so with this aspect of the earlier mythic structure, is lost, or at least reduced. It is worth noting, however, that at least one of the modern folk-tale versions of the story does feature the collocation of a one-handed person with a one-eyed person. In the version of the story published by Larminie, Balor is instructed to send his son to seek out a woman with one hand and a child with one eye, who can provide the tools required to complete the construction of his palace

⁴⁵McCone (2021: 218) argues that Cú Chulainn’s *ríastrad* renders him, at least temporarily, a cyclops. As pointed out to me by the anonymous reviewer, in *Betha Colaim Chille* (ed. O’Kelleher and Schoepperle 1918: 176–9) we have an intersection of the motif of an eye being plucked out by a crane (as found in the descriptions of Cú Chulainn’s *ríastrad*, where it is offered a physical possibility, rather than something that actually takes place) and the restoration of an eye that has been plucked out (as in the episode with Echu mac Luchtae). When Columcille discovers that a youth has been spying on him, he instructs his pet crane to pluck out the youth’s eye, which it does through the keyhole that the youth is looking through. When Finden, the abbot, learns what has happened, he restores the youth’s eye.

(1893: 2–3). This version of the story does not contain the incident of the head and makes no reference to Balor’s evil eye or its destruction, yet in it we find an echo of the presence of *le borgne* and *le manchot*.

While some of the transformations that occur to the story of the conflict between Balor and Lugh shift it away from the other versions of this episode, other changes instead bring it closer to TÉ and BMMM. One element strongly present in Conall Cernach’s combats with Mess Gegra and Lugaid is the desire for vengeance, and specifically vengeance for a family member. He pursues Mess Gegra to avenge his brothers and he pursues Lugaid to avenge Cú Chulainn, his foster-brother. Lugh’s conflict with Balor contains a family connection in that Balor is consistently presented as Lugh’s grandfather, but in the earlier versions of the story the vengeance aspect is present only weakly, if at all. Gray notes that when Lugh kills Balor in CMT, he is ‘thereby avenging the fallen Núadu’ (1982: 3), but this is not explicitly his goal in confronting Balor. In fact, in CMT he does not even pursue Balor, instead facing him in the midst of the ongoing battle between the Túatha Dé Danann and the Fomoirie. In CMT² Lugh does pursue Balor and face him in single combat, but vengeance is not presented as a motivating factor. In the later folktales, however, Lugh is given a much more direct motive for killing Balor: vengeance for the death of his own father. The version of the story printed in O’Donovan (1856) describes how Balor kills Lugh’s father, named here as Fin MacKineely. Balor later boasts about this act, not realizing that he is in the presence of Lugh, who, ‘taking a glowing rod from the furnace, thrust it through the basilisk eye of Balor and out through the other side of his head, thus avenging the death of his father, slaying his grandfather, and executing the decree of fate, which nothing can avert’ (O’Donovan 1856: 21). The two stories about Balor’s death previously mentioned from Curtin’s *Hero-Tales of Ireland* are given the titles ‘Balor on Tory Island’ and ‘Balor of the Evil Eye and Lui Lavada, his Grandson’. Only the first of these, which Curtin collected from Michael Currann of Gort an Choirce, Co. Donegal, contains ‘the incident of the head’, and this is also the version in which vengeance for his father motivates Lugh’s attack on Balor. In this version, Lugh is unaware of his own relationship with Balor, and kills him only to avenge his father. In both of these stories, Fin MacKineely’s death involves his head being placed upon a stone and then cut off. In the version printed in O’Donovan (1856: 21), MacKineely’s blood is said to have marked the stone, and we are told that ‘it was raised, in 1794, on a pillar sixteen feet high’ and that this pillar, which the Four Masters refer to as *Cloch Chinnfhaolaidh*, remains ‘a very conspicuous object in the neighbourhood’.⁴⁶ Thus, in providing Lugh with the motive of vengeance for his father, these accounts also incorporate a secondary incident involving the placement of a severed head on a pillar-stone, with the heads of both MacKineely and Balor being placed on stones.

While there are many additional stories about the death of Balor, only a few contain ‘the incident of the head’, but they do so in ways that are remarkably

⁴⁶Lacey (2018) provides further discussion of this monument and its history.

similar to the literary versions previously discussed. One version of the episode is found in Seosamh Laoide's *Cruach Chonaill*:

D'iarr sé air an cionn a ghearradh dó agus a chur i mullach a chinn féin. Chuir sé i mullach na Cloiche Gairbhe é, agus thainic deor nimhe amach as a'chionn. Sgoilt sé an chreag agus d'éirigh loch ann. (1909: 65)

'He [Balor] asked him [Lugh] to cut off his head and place it on top of his own head. He put it on top of the Cloch Gharbh (Rough Stone), and a poisonous drop came out of the head. It split the rock and a lake rose out of it.'

This episode is found also in Curtin's 'Balor on Tory Island'. In this story, Lugh strikes Balor in the eye with a spear, leading Balor to recognize him as his grandson, since no one else could have struck him such a blow. He calls out to Lugh then, saying: 'Come near now. Take the head off me and place it above your own for a few moments. You will know everything in the world, and no one will be able to conquer you' (Curtin 1894: 294). Lugh beheads Balor but instead of placing the head above his own, he places it on a nearby rock. There, 'a drop came out of the head, made a thousand pieces of the rock, and dug a hole in the earth three times deeper than Loch Foyle, — the deepest lake into the world up to that time, — and so long that in that hole are the waters of Gweedore Loch, they have been there from that day to this' (Curtin 1894: 294).

Here again, we find the motif of the creation of a lake stemming from the properties of Balor's head and the way that it is handled, something entirely absent from the stories about Mess Gegra and Lugaid, but which continues a theme from some of the earlier stories about Balor, which is the reshaping of the landscape. A common thread that runs through the different versions of this story is the destructive and often profound impact that Balor's body has on the surrounding landscape, both before and after his death. This is something not found in the other texts, and again reflects the fact that with Balor we are not dealing with the body of a mortal, but that of a god or monster. In consequence, the dangers associated with his body are of a greater magnitude than what we find with Mess Gegra or Lugaid.

5. CONCLUSION

The departure point for this study was the core sequence of (1) an instruction that a severed head be placed on the head of the person who severed it; (2) the head being placed elsewhere instead; and (3) this resulting in the head causing damage wherever it was placed, rather than to the intended victim of this form of posthumous revenge. After examining the stories more closely, it is possible to give a fuller description of the narrative elements involved in this episode.

1. The encounter between the two opponents comes about when one seeks vengeance, most often for the death of one or more family members. We

have seen that Conall Cernach seeks out Mess Gegra in order to avenge his brothers and Lugaid in order to avenge his foster-brother. In the modern folk versions, Lugh seeks to avenge his father, and even in the earlier versions, vengeance for Núadu could be viewed as a motivating factor in his confrontation with Balor.

2. Mess Gegra, Lugaid, and Balor are all injured in ways that impede their core functions before combat begins. Mess Gegra and Lugaid have each lost a hand, and Balor has lost his eye. These injuries, along with injuries to various figures within the narrative orbits of Mess Gegra, Lugaid, and Balor, suggest a mythic framework involving the collocation of *le manchot* and *le borgne*, with the potential third injury of loss of foot or leg suggested by McCone (2021) also a common feature.
3. In each case, the injured party asks that their injury be acknowledged and taken into account. Mess Gegra and Lugaid ask for *fír ngaiscid* and *fír fer*, respectively, with the result that Conall Cernach binds his own arm in imitation of their injuries to ensure fair combat. In CMT² Balor simply asks that Lugh cause him no further injury, but Lugh refuses. In ‘Balor on Tory Island’, Lugh puts out Balor’s eye, and Balor then pursues him for a time before becoming too weak to continue. Each opponent of the hero is weakened in ways that make their deaths inevitable.
4. Each opponent makes another request, once they realize that they are doomed. Mess Gegra, Lugaid, and Balor all request that their severed heads be taken by their killers and placed upon their own heads. Each offers a potential benefit along with this request: that by doing so their killers may inherit something from them. Mess Gegra offers his *orddan*, which, as discussed, has a range of meanings that include ‘sovranty’ and ‘ordaining, raising to dignity’. Lugaid’s offer is more concrete: he offers his kingship and his weapons. Balor directly names Lugh as his heir and offers him everything that he has. Each of these offers seems to acknowledge that the victor of the combat has earned the right to some form of inheritance or succession, but none of these offers are made in good faith.
5. In each case, the head, once removed, displays properties that make it physically dangerous. Specifically, all three heads develop corrosive properties. Lugaid’s head dissolves the stone on which it is placed. Balor’s head splits and poisons trees, or cracks rocks and the earth itself so deeply that a lake is formed. The blood that drips from Mess Gegra’s head pierces through a pillar-stone, and in a poem in the ‘D’ version of AC, his brain is described as giving Conchobar *dig di nathrach neim* ‘a drink of a snake’s venom’ and as being itself *neimnech* ‘venomous’ or ‘poisonous’.⁴⁷ The destruction that it causes to Conchobar leaves him immobilized and effectively sterile for a

⁴⁷ This poem is not found in all manuscripts of this version of AC, and so Kobel does not include it in her edition of the text (2015: 27). I instead here cite the edition of Meyer (1906: 18–21).

period of seven years. Given the association between the body of the king and the land itself, Mess Gegra's brain could potentially be read here as having a harmful impact on the landscape.⁴⁸ In all three cases, the various acts of dismemberment to the body are mirrored by the ability of the head to cause disintegration, though this is greatly magnified in Balor's case.

6. The attempt at posthumous revenge consistently fails when the instruction regarding the placement of the head is disobeyed. This comes about when Conall Cernach and Lugh instead take the heads as trophies, which suggests the value of the heads as trophies is greater than the rewards that were promised in consequence of placing the heads on their own.

In addition to these structural similarities, the stories discussed also present a number of parallel thematic concerns. In the two Ulster Cycle stories, there is a strong focus on questions of correct behaviour, particularly in the context of single combat. The appeals to *fir fer* and *fir ngaiscid* offer Conall Cernach an opportunity to display ethical behaviour and honour, just as the combats themselves allow him to display his martial abilities. The personal attributes and broad skill set of the hero are showcased in these stories not just through physical strength and honour, but also through intelligence. Conall Cernach and Lugh are both superior warriors, but both are also clever enough not to be taken in by the traps laid for them by Mess Gegra, Lugaid, and Balor. Vengeance is another shared theme of these stories, both leading to and stemming from the central combats involved. In these episodes, posthumous revenge is a matter of intent rather than accident. That harmful intent is transferred from the living person to their severed head, which is thus transformed into a weapon and an instrument of vengeance. The dangerous properties that these heads develop after being severed can be connected to the more general circumstances that create restless spirits and malevolent ghosts in stories from all over the world: unfinished business and the desire for vengeance. In these dangerous and toxic heads, we see the reverse of the healing powers that are often attributed to the relics of saints, with the heads inheriting and perpetuating the malevolent intent of their previous owners, just as the saints' relics continue the holiness inherent in the body of the living saint.⁴⁹ We find positive attributes not only in the case of saints' relics, however. In *Goire Conaill Chernaig* we are told of Conall Cernach's own severed head that *Ata a tarngire do Ulaib a breth budthes aris 7 doicfa a nert cétna intib aris acht co n-ebad as as* (Meyer 1897: 105, l. 18–106, l. 2) 'The Ulaib had a prophecy about its being carried southwards again and that their original strength would come to them again, but only if they drank milk from it'. In Mess Gegra's severed head also, we find not only the dangerous, negative attributes previously discussed but also the more positive ones that might be expected of the heads of saints or kings: the ability to provide salvation

⁴⁸See McCone (1990), Chapter 5 on 'Kingship and society', for the reciprocal relationship between the king and the land.

⁴⁹Helen Imhoff (2018) has discussed some of the ways that aspects of the body after death, including its physical properties and its burial, act as a continuation of the characterization of the living person.

and the ability to provide protection. AC tells us that *is nemedach gach aen fora racha incind Miscegra ic dol fria bás 7 ata briathar a breth fodes a Lagnib 7 fortamlus doib iarsin* (Meyer 1906: 10n)⁵⁰ ‘each one upon whom the head of Mess Gegra goes as he is dying is guaranteed heaven and there is a saying that it will be brought southwards to Leinster and they will have supremacy after that’.

Transformation, both of the head itself and caused by the head, is also a theme found in the various versions of the ‘incident of the head’. In the case of Mess Gegra’s head, we see that the transformation does not end with the attempt on Conall Cernach’s life, or even with the use of his brain as a weapon against Conchobar. Mess Gegra’s transformation continues as his brain becomes a holy relic and then a lake-monster, and in its ability to offer salvation to those it touches at the moment of death, Mess Gegra’s brain also has a transformative power. Lugaid’s head is most limited in its transformations, but it does have the ability to melt stone, and the place where his head is forgotten is renamed because of this incident (Kimpton 2009: l. 486). Balor’s ability to transform spreads well beyond direct contact with his head, altering the landscape in which his severed head is placed, and thus extending his malicious intent beyond the limits of his own body. Just as the abilities of the living warrior are displayed by Conall Cernach and Lugh, so the potential abilities of the body after death are displayed by the heads of Mess Gegra, Lugaid, and Balor.

The affinities between these three separate episodes are clear, and so the question of the relationship between them must be considered. *Brisleach Mór Maige Muirthemne*, dated to the eighth century (Kimpton 2009: 8), is the earliest of the texts. As previously mentioned, Thurneysen saw the combat between Conall Cernach and Lugaid as a model for the combat between Conall Cernach and Mess Gegra in *Talland Étair*, which dates to the ninth century (Ó Dónaill 2005: 39).⁵¹ The earliest attested form of the ‘incident of the head’ in connection with Balor is DF XVI, which has been dated to c. 1150 by Gerard Murphy (1953: cxvi).⁵² Radner, who discusses Balor as a stand-in for invaders, first the Vikings and then the English, states that: ‘It seems to me no coincidence, furthermore, that the tale gains a new closing motif — the so-called Episode of the Head — during the period at which the English conquest of Ireland intensified’ (1992: 146). Radner further suggests that what Balor offers Lugh in exchange for placing his head on his own is, in fact, ‘that the Irish hero will learn to behave like his oppressor’ (1992: 147). This is an entirely plausible contemporary

⁵⁰I quote here from the Meyer edition of the text because this passage is found in the Edinburgh manuscripts of the text and is therefore not treated as part of the main text of the A version. Kobel refers to this passage (2015: 61, 143, and 342) and provides a transcription (433–4), but does not provide an edition of it.

⁵¹Ó Dónaill instead suggests that *TÉ* may be the source of BMMM, stating that ‘this episode is not contained in *TBC* Rec. I, so it is possible, as the language of *TÉ* is generally older than that of the LL *Táin*, that *TÉ* was the source for this incident in the later recension’ (2005: 6). The incident under discussion is not contained in any recension of the *Táin Bó Cúailnge*, but there is an unrelated passage called *Bresleach Maige Murthemne*, which begins at l. 2121 of O’Rahilly’s edition. There may be some confusion between BMMM and this part of the LL *TBC* based on their titles.

⁵²On the dating of the poems in *Duanaire Finn*, see further Carey (2003b).

reading of this scene, and a demonstration of how the same narrative structure can convey different messages in different contexts. However, we cannot be certain that this episode had not previously been associated with Balor's death in the oral tradition, in which the conflict between Balor and Lugh continues to play a dynamic role into at least the nineteenth century. Despite the numerous transformations to the story, it has in many cases retained the 'incident of the head', which suggests that this is one of the more stable, and therefore potentially older, elements of the narrative. It is not possible to argue for direct influence in this case, but it seems that we are dealing with a relatively cohesive narrative episode that could be inserted into various stories about vengeance and single combat. Further, as we have seen, during the earlier period this seems to have been associated with the mythological context involving the figures of *le borgne* and *le manchot*. In the 'incident of the head' we have the framework of a narrative episode that could be fleshed out and reshaped as required in different ways and in multiple narrative contexts, a thematic and motival complex that offers insight into the dynamic and transformative nature of stories inherited throughout the Irish mythological, literary, and folk traditions across centuries.

6. ABBREVIATIONS

AC	<i>Aided Chonchobair</i>
BMMM	<i>Brisleach Mór Maige Muirthemni</i>
CMT	<i>Cath Maige Tuired</i>
CMT ²	<i>Cath Muighe Tuireadh</i>
DF	<i>Duanaire Finn</i>
LL	The Book of Leinster (TCD MS H 2. 18 (1339))
TBC	<i>Táin Bó Cúalgne</i>
TÉ	<i>Talland Étair</i>

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A WRONG TURN ON THE WAY TO TROY:
SAMSON AND THE CLASSICAL TRADITION
IN MEDIEVAL IRELAND¹

ABSTRACT

This article examines the sources and style of a short narrative found in RIA MS D iv 2 (1223) and edited by Carl Marstrander as *How Samson Slew the Gesteda*. I argue that this text adapts the myths of Hercules and Busiris, and Philomela, retelling them to star the biblical Samson as the protagonist. This process of creative adaptation draws on late antique synchronisms and medieval Irish pseudohistorical traditions, linking Classical and biblical characters and events; this article offers suggestions as to the textual sources that influenced the production of the narrative and analyses its medieval Irish cultural context. *How Samson Slew the Gesteda* has received very little critical attention to date, but a careful consideration of its contents and context helps to illuminate our understanding of the processes of reception and intellectual innovation at work in twelfth-century Ireland.

A FIFTEENTH-CENTURY manuscript contained in Dublin's Royal Irish Academy, RIA MS D iv 2 (1223) contains a curious narrative.² Carl Marstrander edited the text in question under the title *How Samson Slew the Gesteda* in 1911 but it has received virtually no critical attention since.³ Kuno Meyer had already provided a short summary of the first half of the text in 1903 but made no mention of Samson's appearance in the second half.⁴ To the best of my knowledge, the only scholar to mention the tale in a critical article is Jacqueline Borsje, who discusses it in passing when listing instances of human sacrifice in medieval Irish literature.⁵ Marstrander suggests a

¹ I extend my heartfelt thanks to Máire Ní Mhaonaigh, Paul Russell, Barry Lewis, and the anonymous reviewer and copy editor for their time, consideration, and helpful suggestions, to Agnese Fontana for sharing her research on Byzantine chronicles, to James Miller for reading multiple drafts of this article, and to the Harding Distinguished Postgraduate Scholars Programme for supporting this research. All errors are my own. Unless otherwise stated, all translations are my own.

² *ISOS* catalogues the text as fol. 69vb–71ra. (The old numbering in Carl Marstrander (ed. and trans.), 'How Samson Slew the Gesteda', *Ériu* 5 (1911), 145–59 and Kuno Meyer, 'Mitteilungen aus irischen Handschriften', *ZCP* 4 (1903), 467–8 is fol. 61vb–62vb.)

³ Marstrander (ed. and trans.), 'How Samson Slew the Gesteda'.

⁴ Meyer, 'Mitteilungen aus irischen Handschriften', 467–8.

⁵ Jacqueline Borsje, 'Human sacrifice in medieval Irish literature', in J. N. Bremmer (ed.), *The Strange World of Human Sacrifice*, Studies in the History and Anthropology of Religion (Leuven, 2007), 31–54, at 45.

late twelfth-century date for the text, which seems reasonable on linguistic grounds.⁶

The plot runs as follows: the land of the Gesteda faces a terrible drought because the angry gods conceal the waters. A priest from India named Proiss arrives and narrates the cause of his banishment to the king of the Gesteda. Proiss had been married to Algdha, the daughter of the King of Thrace. He conceived a terrible passion for Tabuile, his wife's daughter by the King of Africa. After Tabuile rejected his advances, he raped her on a hunting trip. When Algdha learned of this, she violently whipped Proiss, killed his seven sons and his nobles, and finally exiled him after her own retinue convinced her not to kill him. Despite hearing this narrative of shame and violence, the Gesteda request Proiss's advice concerning how to fix their drought. Proiss tells them to sacrifice all their priests, druids and seers to the gods, and when they have exhausted those, to move on to other men. The narrative suddenly shifts focus at this point and recounts how Priam's son Helen(us) has come to request Samson's aid against the Greeks in the Trojan War. Samson sends messengers to Troy to ascertain whether the Trojans worship the same god as the Israelites. En route, his messengers are shipwrecked in the land of the Gesteda. The king begins sacrificing the messengers, but allows one to return to Samson and tell him what has occurred. Upon learning the fates of his messengers, Samson rushes off to fight the Gesteda in his ivory ship, dragging along his unwilling wife, Lilia, and the priest, Nehemias. Samson wields his camel jawbone, two beams of light shoot from his eyes, and he jumps on the floor of the palace so that it shakes, prompting everyone inside to fall upon their own weapons in fear. He then ties up the king, queen, and Proiss, and kills the rest of the Gesteda. Finally, Samson forces the king, queen and Proiss to watch the waters return before killing them too. Samson thanks God and the text ends with a note that the priest Nehemias recorded the story.⁷

In RIA MS D iv 2, *How Samson Slew the Gesteda* immediately follows a series of short Classical adaptations, *Fingal Chlainne Tantai*, *Merugud Uilix*, and *Sgél in Mínaduir*, and is itself directly followed by *Riss in Mundtuirc*. All of these twelfth- or thirteenth-century texts represent creative approaches towards reconstructing and retelling tales from Classical mythology that were most likely not available to the medieval Irish in their original Greek forms.⁸

⁶Marstrander (ed. and trans.), 'How Samson Slew the Gesteda', 146. Linguistic features that support this dating include 3 pl. perfect passive forms such as *rocelilit* (l. 5) and *rotimairgit* (l. 6), and independent object pronouns such as *Roghuidhiusa hí* (l. 29) and *dia deoin í* (l. 35). Most verbs have been simplified, suggesting a general Middle Irish date as well, e.g., *Rotinoiled* (l. 78), *Tangatar* (l. 92), *Doriachtsat* (l. 94), and *roinnsitar* (l. 95).

⁷Marstrander (ed. and trans.), 'How Samson Slew the Gesteda', ll. 228–9.

⁸For editions and source analysis of these shorter Classical adaptations see the following: *Fingal Chlainne Tantai*: Mary Byrne (ed. and trans.), 'The parricides of the children of Tantalus', *RC* 44 (1927), 14–33; R. J. Crampton, 'The uses of exaggeration in *Merugud Uilixis Meic Leirtis* and *Fingal Chlainne Tantai*', in Ralph O'Connor (ed.), *Classical Literature and Learning in Medieval Irish Narrative*, *Studies in Celtic History* 34 (Woodbridge, 2014), 58–82. *Merugud Uilix*: Robert T. Meyer (ed.), *Merugud Uilix maic Leirtis*, *Mediaeval and Modern Irish Series* 17 (Dublin, 1958); Barbara Hillers, 'The medieval Irish *Wandering of Ulysses* between literacy and orality', in Ralph O'Connor (ed.), *Classical Literature*, 83–97, and her 'Ulysses and the Judge of

Whoever placed *How Samson Slew the Gesteda* beside these other tales clearly thought that it was a similar text and indicated how it should be read. *How Samson Slew the Gesteda* is positioned, then, as a Classical adaptation. Its length is commensurate with the other short Classical adaptations that precede and follow it in the manuscript. Its innovation and synthesis of multiple sources also put it in good company with these shorter Classical adaptation texts that assemble mythological narratives out of references in Classical Latin authors, later commentaries, mythographies, and scholia.⁹ These contrast with longer adaptations that translate lengthier works of Classical Latin verse such as the twelfth-century *Togail na Tebe* (the medieval Irish adaptation of Statius's *Thebaid*) and *In Cath Catharda* (the medieval Irish version of Lucan's *De Bello Civili*).

Marstrander gives only one page of commentary in his edition of *How Samson Slew the Gesteda*. He suggests that the location of the land of the Gesteda should be taken as the land of Goshen in Egypt. He bases this both on the observation that the location is reachable by sea from Israel and India and the fact that the *Leabhar Breac* (henceforth, LB) refers to Goshen as *Gessen issind Egipt*, 'Gessen in Egypt'.¹⁰ LB is an early fifteenth-century manuscript, largely containing Latin and Irish religious texts, including hagiography, and mentions Samson in a biblical historiographical tract (henceforth, the *LB Biblical Tract*), which will be discussed below.¹¹ LB also contains *Scéla Alaxandair*, a tenth-

Truth: sources and meanings in the Irish Odyssey', *Peritia* 13 (1999), 194–223; Michael Clarke, 'A Latin source for *Merugud Uilix*, the medieval Irish narrative of Ulysses', *Ériu* 70 (2020), 95–118. *Sgél in Minaduir*: Kuno Meyer (ed.), 'Mitteilungen aus irischen Handschriften. VI: Aus dem Stowe MS. D. 4. 2. Sgél in Mhínaduir', *ZCP* 4 (1903), 238–40; Barbara Hillers, 'Sgél in Minaduir: Dädalus und der Minotaurus in Irland', in Erich Poppe and Hildegard L. C. Tristram (eds), *Übersetzung, Adaptation und Akkulturation im insularen Mittelalter*, Studien und Texte zur Keltologie 4 (Münster, 1999), 131–44. *Riss in Mundtuirc*: Brent Miles (ed. and trans.), 'Riss in Mundtuirc: the tale of Harmonia's necklace and the study of the Theban Cycle in medieval Ireland', *Ériu* 57 (2007), 67–112.

⁹For further discussion of the shorter Classical adaptations in RIA MS D iv 2 and their affinities to 'How Samson Slew the Gesteda', see Brigid Ehrmantraut, 'How Samson Slew the Gesteda', in Michael Clarke, Erich Poppe, and Isabelle Torrance (eds), *Classical Antiquity in Medieval Ireland: The Antiquity Sagas and Related Literature*, Bloomsbury Studies in Classical Reception (London, forthcoming).

¹⁰Marstrander (ed. and trans.), 'How Samson Slew the Gesteda', 145. Marstrander does not specify where in LB this quotation occurs, but he must refer to the appearance of the phrase in LB fol. 49a26, in a text on the Paschal Feast. We might compare Muirchú, *Vita Sancti Patricii*, I.13, which describes the first Easter as being celebrated in *Gessen*, although this reading is disputed between different manuscripts; see L. Bieler (ed. and trans.), *The Patrician Texts in the Book of Armagh* (Dublin, 1979), 82–3, 202 for apparatus and commentary.

¹¹The tract runs from LB fol. 109a to 150a, begins *Dorigne Dia imorro in rigthech uachtarach*, and summarises biblical history from the creation of the world through the life and teachings of Christ. The section of the text in fol. 133b23 to 144b22 concerning the infancy of Christ has been edited in Martin McNamara et al. (eds and trans), *Apocrypha Hiberniae, 1: Evangelia Infantiae* (Turnhout, 2001), 247–439. The Old Testament section of the text remains unedited and, in addition to the Samson material discussed here, includes a poem on the Ark of the Covenant and a meeting between Moses and Niul, father of Goídel Glas. The section on Samson appears in LB fol. 127a20 to 128a20. The manuscript catalogue as given on *ISOS* maintains the textual divisions given in Joseph Ó Longáin and J. J. Gilbert (eds), *Leabhar Breac, the Speckled Book, Otherwise Styled Leabhar Mór Dúna Doighre, the Great Book of Dun Doighre*, 2 vols (Dublin, 1872–6),

or eleventh-century compilation of material drawn from Orosius, the *Epistola Alexandri ad Aristotelem* and the *Collatio Alexandri cum Dindimo rege Bragmanorum*. In both the *LB Biblical Tract* and *How Samson Slew the Gesteda*, Samson has a servant named Gerson. I have found no other example of a character associated with Samson by this name, or in fact any other biblical or apocryphal character who shares the name except a son of Levi in Num. 3:21, and a son of Moses in Exod. 2:22, both of whom significantly predate Samson in biblical chronology.

SOURCES: HERCULES AND SAMSON

In *How Samson Slew the Gesteda*, we have a tale of a legendary strong hero killing a king (likely in Egypt) who has been sacrificing visitors to the gods in order to avert a drought. This is ultimately the myth of Hercules and Busiris, recast to star the biblical Samson. In the Classical myth (individual versions of which will be presented below), Busiris, the king of Egypt, struggles with a terrible drought. The foreign seer Thrasius tells him to sacrifice his guests to the gods. Busiris decides that Thrasius himself, being a guest, will be the first sacrifice. Hercules later arrives in Egypt between Labours and kills Busiris when he tries to capture and sacrifice him. The death of Busiris ends the drought.

Numerous versions of the myth circulated in the Classical and late antique world. Greek versions, such as that in (Pseudo-)Apollodorus's *Bibliotheca*, can probably be ruled out as sources of transmission given the minimal knowledge of Greek in medieval Ireland.¹² Confining ourselves to versions of the myth found in Latin retellings known to have been read in the early medieval west, we still have a significant range of possible texts that could have transmitted this story to medieval Ireland, including Ovid, scholia on Ovid, Hyginus, Servius's and Philargyrius's commentaries on Vergil, Lactantius Placidus's commentary on Statius, Orosius, and the Vatican Mythographers. I shall attempt to narrow down the possible sources from this list, based on episodes and names that appear in *How Samson Slew the Gesteda*.

Ovid alludes to the myth three times. In the *Metamorphoses*, IX.182, Hercules states:

ergo ego foedantem peregrino templa cruore
Busirin domui ...?

but introduces the heading 'Biblical tract' under which nineteen sub-texts are listed (these nineteen texts are presented as separate, individual entries in Ó Longáin and Gilbert's facsimile). McNamara, *Apocrypha Hiberniae*, I, 249–56 discusses the unity (or lack thereof) of the New Testament sections of the text, but it is unclear to what degree the individual sub-texts of the Old Testament section represent a single, unified work. I refer to the entire text spanning LB fol. 109a–150a as the *LB Biblical Tract* for the sake of present clarity. Further investigation and the production of future editions are desirable.

¹²For knowledge of Greek in medieval Ireland (or lack thereof), see Pádraic Moran, 'Greek in early medieval Ireland', in Alex Mullen and Patrick James (eds), *Multilingualism in the Greco-Roman Worlds* (Cambridge, 2012), 172–92, and his 'A living speech? The pronunciation of Greek in early medieval Ireland', *Ériu* 61 (2011), 29–57.

‘Was it for this I slew Busiris, who defiled his temples with strangers’ blood?’¹³

In *Ars Amatoria*, I.647–52, Ovid gives a more detailed account:

Dicitur Aegyptos caruisse iuvantibus arva
Imbribus, atque annos sicca fuisse novem,
Cum Thrasius Busirin adit, monstratque piari
Hospitis adfuso sanguine posse Iovem.
Illi Busiris ‘fies Iovis hostia primus’,
Inquit ‘et Aegypto tu dabis hospes aquam’.

‘Egypt is said to have lacked the rains that bless its fields, and to have been parched for nine years, when Thrasius approached Busiris, and showed that Jove could be propitiated by the outpoured blood of a stranger. To him said Busiris, “Thou shalt be Jove’s first victim, and as a stranger give water unto Egypt.”’¹⁴

Ovid also obliquely mentions the story in *Ibis*, ll. 393–4:

Ut qui post longum, sacri monstrator iniqui,
Elicuit pluvias victima caesus aquas.

‘As he who taught a cruel rite, and after long time, a victim slain, brought rainy showers’.¹⁵

The scholiast on *Ibis* clarifies this reference, drawing on the information from *Ars Amatoria*.¹⁶

Hyginus mentions the myth twice in his *Fabulae*:

Busiridem in Aegypto, qui hospites immolare solitus erat; huius legem cum audiit, passus est se cum infula ad aram adduci, Busiris autem cum uellet deos imprecari, Hercules eum claua ac ministros sacrorum interfecit.¹⁷

‘Busiris in Egypt, who was accustomed to sacrifice guests. When [Hercules] heard of this, he allowed himself to be led to the altar with the ribbon of sacrifice, however, when Busiris was about to invoke the gods, Hercules killed him and the assistants of the sacrifice with a club’.

Busiris. In Aegypto apud Busiridem Neptuni filium cum esset sterilitas et Aegyptus annis nouem siccitate exaruisset, ex Graecia

¹³Ovid, *Metamorphoses*, in F. J. Miller (ed. and trans.), *Metamorphoses*, revised by G. P. Goold, LCL 43 (Cambridge, MA, 1916), 16 (edition), 17 (translation).

¹⁴Ovid, *Ars Amatoria*, in J. H. Mozley (ed. and trans.), *The Art of Love and Other Poems*, revised by G. P. Goold, LCL 232 (Cambridge, 1929), 56 (edition), 57 (translation).

¹⁵Ovid, *Ibis*, in J. H. Mozley (ed. and trans.), *The Art of Love and Other Poems*, 266 (edition), 267 (translation).

¹⁶Robinson Ellis (ed.), *P. Ovidii Nasonis Ibis, ex novis codicibus edidit, scholia vetera commentarium cum prolegomenis* ... (Oxford, 1881), 72.

¹⁷Hyginus, *Fabulae*, in Peter K. Marshall (ed.), *Fabulae* (Munich, 1993), §31.

augures conuocauit. Thrasius Pygmalionis fratris filius Busiridi monstraui immolato hospite uenturos imbres, promissisque fidem ipse immolatus exhibuit.¹⁸

‘Busiris: In Egypt in the land of Busiris, son of Neptune, when there was a famine and Egypt had been dry for nine years, the king called together augurs from Greece. Thrasius, the son of Pygmalion, Busiris’s brother, related that rains would come if a guest were sacrificed, and showed the truth in his promises when he himself was sacrificed.’

Servius comments on the myth in two instances in Vergil. On *Aeneid*, VIII.300, he says, *inde in Aegypto Busiridem necavit, qui aduenientes hospites immolare consueverat*,¹⁹ ‘Thence in Egypt [Hercules] killed Busiris, who had been accustomed to sacrifice arriving guests’. On *Georgics*, III.5, he elaborates, *Busiris rex fuit Aegypti: qui cum susceptos hospites immolaret, ab Hercule interemptus est, cum etiam eum uoluisset occidere*,²⁰ ‘Busiris was king of Egypt: who, because he sacrificed his welcomed guests, was killed by Hercules, because he wished to kill him likewise’. Philargyrius expands the story somewhat, also commenting on *Georgics*, III.5:

Busiris, Aegypti rex, omnibus annis Iovi hospites immolabat: nam per octo annos sterilitate Aegypto laborante, Pygmalion Cyprius finem futurum non ait, nisi sanguine hospitis litatum fuisset. primus autem Thyestes alienigena immolatus originem sacrificio dedit. *alii sic*: Busiris, Neptuni filius, rex Aegypti: qui cum Iovi hospites immolaret, pari exemplo mactatus est ab Hercule, ipsum quoque ausus aris admovere.²¹

‘Busiris, king of Egypt, used to sacrifice guests to Jove every year: for, when Egypt was afflicted with famine for eight years, the Cyprian Pygmalion said there would not be an end, unless the blood of guests was offered. However, Thyestes was the first foreigner to be sacrificed. Others [say] thus: Busiris, son of Neptune, king of Egypt: who, because he sacrificed guests to Jove, was killed by Hercules as a suitable example, having dared to lead that one [i.e., Hercules] likewise to the altars’.

Lactantius Placidus offers the following commentary on Statius, *Thebaid*, XII.155: *Busiridis Aras: hic rex Aegypti fuit, aduenas solitus ad aras mactare. postremo aduentu Herculis immolatus exemplo est*,²² ‘Altars of Busiris: this

¹⁸Ibid., §56.

¹⁹G. Thilo and H. Hagen (eds), *Servii grammatici qui feruntur in Vergilii carmina commentarii* (Leipzig, 1881–1902), ii, 242.

²⁰G. Thilo (ed.), *Servii grammatici qui feruntur in Vergilii Bucolica et Georgica commentarii* (Leipzig, 1887), 272.

²¹H. Albert Lion (ed.), *Commentarii in Virgilium Serviani sive commentarii in Virgilium qui Mauro Servio Honorato tribuuntur* (Göttingen, 1826), ii, 333.

²²Robert Dale Sweeney (ed.), *Lactantii Placidi in Statii Thebaida Commentum* (Leipzig, 1997), 643.

was a king of Egypt, he was accustomed to sacrifice foreigners on altars. Afterwards he was sacrificed as an example at the arrival of Hercules’.

Orosius mentions Busiris twice. He writes:

Busiridis in Aegypto cruentissimi tyranni crudelis hospitalitas et crudelior religio tunc fuit; qui innocentum hospitem sanguinem diis scelerum suorum participibus propinabat: quod execrabile sine dubio hominibus uiderim an ipsis etiam diis execrabile uideretur.²³

‘The hospitality of the gory tyrant Busiris in Egypt was cruel and his religion was even crueller; who used to propitiate the gods — partners in his crimes — with the innocent blood of his guests, which I would think, without a doubt, would seem execrable to humans or indeed also execrable to the gods themselves’.

He also questions, *an [...] Busiris in Aegypto peregrinorum infelicitur incurrentium impiissimus immolator?*²⁴ ‘Did not most impious Busiris in Egypt sacrifice travellers who unluckily crossed his path?’

Lastly, the First and Second Vatican Mythographers mention the episode. As they do so in nearly identical wording, I give only the Second:

*Busiris rex fuit Aegypti. Qui quum susceptos hospites immolare solitus esset, ab Hercule, quum eum etiam uoluisset occidere, interemptus est. Huius laudes Sostrates scripsit.*²⁵

‘Busiris was a king of Egypt who used to sacrifice guests whom he had welcomed. He was killed by Hercules when he also wanted to slay him. Socrates [Isocrates] sang his praises’.²⁶

Ovid and Hyginus are the earliest authors listed here, and it is likely that the other fourth- and fifth-century (or possibly as late as the eleventh-century in the case of the Vatican Mythographers) writers drew on them or on Greek or other non-extant Latin versions of the story. The basic Hercules and Busiris story could have been sourced from any of these Latin texts, but not all of them give all the details that are found in *How Samson Slew the Gesteda*. From Lactantius and Orosius alone, there is no way to connect Busiris with Hercules. Only Ovid, the scholiast on Ovid, and Hyginus mention Thrasius by name. If the name Proiss in *How Samson Slew the Gesteda* is based on the name of the seer in the Hercules story, however, the source for the story may have had the more common Greek variant spelling *Phrasius* (Φρασίος) for *Thrasius*.²⁷ This does

²³ Orosius, *Historiae Contra Paganos*, in Marie-Pierre Arnaud-Lindet (ed.), *Histoires contre les païens*, 3 vols (Paris, 1990–1), i, 58–9.

²⁴ Ibid., ii, 85.

²⁵ Péter Kulcsár (ed.), *Mythographi Vaticani I et II*, CCSL 91C (Turnhout, 1987), 29, 238.

²⁶ Ronald E. Pepin (trans.), *The Vatican Mythographers* (New York, 2008), §180.

²⁷ For example, Apollodorus, *Bibliotheca*, in J. G. Frazer (ed. and trans.), *Apollodorus: The Library*, LCL 121–2 (Cambridge, 1921), ii, 224–5.

not rule out a Latin source with a variant reading or a gloss containing the name *Phrasius*, or a conflation of *Phr*- and *Thr*- by Irish scribes.

There are closer-to-home variants of the Hercules story as well, found in both the eleventh-century first recension and twelfth-century second recension of *Togail Troí* (henceforth, TTr, TTr-1, and TTr-2, respectively). TTr is a vernacular version of the Troy story loosely based on Dares Phrygius's *De Excidio Troiae*. The Irish text expanded over time, gaining mythological details and dramatic descriptions more in keeping with the story's Homeric or Vergilian predecessors than with Dares's matter-of-fact style.²⁸ In TTr-1, *Is he damarbh Bussirim robói i coraidecht hi taeb srotha Níl. Is he side noedbrad a óeghedhaidh do sruth Níl*, 'It is he who killed Bussiris who was champion on the side of the river Nile. It is that one who used to sacrifice his guests to the river Nile'.²⁹ TTr-2 from the *Book of Leinster* adds to the narrative:

Is é dano ro marb Bossírim ro baí i curadacht i taib srotha Níl. Is éside no marbad a aigedu. ra chubrig sé Hercoil i cumma chaich 7 rasuc leis co bruach in tsrotha da edbairt. O ra siachtatar in sruth brissid Hercoil a chubrech. 7 marbaid Bossírim.³⁰

'It is he also who killed Bossíris who was champion on the side of the river Nile. That one used to kill his guests. He bound Hercules like the rest and took him with him to the edge of the river to sacrifice him. When they reached the river, Hercules broke his bonds and killed Bossíris'.

Neither recension mentions a Thrasius/Proiss character.³¹ TTr-2 does, however, mention Samson elsewhere and compares him twice to Hercules. In Nestor's description of Hector, Samson and Hercules are referenced:

Iss eside dorósce ar gail 7 gasciud. nirt 7 niachus. d'ócaib na huli Asia. acht Samsón mongach móradbul. tuísech mac n-amra nIs-raél. ar nira genair ríam a šamailside acht Hercuil. 7 ni thicsede inbar n-agidsi etir.³²

'It is he [Hector] who surpassed in valour and arms, strength and prowess the warriors of all Asia, except longhaired, very mighty Samson, leader of the marvellous sons of Israel, for there was not

²⁸For the development of TTr, see Brent Miles, *Heroic Saga and Classical Epic in Medieval Ireland*, Studies in Celtic History 34 (Woodbridge, 2011), 95–144; Leslie Diane Myrick, *From the De Excidio Troiae Historia to the Togail Troí: Literary-Cultural Synthesis in a Medieval Irish Adaptation of Dares' Troy Tale*, Anglistische Forschungen 223 (Heidelberg, 1993).

²⁹Whitley Stokes (ed.), 'The Destruction of Troy', in Whitley Stokes and Ernst Windisch (eds), *Irish Texts mit Übersetzungen und Wörterbuch* (Leipzig, 1884), II.1, 1–142, at II. 48–9.

³⁰*Togail Troí from the Book of Leinster*, in LL, iv, ll. 31231–4.

³¹See Brent Miles, 'Irish evidence for shared sources of classical mythology in Anglo-Saxon England and medieval Ireland', in Gernot R. Wieland, Carin Ruff, and Ross G. Arthur (eds), *Insignis Sophiae Arcator: Essays in Honour of Michael W. Herren on his 65th Birthday*, Publications of the Journal of Medieval Latin 6 (Turnhout, 2006), 124–48 for a discussion of Busiris sacrificing his guests to the Nile instead of Jove.

³²*Togail Troí*, LL iv, ll. 32579–82.

born before him his like, except Hercules, and that one does not oppose you at all [i.e., Hercules is not fighting against you].’

More importantly, TTr-2 mentions Samson and Hercules again, this time in the context of Hector’s death, when it says of Achilles:

Mairg da tarla frithalim a feirgge in láásin. ar ní rabi ‘sin domun in tansain oenfer da tísad díngbáil Achíl. ar níra mair Hercuil mac Amphitrionis 7 Alcmena. acht Samsón mongach móradbul túsech mac n-amra n-Israél. bes ticfad desede da mbeth and.³³

‘Woe to him to whom it befell to withstand his [Achilles’s] wrath on that day, for there was not in the world at that time any man who could equal Achilles — for Hercules son of Amphitryon and Alcmena was not still alive — except longhaired, very mighty Samson, leader of the marvellous sons of Israel. Perhaps it would have been possible for the aforementioned if he were there.’

TTr-2 thus connects Samson to Troy, entertaining the idea of an alternate (pseudo)historical tradition where Samson (could have) fought at Troy. I propose that it was this speculation, either made in TTr-2 or a text with similar contents, or drawn from wider traditions of synchronism connecting Samson and the Trojan War in time, that prompted the composition of *How Samson Slew the Gesteda*.

The historiographical methodology that synchronized biblical and Classical figures and historiography can be traced back to Eusebius’s *Chronicon*, which the Irish would have accessed through Jerome’s Latin translation.³⁴ Eusebius’s preface to the *Chronicon*, as translated by Jerome, states:

Samson autem est, quem in corporis robore Herculi similem ferunt posterī Judaeorum, et mihi videntur non multum inter se distare tempore, si quidem ambo circa Troiae captivitatem fuerunt.³⁵

‘Samson, however, is whom the descendants of the Jews report was similar to Hercules in bodily strength, and it seems to me they were not far apart in time, if indeed both lived around the time of the capture of Troy’.

Eusebius’s *Praeparatio Evangelica* also compares Samson to Hercules and asserts that the capture of Troy occurred seven years before Samson ruled the

³³Ibid., ll. 32823–5.

³⁴See Elizabeth Boyle, ‘Biblical history in the Book of Ballymote’, in Ruairí Ó hUiginn (ed.), *The Book of Ballymote*, Codices Hibernensis Eximii 2 (Dublin, 2018), 51–75, at 54 for a discussion of medieval Irish biblical pseudohistory within the framework of Eusebian (and other) chronologies.

³⁵Eusebius, *Chronicon*, in J. K. Fotheringham (ed.), *Eusebii Pamphili Chronici Canones latine vertit, adauxit, ad sua tempora produxit S. Eusebius Hieronymus* (London, 1923), 12.

Hebrews.³⁶ However, as this text circulated in Greek, it is probable the medieval Irish instead drew on Jerome's translation of the *Chronicon*, given limited Irish knowledge of Greek, as mentioned above.³⁷

Other medieval Irish texts also position Samson in relation to Hercules and/or to Trojan heroes. The poem *Luid Iasón ina luing loir* ('Jason went in his spacious ship') names *Samson*, *Treolus gan tár*, *Echtair*, *Ercoil*, *Aichil án*, *.v. iur is chalma ro-bí ar tuind talman togaidi*, 'Samson, Troilus without reproach, Hector, Hercules, noble Achilles, the five bravest men who were ever on the surface of the excellent earth'.³⁸ The poem, which likely accompanied a prose version of *Togail Troí*, probably dates from the twelfth century, although a later manuscript attributes it to the poet Flann Mainistrech (d. 1056).³⁹ A late twelfth-century (or even later) text, *Don Tres Troí*, places Samson's death before Hector's son Astyanax rebuilds Troy.⁴⁰ An eleventh-century poem by Gilla Chomdid úa Chormaic, *A Rí richid, réidig dam* ('O King of heaven, clarify to me'), synchronizes Samson with Aeneas.⁴¹

If the author(s) of *How Samson Slew the Gesteda* were thinking of Samson as a contemporary of Aeneas in addition to Hercules, it might explain the inclusion of the shipwreck that lands Samson's messengers in the kingdom of the Gesteda as a reference to the storm that washes Aeneas ashore on the Libyan coast in Vergil's *Aeneid*, I.81–222. It might also explain the sexual encounter between Proiss and Tabuile during a hunting trip in the first half of *How Samson Slew the Gesteda*, which is vaguely reminiscent of the encounter between Dido and Aeneas in the cave during a hunt in *Aeneid*, IV.129–72 (although Vergil's version does not include rape). While Vergilian allusions are certainly possible, Samson's character in *How Samson Slew the Gesteda* shows few other similarities to Aeneas, and Proiss's backstory bears far more resemblance to another Classical myth: the story of Philomela.

³⁶Eusebius, *Praeparatio Evangelica*, PG 21, col. 805–6.

³⁷The use of synchronisms to speculate on whether biblical characters could have fought at Troy was not unique to medieval Ireland. Agnese Fontana, 'Presenza della grecità antica nella Chronographia di Giovanni Malala', unpublished PhD thesis, University of Genoa (2020), 203 discusses an episode in John Malalas's *Chronographia* where the biblical King David is synchronized with the Trojan War. In 'What if King David had fought at Troy? The Trojan narrative in Byzantine world chronicles (VI–XII century): religious, historical and political issues', a paper delivered at the *Enchanted Reception: Religion and the Supernatural in Medieval Troy Narratives* conference at Ghent University, 4 June 2021, Fontana argued that this synchronism may have produced the Byzantine tradition where Priam asks David to fight at Troy, which is found in two chronicle fragments attributed to John of Antioch (Vienna, Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, MS Hist. Gr. 99, fol. 11v1–5 and Excerpta Salmasiana, ii, 27) and in Constantine Manasses's *Breviarium historicum*.

³⁸Gearóid S. Mac Eoin (ed. and trans.), 'Dán ar chogadh na Traoi', *Studia Hibernica* 1 (1961), 19–55, at 41 (edition), 54 (translation).

³⁹Ibid., 21, 49.

⁴⁰Brent Miles (ed. and trans.), *Don Tres Troí*, ITS 68 (Dublin, 2020), ll. 14–15.

⁴¹*LL*, iii, 574–87, at 578.

SOURCES: PROISS AND PHILOMELA

In the tale of Philomela, as recounted by Ovid, Philomela's sister Procne marries Tereus, the king of Thrace.⁴² Tereus desires Philomela and when she refuses him, he rapes her in a house in the woods, cutting out her tongue so that no one may learn of his crime. Philomela weaves a picture of the assault and shows it to her sister Procne. In vengeance, the two sisters kill Procne's son by Tereus and feed him to his father. Philomela, Procne, and Tereus are subsequently turned into birds.

The similarities between Philomela and *How Samson Slew the Gesteda* include a king raping a close female in-law alone in the woods and violent revenge when the truth is revealed, involving the murder of the king's son(s). Furthermore, several geographical details are comparable. In Ovid, Tereus is the king of Thrace.⁴³ In *How Samson Slew the Gesteda*, Proiss's wife Algdha is the daughter of the king of Thrace.⁴⁴ Proiss is the (former) high king and chief priest of India.⁴⁵ The action of the Philomela story does not take place in India, but Ovid compares Procne to a tigress of the Ganges when she kills her son.⁴⁶ Hyginus tells the story too, but without the Ganges detail found in Ovid that may have inspired an Irish redactor to link the setting to India.⁴⁷ The medieval Irish author(s) certainly could have known that the Ganges was in India, as *In Cath Catharda* mentions this fact.⁴⁸

These parallels may not be as close as those between the various versions of Hercules and Busiris and *How Samson Slew the Gesteda*. Proiss's back-story differs in several ways from that of Ovid's Philomela: Algdha and Tabuile are mother and daughter, rather than sisters; Proiss does not cut out Tabuile's tongue; Algdha merely kills Proiss's sons, rather than feeding them to him; no one becomes a bird. However there is another good reason for linking this story and the myth of Hercules and Busiris. The passage of Orosius, quoted above, discusses Philomela directly after Busiris, as another example of bloodshed and moral depravity in earlier pagan eras:

[...] tunc etiam Terei Procnae et Philomelae incesto parricidium adiunctum atque execrabilibus utroque conuiuium per infandos cibos additum, cum propter sororis pudicitiam ereptam praecisamque linguam filium paruulum mater occidit, pater comedit.⁴⁹

⁴²Ovid, *Metamorphoses*, VI.401–674.

⁴³Ibid., VI.424.

⁴⁴Marstrander (ed. and trans.), 'How Samson Slew the Gesteda', I. 17.

⁴⁵Ibid., I. 14.

⁴⁶Ovid, *Metamorphoses*, VI.636–7.

⁴⁷Hyginus, *Fabulae*, §§54–5.

⁴⁸Whitley Stokes (ed. and trans.), 'In Cath Catharda: the Civil War of the Romans, an Irish version of Lucan's *Pharsalia*', in Whitley Stokes and Ernest Windisch (eds), *Irische Texte mit Wörterbuch* (Leipzig, 1909), IV.2, 1–581, at ll. 1574–7.

⁴⁹Orosius, *Historiae*, I, 58–9.

‘[...] then patricide also joined the incest of Tereus, Procne, and Philomela and more execrable than either was the meal augmented by unmentionable food, for when [Tereus] had raped [Procne’s] sister and cut out her tongue, the mother [Procne] killed her own little son, and the father [Tereus] ate him’.

This would have provided an obvious link between the tales in the mind of any medieval reader of Orosius. In both the case of Hercules and Philomela, Orosius alone would not have been enough to construct the full narratives without recourse to a more detailed source, such as Ovid or Hyginus. That the link between Busiris and Philomela made in Orosius may have inspired *How Samson Slew the Gesteda* reveals the education and intellectual creativity of the Irish text’s authors and redactors, who were able to draw inspiration from one text, and fill in narrative details from others.

Orosius was a major source for medieval Irish historiographical writing and Classical adaptation, and, along with Eusebius and Jerome’s biblical synchronism noted above, played a large role in the development of the pseudohistorical methodology found in works such as the Irish *Sex Aetates Mundi*.⁵⁰ *Scéla Alaxandair* also draws heavily on Orosius and *Don Tres Troí* names Orosius as one of its sources, alongside Bede, Servius, Augustine, and Varro.⁵¹ The potential use of Orosius thus also ties *How Samson Slew the Gesteda* to larger Irish and indeed western European methods of synchronizing biblical and Classical material, and building new original narratives.

BIBLICAL SOURCES AND PARALLELS

In addition to adapting multiple Classical mythological and historiographical sources, *How Samson Slew the Gesteda* is very willing to draw from, and playfully adapt biblical material, most notably in its choice of hero. There are basic similarities between descriptions in the Irish text and the account of Samson’s life in Judg. 12–16, although these similarities are at the level of individual details, rather than informing the plot arc. Samson, like his biblical counterpart, fights with a jawbone, although the Irish Samson’s jawbone comes from a camel instead of an ass.⁵² This detail is also present in the *LB Biblical Tract* introduced above.⁵³ In *How Samson Slew the Gesteda*, Samson does not kill a lion, but he is described as leaping up *co leomunda*, ‘lionlike’.⁵⁴ In the Irish

⁵⁰Michael Clarke and Máire Ní Mhaonaigh, ‘The ages of the world and the ages of man: Irish and European learning in the twelfth century’, *Speculum* 95.2 (2020), 467–99, at 476.

⁵¹Miles, *Heroic Saga*, 55–7, 61–2. For further discussion of the influence of Orosius on *Scéla Alaxandair* see Hildegard Tristram, ‘Der insulare Alexander’, in Willi Erzgräber (ed.), *Kontinuität und Transformation der Antike im Mittelalter* (Thorbecke, 1989), 129–55, and her ‘More Talk of Alexander’, *Celtica* 21 (1990), 658–63.

⁵²*a chromchuarchoiltur do lecaín camail* ‘his crooked, bent coultter of the jawbone of a camel’. Marstrander (ed. and trans.), ‘How Samson Slew the Gesteda’, ll. 200–1. Cf. Judg. 15:15–16. All biblical quotations are from the Clementine Vulgate.

⁵³*LB*, fol. 127b7–8.

⁵⁴Marstrander (ed. and trans.), ‘How Samson Slew the Gesteda’, l. 203.

text, Samson's eyes shoot *da columain teinntighi*, 'two columns of flames'.⁵⁵ This may be a fanciful re-imagination of Judg. 16:25–6 where Samson knocks down *duas columnas*, 'two columns' after being blinded. *Columna* 'column' is the same Latin word as that which *How Samson Slew the Gesteda* uses for the 'two columns of flames,' having been loaned into Irish as *columa*.⁵⁶

How Samson Slew the Gesteda re-orders two of the major elements of the biblical Samson story: his destruction of the Philistines' building, causing his and their demise at the end of Judg. 16, and the appearance of water out of the ass's jawbone in Judg. 15. In *How Samson Slew the Gesteda*, Samson's destruction of the palace of the Gesteda precedes the reappearance of the waters. The collapsing house episode bears close similarities to Judg. 16:30, although in *How Samson Slew the Gesteda* this feat is accomplished merely by Samson jumping on the floor, and comes with the added detail that, *co trochair na sgeith 7 na slega 7 na cloidemthi 7 na hairm airchena dia naidhlenn*, '(and) the shields and the spears and the swords, and the other weapons, fell from off their rack'.⁵⁷ The *aidlenn* (weapon-rack) is a detail concomitant with an Irish narrative setting.⁵⁸ The return of the water after Samson has slain the Gesteda now comes at the end of the Irish narrative and has its parallel in Judg. 15:18–19 when Samson tires after killing a host of Philistines with his ass's jawbone and prays to God to send him water, which bursts out of one of the teeth of the jawbone, quenching his thirst. This clever inversion invokes well-known elements of the biblical story while fitting the Irish narrative into the Hercules myth, in which the waters return after the death of the murderous king.

The minor characters involved in *How Samson Slew the Gesteda* are also noteworthy. Samson takes his wife, Lilia, and the priest, Nehemias, with him to fight the Gesteda, despite their protestations. Lilia, *ingin righ Glenda Soilia a crichaib na Filistine*, 'daughter of the king of Glendasolia [the valley of Soilia] in the lands of the Philistines' is presumably the biblical Delilah.⁵⁹ Marstrander takes *Glenda Soilia* to be the valley of Sorek, Delilah's home in Judg. 16:4. Nehemias the priest is a more out-of-place character. In name, he resembles the priest Nehemiah from the Book of Nehemiah, which takes place during the Second Temple period, significantly later than Samson in the Old Testament. As mentioned above, Samson's servant Gerson, while also present in the *LB Biblical Tract*, appears to be an original character, unless we are meant to assume that Levi's son from Numbers has time-travelled forward to Judges.

Samson's ivory ship may be another biblical allusion.⁶⁰ In Ezek. 27:6, Tyre is compared to a ship, *et transtra tua fecerunt tibi ex ebore indico*, 'and they made for you your crossbeams from Indian ivory'. In *How Samson Slew the*

⁵⁵Ibid., I. 201; my translation.

⁵⁶A *columa ignis* 'column of fire' also appears in Exod. 13:21–2 to light the Israelites' way out of Egypt, which is referenced in later books of the Bible, including Neh. 9:12, 19. This does not seem to be as close a parallel as the columns and loss of Samson's eyes in Judg. 16, but may have additionally been in the mind of the Irish author(s).

⁵⁷Marstrander (ed. and trans.), 'How Samson Slew the Gesteda', II. 205–6.

⁵⁸See *eDIL*, s.v. *aidlenn* for further attestations of this word in medieval Irish literature.

⁵⁹Marstrander (ed. and trans.), 'How Samson Slew the Gesteda', II. 169–70. Cf. Judg. 16:4.

⁶⁰Marstrander (ed. and trans.), 'How Samson Slew the Gesteda', II. 166–7.

Gesteda, Samson acquired the ship from Ascalapius, king of Ascalon.⁶¹ While Ascalon and Tyre are separate cities along the Mediterranean coast, they are within a hundred miles of each other and may have blurred in the minds of Irish scholars. Note that the ivory on the ship in Ezekiel is specifically from India, bringing to mind Proiss's country of origin and the ivory horsewhips with which Algdha beats Proiss.⁶²

Another ivory vessel appears in Rev. 18:12 among the lost merchandise of Babylon, including *et omnia vasa eboris*, 'and all the ivory vessels'. *Vas* means 'vessel' in the sense of 'cup' in Classical Latin, but in medieval Latin, its meaning expanded to 'ship'. Although more tenuous, this could be seen as a clever linguistic pun, especially if a medieval Irish audience read Ezekiel's lament for Tyre as typologically similar to ruined Babylon in Revelation, *qui habebant naves in mari de pretiis*,⁶³ 'which had ships in the sea for riches'. Furthermore, the other wealth of Babylon mentioned directly before the *vasa eboris* in Revelation includes *merces auri, et argenti, et lapidis pretiosi*,⁶⁴ 'rewards of gold and silver and precious stones'. These appear in exactly the same order as *a breith fein do ór 7 do airget 7 do sedaib loghmuraib*, 'will give his own award of gold and silver and precious jewels', which is given to Proiss by the king of the *Gesteda* in return for his assistance ending the drought.⁶⁵ This is circumstantial evidence supporting borrowing from Revelation and/or Ezekiel on the part of the author of *How Samson Slew the Gesteda*, but in the absence of any other obvious analogues for Samson's ivory ship in biblical, Classical, or Irish tradition, it merits bearing in mind as another possible example of biblical adaptation in the text.

A more solid biblical perspective worth considering is Samson as a type for Christ. Augustine and Isidore, as well as the (possibly Irish) Pseudo-Jerome, among other late antique and early medieval sources, compare Samson and Christ.⁶⁶ Isidore explicitly states, *Samson autem, quondam Domini Nazaraeus, habet quiddam in typo gestum Christi*,⁶⁷ 'Samson, moreover, formerly a Nazarite of the Lord, has a certain bearing as a type of Christ' and *Samson Salvatoris nostri mortem et victoriam figuravit*,⁶⁸ 'Samson prefigured the death and victory of our Saviour'. This identification seems largely to rest on

⁶¹Ibid., ll. 167–9. Compare Samson's slaughter at Ascalon in Judg. 14:19.

⁶²Marstrander (ed. and trans.), 'How Samson Slew the Gesteda', ll. 41–2.

⁶³Rev. 18:19. For general approaches to wordplay and allegory in medieval Irish literature, see Jan Erik Rekdal, 'Etymology, wordplay and allegorical reading in some medieval Irish texts', in Mikael Males (ed.), *Etymology and Wordplay in Medieval Literature*, Disputatio 30 (Turnhout, 2018), 169–90.

⁶⁴Rev. 18:12.

⁶⁵Marstrander (ed. and trans.), 'How Samson Slew the Gesteda', ll. 62–3.

⁶⁶Augustine, *Enarrationes in Psalmos* §§80, 88, PL 37, col. 1039–41, 1126; Isidore, *Quaestiones in Vetus Testamentum*, PL 83, col. 389B–90C; *Allegoriae Quaedam Sacrae Scripturae*, PL 83, col. 111C–12A; *Expositio evangelii secundum Marcum*, in M. Cahill (ed.), CCSL 82, Scriptores Celtigenae 2 (Turnhout, 1997), 71.

⁶⁷Isidore, *Quaestiones*, PL 83, col. 389B.

⁶⁸Isidore, *Allegoriae*, PL 83, col. 111C.

etymologies relating Samson's name to the sun,⁶⁹ and to the miraculous nature of Samson's birth, announced by an angel after his mother's barrenness.⁷⁰ It may not particularly matter to the author of *How Samson Slew the Gesteda* that Samson typologically represented Christ, and the text does not comment on either his name or birth, but it likely resonated on some level with a medieval Irish audience, as Christological typology seems to have been a well-accepted approach to Samson in the wider western European medieval world.⁷¹ This typological relationship may also account for the fact that twelve of Samson's men are killed every day by the Gesteda before he arrives, in a gesture to the number of Christ's apostles.⁷²

The *LB Biblical Tract* seems more interested in seeing Samson as a type for Christ, or at least following more conventional etymological lines of exegesis. The comparison between Christ's and Samson's miraculous births may be behind the assertion in the *LB Biblical Tract* that Samson was *Mac[...] amra ro-genir for talmain in fersa*,⁷³ 'the most wonderful son ever born upon the earth'. The etymology linking Samson's name to the sun seems to also be obliquely referenced:

Ar it eat so coicer ba coemiu monga ocus fuilt isin bith .i. Adam 7
Ábel a mac ocus Áron mac Amraim brathair Móyse ocus Sámson
mongach fessin. ocus Apisolón mac. D[avi]d. iarisin. nicon lamtis
tra doeine décsiú na silliu for foltaib na fear so cen chloieine na
suilib acht amal nobetis fri grein ina bruth.⁷⁴

'For these are the five who had the most beautiful manes and hair in the world, that is Adam and Abel his son and Aaron son of Amram brother of Moses and longhaired Samson himself and Absalom son of David after that. Then people did not used to dare to look or gaze upon the hair of these men without squinting with the eyes as though they were comparable to the sun in its glow.'

These men's hair shines like the sun, so brightly that no one can stand to look at it without squinting. This seems to extend the idea that Samson himself is somehow intrinsically sun-like due to the sun element in his name. He appears to be in strange company at first, but the other four individuals mentioned, Adam, Abel, Aaron, and Absalom, could also plausibly be considered types for Christ. Adam and Abel are the first men whose sin and death Christ redeems. Aaron is explicitly compared to Christ in Heb. 5:4–5. Absalom as the murdered son of a

⁶⁹Isidore, *Etymologiae*, in Wallace Lindsay (ed.), *Isidori Hispalensis Episcopi Etymologiarum Sive Originum Libri XX* (Oxford, 1911), VII.vi.56; *Quaestiones*, PL 83, col. 389C. This etymology was certainly known to the Irish as it appears in *Sanas Cormaic*, see Whitley Stokes (ed.), *Three Irish Glossaries* (London, 1862), 40, 42–4.

⁷⁰Isidore, *Quaestiones*, PL 83, col. 389B–90C. Cf. Judg. 13.

⁷¹For contemporaneous continental approaches to Samson, see Greti Dinkova-Bruun, 'Biblical thematics: the story of Samson in medieval literary discourse', in Ralph Hexter and David Townsend (eds), *The Oxford Handbook of Medieval Latin Literature* (Oxford, 2012), 356–75.

⁷²Marstrander (ed. and trans.), 'How Samson Slew the Gesteda', I. 112.

⁷³*LB*, fol. 127a22.

⁷⁴*Ibid.*, fol. 127b37–43.

grieving father is another potential type for Christ and his death is brought about when he is trapped in a tree by his head (presumably, by the hair on his head, although the Vulgate has only *caput*), strengthening the hair comparison.⁷⁵

The fact that *How Samson Slew the Gesteda* eschews obvious Christological parallels followed in other medieval Irish texts in favour of retelling a Classical story about Hercules likely illustrates the redactor's own narrative choices. This seems especially the case as the narratives in the *LB Biblical Tract* and *How Samson Slew the Gesteda* are related to the extent that they share the same name for Samson's otherwise unattested servant and the detail that Samson's jawbone is from a camel rather than an ass (either through mutual influence or similar source material).⁷⁶ However, they diverge in their focus and interests, indicating a significant degree of authorial freedom. In *How Samson Slew the Gesteda*, Classical and biblical sources are combined and built upon to form a new work of literary pseudohistory. This is in keeping with the broader context of medieval Irish pseudohistorical writing, as Máire Ní Mhaonaigh has discussed similar phenomena of linking Classical and biblical characters in medieval Irish portrayals of Brian Boru.⁷⁷ Medieval Irish authors were adept at shaping and reshaping the biblical and Classical past, with individual texts and authors displaying unique stylistic choices within a larger cultural approach to producing pseudohistorical works.

STYLE AND CONTENT

We shall now turn to questions of style and literary devices within *How Samson Slew the Gesteda*. Medieval Irish etymologies, found throughout literature and in glossaries such as *Sanas Cormaic*, focused extensively on names and word-play.⁷⁸ Thus, given the elaborate incorporation of Classical and biblical detail and etymology in *How Samson Slew the Gesteda*, it is worth starting with an examination of the names of some of its characters. Ascalapius probably takes his name from the city he rules, Ascalon.⁷⁹ It is possible that the name is also meant to allude to Asclepius, the Greek god of medicine, as a pagan deity meant to represent an enemy of Samson, but there is nothing besides the similarities of

⁷⁵ 2 Sam. 18. Absalom's hair is also praised in detail in a short narrative about David and Absalom preserved in the Yellow Book of Lecan, col. 772–6, Rawlinson B 512, and the Book of Fermoy; see Kuno Meyer, 'Mitteilungen aus irischen Handschriften', *ZCP* 12 (1921), 3–30, 166–84, at 177 for text, and Elizabeth Boyle, *History and Salvation in Medieval Ireland* (London, 2021), 62–3 for translation.

⁷⁶ Note that Cain slays Abel with a camel's bone in *Lebor Gabála Érenn*, recension A. See R. A. S. Macalister (ed. and trans.), *Lebor Gabála Érenn: The Book of the Taking of Ireland*, ITS 34, 35, 39, 41, 44 (Dublin, 1932–42), i, 18. See George Henderson, 'Cain's jaw-bone', *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* 24 (1961), 108–14 for comparisons between Cain's and Samson's weapons.

⁷⁷ Máire Ní Mhaonaigh, 'Glorious by association: the Clontarf obituary of Brian Boru', in Seán Duffy (ed.), *Medieval Dublin XVI: Proceedings of Clontarf 1014–2014, National Conference Marking the Millennium of the Battle of Clontarf* (Dublin, 2017), 170–87.

⁷⁸ See, for example, Rekdal, 'Etymology', 169–90, and Paul Russell, 'The sounds of a silence: the growth of *Cormac's Glossary*', *CMCS* 15 (1988), 1–30.

⁷⁹ Marstrander (ed. and trans.), 'How Samson Slew the Gesteda', I. 168.

the names to suggest this identification is the case, nor are the pagan gods of the Gesteda ever named. Dabilla, the daughter of the king of the Gesteda, shares her name with the pet dog of Boand, the personification of the river Boyne, in the metrical *dindsenchas*.⁸⁰ When Boand drowns, the dog is swept away by the sea and smashed in half, becoming two rocks known as Cnoc Dabilla. The Dabilla in *How Samson Slew the Gesteda* also has a connection to water, and her death (together with that of the rest of her people) at Samson's hands releases the waters, ending the drought. If the author(s) knew the *dindsenchas* poem, which is possible given that a version appears in the twelfth-century Book of Leinster, this might be an attempt at low humour: the king's daughter described as *genmnaidh grian-tsolusta* ('chaste, bright') is really a lapdog.⁸¹

The name of Cainnill, the king of the Gesteda, offers more parodic possibilities. It may be a reference to Cain, or, perhaps more likely, based on Irish *caindel* 'candle; paragon, hero'. Of course Cainnill is anything but a shining hero in the story, but this may be fitting for a narrative in which he welcomes Proiss and promptly offers him rewards after hearing the priest's confession of rape and incest. Surely Cainnill's behaviour is somewhat tongue-in-cheek and perhaps so is his name. Parodic or even humorous elements reoccur throughout the text, as potentially seen above in the name of Dabilla. The druids and seers and learned people of the Gesteda respond to Proiss's suggestion that they be sacrificed with the laconic *nar budh coir in comairli sin*, 'that advice was not proper'.⁸² Similarly, Lilia and Nehemias are rather unimpressed by Samson's suggestion that they accompany him to the land of the Gesteda:

Atbert iarsin in ben 7 in sacart anaenfecht nat roibi a toisc na ndis leisin isin tír ngentlighi neimchreitmidh acht dodhisigh sloigh 7 miledha mac nIsrael imailli fris no ticsaidh fein 7 a ghilla no na ticsidh. Atbert iarsin Samson friu: 'Ticfaidhthisi ann gidh ail gin cob áil'. 'Ragmaidni ann' ar in sacart 'uair is eicin dunn'.⁸³

'But the woman and the priest both said that neither of them had any wish to accompany him to that unbelieving pagan country, but that he might arm the hosts and warriors of the Children of Israel to go with him, or set out by himself with his servant or not set out. Then Samson said to them: "You shall come there whether it please you or not." "We shall go then", said the priest, "since we must."'

This is hardly proper behaviour for a loyal wife (although Delilah does not prove to be such in the Bible) or a priest tasked with recording the events afterwards

⁸⁰E. J. Gwynn (ed. and trans.), *The Metrical Dindsenchas*, RIA Todd Lecture Series 8, 9, 10, 11, 12 (Dublin, 1903–35), i, 38, 3.33. The lapdog Dabilla is also mentioned in *A Rí richid, réidig dam*; see *LL*, iii, 580.

⁸¹Marstrander (ed. and trans.), 'How Samson Slew the Gesteda', ll. 70–1.

⁸²*Ibid.*, ll. 77–8; my translation.

⁸³*Ibid.*, ll. 171–7.

(and who rebuilds Jerusalem in the *Book of Nehemiah*). It is also never explained why Samson brings either character with him as they contribute nothing to the ensuing conflict.

Proiss's own name could represent ironic wordplay on *fras/fros* 'shower, gush', given his role in failing to resolve the drought.⁸⁴ This may be an alternative explanation to the derivation based on Thrásius presented above, or a backformation meant to provide an Irish etymology for the preexisting name of the character from Classical tradition. I am unaware of the origins of the names Algdha and Tabuile and it seems probable that the author(s) of the text made them up or drew them from now-lost sources. The first element of Algdha may be *elg* 'noble', which is also a literary name for Ireland, and reflect her moral superiority to Proiss.⁸⁵

How Samson Slew the Gesteda engages in wordplay beyond names. After Proiss rapes Tabuile, he attempts to soothe her, *roghabus oca cendsugud iarsin o briathraib áilghinaib*, 'afterwards I began to soothe her with sweet words'.⁸⁶ He clearly fails since she subsequently weeps and tells her mother what has occurred. The same verb *cennsaigid* 'soothes, placates, appeases' appears later in the text as the word used to describe placating the gods, when Cainnill promises to give rewards and treasure to the one *rofoirfedh sinn 7 rocendsochadh na dee*, 'who will help us and appease the gods'.⁸⁷ Proiss ultimately fails to placate the gods as well, a fact which is foreshadowed by his inability to soothe Tabuile earlier in the tale, using the same verb. The use of *cennsaigid* also ties the text to more conventional medieval Irish modes of depicting paganism. In *Togail na Tebe*, the same verb is used when Amphiaras falls into Hades and soothes an angry Orcus.⁸⁸ This links *How Samson Slew the Gesteda* with the ways in which other Classical adaptations verbally depict placating gods and its gods, while unnamed, are fitted into modes of human-divine interaction from the wider genre.⁸⁹ Short as the text is, it represents an equally valid and interesting approach to adaptation as the longer Classical adaptations such as *Togail Troí* or *Togail na Tebe*, or other biblically-inspired works such as *Saltair na Rann*.

⁸⁴*eDIL*, s.v. 1 *fras, fros*. The variant *frois*, with palatal final -s is attested in *IGT* ii §§14, 39, and would be explainable as an accusative-dative form replacing the nominative, as can happen in a-stems. *Prois* with initial *P-* could be considered the equivalent without initial lenition. I am grateful to the anonymous reviewer for these suggestions.

⁸⁵*eDIL*, s.v. 2 *elg*, s.v. *Elg*.

⁸⁶Marstrander (ed. and trans.), 'How Samson Slew the Gesteda', I. 36.

⁸⁷*Ibid.*, II. 63–4.

⁸⁸George Calder (ed. and trans.), *Togail na Tebe: The Thebaid of Statius* (Cambridge, 1922), II. 2950–60.

⁸⁹Borsje, 'Human sacrifice', 45 presents *How Samson Slew the Gesteda* alongside the ninth-century *Epistil Ísu* (Letter of Jesus), which includes abduction and sacrifice by pagans to their gods as a punishment for those who fail to uphold the law of Sunday, but she does not argue for any connection between the two texts. While it is possible that the *Epistil Ísu* influenced aspects of *How Samson Slew the Gesteda*, or reflected similar grisly fascination with pagan sacrifice and conceptions of blood-thirsty pagan divinities, to my mind the biblical and Classical materials discussed in this article constitute stronger and more obvious sources. See Borsje, *From Chaos to Enemy: Encounters with Monsters in Early Irish Texts*, *Instrumenta Patristica* 29 (Turnhout, 1996), 177–316 for analysis of the *Epistil Ísu* more generally.

WIDER CONTEXTS AND CONCLUSIONS

Togail Troí makes a good contrast with *How Samson Slew the Gesteda*. The latter tale recasts Classical mythology, giving it a biblical character. This is precisely an inversion of the type of adaptation we see at the beginning of the second recension of *Togail Troí*, where the biblical story of Moses is rewritten to star Jove:

Ra tharngirset fádi do Šatuirn a mac do thictain ris. conid airesein no ithed cach mac rucad dó ria nÍóib. Ra foilged Ioib fair. 7 ra cured i curach oenšeiched for sruth Níl. 7 gabur blicht ceŋgalta isin churuch conid edsain ras bethaig. Co fuaratar iascaireda srotha Níl hé cona thlacht ríŋ immi. Co tucsat i cind .uii. mbliadan he don ríŋ. Is í bréc thucad immisium don breithsin. cloch do thabairt i mmesc na fulcí co ndúaid Satuirnd in cloichsin.⁹⁰

‘Prophets prophesied to Saturn that his son would come against him and because of that he used to eat every son born to him before Jove. Jove was hidden from him and was put into a boat [made] of one hide upon the river Nile, and a goat for milk bound in the boat so that it would nourish him. Fishermen of the river Nile found him with his royal garment about him. At the end of seven years, they brought him to the king. This is the lie that was told concerning him about that birth: a stone was brought to him in a lump of swaddling clothes so that Saturn ate that stone’.

In *Togail Troí*’s euhemerizing account of Classical theogony, Jove is the one who floats down the Nile in a basket instead of Moses. As a parallel to Samson’s assumption of Hercules’s role in *How Samson Slew the Gesteda*, this illustrates the range of medieval Irish creativity when dealing with both Classical and biblical material. In the medieval Irish narrative imagination, biblical stories and characters are evidently just as malleable as their Classical counterparts, offering multiple sources for the creation of new synthetic and pseudohistorical texts.

As a text, *How Samson Slew the Gesteda* is aware both of itself as an (often parodic) work of literature, and of other conventions and narratives in both Classical and non-Classical Irish literature, as one final example may serve to illustrate. Proiss’s origins in India may be parodic in their own right if read in the context of wider medieval literature. In the sections of *Scéla Alaxandair* based upon the *Collatio Alexandri cum Dindimo rege Bragmanorum*, India emerges in a very positive light as a nearly-divine kingdom without the troubles of Alexander’s earthly, pagan realm.⁹¹ Isidore also depicted India as a land of plenty where honey grew on trees and as a source of many gems and spices.⁹²

⁹⁰LL, ll. 30827–34.

⁹¹See Erik Peters (ed.), ‘Die irische Alexandersage’, ZCP 30 (1967), 71–264, at 139–53 for the Irish version of the *Collatio Alexandri cum Dindimo rege Bragmanorum*.

⁹²Isidore, *Etymologiae*, XIV.iii.5, XX.ii.36.

These associations of India with purity and plenty appear in the late medieval text *Altram Tige Dá Medar*, when Ethne, a former member of the medieval Irish pantheon, the Túatha Dé Dannan, can only survive on milk from Indian cows after she starts to slide from the Túatha Dé's Otherworld towards the Christian world of the narrative present.⁹³ This fifteenth-century text significantly postdates *How Samson Slew the Gesteda*, but may testify to the continuing associations of India with righteousness and purity in wider medieval Irish tradition. India also appears several times in the late medieval *Duanaire Finn* poems, collected in a seventeenth-century manuscript, as a land of wealth conquered by the legendary hero Finn mac Cumhaill's grandson Oscar.⁹⁴

If these associations of India with moral reputation and wealth were on the mind of the author(s) of *How Samson Slew the Gesteda* (either from *Scéla Alaxandair*, the *Collatio Alexandri cum Dindimo rege Bragmanorum*, and Isidore, or non-extant sources that contributed to depictions of India in later Irish narratives), then the text must poke fun at such conventions since Proiss is about as far from a righteous, chaste, godly leader as one can get. His punishment at the hands of his wife may restore India within the narrative to a former moral status based on Isidore or the Alexander material (either in Latin or Irish). Notably, India features only in the passing tigress simile in Ovid's version of the myth of Philomela, so the author(s) of *How Samson Slew the Gesteda* are likely to have picked it as a setting on purpose, as an appropriately exotic-sounding location by way of Ovid, and/or in light of wider cultural associations.

To quote Greti Dinkova-Bruun on the use of Samson in continental medieval Europe, the 'relationship [of medieval writers] to the truth and mystery of the Bible was not dogmatic and uniform; rather, it was an impetus for intellectual curiosity and an inspiration for literary creativity'.⁹⁵ In medieval Ireland, this creativity took particularly dynamic forms. *How Samson Slew the Gesteda* is an intricate, erudite production, drawing liberally from biblical and Classical sources, incorporating Irish motifs, and likely parodying both itself and genre conventions. It is a testament to the highly-educated, scholarly milieu in which it was composed — a milieu in which historiography and literary writing were closely linked and ingenuity could flourish.

⁹³Lilian Duncan (ed. and trans.), 'Altram Tige Dá Medar', *Ériu* 11 (1932), 184–225, at 195. Several scholars have commented on India as a land of righteousness in *Altram Tige Dá Medar*, including Cathinka Hambro, 'Waiting for Christian fish on milk from India: a textual and contextual analysis of *Altram Tige Dá Medar* ("The Nourishment of the House of Two Milk Vessels")', unpublished PhD thesis, University of Oslo, 2013, 132; Séamus Mac Mathúna, 'Sacred landscape and water mythology in early Ireland and ancient India', in M. Fomin et al. (eds), *Journal of Indo-European Studies Monograph Series: Sacred Topology in Early Ireland and Ancient India*, Religious Paradigm Shift 57 (Washington, DC, 2010), 3–53, at 27; Charles William MacQuarrie, *The Biography of the Irish God of the Sea from The Voyage of Bran (700 A.D.) to Finnegan's Wake (1939): The Waves of Manannán*, *Studies in Irish Literature* 13 (Lampeter, 2004), 119–20. However, to the best of my knowledge, no one has drawn a connection with the Dindamus text or Isidore.

⁹⁴E. MacNeill and G. Murphy (eds and trans.), *Duanaire Finn: The Book of the Lays of Fionn*, ITS 7, 28, 43 (London, 1908–53), i, 71, 181; ii, 208–9, 214–15.

⁹⁵Dinkova-Bruun, 'Biblical thematics', 372–3.

ABBREVIATIONS

LB	The Leabhar Breac (RIA MS 23 P 16 (1230))
LCL	Loeb Classical Library
PG	Jacques-Paul Migne (ed.), <i>Patrologia Graeca</i> , 161 vols (Paris, 1857–66).
PL	Jacques-Paul Migne (ed.), <i>Patrologia Latine</i> , 217 vols (Paris, 1841–55).
TTr	<i>Togail Troí</i>

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SANDHI *h* AFTER THIRD-PERSON PRONOUNS IN MIDDLE WELSH

ABSTRACT

‘Sandhi *h*’ after 3 sg. feminine possessive pronouns in Welsh, Cornish, and Breton is agreed to be ancient. Although it has been supposed that sandhi *h* after other pronouns in Welsh is also of ancient origin, an earlier study (Sims-Williams 2010) argued that *h* did not appear after first-person possessive and infixed object pronouns with nasal auslaut (*’m*, *yn*, *’n*) until about the middle of the thirteenth century. At that point sandhi *h* was already frequent after infixed object and third-person plural possessive pronouns (*’y/’e*, *eu*), but it did still not appear consistently. Here it is argued that some of the examples without *h* were due to dissimilation (a form of Grassmann’s Law), but that when these exceptions are set aside enough evidence of significant absence remains to conclude that sandhi *h* after third-person pronouns was a recent development in the mid-thirteenth century. In the case of the infixed object pronouns, the main evidence comes from alliteration in poetry composed before *c.* 1258. In the case of 3 pl. possessive pronouns, the main evidence is provided by thirteenth-century manuscripts in which sandhi *h* is significantly less frequent than in the early fourteenth century. It is argued that sandhi *h* spread first from third-person infixed pronouns to 3 pl. possessive pronouns and then to first-person pronouns. An Appendix revisits the relevance of post-nasal hypercorrect *h* to the emergence of sandhi after first-person pronouns with nasal auslaut, and comments on the relevance of ‘post-sonorant aspiration’ in Basque.

INTRODUCTION

IT IS AGREED on all sides that Welsh ‘sandhi *h*’ after the feminine prefixed and infixed possessive pronouns MW *y*, *-e/y*, ModW *ei*, *-i*, as in *ei hafal* ‘her apple’, *a’i hafal* ‘and her apple’, is a reflex of the final **s* of **esjās* ‘her’. This initial mutation is common to Welsh, Cornish, and Breton, and is clearly ancient. In Welsh it spread by analogy to other pronouns, according to Pedersen (1909: 406; Lewis and Pedersen 1961: 121). This is plausible, though Pedersen did not provide much detail, leaving later scholars to suggest a number of competing analogies or even to look for non-analogical explanations.

Some other Welsh pronouns followed by sandhi *h* include the 1 sg. infixed and 3 pl. prefixed possessive pronouns (*i’m hafal* ‘to my apple’, *eu hafal* ‘their

apple') and their explanation is less obvious, since they are normally reconstructed with final **n*: **dummen* 'to my', **e(s)on* 'their' (or the like). One might have expected the nasal mutation to follow, but it does not, neither when the following word begins with a vowel, as in *i'm hafal*, *eu hafal*, nor when it begins with a consonant, e.g. *i'm bys/pen* 'to my finger/head', *eu bys/pen* 'their finger/head'. Thomas (1990: 34–5 and 37–9) convincingly explained the non-mutation in *eu bys/pen* etc. by the theory that in the ancestor of Welsh (West British), unlike Cornish and Breton (South-West British), polysyllables such as **eon* lost their final /n/ after the periods when final vowels voiced or spirantised following consonants. Hence West British **eo* (< **eon*) would not mutate a following consonant, and neither would **dumme* (< **dummen*), hence Welsh *eu bys/pen* 'their finger/head' and *i'm bys/pen* 'to my finger/head'.¹ So far so good; but we would also expect *eu **afal* 'their apple', *i'm **afal* 'to my apple', leaving *eu hafal* and *i'm hafal* to be attributed to some sort of analogy. (A similar pattern can be seen with the 1 pl. possessive forms — *ein hafal* 'our apple', *ein bys/pen* 'our finger/head', *i'n hafal* 'to our apple', *i'n bys/pen* 'to our finger/head' — but they can be left aside for now as their etymology is unclear;² a non-etymological explanation of their sandhi *h* (Sims-Williams 2010) will be summarised below.)

Without referring to the contrary view of Thomas (1990), Schrijver (1999) proposed that *throughout* the Brittonic languages final /n/ in polysyllabic forms such as **eon* was lost *before* the spirantisation of voiceless consonants and that, because they therefore caused the spirant mutation of following consonants (e.g. Breton *o phenn* 'their head'), as did the reflex of **esjās* 'her' (e.g. Breton *he phenn* 'her head'), they followed the analogy of the latter pronoun before vowels (e.g. Breton *he h-alc'hoez* 'her key') and added sandhi *h* to following vowels. Subsequently, however, Welsh backtracked, as it were, dropping the spirantisation but retaining the analogical *h* (Schrijver 1999: 8–10 and 13).

Isaac (2004: 81; 2008: 19), on the other hand, suggested that **-n* in Brittonic clitic polysyllables lost its nasality and developed into /h/, a possibility already rejected 'on general phonetic grounds' by Schrijver (1999: 9).³ Thus, for Isaac, Welsh *eu hafal*, *i'm hafal*, etc. were regular, with *h* < **n*, not analogical.

Although Schrijver's and Isaac's theories were very different, they both supposed that Welsh sandhi *h* in *eu hafal*, *i'm hafal*, etc. arose at an early date. In mid-thirteenth-century Welsh manuscripts, however, written *h* is still spreading after first-person pronouns and may therefore be recent, both there

¹In South-West British polysyllables (Thomas 1990: 34–5 and 38–9), final /n/ was already lost *before* the period when final vowels spirantised following voiceless consonants; consequently **eo* (< **eon*) caused the spirant mutation, as in Breton *o phenn* 'their head' (Hemon 1975: 8). On sporadic Breton *h-* after *o* 'their' see Jackson (1967: 322) and Schrijver (1999: 6).

²Schrijver (1999: 7–8) suggested that the sandhi *h* arose from the infixed object pronoun **nes* or **nos*.

³Cf. Hualde (2018: 3 and 17), who quotes the view that in Basque 'in some instances, aspiration appears to have developed as a regular evolution of intervocalic /n/, which is a typologically uncommon sound change' (my italics) and 'appears to lack parallels in the history of other languages' (an exaggeration: see Blevins and Garrett 1993: 223–4; Ó Maolalaigh 2003a: 317–18 and 2003b). On Basque *n* > *h* see Igartua (2015) and cf. Appendix below.

(Sims-Williams 2007: 53 n. 12)⁴ and possibly, by implication, after various other pronouns such as *eu*, excluding, of course, *y* ‘her’ < **esjās*, after which sandhi *h* is the regular reflex of *-*s*. Isaac disagreed with my 2007 footnote on this point, partly because I did not include a satisfactory explanation of the analogies involved, and partly because

the basis for the assumption of late analogy for prefix *h*, that is the inconsistent writing of the *h* in Middle Welsh texts, is a vacuous premiss. If we were to allow ourselves to be guided positivistically by the *writing* of the mutations in medieval texts, then we would not posit any mutations at all earlier than Middle Welsh, and then only as a haphazard whim (Isaac 2008: 27 n. 9).

It is certainly true that an occasional missing mutation in Middle Welsh cannot be accepted at face value. In the case of the first-person possessive pronouns, however, the rarity of following *h* in the vast majority of thirteenth-century manuscripts, contrasting with their very regular inclusion of *h* after the 3 sg.f., is statistically significant. Apart from one example of *a’m hadaw* ‘and my abandoning’ in NLW MS 5266B, p. 155 and one of *yn harglwyd ni* ‘our lord’ in NLW Peniarth 14, p. 81 (both manuscripts from the second half of the century), the only examples of first-person sandhi *h* occur in conjunction with *erbyn* (*en en herbyn* ‘against us’, *y’m herbyn* ‘against me’, etc.), starting with *en en herbyn* ‘against us’ beside *en en erbyn* in NLW Llanstephan 1, pp. 105 and 111 in the mid-thirteenth century, when extant manuscripts in Middle Welsh begin.⁵ This distribution is probably a key to how sandhi *h* after first-person pronouns originated:

- (1) by dissimilation of *en en erbyn* to *en en herbyn*;
- (2) more generally, by hypercorrection of /nV/ and /mV/ to /nhV/ and /mhV/ in reaction to the already ongoing loss of post-nasal /h/ in Middle Welsh words such as *brenin* < *brenhin* ‘king’ and *kymell* < *kymhell* ‘compel’;
- (3) possibly, in the case of 1 sg. *a’m hadaw*, *y’m herbyn*, etc. (despite Isaac 2008: 19), under the influence the /h/ heard after the prefixed form of the 1 sg. possessive pronoun (ModW *fy mhen* ‘my head’, etc.).

For detailed discussion see Sims-Williams (2010). As the argument that sandhi *h* after first-person pronouns is a late innovation has not been disputed since 2010, it will not be elaborated further here (except in the Appendix below). Instead, the present contribution concentrates on sandhi *h* after the relevant *third-person* pronouns.⁶ These may well have influenced its development after first-person pronouns.

⁴Despite its date, Sims-Williams (2007) contains a slightly later version of Sims-Williams (2008).

⁵The pronouns before (*h*)*erbyn* (: Old Irish *ar chiunn*) are possessives, despite the English translations.

⁶Unless otherwise noted, all citations of prose below are from the following databases: G. R. Isaac, Simon Rodway, Silva Nurmio, Kit Kapphahn, and Patrick Sims-Williams (eds),

I. SANDHI *h* AFTER THIRD-PERSON INFIXED OBJECT PRONOUNS

In Middle Welsh the third-person infixed object pronouns all share the same two forms irrespective of gender and number: *-s*, which is never followed by sandhi *h*,⁷ alternating, according to grammatical context (*GMW* 55), with *-e/y*, which is usually followed by sandhi *h* (e.g. Peniarth 44 (s. xiii^{med.}), p. 34 *a | h6nn6 ae herbynnys ef* ‘and that man received him’).

Evidently the third-person infixed object pronouns were homogenised via various mergers. For the third-person plural, *-s* is etymologically regular (cf. Old Irish and Middle Cornish *-s*) < **sos* (Schrijver 1997a: 22 and 39), whereas 3 pl. *-e/y* seems to be borrowed from the 3 sg.m. *-e/y* (cf. Middle Breton *en*, Middle Cornish *-n*), where *-e/y* derives regularly from **en* < **em* (*GOI* 283–4; Schrijver 1997a: 55; 1999: 7 and 12). Similarly, the 3 sg.f. infixed object pronoun *-e/y* seems to be borrowed from the 3 sg.m. *-e/y*, whereas its *-s* form (cf. Old Irish, Old Breton, and Middle Cornish *-s*) is regular from **sVn* (Le Bihan 2020). The 3 sg.m. variant *-s* is presumably borrowed from the 3 pl. and/or 3 sg.f. *-s*.

When a Brittonic element such as a particle or preverb — or at least one ending in an elision-impeding consonant — was followed by infixed **-en*, the result would be a polysyllable in which the /n/ of **-en* should be lost (cf. Schrijver 1999: 12). According to the chronology outlined above, the resulting final /e/ should be followed by no consonantal mutation in Welsh, and this is indeed the case, e.g. Peniarth 44 (s. xiii^{med.}), p. 23 *ae karey ef* ‘who loved him’, p. 31 *ty ae gyrryst* ‘you drove him’ (both with *ae* < relative *a* + *-e* < **-en*). As illustrated by these examples, elision to a monosyllable did not happen early enough in West British to allow **-en* to nasalise.⁸

From an etymological point of view, none of the third-person singular and plural *-e/y* infixed object pronouns should be followed by sandhi *h*, but they all are. A probable source is the 3 sg.f. infixed possessive pronoun MW *-e/y* < **esjās*, after which sandhi *h* is etymologically regular. Thus sandhi *h* may have spread as follows:

2013: *Rhyddiaith Gymraeg o Lawysgrifau'r 13eg Ganrif: Fersiwn 2.0.*, <https://doi.org/10.20391/3abf4ef1-e364-4cce-859d-92bf4035b303>; Diana Luft, Peter Wynn Thomas, and D. Mark Smith (eds), 2013: *Rhyddiaith Gymraeg 1300–1425*, <http://www.rhyddiaithganoloesol.caerdydd.ac.uk>; Katherine Himsworth, Silva Nurmio, Richard Glyn Roberts, Sara Elin Roberts, Sarah Rowles, Paul Russell, and Patrick Sims-Williams (eds), 2019: *Rhyddiaith y 15fed Ganrif: Fersiwn 2.0.*, <https://doi.org/10.20391/148879e0-6ce3-49d6-bf77-5d7597ba4422>.

⁷Cf. *nis ofnir* ‘one does not fear them’ (Morris-Jones 1913: 278). According to Schrijver (1997a: 21, 39, and 57; 1999: 7 n. 5), the infixed object pronoun *-s* comes from **san* < **sām*, cognate with *-s^N* in Old Irish *du-s-ngí* ‘he makes it (f.)’, etc. (*GOI* 261 and 284; cf. Watkins 1965: 287 who favours **siyan*). Since infixed **sVn* by definition only occurred in polysyllables, its /n/ should be lost in Welsh and the resulting final vowel should be followed by no mutation, and no sandhi *h*, and that is the case. The non-development of **-s* > ***-h* requires an explanation, such as combination with the **-s* of **nis* ‘not’; compare the survival of *-s* in Old Irish (Sims-Williams 1984: 144 and 186–7; McCone 2006: 92–5). The *-s* form of the object pronoun is regularly used after the negative *ny* (*GMW* 55).

⁸Possibly only the *(C)VC-*e(n)* type was productive in West British. Schrijver (1999: 12) argues that what he exemplifies as the **ron* < **ro-en* type was generalised in South-West British, whence Middle Cornish *-n* and Middle Breton *en*.

3 sg.f. infixed possessive $-e/y^H \rightarrow$ 3 sg.f. infixed object $-e/y^H \rightarrow$
 3 sg.m. and 3 pl. infixed object $-e/y^H$.

A suggestion that sandhi *h* after infixed object pronouns is late and analogical is provided by some texts where it is missing. These are fairly rare (*TC* 154–5). The only example cited in *GMW* 23 is *ninheu a'y arhown* ‘we shall await him’ in the mid-fourteenth-century White Book *Manawydan* (versus the Red Book’s *a’e harhown*, half a century later). This may be a special case, since there is evidence at various periods of Welsh (*TC* 154–5) that sandhi *h* could be omitted before words containing an internal /h/, by a dissimilation comparable to Grassmann’s Law in Greek and Indic (Collinge 1985: 47–61) and to similar phenomena elsewhere (e.g. de Reuse 1981). A slightly earlier example with the same verb occurs in *Lludd a Lleuelys* in BL Cotton Cleopatra B.v, part i (s. xiv¹), fol. 34r *Ac yntev a|y arhoes ef* ‘and he awaited him’, which agrees with the Red Book of Hergest, Oxford, Jesus College, 111 (s. xiv/xv), fol. 175r, col. 709, *a|e arhoes ef*,⁹ against the later NLW 7006D (s. xv¹), p. 93a *Ac yntav yma ai harhoes*.

Caution is needed in assessing examples of preverbal *ae* without following *h* for two reasons:

- (a) *a’e* (with $-e$ = possessive pronoun) before verbal nouns and *a’e* (with $-e$ = object pronoun) before finite verbs have to be distinguished. In the earliest text of *Lludd a Lleuelys*, in NLW Llanstephan 1 (s. xiii^{med.}), a verbal noun is used in the above passage: *Ac ... ente6 ... ae arhos ef* (p. 63), literally ‘... and his awaiting him’ (cf. Cardiff 1.363 (s. xiv¹), fol. 50v *a|e arhos ef* and Peniarth 23 (s. xv²), fol. 30v *ac aros*). In this construction sandhi *h* is not expected. Conceivably *ay arhoes* in the copies of *Lludd a Lleuelys* cited above originated in a miscopying of *ae arhos*.
- (b) Middle Welsh *ae* can sometimes be a survival of the Old Welsh relative pronoun (*h*)*ai*, as noted in *GMW* 63. This pronoun has been derived from **sosin* (Schrijver 1997a: 45, 56, 161, and 172; cf. Falileyev 2000: 80, and Hemon 1975: 204, 206, and 232 on Breton *a y-* as in *me a y-a* ‘I go’). Assuming that **sosin* lost its /n/ at the same stage as **dummen* and **eon* (see above), the non-mutation of following consonants, as in MW *ae gulich y glav* ‘which the rain wets’ and *ae tut mor* ‘which the sea covers’ (cited in *GMW* 63 and *TC* 172–3), is predictable, as is the absence of sandhi *h*.¹⁰ Sometimes it can be uncertain whether *ae* represents relative *ae* or one of the various forms that modern editors punctuate as *a’e*.

Turning now to the data with the above caveats in mind, we may begin with the poetry. In the poems in the Black Book of Carmarthen (c. 1250) sandhi *h*

⁹Cf. Roberts (1975: line 157) (the White Book has a lacuna here).

¹⁰Unless the non-lenition in *ae gulich* and *ae tut* is purely scribal (which is quite possible), the relative pronoun OW (*h*)*a*, MW *a*, which is followed by lenition, e.g. *LL* 121 *a | uo* ‘which may be’, would seem to be of different origin from *ae*. But Schrijver (1994: 178) explains the lenition as secondary. In BL Add. 14931, p. 29 *a eill* and *ay eill* alternate, both with lenition of the following *g-*. However, *ay* may well be a scribal error for *a* there.

is always included after infixed object pronouns: 2.22 *a'e hamhevo*; 5.44 *ac y* [= ModW *y'i*] *haruetud*; 15.22 *a'e harhowe*; 16.36 *a'e hargel*; 17.144 *a'e harovy*; 18.214 *a'y haelew*; 20.13, 17, 21, 25 *y* [= ModW *y'i*] *harchaw*; 31.31 *a'e heirirolei*; and 39.5 *a'e hellygaut* (numbering as in Jarman 1982, and supplying apostrophes). The same is true of *hengerdd* in later manuscripts such as Peniarth 3, part ii (s. xiii/xiv) (Williams 1928: 114 and 116 *ae hamouyn*, 121 *ay hys*, 124 *ay hargel*, 128 *ay harrowy*), and, in the fourteenth century, the Book of Taliesin (Haycock 1994: poem 20.42 *a'e harhöes* and 61 *a'e hen[n]yn*, and Haycock 2015: poem 21.24 *a'e harobryn*) and Red Book of Hergest (R 578.16 *y* [= *y'i*] *hetmycca6r*; 579.32 and 580.35 *ae hamouyn*;¹¹ 1030.36 *ae heirch*; 1039.25 *ae hys*; 1052.33 *ban y* [= *y'i*] *hatrodi*). An exception in the Book of Taliesin is *Ar meint a gollwyf y argollawr* ('and the number I may lose shall be lost?'), if *y* corresponds to ModW *y'i* or *y'u* (Williams 1968: poem VII.48 and pp. 91–2).¹² This may have dissimilation before the future ending *-hawr*, even though the latter's /h/ is not expressed in writing here. Another possibility is that the *y* after *gollwyf* is the 1 sg. affixed pronoun (cf. line 54 of the same poem: *yny vallywyf y*). All these undated poems may well have been edited during transmission.

With one exception, sandhi *h* is always shown in the dateable Poetry of the Princes copied into the Hendregadredd Manuscript (NLW 6680B, s. xiii/xiv and later) —

CBT I, 14.75 *pan y* [= *y'i*] *herlyn*; II, 16.6 *a'e harwed* and 49 *yssef a'e herly*; 26.172 *a'e haroy* [*ae haroei* R 1189]; III, 10.76 *Kyndel6 a'e hanrec*; V, 1.130 *a'e hymduc*; VII, 50.18 *y* [= *y'i*] *henwaf*

— and the Red Book of Hergest (c. 1400):

CBT VI, 35.26 *a'e hyssiga* and 58 *a'e harueida*; VII, 33.34 *Dy uoned a'r wed y* [= *y'i*] *harwedych*; 42.3 *vegys y* [= *y'i*] *harchei*.

¹¹Cf. *ae hamouyn* in Peniarth 3ii (s. xiii/xiv): Williams (1928: 114 and 116).

¹²Cf. Williams (1960: 70): 'a'r nifer a gollwyf fe'i collir'. MW *y* is the normal form of the preverbal particle *y* + third-person infixed object pronoun *-y* (GMW 55; on its syntax see Mac Cana 1995: 54–5). The ModW forms *y'i*, pl. *y'u* have 'no authority' according to Morris-Jones (1913: 278). In the following examples *eu* is written instead of particle *a* + 3 pl. object pronoun, perhaps on the analogy of the use of possessive *eu* after *nac* and *ac* (for which see in Evans 1950): (1) Peniarth 29, p. 81a *kany's ef ac eu hamdyfyn* 'for it defends them'; (2) Cotton Titus D.ii, fol. 57r, col. b *cany's y tauaut ac eu hamdyfyn* 'for the tongue defends them'; (3) Peniarth 14 (45–78) (s. xiii²), p. 54 *ac ny byd a brthuynepo udunt nac eu hamdiffynho* 'And there will not be anyone who may oppose them nor defend them'; (4) NLW 5266B (s. xiii²), p. 107 *cany's y uelly y tebygynt cael hed6ch o[s]* [*o* with *s* added above; the reading of the other manuscripts (*ac*) gives better sense] *ruueina6l amherodraeth ac eu hamdiffynnei* 'For thus they thought to get peace, and the Roman empire would defend them'; (5) NLW 3036B (s. xiv¹), p. 99 *kany's velly y tebygynt kaffel hed6ch. A rufeinha6l amherodraeth ac eu hamdiffynnei*. Cf. Oxford, Jesus College 111, fol. 26r, col. 101 ... *a rufeina6l amherodraeth a[e] hamdiffynnei*. Other manuscripts substitute verbal-noun constructions: Cardiff 1.362, fol. 38v–39r *Kans velly y tebygynt kaffael hed6ch a rufeina6l amherodraeth y emdiffyn*; Peniarth 45, p. 105 *Cany's y uelly y tebygynt cael hed6ch yn tragywyda6l tr6y amdiffyn gwyr ruuein*; Peniarth 46, p. 145 *a[l]lyma argl6yd heb ef y tebygant kaffel hed6ch yn tragy6yda6l tr6y amdiffyn g6yr rufein*.

The exception is *a'e adawo* 'who may leave him' in the Hendregadredd copy of a poem addressed by Llygad Gŵr to Gruffudd ap Madog between the late 1250s and 1269 (*CBT* VII, 25.68). Is this due to the scribe, Hand J (s. xivⁱⁿ), or is it an original scribal feature of a manuscript of c. 1260 that escaped updating? The latter possibility is at least suggested by the absence of *h* in some of the mid-thirteenth-century legal manuscripts examined below, in which *h-* is similarly omitted (presumably owing to dissimilation) before subjunctives in *-(h)o*.

A more fruitful approach to these poetic texts is suggested by Morris-Jones's observation (1925: 204–6) that in the fourteenth- and fifteenth-century *cywyddau* an accented /h/ tends to alliterate with another /h/ rather than with a vowel (for some earlier instances see Parry 1936: 148 [*CBT* I, 7.120] and Lynch 1996: 267 and 269 [*CBT* III, 16.103 and 7.33], and another, with sandhi *h* after 'e 'her', is *Llysseit y hirdwf o'e heurduted*, 'Courtly her tall form in her gold garment', *CBT* III, 5.43). Applying this doctrine to the line by Llygad Gŵr, *Ny chymer hyder a'e adawo!*, 'He who may leave him will not take courage!', suggests that *a'e adawo* — however it may have been written down — was pronounced *a'e *hadawo* for the sake of alliteration; many of the nearby lines have alliterating cadences: for example, *nef a'e nerthao*; *kyrt a'e kyrcho*; *kenetyl a'e canlyno*; *am dud a deruyno*. If so, absence of written *h* does not necessarily mean absence of /h/, a warning that will need to be taken into account. Perhaps *Ny chymer hyder a'e *hadawho!* was acceptable c. 1260¹³ but the initial /h/ was subsequently lost through dissimilation before the subjunctive *-ho*, leading to the spelling *adawo* in the Hendregadredd Manuscript.

Among the above citations from undated *hengerdd*, the sandhi *h* is supported by alliteration in the Black Book, poem 16.36 *y hangert a'e hargel rac riev Ryderch* 'her virtue hides her from Rhydderch's lords' (in the *Afallennau*),¹⁴ in Peniarth 3, part ii, *yr ay hys melis y haualeu* 'for those who consume them, sweet are her apples' (also in the *Afallennau*), and in the Red Book, *R* 578.16 *a hyt byt y hetmycca6r* 'and the length of the world it will be praised' (in the *Cyfoesi*) and *R* 1030.36 *bit hoffder llawer ae heirch*, a rather obscure gnome, '? what many ask for is a favoured thing' (Jacobs 2012: poem III.18 and n.). None of these four poems is likely to be early. Conversely, in the Book of Taliesin line, *gwyn y vyt yr eneit a'e harobryn* 'blessed the soul who shall secure it (f.)' (in *Marwnat Corroi m. Dayry*), omission of the *h*-would improve the alliteration. The same applies to: two lines by Llywarch Llaety (c. 1160?) copied into the Hendregadredd Manuscript by Hand F (s. xivⁱⁿ), *CBT* II, 16.6 *Nyt arall a'e harwed* 'it is not another who wears it (f.)' and 49 *Yssef a'e herly, arlwy garthan—dyn* 'this one guards(?) them, a man preparing a fort'; a line by Gwynfardd Brycheiniog (c. 1170s?), *CBT* II, 26.172 *A'r adar [anwar]*¹⁵ *a'e haroy* 'and the wild birds that awaited him'; one by Dafydd Benfras (1240) extant in late manuscripts, *CBT* VI, 27.97 *I'm Rhec y [= y'i] harchaf arch* (var. *ir archaf arch*) *o'm plegyd* 'to my Patron I

¹³Verbs ending *-w-ho* are common in the legal manuscripts of this period.

¹⁴But Peniarth 3ii has *anger ay hargel rac rieu ryderch* (Williams 1928: 124).

¹⁵Hendregadredd (Hand alpha) and *R* 1189.40 share the lacuna.

request it, a request for my sake'; another line by Dafydd Benfras (c. 1258), *CBT* VI, 35.58 *Aróreid a vleid a'e harueida* 'an heroic wolf attempts it'; and a line by Madog ap Gwallter (mid-thirteenth century?), *CBT* VII, 33.34 *Dy uoned a'r wed y [= y'i] harwedych* 'your nobility and the way that you may bear it'. By contrast, alliteration may support sandhi *h* in the following line by Bleddyn Fardd (1282), copied into the Hendregadredd Manuscript by Hand A (s. xivⁱⁿ): *CBT* VII, 50.18 *G6r oet dros Gymry, hy y [= y'i] henwaf* 'he was a warrior for Wales, boldly I name him'. Caution is needed here, however, because a peculiarity of the noun (*h*)*enw* and verb (*h*)*enwi* is that they are sometimes spelt with *h*- regardless of context (Lloyd-Jones 1913–31: 481; Sims-Williams 2010: 42). Nevertheless, parallels suggest that *henwaf* probably does have /h/ (thus Andrews 1994: 134; cf. 145–6).

To sum up, alliteration in poetry suggests a mid-thirteenth-century date for the advent of sandhi *h* after third-person infixed pronouns. The *h* is always written in the poems in the Black Book of Carmarthen c. 1250, but we do not know how typical that manuscript was.

Sampling the thirteenth-century prose corpus for [space **ae** space **ha**] turns up 26 examples of infixed object pronouns + *h*, starting with *6n ae hatwaenat* 'one who knew him' in Peniarth 44 (s. xiii^{med}), p. 6. BL Cotton Titus D.ii (s. xiii²), however, has 2 examples without *h*:

1. fol. 28r *osyt ae amheuo*, 'if there is anyone who doubts it'.¹⁶ Compare *osyt ay hamheuo* in the roughly contemporary BL Add. 14931 (s. xiii²), p. 46.
2. fol. 72r *o | byd ae amheuo*, 'if there is anyone who doubts it'.¹⁷ Compare *o | byd ay hamheuo* in BL Add. 14931, p. 46.

Searching for [space **ay** space **a**] produces 5 more examples, three of them in a similar phrase in Peniarth 30 (s. xiii^{med}):

3. col. 115 *o | byt ay amheuo*.
4. col. 273 *o | byd ay amheuo*, 'if there is anyone who doubts it'. Compare *ac o|r byd a|e hamheuo* in a later copy of the text in question in Peniarth 32 (s. xiv/xv), p. 203.
5. col. 302 *o bey ay amheuey*, 'if there be anyone who doubts it'.¹⁸ Compare *ac o bei a|e hamheuei* in the later copies in Peniarth 32, p. 212 and NLW Wynnstay 36 (s. xv¹), fol. 117rb.

It may be suspected that in these five examples sandhi *h* was omitted because of the internal /h/ in the verb, by the sort of dissimilation discussed above in connection with *ninheu a'y arhown* and *yntev ay arhoes*. This consideration may

¹⁶Wiliam (1960: 46 §75); Jenkins (1986: 86).

¹⁷Where, to aid searching, the thirteenth-century corpus inserts a highlighted space between words joined in the manuscripts I replace the highlighted space with | plus a space on either side. Note that the fourteenth-century corpus uses | (without a space on either side) more widely, e.g. where Modern Welsh inserts an apostrophe.

¹⁸Jenkins (1973: 51 §458). I follow the conventions of the corpus being cited.

also apply to three final examples, which all involve verbs with the underlying subjunctive ending *-ho*:¹⁹

6. Peniarth 30, col. 320 *Nyt oes achuysson ereyll ay annoto onyt try*, ‘there are no other occasions that may delay it except three’.²⁰ Compare Oxford, Jesus College 57 (s. xiv/xv), p. 292, *Nyt oes ach6ysson ereill a|e hannotto onyt tri*.²¹
- 7 and 8. Peniarth 29 (s. xiii^{med.}), p. 82 *e | nep ay | arholleho ... e | nep ay | archollo*, ‘whoever may wound him’. Other copies of this text include the sandhi *h*: BL Cotton Caligula A.iii (s. xiii^{med.}), fol. 193r, col. 1 *e nep ay harchollo*; BL Add. 14931, p. 88 *y nep ay harchollo*; Cotton Titus D.ii, fol. 57v *e nep ae harchollo*; Peniarth 32, p. 150 *y neb a|e harchollo*.

Searching for examples of [*ae/ay*²² + any vowel] in the prose of the s. xiii/xiv and s. xiv¹ periods suggests that sandhi *h* after object pronouns was almost universal then.

First, cases of relative *ae/ay* must be eliminated:

- (a) Peniarth 7 (s. xiii/xiv), fol. 36v, col. 131 *March balch advwyn ay | esgyn-nawd* ‘a proud fine horse he mounted’ (probably not ‘he mounted it’ with anaphoric pronoun).²³
- (b) BL Cotton Cleopatra B.v i (s. xiv¹), fol. 110v *a|y gwr ae achwanegws y rod o seith kyvanned*, is translated by Thomas Jones as ‘and her husband augmented her gift with seven dwellings’. He punctuates *a’y gwr a’e achwanegws y rod o seith kyvanned*,²⁴ but again it may be simpler to regard *ae* as an old alternative to relative *a* rather than as *a* + proleptic *e*.
- (c) Cardiff 1.363 (s. xiv¹), fol. 110v *ac eisoes degwm normandi a|e argyweda* (cf. Peniarth 23 (s. xv²), fol. 62v *Ac eisioes. degwm normandi ae hargyweda*), corresponds to *sed decimatio Neustriae nocebit* (HRB VII.3 §113), translated by Wright as ‘but Normandy’s tithe will injure it’ (‘it’ being the ‘German dragon’). There is no object pronoun in the Latin, however, and perhaps the 1.363 translation has followed its syntax closely. Compare the syntax of the independent translation in NLW 5266B (s. xiii²), p. 161 *degwm flandrys hagen a argyweda*.
- (d) Cardiff 1.363, fol. 74r (translating HRB V.5 §77) presents similar problems:

¹⁹The *h* only appears in spelling here in the peculiar form *arholleho*. Nevertheless, comparable subjunctive verbs in the mid-thirteenth-century legal manuscripts can easily be found by searching for the string [llho].

²⁰Jenkins (1973: 58 §486). Cf. Peniarth 30, col. 31: *canyt oes dym ay hannoto namryn try peth*.

²¹Richards (1957: 141).

²²The modern spelling *ai* is not used.

²³Cf. Rejhon (1984: 134 §XXIII); Williams (1968: 121).

²⁴Jones (1971: 6–7). The later text in NLW 7006D (s. xv²), p. 201, col. a simplifies: *ar brenin a roes saith gyvannedd*.

A seynt alban ... a kymyrth amphybal y kyffessvr ef o lav er rey a[e merthrey ac en kyntaf a[e kvdyws enly ty e hvnan. ac odyna a sym6dvs e dyllat. ac|a[e **ellynaws** y emdeyth. ac ed emrodes entev e hvnan y verthyryolaeth. Ar rey ereyll trwy amravalyon poynev ar ev corfforoed **a[e ehedassant** ar orwchelder llewenyd gwlat nef.

‘And St Alban ... took Amphybal his confessor from those who would martyr him and at first hid him in his own house, and then changed his clothes and **let him go** away, and gave up himself to martyrdom. And the others, owing to various tortures on their bodies, **flew** to the height of joy of the land of heaven.’

Here *ae ellynaws*²⁵ clearly has an infixed pronoun, but *ae ehedassant* seems to have the relative alone, and this is confirmed by the earlier text in Llanstephan 1 (s. xiii^{med.}), pp. 93–4, which has *ae hellygh6s* and *a ehedassant*. It is generally agreed that these two manuscripts go back to a common exemplar (Roberts 2015). Presumably this mid-thirteenth-century or earlier exemplar lacked sandhi *h* after the infixed pronoun (dissimilation before the /h/ in /nh/ in *ellynaws* is a possible explanation)²⁶ and still used *ae* as a relative pronoun.

After eliminating (a)–(d), we are left with only 11 passages in the prose of the xiii/xiv and xiv¹ periods where [*ae/ay* + any vowel] definitely includes an infixed pronoun (manuscripts are listed in the chronological order established by Huws 2000: 58–9):

1. Peniarth 8, part i (s. xiii/xiv), p. 31 *Ac a wahanassej y wrthaw oy garyat ef oc ev heuyrllit wy ef **ay ymchwelws** attaw o wir gyngweinnyeint*, ‘And whoever had separated from him, through his love and according to their merit he returned **them** to himself through true compunction’, translating *et quos ab amore suo iuste separaverat, Dei dilectione compunctus, ad amicitiam suam omnino convertit*.²⁷ Other manuscripts have *a*, without infixed pronoun,²⁸ so it is possible that *ae* is in fact comparable to *ae ehedassant* above.

- 2–4. The law manuscript, Peniarth 35, fol. 52–70 (s. xiv¹), which is notable for preserving old orthography (Sims-Williams 2021: 27, 32, and 34), has

²⁵ On *-aws* see Rodway (2013: 135).

²⁶ Compare TC 154 on Early Modern *ei anghyfannedd leoedd hi*, where *h-* is even omitted after the feminine possessive pronoun.

²⁷ Castets (1880: 16 §XI).

²⁸ Peniarth 9 (s. xiv¹), fol. 33r *Ac a wahanassei o gyfya6nder y 6rtha6 kygweinyeint caryat du6 **a ymchoel6ys** ar ylgetydymdeithyas a chedydymdeithyon*; Peniarth 10 (s. xiv^{med.}), fol. 21v *Ac a giliassei neu a wahanassei o[e garyat ef. oc eu hefyrllit wy. ef **a ymchwelawd** y holl gareat a[e gerennyd vdunt trwy wir gygweinieint*; Peniarth 5 (s. xiv^{med.}), fol. 70r, col. 47 *ac a|6ahanassei o gyfya6nder y 6rtha6 kyg6eineit caryat du6. **a ymhoela6d** ar ylgetydymdeithas. a chetymeithon*; Jesus College 111 (s. xiv/xv), fol. 93r, col. 390 *ac a|wahanyssei o gyfya6nder y wrtha6. o gyng6einyeint caryat du6 **a ymchoeles** ar y gedymdeithas* (cf. Williams 1968: 14 §XI).

three examples of *ossyd a|y amheuo* (fol. 52r), *ossyd a|y amhe6o*, and *ossyt a|y amhe6o* (fol. 53v) — the phrase discussed earlier, where dissimilation was mentioned as a possible factor.

5. Peniarth 20 (s. xiv¹), p. 21, col. 1 *ef aly anghanmoles duw*,²⁹ ‘God rebuked **him**’. Dissimilation before the /h/ in /ɣh/ is again a possible explanation.
6. Peniarth 20, p. 195, col. 1 *pawb o|y gynesseyfeyt aly ergrynnei*, ‘all of his neighbours dreaded **him**’. (The Red Book of Hergest version of *Brut y Tywysogyon* (Jones 1955: 170) has *a’e hergrynnynt* here, s.a. 1187.) Is it possible that subjunctive *-hei* underlies *ergrynnei*?
7. BL Cotton Cleopatra B.v, part i (s. xiv¹), fol. 26v *Ac yn oes gurgant y bu y seith wyr doetheon y rei a gauas y keluydodeu kyntaf o annean ac aly ysgriuennessant ac a|y dysgassant*, ‘And in the time of Gurgant lived the seven wise men, who discovered the first arts of nature ... and wrote **them** and taught them’. (The later text in NLW 7006D (s. xv²), pp. 80–1 agrees.)
8. BL Cotton Cleopatra B.v, part i, fol. 34r *Ac yntev aly arhoes ef*, ‘and he awaited **him**’ (on dissimilation in this passage see above).
9. Cardiff 1.363 (s. xiv¹), fol. 74r *ac|a|e ellynaws* (see (e) above on dissimilation before /ɣh/).
10. Cardiff 1.363, fol. 147v *Ac|wrth henny arth6r a chymyrth³⁰ e6 gol6t wynt ac e6 gwystlon ac a|e ellyngha6d y emdeyth*, ‘And at that Arthur took their wealth and their hostages and let **them** go away’. (Llanstephan 1, p. 149 has *Ac wrth henny arthvr a kymyrth ev golv t wynt ac ev gwystlon ac ae hellynghavd y emdeyth*.) Dissimilation before the /h/ in /ɣh/ is again a possibility.
11. Cardiff 1.363, fol. 199r *y gan er hyn rey aly etholynt*, ‘by the same ones who chose **them**’. (Llanstephan 1, p. 195 has *y gan er 6n | rey ay hetholynt*.) Might *-thol-* here be felt to contain /θ-hol-/ , leading to dissimilation?

In assessing these exceptions it must be borne in mind that the scribes of Peniarth 35 and Cardiff 1.363 were copying older texts, and that the scribes of Peniarth 20 and Cotton Cleopatra B.v, part i were colleagues at Valle Crucis where conservative orthographical ideas were prevalent (cf. Sims-Williams 2021: 34–5).

Conclusion

To sum up, much of the manuscript evidence for the absence of /h/ seems ambiguous, once the possibility of dissimilation is taken into account, but the alliterative patterns in poetry composed before c. 1250, which deserve more

²⁹*est reprobatus a Domino* in the Latin. See Jones (1940: 25 and 91) for the translator’s avoidance of the passive.

³⁰Probably the scribe absent-mindedly changed *k* in his exemplar to *ch*, as if the preceding *a* was the conjunction ‘and’.

study (cf. Lloyd 1968; Jones 1997; Parry Owen 2022: 271, 273), suggest that sandhi *h* after third-person infixed pronouns was an innovation of the mid-thirteenth century, about the time when the sequence of extant Middle Welsh manuscripts begins.

II. SANDHI *h* AFTER *eu* AND *-e/y* ‘THEIR’

In West British (the ancestor of Welsh), after the relevant periods of lenition and spirantization were over, 3 pl. **e(s)on* or similar underwent the apocope of **-n* that was limited to polysyllables (see above). The regular result was the non-mutation of following consonants, whence ModW *eu bod* ‘their being’ and *eu cymer* ‘their confluence’. This non-mutation is already seen in Old Welsh *ou bot* and *ou cimer* (LL 121 and 197).³¹ Old Welsh *ou* is unfortunately not attested before vowels, but in Middle Welsh a non-etymological sandhi *h* appears, e.g. *eu hargluyd* ‘their lord’ (Peniarth 17 (s. xiii²), p. 5). It also appears after the 3 pl. infixed possessive, which is etymologically identical, e.g. *o’y henill* ‘of their gain’ (GMW 23 and 53).³²

The sandhi *h* following 3 pl. infixed object pronouns is a likely source for sandhi *h* after 3 pl. possessive pronouns. For analogical influence between object and possessive pronouns, compare the comment by Jackson (1967: 322), cited by Schrijver (1999: 6), that the Breton

possessive *o* ‘their’, probably from Brit. **eson*, ... may prefix *h-*,
... an easy analogical extension ... from the infixed object pronoun
o ‘them’, probably from Brit. **sos*, which itself spirantises.

As Schrijver notes (1997a: 34), ‘there was a gradual tendency in B[reton] to give up the distinction between the object and possessive pronouns’. Assuming that sandhi *h* after 3 pl. possessive *eu* and *-e/y* in Middle Welsh is due to analogy, when did it arise?

Sandhi *h-* after *eu* is not consistently written in early Middle Welsh. The following examples, again listing manuscripts in the chronological order established by Huws (2000: 58–9), were assembled by searching the prose databases for [*space eu space a*]. The sample could of course be enlarged by looking for examples before vowels other than **a** and including the spelling variants **ev** and

³¹ Although initial mutations are not shown regularly in Old Welsh, /v/ as a result of lenition is regularly written *u* in *ouinyd garthon* ‘from Garthon mountain’ and *diuinid* ‘upwards’ (LL 126 and 226), and *ch* as a result of the spirant mutation is written in *ichimer* ‘its confluence’, *ichoretou* ‘its weirs’ (LL 42 and 166), and *hichet* ‘its tribute’ (‘Chad 4’, LL xlv), so it is unlikely that a consonantal mutation (for which there is no evidence in Middle Welsh) is concealed in *ou bot* or *ou cimer*. It may also be worth noting that although silent *h-*, as in Old Irish (GOI 19–20; cf. Schrijver 1997b), appears in Old Welsh proclitics such as *hi* in *hichet*, it is very rare in other words (see Falileyev 2000: 78–88). Omission of *h* for initial /h/ is also very rare (Haycock and Sims-Williams 2017: 30).

³² A referee asked whether scribes sometimes inserted ungrammatical sandhi *hs*, e.g. after inappropriate possessive pronouns. I can find no examples of *h-* after 1 sg. *uy/by* or 2 sg. *dy* in the thirteenth-century prose. 2 sg. *’th* and 2 pl. *ach*, *’ch* etc., are a special case in that they already include *h*. In pre-twentieth-century printed texts forms such as *eich harghyoeddi* sometimes appear (TC 154), but a search for [*h space h*] in thirteenth-century prose leads nowhere.

e6 (for these see below) and even the later monophthongised **y** < *eu* (which is not attempted in this article). In the following collection note that **eu a** sometimes contrasts with *eu h* in the same passage (e.g. at Peniarth 17, p. 5).

s. *xiii*^{med}.

Peniarth 29, p. 11 *kan eu ardercauael*; p. 61 *ac o | achau henne et hys en deuody eu hargluydh | y*³³ *dyheuraeu eu | allduyon*;³⁴ Peniarth 30, col. 78 *gan eu arderchauel ... gan eu arderchauel*; col. 99 *eu alldudon*;³⁵ col. 159 *eu | alldudyon*; col. 160 *eu argluyd*; col. 170 *ac eu amdyffyn*; col. 237 *oc eu achau huy*; col. 274 *en eu absen*.

s. *xiii*²

Peniarth 17, p. 5 *eu hargluyd priodaur ... eu ampriodoryon argluydi*; Cotton Titus D.ii, fol. 38v *eu agkeureythyau ac eu dyruac ac eu kamluru ac eu hebedyu ... eu amdyffyn*; NLW 5266B, p. 89 *ac eu anreitha6 ac eu llogsi*; p. 248 *yn herwyd eu anryded*; p. 273 *eu hargl6ydiaeth ... eu anryded*; Peniarth 16, part iii, fol. 37r *eu achwydawl dyfred wy a | 6agant angheu*.³⁶

After the turn of the century, there are many more prose manuscripts, yet far fewer examples without *h*-, most or all of them in copies of older texts:³⁷

s. *xiii/xiv*

Nil.

s. *xiv*¹

NLW 3036B (Mostyn 117), p. 232 *eu heur ac eu aryant* ‘their gold and their silver’; Peniarth 45, p. 173 *herwyd eu anryded* ‘according to their status’; Peniarth 9, fol. 52r *eu angreiffya6 gan eu hannoc* ‘chiding them by inciting them’;³⁸ Cardiff 1.363, fol. 113v *ac eu achwydawl dyfred wynt a 6agant ageu* ‘and their health-giving waters will foster death’.

The reading **eu aryant** in *Brut y Brenhinedd* in NLW 3036B probably goes back to an early version of the *Brut* (‘*Brut X*’), since **ev aryant** is also the reading of Peniarth 23 (s. xv²), fol. 90r (cf. Sims-Williams 2017: I 124 and II 35). Peniarth 45’s *herwyd eu anryded* (also in the *Brut*) must come from an older exemplar because its later sister manuscript Peniarth 46 (p. 241) similarly

³³Read *hargluydhy*. Despite the editorial |, the -y must be the plural ending of *hargluydhy*. Cf. Caligula A.iii’s *ed edes en de6ody yr arglwydy dyhe6ra6 e6 gweyssyon allt6dyon* (quoted below). Where the latter has ‘it is customary for the lords to exonerate their alien servants’, Peniarth 29 here has ‘for their (*eu* = ModW *i*’w) lords ...’ (not an example of prefixed *eu*).

³⁴Scribal error for *alldudyon*; see below on this passage.

³⁵*Sic* (MS *alldud/on*). See below on this passage.

³⁶I omit Peniarth 14 (45–78), p. 60 *gan eu arant* because the *a*- is written over a *c* — *carant* must be meant.

³⁷I limit the collection to manuscripts earlier than s. *xiv*^{med}.

³⁸The later Peniarth 10 (s. *xiv*^{med}), fol. 48v has *Ac eu hagreifftiaw a oruc oliuer ... gan eu hannoc*. Cf. Rejhon (1984: 200 §LXX).

lacks sandhi *h*. (The thirteenth-century copy in NLW 5266B has *hanryded* at this point (p. 198 = *BD* 129), but it has the phrase *yn herwyd eu anryded* elsewhere (p. 248 = *BD* 160), showing that sandhi *h* was still optional.) The final quotation, from Cardiff 1.363, is from a version of the *Brut* which is generally similar to that in the mid-thirteenth-century Llanstephan 1 (which has a lacuna at this point), and its *eu achwydawl dyfred* ‘their health-giving waters’ is confirmed by the reading of Peniarth 16, part iii, *eu achwydawl dyfred wy*, quoted above. (Most other versions have *a’e dyured achvydawl* without the inversion, e.g. *BD* 109; Sims-Williams 2017: I 83 and II 33.) — Possibly *eu achwydawl* is a questionable example of missing sandhi *h*, however, for sandhi *h* is not regular before initial /j/³⁹ and *achwydawl* is < *iachwydawl*.

The following counter-examples were found by searching the thirteenth-century prose for [space *eu* space *ha*]. Some examples, such as *ac eu h-*, occur in situations where later Middle Welsh scribes prefer infixed forms, such as *a’u h-* ‘and their’, instead of the uncontracted *ac eu h-* (Evans 1950; *GMW* 53–4).

s. *xiii*^{med}.

Peniarth 29, p. 37 *eu* | *cenedel ac eu hargluyt*; p. 57 *eu hardelu*; p. 81a *kans ef ac eu hamdyfyn*; p. 86 *nac eu* | *guestau nac eu* | *hadauaelha*; p. 90 *eu hacure*; p. 97 *eu hamadraut*; p. 103 *eu hemys ac eu hanulkun* (‘pet dogs’ cf. Add. 14931, p. 100, below) *ac eu eu* [sic] *hebocheu ac eu* | *harueu*; Peniarth 30, col. 34 *eu hamot*; col. 133 *eu hardelu*; col. 160 *oc eu hanuot*; col. 189 *eu hadau*.

s. *xiii*²

Peniarth 14 (1–44), p. 30 *eu hanfydlonder*; p. 44 *eu hangeu*; Peniarth 17, p. 5 *eu hargluyd*; p. 6 *oc eu hannoc wy*; p. 7 *eu hargluyd ... eu hargluyd*; p. 8 *eu hargluyd*; p. 13 *eu hangenreidyau*; p. 14 *eu hargluyd*; p. 16 *eu hanhedeu*; p. 19 *oc eu hanyanau gyffro*; p. 21 *eu hannyan*; Cotton Titus D.ii, fol. 3r *ef a dely ethol y rey a uenho. y* | *eu hanuon ac ny deleyr e omed*;⁴⁰ fol. 25r *eu hamuot*; fol. 28v *eu hardelu*; fol. 31r *eu hardelu*; fol. 31v *eu hardelu*; fol. 35v *eu halltudyon*; fol. 36r *eu hargluydy ... oc eu hanuod*; fol. 45r *eu harderchauael*; fol. 49r *eu hargluyd*; fol. 59r *Ny deleyr e ychen a uo eg kyuar nac eu guystlau nac eu hadauaelha*; fol. 60r *ac eu hachure*; fol. 61v *eu har*; BL Add. 14931, p. 8 *eu hardyrchauael*; p. 41 *eu hamuot*; p. 51 *eu hardel6*; p. 57 *eu halldudyon*; p. 58 *eu hargluydy ... oc eu hanuod*; p. 62 *eu haghyureythyau ... eu hamdyfyn*; p. 72 *eu hardychauael*; p. 77 *y* | *eu hargluydy dyheurau eu halldudyon*; p. 91 *nac eu guystlau nac eu hadauaylha*; p. 92 *ac eu hachwyre*; p. 100 *eu hemys ac eu hannuyl gun ac eu hebogeu ac eu harueu*; NLW 5266B, p. 7 *ac eu harueu*; p. 11 *eu harglwyd ... eu hagheu ... eu harueu ... eu* | *hargl6yd*; p. 16 *ac y managyssant hyny y eu hargl6yd*; p. 19 *eu harueu*; p. 47 *y eu hamdiffyn*; p. 59

³⁹ See below, n. 48.

⁴⁰ *e omed* may be a case of omitted *h-* (‘their refusal’); cf. *y* | *homet* in Peniarth 29, p. 7.

ac *eu hanryded*; p. 63 6rth *eu haberthu*; p. 67 *eu harueu*; p. 78 ac *eu hamylder*; p. 83 ac *eu haberthu*; p. 85 *eu hachuanegu*; p. 86 *eu hargl6ydiaeth*; p. 91 *eu hagheu*; p. 94 *eu hargl6ydiaeth*; p. 97 *eu halltuded*; p. 105 *eu heur ac eu haryant*; p. 111 Ac y *eu hamdiffyn*; p. 122 *eu hagheu*; p. 132 *eu hann6yt ... Ac eu hanrydedu*; p. 133 yn *eu harydedu* [sic] hwy ... ac *eu hada6 6ynteu*; p. 147 ac *eu hanrydeu* [sic]; p. 148 *eu hannoc*; p. 157 oc *eu hanadyl*; p. 198 *eu hanryded*; p. 208 *eu harganuot ... eu harueu*; p. 210 yn *eu haruoll*; p. 218 *eu hagreiffya6*; p. 219 *eu harueu*; p. 223 *eu haghen*; p. 228 gan *eu hamdiffyn ... eu heur ac eu haryant*; p. 229 *eu hamot*; p. 230 *eu harueu*; p. 232 *eu hagheu*; p. 234 *eu harueu ... eu hadoli*; p. 241 *eu har6ydyon*; p. 242 *eu hattal*; p. 253 *eu hanryded*; p. 268 *eu hanryded*; p. 272 *eu harhos*; p. 273 *eu heur ac eu haryant ... eu hargl6ydiaeth*; p. 274 *eu harueu*; p. 275 yn *eu hannoc*; p. 277 *eu hangerd*; p. 279 *eu hardercha6c urenhin*; p. 281 *eu hanuon*; p. 283 *eu habit*; p. 293 *eu harchescob*; p. 294 *eu harueu*; p. 295 *eu hamser ... eu hanuon ... eu haruoll*; p. 297 *eu hanrydedu*; p. 298 *eu haruoll*; p. 299 *eu hanrethy6*; p. 315 *eu hargl6ydiaeth*; Peniarth 16, part iv, fol. 51v *eu harglwyd ... eu harglwyd ... eu harglwyd ... eu harglwyd*; Peniarth 16, part iii, fol. 28v *eu hamser*; fol. 43r *eu harglwyd*; Peniarth 14 (45–78), p. 75 *eu harglwyd*.

Looking beyond prose, note that *eu* in the mid-thirteenth-century Black Book of Carmarthen (Peniarth 1) attaches *h* to *a-* (y *amdiffin eu hadew* ‘to defend their dwelling’) in poem 40.18 (Jarman 1982); 40.18 has therefore been counted in the Table below.⁴¹ In fact all the Black Book’s examples of *eu* (and *ev*) before vowels are followed by *h*: poems 1.28, 5.68, 12.71 (*Toriw anwar enwir ev hinni* ‘a rough host, cruel their energy’), 16.32 (*Andau de adar clywir ev hymevtun* ‘listen to the birds, their desire is heard’), and 17.188 (*Andau de leis adar. myr. maur ev hinni* ‘listen to the sea birds, great their energy’). In the three quoted lines — all from undated anonymous poems — the *h* could be perhaps be omitted to improve the alliteration. In the poetry in the Book of Aneirin (Cardiff 2.81) there are 6 examples of *eu* (never *ev*) followed by *ha-*, plus 9 more with *h* before other vowels (Williams 1938: lines 69, 85, 91, 132, 356, 364–7, 670, 1004, and 1319); all 15 are in the A-text of the *Gododdin*, except for line 1319 which is in *Gwarchan Tudfwlch*. In three lines the sandhi *h* seems to be confirmed by alliteration with (here underlined> words with radical *h-*:

85 *trauodynt eu hed eu hownawr* ‘their fears shifted their dwelling’;

365 *mor dru eu hadrawd wy. angawr hiraeth* ‘how sad telling of them, insatiable longing’;

⁴¹In line 12 *o’e adav ar lan awon* (with alliteration) is possibly ‘because of *their* being left on the bank of a river’; however, ‘*e* is taken as singular by Jarman (1982: 158: *o’i*) and Rowland (1990: 473 and 536). There are two examples of 3 pl. possessive ‘*e* in poem 27.2 and these are followed by sandhi: *ae hesgip ae higneid*. Alliteration is no help here.

367 *mor hir eu hetlit ac eu hetgyllaeth* ‘how long grieving them and mourning them’.

All three lines are in the ‘narrative stanzas’ which have long been suspected of being subject to interpolation (Sims-Williams 2016: 167 and 216). There are no relevant examples of *eu* (or *ev* or *e6*) before vowels in the poems in Peniarth 29 and Peniarth 3, part i (*CBT* VI, 431–2; Lloyd 1949), but *ev hatneu* occurs in Peniarth 3, part ii (Williams 1928: 122). In the Hendregadredd Manuscript, however, there is just one example (fol. 2v) where *h* is omitted after *eu/ev/e6* (Owen and Williams 1989). This occurs in the copy of Meilyr’s elegy for Gruffudd ap Cynan, who died in 1137 (*CBT* I, 3.121):

ar meint a defu ar eu edryt ‘and as many as came back to their home ...’

Here Hand alpha (*s. xiii/xiv*) at first wrote *defu*, with the old spelling of schwa by *e* (cf. Sims-Williams 2021), then corrected it to *dyfu* in the margin. It looks as if he also failed to modernise his exemplar’s *edryt* to *hedryt* (ModW *hedrydd*). Further on, however, at line 151 (fol. 3r), he writes *eu havenyt* ‘their poet’ with sandhi *h* in the modern fashion (here alliteration is no help on deciding on the correct reading). Possibly *c. 1137* the poets did not regard sandhi *h* as essential after *eu*. From the 1160s, however, sandhi *h* seems to alliterate with words with radical *h*- (underlined), twice in the poems of Cynddelw:

Handoet eu hachoet kyn eu hechig (fol. 58v/59v [Hand alpha]; *CBT* III, 24.157; R 1432.2)

‘Their pedigrees derived, before their suppression ...’;

Gweleis eu hadaw hep eu hadein (fol. 33r [Hand alpha]; *CBT* IV, 1.43)

‘I saw them left without their wings’.

and once in one by Prydydd y Moch *c. 1174–5*:

Meith o’th rad, heb reid eu heiryabl (fol. 101r/103r [Hand alpha]; *CBT* V, 1.149)

‘Numerous, out of your bounty, without need to ask for them’.

Whether the *h*- alliteration apparent in these three lines is coincidental is unclear (cf. below, n. 52). In other lines by Cynddelw that begin with forms of the verb *hanfod*, it may participate in alliteration in two lines (*CBT* IV, 2.57–8) but not in four others (*CBT* III, 3.226, 5.123, 21.157, 26.120). Similarly *heb* seems not to alliterate with words containing /h/ (other than itself) in twenty-five of Cynddelw’s lines (for references see *CBT* IV, glossary), while alliteration may be deliberate in seven lines (*CBT* III, 3.75; 20.9; 21.42; *CBT* IV, 2.45; 6.19; 16.48; 17.66). For Prydydd y Moch the figures for *heb* are 20 (see *CBT* V, glossary) versus 2 (*CBT* V, 1.17; 1.85). In other words, little reliance can be

placed on the alliteration in the three lines quoted above. They may be contrasted with the following line, very possibly by Cynddelw (Williams 1996), from *Hirlas Owain* (cited by Parry 1936: 157) in which the sandhi *h* after *eu*, as transmitted in the Red Book, is inessential for the alliteration:

Kywir eu haruaeth, arueu lliweit (CBT II, 14.124 [cf. 14.38];
R 1435.5–6 [cf. 1433.8–9])

‘Proper their plan, (with) whetted weapons’.

At the foot of the Table, figures for the four early-fourteenth-century prose manuscripts that sometimes omit sandhi *h* after *eu* before *a-* are included.⁴² For statistical purposes Cardiff 1.363 is treated differently from the other three: because its usual spelling of *eu* is *ev* or *e6*, it has only one example of *eu h-* (fol. 114r: *eu hanudoneu*). It has no examples of *ev a-* or *e6 a-*, but 15 examples of *ev ha-* and 33 of *e6 ha-*; these have been included in the total.

Clearly omission of sandhi *h* after *eu* before *a-* is extremely rare by the fourteenth century; the 4 examples of its omission in only four fourteenth-century MSS (2.4%) in the Table contrast with 165 examples (97.6%) of its inclusion in the same four MSS.

In the Table there are 17 examples of *eu a-* (15%) in six thirteenth-century manuscripts, as opposed to 100 *eu ha-* (85%) in the same six manuscripts. Is the 15% a faint signal of a stage before *eu* acquired its sandhi *h* or can it be explained away? Possibly it can, but it seems significant that in the relevant six thirteenth-century manuscripts, there seem to be only *three* clear cases⁴³ where regular *h-* after *y* ‘her’ is omitted before *a-*:

Peniarth 29, p. 40 *canys e | bot en voruyn eu y | ardelu*. (One would have expected *h-* as in *canes e bot en uoruen yu e hardelu* (‘for it is *her* plea that she is a virgin’, Charles-Edwards 1980: 177) in Cotton Titus D.ii, fol. 18v.)

Peniarth 30, col. 9 *am y | chwylyt y | aguedy* ‘for her shame, her maiden fee’ (cf. Jenkins 1963: 3, 43–4, and 54).

NLW 5266B, p. 301 *na ell6ch chuitheu y amdiffyn hi* ‘that you cannot defend her’.

In the third passage (HRB XII.5 §194) one other manuscript also lacks the *h*. This is Cardiff 1.362 (s. xiv^{med.}), fol. 101v, which also omits the prefixed

⁴²Their examples of *ha-* are on the following pages: NLW 3036B, pp. 11, 12, 20, 22, 50, 64, 67, 81, 83, 85, 87, 90, 92, 99, 102, 104, 111, 118, 119, 130, 131, 139, 178, 179, 186, 190, 194, 195, 199, 205, 231, 233, 234, 236, 237, 239, 250, 251, 253, 255, and 256; Peniarth 45, pp. 11, 12, 67, 94, 96, 98, 117, 124, 136, 162, 182, 184, 192, 200, 205, 206, 214, 240, 244, 245, 246, 263, 264, 265, 266, 268, 283, 297, and 298; Peniarth 9, fol. 5r, 5r, 6r, 7r, 11r, 12v, 16v, 24r, 26r, 26v, 29r, 30v, 31r, 33v, 38r, 43v, 44v, 49r, 49v, 51v, 52r, 52v, 53r, 53v, 54r, 56r, and 62r; Cardiff 1.363, *ev* = fol. 43r, 75v, 82r, 84v, 87v, 95r, 122v, 123r, 179v, 183r, 186r, 187v, 188r, 193r, and 207r; *e6* = fol. 5v, 34r, 37r, 37r, 43r, 48r, 56r, 57r, 59v, 81r, 87v, 95v, 103r, 124r, 134v, 140r, 140v, 141v, 142r, 144r, 147v, 153r, 154v, 156v, 172v, 175r, 175v, 177r, 178v, and 195v.

⁴³Leaving aside the problematic examples of *kan y | arderh[a]uel* etc. mentioned below and in n. 47.

	eu a-	eu ha-
s. xiii^{med.}		
Peniarth 1	0	1
Peniarth 44	0	0
Llanstephan 1	0	0
Cotton Caligula A.iii	0	0
Peniarth 29	2	8
Peniarth 30	8	3
 s. xiii²		
Cardiff 2.81	0	6
Peniarth 14 (1–44)	0	2
Peniarth 17	1	10
Cotton Titus D.ii	2	13
BL Add. 14931	0	15
NLW 5266B	3	64
Peniarth 16, part iv	0	4
Peniarth 3, part i	0	0
Peniarth 16 part iii	1	2
Peniarth 14 (45–78)	0	1
Peniarth 14 (79–90)	0	0
 s. xiv¹		
NLW 3036B	1	54
Peniarth 45	1	34
Peniarth 9	1	28
Cardiff 1.363	1	49

Table: *eu a-* versus *eu ha-* in the thirteenth and early fourteenth centuries⁴⁴

pronoun (perhaps because of the line break?): *na ell6ch ch6itheu / amdiffyn hi*. Conceivably the *h-* was missing in their shared source (see the stemma in Sims-Williams 2017: II 12).

As the omission of *h* in *y | ardelu* ‘her plea’, etc., cannot reflect phonetic reality, arguably the same may be true of some of the above-cited examples of *eu* without *h-*. In Peniarth 29 (p. 61) the phrase *ac o | achau henne et hys en deuody eu hargluydhy dyheurau eu | allduyon* contains at least one scribal error (*allduyon* for *alldudyon*) and another scribal error may be its omission of the mutation-blocking word *gweysson* seen in the parallel passages on theft in BL Cotton Caligula A.iii, fol. 185r, col. 1 and Cotton Titus D.ii, fol. 49r:

*Ac o achau6s henny ed edes en debody yr arglwydy dyhebra6 e6
gweysson allt6dyon.*

⁴⁴Peniarth 6, part iii (s. xiii¹) is omitted as Huws now dates it s. xiv¹. In any case, it has nothing relevant.

ac o achau henne yd yd (sic) en deuody gadu er argludy dyheurau eu gweysson alltudyon.

‘And because of that it is customary for the lords to exonerate *their* alien servants’ (cf. Jenkins 1986: 167).

Possibly the Peniarth 29 scribe skipped over *gweysson* and this explains the absence of *h*–? A similar scribal omission of *gweysson* could explain both *eu alldudon* in Peniarth 30 col. 99 —

Ny deleyr dyneydau caeth os pryn y | argluyd yr y | guerth. k{eureyth}. ac ony keffyr dym yn | y lau y | argluyd a | eyll y | dyheurau ac urth henny e | deuotta er uchelur (sic [cf. below]) dyheurau eu alldudon

‘One should not execute a slave if his lord redeems him for his legal worth and, if nothing is found in his hand, his lord can exonerate him, and because of that it is customary for the lord (*sic*) to exonerate *their* (*sic*? [cf. below]) aliens.’

— and also, conceivably, *eu | alldudyon* at col. 159:

Meybyon a | dalaant cadu yaun ac eu | alldudyon megys y | dely argluyd cadu argludydaeth yaun ac eu alldudyon enteu.

‘Sons (of nobles) are entitled to maintain law over *their* aliens just as a lord is entitled to maintain lordship over his aliens.’

In the latter passage, however, *eu | alldudyon* is probably a sound example of *eu* without sandhi *h*, because the parallel passage in Cotton Titus D.ii, fol. 35v reads:

e dele meybyon uchelwyr cadu argludydaeth ar eu halltudyon ual e dele e brenhyn kadu argludydaeth ar y alltudyon enteu (cf. Wiliam 1960: 58; Jenkins 1986: 114).

The last three words in the passage just quoted (*eu alldudyon enteu/y alltudyon enteu*) are particularly revealing because *eu* in Peniarth 30’s *eu alldudyon enteu* cannot possibly be 3 pl. in view of the 3 sg. affixed pronoun *enteu*, which refers back to *argluyd*. The only possible explanation is that *eu* here is a hypercorrect spelling of *y* ‘his’, no doubt owing to the Middle Welsh monophthongisation of *eu* (as in *eu* ‘their’ > *y* ‘their’) already being underway.⁴⁵ This suggests another explanation of *eu alldudon* in col. 99. Although Jenkins (1963: 24) emends MS *uchelur* to pl. *ucheluyr*, as it stands it is singular and that would fit with the lack of *h* in *eu alldudon*, if it means ‘his (the *uchelwr*’s) aliens’.

Eu ‘his’ is not a panacea that can explain all absences of *h* after *eu*; it cannot explain Peniarth 30, col. 237 *oc eu achau huy*, for instance, where the 3 pl. *huy*

⁴⁵Morris Jones (1913: 275) described ModW *eu* as a medieval form ‘preserved artificially in lit[erary] W[elsh]’. Examples of *y* ‘their’ are already found in the Black Book of Carmarthen (Jarman 1982: 151 s.v. *i*³).

confirms that *eu* must be plural. But it does provide a possible explanation for the three examples of *eu a-* in the phrase *kan eu ardercauael* ‘with their(?) augmentation’ or similar in Peniarth 29 and 30:

Peniarth 29, p. 11 *y | saraet eu .vi. byu a .vi. ugeyn aryant. kan y | arderh{a}uael. y | guerth eu .vi. byu. a .vi | ugey{n} | myu kan eu ardercauael.*

‘His honour-price is six cattle and six score pence with its(?) augmentation. His worth is six cattle and six score cattle with their(?) augmentation.’

Peniarth 30, col. 78 *Galanas mab uchelur o | byt penkenedyl. nau myv a nau ugeyn | myv gan eu arderchauel teyr | gueyth E | sarhaet nau myv a | nau ugeynt aryant gan arderchauel un gueyth. Galanas y | alldut y⁴⁶ | aylaut .i. y | kar. vi. byv. a cxx. myv gan eu arderchauel teyr gueyth.*

‘The compensation for a noble’s son, if he be a chief of kindred, nine cattle and nine score with their(?) augmentation three times. His honour-price nine cattle and nine score pence with augmentation one time. The honour-price of his alien [and] his member, i.e. his kinsman, six cattle and a hundred and twenty cattle with their(?) augmentation three times.’

In Peniarth 29, p. 11 the antecedent of *eu* in *kan eu ardercauael* is probably not the plurality of animals listed but *guerth* (m.), with *eu* as a spelling of *y* ‘its’. (But in the preceding clause *kan y | arderh{a}uael* lacks the *h* that is expected if the antecedent is *saraet* (f.) or the animals plus the money (pl.); is its antecedent *aryant* (m.) alone?)⁴⁷ In Peniarth 30, col. 78 both cases of *eu* may be for 3 sg.m. *y*, referring back to *galanas* which is m.f.

While a few of the 17 examples of *eu a-* can thus be explained away, that is by no means true of them all. It is difficult to explain the remainder away as mere scribal errors when 3 sg.f. *y a-* for *y ha-* is so very rare a scribal error by comparison (see above). Is the disparity because *eu* was distinctively plural and did not need a following *h-* to be written to be intelligible, whereas *y* before a vowel was ambiguously ‘his’ or ‘her’, unless *h-* was written consistently after the feminine? The use of *eu* for sg. *y* is a slight objection to such a pragmatic explanation; when *eu alldudyon* could mean ‘his aliens’ as well as ‘their aliens’, writing the *h* would disambiguate the latter.

On balance, it seems that the thirteenth-century manuscripts do indicate, faintly, that sandhi *h-* after *eu* ‘their’ was still establishing itself in the thirteenth century, unlike the long-standing and etymologically justified *h-* after *y* ‘her’.

⁴⁶Jenkins (1963: 19, cf. 101) emends to *a’y*. Cf. Jenkins (1986: 155).

⁴⁷Compare Peniarth 29, p. 17 ‘*y | sarhaet eu vi byu a .vi. xx{ti}. aryant kan y | arderhauael ungueyth. y | guerth eu .vi. byu a | .vi.xx{ti} | myu kan y | arderhauael ungueyt*’ and ‘*y | saraet eu .vi | byu a .vi. xx{ti}. aryant kan y | arderchauael ungueyt. y | guerth eu .vi. byu a vixx{ti}. | myu. kan y | ardercheauae [sic]*’ and p. 18 ‘*y | sarhaet eu vi | byu a | vixx{ti}. aryarnt (sic) ka{n} y | arderchauael*’.

This conclusion can be strengthened by noting the further examples that can be found by searching thirteenth-century prose for combinations of [eu ~ ev ~ e6] + [a ~ e ~ i ~ o ~ u ~ v ~ 6 ~ y]:⁴⁸

s. *xiii*^{med}.

Peniarth 44, p. 49 *megys llew dywal en e6 plyth en e6 anreithyaw* ‘like a fierce lion in their midst plundering them’.

Peniarth 30, col. 22 [O] *d{eruyd} bot mach ar xii. d’ a | pan er doeth eu oet na* (sic) *oet ar helu y | kynnog{yn}*. (This seems to mean ‘their due date’, referring to the twelve pennies’ due date, but it must be admitted that the text seems corrupt at this point.)⁴⁹

Peniarth 30, col. 75 *y tat ay uam ay urodyr ay chyoryt ac eu etyuet* ‘... and their progeny’.

Peniarth 30, col. 230 *O | d{eruyd}. dody ar dyn un or petheu hyn emay ay llosc ay anreith ay kyrch godeuac* (sic). *sef eyryf a | dyly bot e | kyrch godeuac nau dyn ac eu espeyl ac eu kydluyn*⁵⁰ *ay llat dyn y | meun bruydyr ...* (Here *ac eu* is a false expansion of *ay* ‘or’, as if it were *a’y* ‘and their’, but the non-writing of *h-* after *eu* may still be significant. The scribe was obviously confused by the parenthetical definition of *kyrch godeuac*. Cf. Peniarth 32 (s. xiv/xv), p. 187: *O|deruyd. ellibya6 ar dyn ae llosc ae anreith. ae kyrch kyhoeda6c. Sef eiryf a|dyly bot my6n kyrch kyhoeda6c; na6 nyn. ae yspeil. ae llad dyn ym|br6ydyr. ae kynll6yn ...*, translated as follows by Owen (1841: 55): ‘If a person be charged with burning; or pillaging; or public attack, the number to constitute which is nine persons; or spoiling; or killing a person in battle; or waylaying ...’)

Peniarth 30, col. 310 *try eydyon cehet eu co{r}n ac eu esceuar* ‘three bullocks whose horns are as long as their ears’.⁵¹

s. *xiii*²

Peniarth 17, p. 23 *duw ... a | wyr rify syr ac eu enw* ‘God ... who knows the number of the stars and their name(s)’.

⁴⁸But absence of *h* before /j/ (as at Cotton Titus D.ii, fol. 67r *eu yachau* and NLW 5266B, p. 245 *eu ya6n*) can be ignored; cf. Sims-Williams (2010: 45).

⁴⁹Cotton Caligula A.iii, fol. 158r, col. 2 has ‘O der6yd bot mach ar de6dec keynnya6c. a dy6ot oet e de6 dec keynnya6c. ac nat oes ar helw e kynnogyn namyn march a talho dec p6nt’ (translated ‘If it happens that there is a surety for twelve pence, and the time-limit for the twelve pence is up, and there is nothing in the possession of the debtor except a horse worth ten pounds’ by Charles-Edwards (1986: 147)), and Peniarth 29, p. 46 has ‘O | d{er}uit bot mach ar | deudec keniauc a | deuot oet e | deudec keniauc ac nad | oes ar e | helu e | kenogon namuin march decpunt’. But Cotton Titus D.ii, fol. 22r has ‘O d{er}uyd bot mach ar deudec | keynnyauc ac nat oes ar helu e kennogyn namen march a | talho dec | punt’, which Jenkins (1986: 69) translates ‘If it happens that there is a surety for twelve pence, and the principal debtor has to his name nothing save a horse worth ten pounds’, while noting (p. 249) that Wiliam (1960: 37) restores the following italicised clause (‘and the due date for the twelve pence comes’) from BL Add. 14931, p. 37: ‘O deruyd bot mach ar | deudec keynnyauc a dyuot oet y deudec ceynnyauc ac nat oes ar helw y kynogyn namyn march dec punt’.

⁵⁰*d* partially deleted.

⁵¹Cf. ‘ac eu hesgyuarn’ in *Llyfr Iorwerth*, cited in GPC s.v. *ysgyfarn*. Cf. Sheringham (1982).

Cotton Titus D.ii, fol. 13r *Efa dele gedueu er eskrebyl a | ladher en | e llys sef achabŷ e dele vrth eu eskernegu ae wyall ef* ‘He is entitled to the necks of the livestock slaughtered in the court; the reason he is so entitled is that they are cut up with his axe’ (Jenkins 1986: 37). As *ysgrybl* is masculine singular as well as collective, perhaps *eu* is ‘its’ rather than ‘their’.

BL Add. 14931, p. 71 *y uam ay dat ay urodyr ay chwyoryd. ac eu etyuet* ‘... and their progeny’. (This comes from the same text as Peniarth 30, col. 75 above.)

These 8 thirteenth-century instances of *e6/leu* without sandhi *h* can be counted alongside the 17 thirteenth-century examples of *eu a-* discussed above.

Conclusion

Sandhi *h* after 3 pl. possessive pronouns (prefixed and infixed) was a mid-thirteenth-century innovation,⁵² still in progress, probably more or less contemporary with sandhi *h* after third-person infixed pronouns, from which it may have spread. It has been shown elsewhere that absence of sandhi *h* after first-person pronouns (e.g. *i'm eneid* ‘for my soul’, *a'm etev* ‘who promises me’, *Duw a'n amuc* ‘God defended us’, *an arueu* ‘our arms’, etc.) is still common in the thirteenth-century manuscripts (Sims-Williams 2010). That strongly suggests that sandhi *h* after first-person pronouns was the last type of sandhi *h* to develop. The analogy of the third-person pronouns may have been a factor in its development.

APPENDIX: A FURTHER COMMENT ON SANDHI *h* AFTER FIRST-PERSON PRONOUNS, WITH A NOTE ON ‘POST-SONORANT ASPIRATION’ IN BASQUE

In my earlier discussion, linking sandhi *h* after 1 sg. *'m* and 1 pl. *yn* and *'n* to hypercorrect *h* after nasals (Sims-Williams 2010), I alluded to a shortage of examples of that hypercorrection, and noted that the etymology of some that had been proposed, such as MW *bonhed* ‘nobility’ beside *boned* (ModW *bonedd*), was disputed — although here derivatives such as *bonhedyc* (ModW *bonheddig*) certainly tend to support the idea that the /h/ of *bonhed* is etymological.⁵³ Perhaps the earliest example of the hypercorrection (tenth century) is *a | ceroenhou* ‘and vats’ in the Cambridge Juvenius (Schrijver 2011: 34). Now that searchable databases for prose up to the fifteenth century are available, it is much easier to find good examples of unetymological *h*, for example *gynhedyfeu* in Shrewsbury School 11 (s. xiv/xv) p. 70, *kenhetloed* in

⁵²Regarding the alliteration in the three earlier lines by Cynddelw and Prydydd y Moch as coincidental.

⁵³Morris Jones (1913: 187) has explanations other than hypercorrection for ‘medial **h** before an accented vowel’. In Basque, according to Hualde (2018: 10), ‘aspiration ex nihilo, Ø > /h/, immediately before a stressed vowel and after a [+cons, +son, –lab], e.g. *onest* > *onhest* “honest”, [which] does not appear to have a phonetic justification’, may be due to an assumption such as ‘stressed syllables should have an aspirated onset’.

NLW Peniarth 23 (s. xv²), fol. 105r and *genhedyla6c* in NLW Wynnstey 36 (s. xv¹), fol. 125ra. A likely example in Early Modern manuscripts, noted by Ifor Williams, is *Pen hardd* / *Penhardd* for the place-name *Pennardd* in *Canu Llywarch Hen* XII.7–8;⁵⁴ a possible parallel is *Penharth* in Glamorgan in 1266, discussed by Padel (2021: 118 and 123–5). Further examples, in late manuscripts of *Bonedd y Saint*, are *yn hEnlli*, §§18–19 (MS D = Cardiff 3.242, part ii, s. xiv/xv), and *Kynhan* and *ynn hArllechwedd*, §§20 and 25 (MS N = NLW Peniarth 132, part iii (1554–64)).⁵⁵ The occurrence of sandhi *h* after the preposition *yn* here is striking and provides a parallel to its occurrence across the morpheme boundary after pronouns, e.g. *yn harglwyd* ‘our lord’. And note also *en herbyn* ‘against’ in Peniarth 14 (s. xiii²), p. 89 (twice) and *yn hachwanec* ‘additionally’ in Peniarth 7 (s. xiii/xiv), fol. 8v, col. 19 (Sims-Williams 2010: 49 and n. 3). In names compare *henheglus* in 1254 for Heneglwyys in Anglesey (Lunt 1926: 193), and *Einyawn hyrth* for Einion Yrth (Bartrum 1966: 45; Guy 2021: 81–2).

The spread of /nh/ in Welsh is curiously reminiscent of what has been labelled ‘post-sonorant aspiration’ in Basque and illustrated with *onhest* ‘honest’ < Romance **onest* (Salaberri Zaratiegi and Salaberri Izko 2016: 373–4; Hualde 2018: 8–10). This is not a close parallel, however, because inorganic /h/ is very restricted in Welsh whereas it occurs in a wide variety of environments in Basque and not principally following sonorants (see Igartua 2015).⁵⁶

ABBREVIATIONS

<i>BD</i>	Lewis, Henry (ed.), 1942: <i>Brut Dingestow</i> (Cardiff).
<i>CBT</i>	Gruffydd, R. Geraint (general ed.), 1991–96: <i>Cyfres Beirdd y Tywysogion</i> , 7 vols (Cardiff).
<i>HRB</i>	Reeve, Michael D., and Wright, Neil (ed. and transl.), 2009: <i>Geoffrey of Monmouth: The History of the Kings of Britain</i> (Woodbridge).
<i>LL</i>	Evans, J. Gwenogvryn, and Rhys, John (eds), 1979: <i>The Text of the Book of Llan Dâv Reproduced from the Gwysaney Manuscript</i> (repr. Aberystwyth).
<i>R</i>	Evans, J. Gwenogvryn (ed.), 1911: <i>The Poetry in the Red Book of Hergest</i> (Llanbedrog).
<i>TC</i>	Morgan, T. J. 1952: <i>Y Treigladau a’u Cysrawen</i> (Cardiff).

⁵⁴Williams (1953: 49–50 and 244). He used an inferior copy, but *Pen hardd* is also found in the better manuscripts listed in Sims-Williams (1978: 91 n. 1) and the new one noted by Guy (2016: 75 n. 32).

⁵⁵I noted these when I was privileged to read Barry Lewis’s forthcoming edition.

⁵⁶For advice here I am very grateful to Professor Joseba Andoni Lakarra. I also want to thank Professors Marged Haycock and Barry Lewis for their suggestions and to acknowledge the use of Professor Ann Parry Owen’s Modern Welsh concordance to *CBT*.

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A CRYPTIC *PROBATIO PENNAE* IN THE *SEIFÍN DUANAIRE*
(TCD MS H 4. 22 (1363), PART XII)¹

ABSTRACT

This article provides an edition and translation of a *probatio pennae* of four short lines' length, found on a slip inserted in the so-called *Seifín Duanaire*. This brief note is written in a deliberately obscure style. One line is written in reverse to conceal an attack on a prominent political figure, Máel Mórdha. We suggest identifications for Máel Mórdha and the scribe of the note, Fearghal Ó Gabhann, both of which have connections to the region of Bréifne, and we make proposals for the meaning of the last two lines that appear to add reflections by Fearghal about his note.

THE *SEIFÍN DUANAIRE*, a collection of praise poems by the fifteenth-century poet Seifín Mór and his sons, forms the twelfth of the sixteen discrete sections of the composite manuscript TCD H 4. 22 (1363), namely, pp. 125–56.² Two colophons at the end reveal the name of the scribe, Tanaidhe Ó Maoil Chonaire, who wrote the *duanaire* in the house of Doighre Ó Duibhgeannáin in Drumcollop, Co. Leitrim. This allows the manuscript to be situated in the sixteenth century and before 1589, when Doighre died (Hoyne 2021). Between pp. 128 and 129 two slips have been inserted one on top of the other and sewn together with the rest. They are designated pp. 128a and 128b here. P. 128a contains the end of the poem *Sguiream feasd do chrannchur Chathail* that begins on p. 128 (poem 3 in Hoyne 2018: 119–43; see also McManus and Ó Raghallaigh 2010: 237), while 'the other (a mere scrap) contains the end of the poem on p. 129, and the signature of Fergal ua Gabann' — thus the terse description in Abbott and Gwynn's catalogue (1921: 208). This is the poem *Fada mé ar mearughadh sligheadh* (cf. Ó Cuív 1950).³ This 'signature' on the second slip (i.e., p. 128b), or rather a brief *probatio pennae* of four lines (with a tiny spill-over into a fifth), is indeed in a different hand from the main scribe Tanaidhe. The scribal note is printed in full below for the first time. A high-resolution photograph is available as image 2 in Hoyne (2021). The present article is only concerned with these four lines, which read, first in a close diplomatic rendering and then in an interpretative semi-diplomatic transcription:

¹ We thank Dennis King, Aonghas Ó hAlmhain and an anonymous reviewer for important input and inspiration for this article.

² Abbott and Gwynn (1921: 199–216); Ó Cuív (1973: 22–3); Ó Cuív (1950: 285 n. 2); Hoyne (2018: 119–20); Hoyne (2021).

³ Ó Cuív (1950: 285 n. 1) corrects the incorrect information about the poem in Abbott and Gwynn (1921: 215). They had given the first line incorrectly as *Fada me ar mearugad* and had described the poem misleadingly as a 'Poem on the Crucifixion'.

lo
 aḁromleam ref na c
 fech̄ glesa f̄gail igab̄
 ailmes ime_asx cema_a
 coirgérkǵe

olc an fer Mael Mordha | fechain̄ glesa Ferghail I Gabann̄ | ailmes
 i measx cema[dh] | coir gércatghe

NOTES

The letters *lo* belong together with the *c* at the end of what we designate here as the first line. The scribe ran out of space and had to add the final two letters on top of the main line. This is certainly the case in the first line, whose letters are a tiny fraction smaller than lines 2–4. It appears to have been squeezed into the remaining space after the second line, and perhaps lines 3–4, were already in place. To make sense, the line must be read in the reverse: *olc an fer Mael Mordha* ‘Máel Mórdha is an evil man’. Maol Mórdha is a name strongly associated with the Uí Raghallaigh of East Bréifne (Co. Cavan) in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries in the Annals of the Four Masters. At least half a dozen different persons with that name are referred to by the Four Masters, either as historical figures — not infrequently the rulers of the Uí Raghallaigh — or as the fathers of historical figures. The Annals of the Four Masters allow us to distinguish at least the following individuals with that name: Maol Mórdha mac Con Condacht (†1411), Maol Mórdha Ua Raghallaigh (†1432), Maol Mórdha Riabhach (early 15th century?), Maol Mórdha mac Cathail (†1482), Maol Mórdha mac Seaáin (middle of 15th century?), Maol Mórdha mac Failghe (†1509), all of whom are too early to be contemporary with the note in the *Seifín Duanaire* — if Fearghal’s disdain is directed at a contemporary at all. Later in the century, we meet two individuals: Maol Mórdha mac Seaáin mic Cathail (probably middle of the 16th century, since his son Aodh Conallach is mentioned in 1581 and 1583, his wife died in 1582, and his grandson Seaán Ruadh was active in 1585) and Maol Mórdha mac Maoil Mhuire mic Eoghain (slain in 1581). Either of the two could be the intended person, although the second one may be closer to the likely composition date of the *duanaire*.

Line 2 is the *probatio pennae* proper. It appears to have been written first. Abbott and Gwynn (1921: 208) understood it as, in normalised spelling, *féchain̄ glésa Fergail Uí Gabann̄* ‘testing the instrument of Fearghal Ó Gabhann’. This name does not occur in the Annals, but a *Farrel duff O Gawine* is mentioned in the year 1590 in the Elizabethan Fiants (Nicholls 1994: 128 no. 5497). According to MacLysaght (1985: 133), the name Ó Gabhann, anglicised O’Gowan, ‘has an early connection with Breffny, where it was a clerical family of note,

but it is primarily of north Oriel'.⁴ Geographically this ties in with the associations of the manuscript in general, but also with the connections discussed above.⁵

The last two lines of the *probatio pennae* are more difficult to crack, but we present the following avenues towards a tentative interpretation:

ailmes: One approach is to assume that the scribe inverted the letters of the internal consonant cluster, a common feature of *Bérla na Filed* vocabulary. This is known as the stylistic device of *delidin litterda*, discussed in the *Trefocal Tract* (Breatnach 2017: 32, 41). Instances in *Bérla na Filed* prose include *Dorndine* for *Ordnde* (in the first line in Meyer 1912: 102) and *Ailbe* or *Ailui* for *Baile* (Meyer 1892). *Ailmes* would then stand for the intended word *aimles* 'disadvantage, harm, mischief; evil report, false charge'. Alternatively, but in our opinion less likely, *ailmes* could be resegmented as *ailm es*. It is noteworthy that *ailm* is the ogam name of the letter *a*. It could conceivably stand for the interjection *á!*, *há!*, followed by *es*, an occasional spelling variant of the copula *is* or *as* in fifteenth- or sixteenth-century manuscripts.

imeasx: The ninth character in line 3 is an *e-caudata*. A reader reminds us that Hoyne (2018: 121) discusses the use of the glide-vowel *a*, ligatured to a previous vowel, in contexts where the *a* is to be elided (but not, in fact, after *e*!). Hoyne gives examples such as *maa tcim* (= *má at-c[h]im*), *da an geall*, or *oa ninit* (= *ó an init*) etc. where elision is required metrically. This observation, however, does not add to the understanding of the present context. We read the eleventh character in line 3 as an *x*, which may stand for *sc*, rather than *cs*. Parallels for such a spelling are *basalixa* for Lat. *basiliscus* 'basilisc' (Gaelic Maundeville, §261 (Stokes 1899: 296)), *astrix* for *aistrisc* 'asterisk' (BL MS Harley 5280, fol. 23v19 and 23v23), and perhaps *tixail* in *Leabhar Breac*, p. 11a26. While the spelling of the latter word could simply reflect OIr. *tícsál*, the verbal noun of *do-ícsa* 'to raise, draw out, remove', it is equally clear from spellings of the verb and the verbal noun with *sc* that the internal cluster had undergone metathesis after the Old Irish period (see numerous examples in *eDIL* s.vv. *do-ícsa* and *tícsál*). This means that, irrespective of its original meaning, synchronically the spelling *tixail* in the *Leabhar Breac* could have been understood by its scribe as representing

⁴Two examples of the surname Ó Gabhann occur in the poem *Do chuamair-ne ar creich* (verse 3a: *Do loiteadh O Gabhann ann*; and 6a: *Dob é cuid Uí Ghabhann dámhuigh*; Carney 1959: 73–4). Significantly, the patron of the poem is one Giolla Íosa Ruadh Ó Raighilligh (†1331). Two other references to Ó Gabhann appear in a text relating to the Confederate Wars in Ireland and dating to 1650–1700. They are *Pilib Ó Gabann* and *Eogan Ó Gabhann* (Smith 2017: 45). Both seem to be connected with Bréifne and the Uí Raghallaigh.

⁵A reader wonders whether instead of *i gabann* = *Uí Ghabhann* the words after *Ferghail* should rather be read as *ig [g]abáil* = *ag gabháil*. Ní Shéaghdha (1968) argues that in the context of scribal activity the verb *gaibid* can have the meanings 'to edit, choose, excerpt' in addition to 'to take down by dictation' or 'to make the first copy'. Since, however, the entire contribution of scribe Fearghal to the *Seifin Duanaire* is limited to writing four short lines of *probatio pennae* on the corner of a slip, the use of such a rather grandiose term is hardly justified by his ephemeral activity. On balance, it seems best to take *i gab* as indicating the name of the family of the scribe.

tíscáil. The finishing stroke of the *x* ends in a dot, but this is unlikely to be a punctuation mark. Reading the letter *x* for *sc*, as outlined above, the phrase *imeasc* can be normalised as *immes* ‘in the midst of, amidst’. Perhaps this is meant as a variant for *ar mes* ‘in confusion, mixed up’.

cema: The final letter is an *m* with a rounded, inward-bent third minim in ligature with subscript *a*. *Cema* stands for *cema[d]* or *cema[dh]* ‘though it be’, i.e. the conjunction *cia*^N ‘although, even if’ + 3 sg. conditional of the copula *bad*, with the final lenited *d* omitted, a common practice in manuscripts of this date.⁶

coirgérkge: The letter *k* is very rare in genuinely Irish words, although it is common in historical sources, especially in the Latin abbreviation *kl* for *calendae* ‘calends, first day of a month’. As a reader reminds us, the letter *k* can represent the syllable *ca* or the word *cath*, e.g. *ktt* for *catt* ‘cat’ (BL MS Add. 30512, fol. 33a marg. inf.) or *senk.* for *Sencath*, the name *Senchad* (CIH 1664.35 and *ibid.* note m).⁷ While the expansion *coirgércaghe* does not lend itself to a meaningful analysis, *coirgércathge* can be split into *cóir gérchathge*, where *cathge* is the genitive or an analogical nominative of *caithig* ‘trespass, fine, liability for trespass’. The phrase could either be nominal, i.e. ‘a penalty (substantivised *cóir*) for a severe offence’ or a virtual copula clause ‘a severe penalty is appropriate (adjective *cóir*)’. An alternative way of solving the ‘riddle’, as it were, is to read *k* as a cipher for the vowel that immediately precedes it in the alphabet, i.e. for *i* (Bischoff 1990: 177). The resulting reading *coirgérighe* could conceivably stand for *cóir-géraigthe* ‘properly sharpened’, referring to the pen that Fearghal was using, with *gérighe* being a deficient spelling for *géraigthe*, the past participle of *géraigidir* ‘to sharpen, whet’. The two words *cóir* and *géraigthe* could also be separated, as in the suggestion above.

CONCLUSION

In summary, lines 1–2 mean ‘Máel Mórdha is an evil man. Testing the instrument of Fearghal Ó Gabhann.’ Lines 3–4, on the other hand, are open to a number of diverse interpretations, none of which is straightforwardly self-evident. Read as normalised *aimles i mes* *cema[d]* *cóir gérchathge*, this can be translated as ‘a mischief / evil report in the midst, although a penalty for a severe offence / a severe fine for trespass were appropriate’ or as ‘malice in muddled form (lit. harm in confusion), though a severe penalty be just (for doing so)’. *Aimles* ‘malice’ here perhaps refers to the slight of Máel Mórdha’s character, albeit written backwards, i.e. *i mes*. This malice is written in spite of

⁶Previously we had read the word as *ceiir*, the genitive of the substantivised adjective *cíar* ‘dark, murky, black’, used as a lexical substitute for the near synonym *dub* ‘black, dark’ in its substantival meaning ‘ink’. However, the spelling with double *ii* and the ‘swan-necked’ *r*, normally at home only in ligature with *o* or *b*, militate against this reading.

⁷Cf. Norberg (2004: 50–1): ‘The letter *k* was in general rendered, in accordance with the teaching of the grammarians, by a word beginning with the syllable *ca*.’

the fact that it should incur a penalty. Or punctuation could be inserted: *aimles i mesc cema[d] cóir; gérchathge* ‘a mischief / false charge / malice in muddled form, although it were appropriate; [the pen is] sharpened’. A less likely alternative would be to read *Á! es i mes .x. cema[d] cóir gérchathge*, the meaning could be something like ‘oh! it’s in the judgement of ten although a penalty for a severe offence / a severe fine for trespass were appropriate’.

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THE TWO SOURCES OF MAURICE KYFFIN'S
DEFFYNNIAD FFYDD EGLWYS LOEGR (1595)

ABSTRACT

In this note it is argued that for his Welsh translation of Bishop John Jewel's *Apologia Ecclesiae Anglicanae* (first published 1562) Maurice Kyffin did not only use Jewel's Latin text, as is indicated on the title page and in his address to the reader, but also Lady Anne Cooke Bacon's English translation, *An Apologie or answere in defence of the Churche of Englande* (1564). This makes Kyffin's *Deffynniad Ffydd Eglwys Loegr* (1595) an example of a 'contaminated' translation, which is based on both the original source and a translation into another language, a specific form of indirect, or 'secondhand', translation which is not infrequent in the history of translating.

IN THIS NOTE I suggest that the issue of the source of Maurice Kyffin's *Deffynniad Ffydd Eglwys Loegr* (1595) is more complex than has hitherto been assumed.¹ My argument is based on the analysis of a small corpus of eleven passages from the text which I prepared for a discussion of its syntactic complexity.² These passages, ranging in length from about 140 to about 450 words, were extracted more or less mechanically at intervals of about every twentieth page. To these, I added the corresponding passages from Bishop John Jewel's *Apologia Ecclesiae Anglicanae* (first published 1562),³ which is generally assumed to have been the only source for Kyffin's translation, based on the statement on the title page, 'Wedi ei gyfieuthu o Ladin' (*DFf* 1908: [i] 'translated from Latin') and on his remark at the end of his introductory address to the reader: '... i 'r llyfr duwiol ymma, a droes i o Ladin er mwyn y rhai anyscedig, yn yr hon iaith y scrifennodd Escob *Iuel* ef' (*DFf* 1908: [xvi] '... to this godly book which I translated from Latin for the benefit of the unlearned, in which language Bishop Jewel wrote it'). For further comparative purposes and as my own support translation,⁴ I complemented this set of passages with the corresponding passages from Lady Anne Cooke Bacon's English translation, *An Apologie or answere in defence of the Churche of Englande* (1564).⁵

¹On Maurice Kyffin (c. 1555–98) and his *Deffynniad Ffydd Eglwys Loegr* see, for example, Williams (1997: 382–3) and Morgan (2018: 11–15), and further below.

²See Poppe (2022).

³On Bishop John Jewel (1522–71), see, for example, Booty (1963). For a brief characterization of his main achievements, see Booty (1963: 5–8), and for the *Apologia*, Booty (1963: 45–57). Booty (1963: 53) suggests that 'the *Apologia* was indeed a group project and therefore is more truly representative of the Church of England than has hitherto been thought'.

⁴For this term, see further below.

⁵On Lady Anne Cooke Bacon (c. 1528–1610), her *Apologie or answere in defence of the Churche of Englande*, and its opaque publication history, see, for example, Allen (2010), Demers

Rather unexpectedly, I then found a number of instances in which Kyffin's text seemed strikingly closer to the English of Bacon's *Apologie* than to the Latin of Jewel's *Apologia*. A first English translation of the *Apologia* was published in 1562, but the examples under (1) and (2) below show that it does not contain characteristic innovations shared by Bacon and Kyffin.⁶ It can therefore be ignored for the purpose of further comparisons.

In the following, I present instances of such intriguing correspondences between Bacon's and Kyffin's versions which, especially when taken together, I think cannot be easily explained as two translators independently finding the same answer to a translational challenge.

I begin with what even in isolation are my perhaps most compelling examples. (1.1) shows in the repetition of names listed in the preceding context an innovation shared by Bacon's and Kyffin's texts against the Latin, which employs simply anaphoric *illi* 'these', and also against the English translation of 1562. In (1.2), Bacon and Kyffin both use the same phrase *quantum in Eucharistia* and supply it with an explanation, while it is left unexplained in the Latin source and in the English translation of 1562.

- (1.1) Canys pam na achwynant hwy hyn hefyd, fyned *Lot* allan o *Sodom*, fyned *Abraham* ymmaeth o wlad *Caldea*, fyned yr *Hebraeaid* allan o'r *Aipht*, fyned *Crist* oddi wrth yr *Iddewon*, a myned *Pawl* oddi wrth y *Pharisaeaid*? Herwydd oni ddichyn bod achos cyfiawn i neb ymadel (na chynt na chweddi) ni welwn-ni resswm pam na ellir cyhuddo ***Lot, Abraham, yr Hebraeaid, Crist, a Phawl Abostol, o gynnwrf a gwyr-bleidiaeth yn gystal ag eraill.*** (*DFf* 1908: [142] = *DFf* 1595: fol. 71v)⁷

'For why do they not complain about that as well, Lot's leaving Sodom, Abraham's leaving the land of Chaldea, the Israelites' departing from Egypt, Christ's going away from the Jews, and Paul's going away from the Pharisees? Because if there cannot be a just reason for anyone to depart, before or afterwards, we see no reason why Lot, Abraham, the Israelites, Christ, and the Apostle Paul cannot be charged with discord and sedition as well as others.'

Nam cur hoc etiam non queruntur, Lothum è Sodoma: Abrahamum, è Chaldaea: Hebraeos ex Ægypto: Christum à Iudæis: Paulū à Phariseis discessisse? Nisi enim iusta aliqua possit esse caussa discessionis, nihil videmus, cur non ***illi*** quoque possint eodem modò, factionis & seditionis

(2011, 2016), Goodrich (2018), and Ferron (2019), all with references to earlier work. *AAD* 2016 is an edition with modernized spelling.

⁶On this translation, see Booty (1963: 55–6), Allen (2010), Demers (2011: 214–16; 2016: 21–3).

⁷Translations are mine, as is the bold type in the quotations which draws attention to parallels and differences between the versions respectively. The numbers in square brackets with *DFf* 1908 are the consecutive page-numbers supplied by the editor of the reprint, William Prichard Williams, which are given in square brackets by him in order to distinguish them from the folio-numbers of the original.

accusari. (AEA 1591: 138 = AEA 1584: 112–13 = AEA 1581: 138 = AEA 1562: [43])⁸

For whye complayne they not also of this, that Lot went quitte his way out of Sodome, Abraham out of Calde, the Israelites out of Egypte, Christ frō the Iewes, and Paule from the Pharisees? For except it be possible there maye be a lawful cause of departing, we see no reasone whye **Lot, Abraham, the Israelites, Christ and Paule** may not be accused of sectes and seditiō, **as wel as others** (AAD 1564: [92–3])⁹

For why doe they not likewise finde fawte at this: that Loth departed from Sodome, Abraham out of Calde, the Hebrewes out of Egypte, Christ from the Iewes, Paule from the Pharisees? For onlesse there maye be some iuste cause of suche departynges, we see not, why they also maye not in like sorte be accused as factious and seditious men. (AAD 1562: fol. 49r)

- (1.2) Mae rhai onynt yn scrifenny fod corph *Crist Quantum in Eucharista*, **sef, fod ei gwbl faintioli ef yn y Sacrament**; a rhai eraill o honynt yn doedyd nad yw. (DFf 1908: [60] = DFf 1595: fol. 30v)

‘Some of them write that Christ’s body is *quantum in Eucharista*, that is, that his full extent is in the sacrament, and others of them say that it is not.’

esse alios qui scribant corpus Christi in Eucharistia esse quantum, esse alios contrā qui negent. (AEA 1591: 59–60 = AEA 1584: 50 = AEA 1581: 59–60 = AEA 1562: [20])

Some also of them there be, whiche write that y^e body of Christ is *quantum in Eucharistia*, **That is to say, hath his perfite quantitie in the Sacrament**: Some other againe saye naye. (AAD 1564: [42])

that there be some that write that the body of Christ in the sacramēt hath quantite and bygnesse, on the other syde there be some that denye it: (AAD 1562: fol. 21r)

The explicit reference to David’s restoration of the perfection of the faith in (2) is a small-scale innovation, shared by Bacon and Kyffin, which is lacking in the Latin text and the English translation of 1562:

- (2) ... am iddynt ddechwelyd at y drefn gyntaf a ‘r prif ddechreuad; gan ddwyn drach-gefn a dattroi crefydd i ‘r perffeiddrwydd **lle y gadowse y Brenin Dafydd ef**. (DFf 1908: [181] = DFf 1595: fol. 61r)

⁸I quote Jewel’s Latin text from the London edition of 1591, which is closest in time to Kyffin’s version, but I have also consulted the earlier editions of 1562, 1581, and 1584, in order not to overlook differences between the Latin texts. For some small-scale textual evidence that Kyffin used one of the identical editions of 1591 or 1581, see below on (13). The numbers in square brackets with AEA 1562 refer to the images of the digital facsimile available through Early English Books Online on the ProQuest platform. All editions of Jewel’s *Apologia* have been consulted via this platform.

⁹The numbers in square brackets refer to the images of the digital facsimile available through Early English Books Online on the ProQuest platform.

'... that is, because they returned to the first order and the original beginning, bringing back and reverting religion to the perfection in which king David had left it.'

... videlicet quòd ad primordia & ad fontes redijssent, & religionem in integrum restituissent. (AEA 1591: 173 = AEA 1584: 141 = AEA 1581: 173 = AEA 1562: [53])

... That is bycause they had retorned to the first and originall foundation, and had restored Religion euen to the perfection **wherin Daudid left it.** (AAD 1564: [116])

... that is to saye, bicause they had resorted back to the first principles, & to the wel heades, and restored religion to his first estate. (AAD 1562: fol. 61v)

In the following four examples we find small phraseological additions to the Latin text in both Bacon's and Kyffin's versions; these are probably not very telling individually, but acquire relevance as part of the cumulative evidence collected here:

- (3.1) Ir wledd hon **yn eyn barn ni** y dylid gwahadd pobl Dduw ... (DFf 1908: [38] = DFf 1595: fol. 12[=19]r)

'To this feast in our view should be invited God's people ...'

Ad hoc epulum inuitandum esse populum ... (AEA 1591: 39 = AEA 1584: 33 = AEA 1581: 39 = AEA 1562: [13])

To this bākett **wee thinke** the people of God ought to be earnestly bidden ... (AAD 1564: [29])

- (3.2) ... ag eraill yn well gentyhynt goelio fod *Crist* yn meddwl, yn hynny, ryw *indiuuiduum vagum*; (**fal y galwant hwy'r peth**;) ... (DFf 1908: [60] = DFf 1595: fol. 30v)

'and others prefer to believe that Christ meant thereby some *indiuuiduum vagum* (as they call it) ...'

... alios qui malint vagum quoddam indiuuiduum indicari ... (AEA 1591: 60 = AEA 1584: 51 = AEA 1581: 60 = AEA 1562: [20])

... Som had rather haue that a certaine *vagum indiuuiduum*, **as they terme yt**, was ment ther by. (AAD 1564: [43])

- (3.3) A *Daniel* y prophwyd **wrth fynegy** am amseroedd diwaethaf Anghrist, y Gwir (hebr ef) ... (DFf 1908: [100] = DFf 1595: fol. 50v)

'And Daniel the prophet speaking about the last times of the Antichrist, truth, he says, ...'

Et Daniel Propheta, de vltimis temporibus Antichristi, Veritas, inquit ... (AEA 1591: 99 = AEA 1584: 81 = AEA 1581: 99 = AEA 1562: [31])

Daniell the Prophete **speaking** of the later times of Antichrist, Truthhe sayth he ... (AAD 1564: [67])

- (3.4) O ddibenny, ni a ‘madowsom a ‘r hwn, nid oeddem-mi rwymedig iddo, a ‘r hwn nid oedd ddim gantho i ddoedyd drosto ‘i hunan, **onid ni wn i** pa ryw yspydoliaeth (a fyn ef fod) yn y lle y mae fo ‘n trigo, a chyhyd barhaad y Gyf-eisteddle. (*DFf* 1908: [197] = *DFf* 1595: fol. 102r)

‘In concluding, we separated from him to whom we were not bound, and him who had nothing to say for himself, except I do not know what spirit (which he claims to be) in the place where he lives and the length of the continuation of his throne.’

Postremò, ab illo discessimus, cui obstricti non eramus, quique præter genium quendam loci, & successionem, quod pro se diceret, nihil habuit. (*AEA* 1591: 187–8 = *AEA* 1584: 153 = *AEA* 1581: 187–8 = *AEA* 1562: [57])

In conclusion, wee haue departed from hym to whom we wer not bound, and who had nothyng to saye for hym selfe, **but only I know not** what vertue or power of the place where he dweleth, and a continuaunce of succession. (*AAD* 1564: [125])

The next two passages show small syntactic agreements between Bacon’s and Kyffin’s translations against the Latin text, with regard to the position of phrases and to the meaning of prepositions used:

- (4.1) ... namyn troi awnaent at chwedleu, **a hynny yn yr Eglwys hefyd**. (*DFf* 1908: [99–100] = *DFf* 1595: fol. 50r–v)

‘... but they may turn to fables, and this even in the Church.’

... sed **in ipsa Ecclesia** ad fabulas cōuerterentur. (*AEA* 1591: 99 = *AEA* 1584: 81 = *AEA* 1581: 99 = *AEA* 1562: [31])

... but he turned back vnto fables & lies, **and that wythin the very Church**. (*AAD* 1564: [67])

- (4.2) Hefyd ni ddoe Escobion y Dwyrain ddim i ‘r Cyngor yn *Syrmium*, **wedi** clywed onynt vnwaith ddarfod i *Athanasius* fynd ymmaeth oddi yno. (*DFf* 1908: [161] = *DFf* 1595: fol. 81r)

‘The Bishops of the East would not come to the Council in Syrmium, once they had heard that Athanasius had gone away from there.’

Ad concilium Syrmianum, **à quo** se subduxit Athanasius, occidentis episcopi venire noluerunt. (*AEA* 1591: 155 = *AEA* 1584: 127 = *AEA* 1581: 155 = *AEA* 1562: [48])

The Bysshopes of the Easte woulde not comme to the Syrmian Councell, **after** they knewe Athanasius had gotten hymselfe thence againe. (*AAD* 1564: [104])

In the following two sentences, Bacon and Kyffin both employ two semantically related lexemes where the Latin one uses only one — in the second example,

the phrase is expanded in the Welsh text by a further third lexeme and an extra attributive adjective:¹⁰

- (5.1) ... ag o ran cadw, achynnal [*sic*], eu Tradoddiadeu eu hunain, a ddarfu iddynt er ys talm o oesoedd, **ddifwyno a di-ysturu** deddfodau *Crist* a'r Apostolion? (*DFf* 1908: [22] = *DFf* 1595: fol. 11v)

'... and who, for the sake of keeping and upholding their own traditions, have since ages past defiled and disregarded the customs of Christ and the Apostles?'

... qui ... traditionum suarum caussa, Christi atque Apostolorum instituta aliquot iam sæcula violarunt? (*AEA* 1591: 22 = *AEA* 1584: 20 = *AEA* 1581: 22 = *AEA* 1562: [8])

... which ... to maintaine their owne traditions, haue **defaced and corrupted** now these many hundred yeares the ordinances of Christe and of the Apostles? (*AAD* 1564: [19])

- (5.2) ... ag nad oedd ddim wedi adel yn heml Dduw, **onid ôl, a thrist-olwg dinistr ag anrhaith** ... (*DFf* 1908: [181] = *DFf* 1595: fol. 61r)

'and that nothing was left in God's temple except the traces and pitiful appearance [left by] destruction and despoiling '

... in templo Dei, præter **miseras ruinas** nihil esse reliqui ... (*AEA* 1591: 173 = *AEA* 1584: 141 = *AEA* 1581: 173 = *AEA* 1562: [53])

... and that nothing remained in the Temple of God **but pitiful spoyles and decayes** ... (*AAD* 1564: [116])

In passage (6), the argument and the syntax develop in parallel in both Bacon's and Kyffin's versions. Note specifically that the explanation of the reason why John Clement burnt these pages is added as a separate second sentence, whereas it is integrated into the Latin sentence as a subordinate clause. Furthermore, *Anglus* is translated as *a cuntrye manne of owres* and as *gwr o'n gwlad ni* and the translation of *in focum* 'into the stove' is less specific, *into the fyer* and *ir tan* respectively:

- (6) Ag os ydynt o ddifri yn bwrw cymaint hyder ar lyfreu henafiaeth, pa ham ofewn y chydig o flynddoedd a aeth heibio, y darfu i *Ioan Clement* **gwr o'n gwlad ni**, yngwydd gwyr da, a ddylent gael ei coelio, rwygo

¹⁰For a further example, see (9) below. Another doublet in (5.1), *cadw*, *achynnal*, has no parallel in the English and the Latin texts. Kyffin's use of such additional doublets as stylistic embellishments may repay further study. The Welsh version already begins with such a doublet, *Hir a hen* (*DFf* 1908: [1] = *DFf* 1595: fol. 1r); the Latin text uses one lexeme here, *Vetus* (*AEA* 1591: 1), and the English version paraphrases with *AN olde complaint* (*AAD* 1564: [5]). The anonymous reader points out that the doublets chosen in (5.2) are not especially similar in the Welsh and English; their use in the Welsh text may be motivated by the doublets in the English version, reinforced by Kyffin's predilection for this device. Such doublets are a feature of medieval translations into Welsh, see, e.g., Lewis (1925: 288), Poppe (1999: 308–11), Russell (2016: 58–9), but also of 'native' narrative, see S. Davies (1995: 182–5). As the instances from Kyffin's text show, they were still a favoured device in the Early Modern Period.

a bwrw **ir tan** syrn o ddolennau allan o lyfr *Theodoretus* vn o'r Tadeu o henafiaeth ag Escob yng-*Greçia*, yn yr hyn ddolenneu yr oedd yr Escob yn dangos yn eglur, ag yn dyscu i ddynion yn hyffordd, nad ydyw naturiaeth y bara yn y Cummun yn mynd ymaeth, nag yn diflannu? **A hynny a wnaeth Ioan Clement gan dybied nad oedd vn copi arall o lyfr Theodoretus onid hwnnw'n vnig.** (*DFf* 1908: [120–121] = *DFf* 1595: fol. 60v–61r)

'If they seriously put so much trust on books of antiquity, why within a few years past, did John Clement, our countryman, in the presence of good men who should be believed, tear off and cast into the fire a number of pages from the book of Theodoret, one of the Fathers of antiquity and Bishop in Greece, in which pages the bishop showed clearly, and taught the people aptly that the nature of the bread in the communion does not disappear nor vanish. And this John Clement did thinking that there was no other copy of Theodoret's book but this alone.'

Quòd si illi ita prorsus fidunt vetustati, & nihil simulant, cur ante non ita multos annos, Ioannes Clemens **Anglus**, aliquot folia vetustissimi patris & Græci Episcopi Theodreti, in quibus ille perspicuè ac luculenter docebat, naturam panis in Eucharistia non aboleri, **cùm putaret nullum aliud exemplar posse vspiam inueniri**, inspectantibus aliquot bonis viris, & fide dignis, lacerauit & abiecit **in focum**? (*AEA* 1591: 118 = *AEA* 1584: 96–7 = *AEA* 1581: 118 = *AEA* 1562: [37])

And yf they truste so fully to antiquitie, and vse no dissimulation, why didde Iohn Clement **a cuntrye manne of owres**, but fewe yeares past, in the presence of certaine honest menne and of good credite, teare and cast **into the fyre** certaine leaues of Theodorete the moste aunciente Father and a greeke Bysshoppe, wherein he plainelye and euidentlye taughte, that the nature of breade in the Communion was not chāged, abolished or brought to nothing **And this didde he of purpose, bicause he thought ther was no other copy thereof to be fōūd.** (*AAD* 1564: [80])

In (7), the syntax of the Latin text is transformed in strikingly parallel steps in Bacon's and Kyffin's translations: the sentence-final phrase *mansisse domi* is moved forward and expanded with a verbal doublet, *did tarry at home*, and *would not come* and *aros gartref, a pheidio a dyfod* respectively. The reference to the councils is in both versions expanded by a locative clause introduced by *lle y* and *wherein*. The logical relations of the verbal events described within the complex Latin *cum*-clause are furthermore made explicit by phrases introduced by *bicause* and *oblegid* and a further dependent phrase, *seeinge ... and gan weled* Note here the additional doublet *gan weled a gwybod* in the Welsh version.

- (7) Ag am hynny, ni a wyddom ddarfod i lawer o wyr da, ag Escobion catholic, **aros gartref, a pheidio a dyfod** i'r cyfryw Gymanfaeu, **lle y** bydde 'r fath amlwg ddilyn pleidieu, a gwasnaethu turnau:

oblegid di-ammeu oedd gentynt, na bydde iddynt onid colli eu poen heb wneuthyr lles yn y byd, **gan weled a gwybod** fod wynebau a meddylieu ei dygassogion mor ollawl iw herbyn. (*DFf* 1908: [160] = *DFf* 1595: fol. 80v)

‘And therefore we know that many good men and Catholic bishops stayed at home and did not come to such councils where there would be such obvious following of parties and serving of sides, because they had no doubt that it would be for them only a waste of their effort without doing any good, seeing and knowing that the faces and the minds of their adversaries were completely turned against them.’

Itaque scimus multos sæpe bonos viros, & catholicos episcopos, cùm huiusmodi concilia indicerentur, & apertè factionibus & partibus inseruiretur, & scirent se tantùm lusuros esse operam, aduersariorum animos prorsus esse obfirmatos, nihil posse promoueri, mansisse domi. (*AEA* 1591: 154–5 = *AEA* 1584: 126 = *AEA* 1581: 154–5 = *AEA* 1562: [48])

And therefore we knowe that diuers times many good men and Catholique Bysshops did **tarry at home, and would not come** when such Councils were called, **wherein** men so apparauntly laboured to serue factions and to take partes, **bicause** they knewe they should but lose their trauaile and dooe no good, **seeinge** where vnto their enemies mindes were so wholye bent. (*AAD* 1564: [103])

The parallels observed in the passages above between the English and Welsh translations of Jewel's *Apologia* provide some cumulative support for my contention that Maurice Kyffin referred to Anne Cooke Bacon's English version in the process of translating John Jewel's *Apologia*. However, in order to avoid the impression that he did not use the Latin text, I give in the following a few examples for his dependence on the Latin text as source, beyond the title-page's explicit claim, 'translated from Latin'. Such examples are more difficult to come by, since both translations are overall quite literal and close to the Latin text, whose wording and syntactic structures they generally attempt to replicate faithfully — as the passages given above show.

In (8), the Latin and the Welsh versions both refer to the suppression of men's conscience, *conscientia* and *cydwybodau* respectively,¹¹ whereas Bacon's text speaks of men's souls instead (Welsh *enaid* or *ysbryd*), so that a direct translation of the English sentence would not have resulted in the Welsh one:

- (8) ... e fydde hynny, bob vn o 'r ddau, beth goganllyd gwradyddus, a hefyd dirfawr enbydrwydd o gynneu llid Duw i 'n herbyn, drwy orthymmy a gorthrechy 'n **cydwybodau**. (*DFf* 1908: [195–96] = *DFf* 1595: fol. 101r–v)

¹¹The plural in the Welsh text has no parallel in the Latin one. Note the additional Welsh doublet *goganllyd gwradyddus*.

‘... this would be both a thing defamatory and shameful and also a very great danger of kindling God’s wrath against us, through oppressing and vanquishing our conscience.’

... esset id nobis non tantum ad famam ignominiosum, sed etiam ad inflammandam aduersus nos iram Dei, & ad opprimendam extinguendamque **consentiam** nostram perniciosum. (AEA 1591: 186 = AEA 1584: 152 = AEA 1581: 186 = AEA 1562: [57])

... Besides that this should be a great blot to our good name, it shoulde also be a very daungerous matter both to kindle Goddes wrath against vs and to clogge and condemne our owne **soules** foreuer. (AAD 1564: [124])

Note, however, the parallel between the English and Welsh versions with regard to a shared doublet in the immediately preceding context:

- (9) ... nid a chwreuddion disieu, eithr a rhai **gwaeth a diffeithiach** o lawer na chwreuddion (DFf 1908: [195] = DFf 1595: fol. 101r)
- ‘not with players of dice, but with some much worse and more wicked than players’
- ... non tantum cum aleatoribus sed etiam cum hominibus **longè nequioribus** (AEA 1591: 186 = AEA 1584: 152 = AEA 1581: 186 = AEA 1562: [57])
- ... not only with dicers, but also with men **farre more vngracious and wicked** then any dycers be (AAD 1564: [124])

An additional doublet in Bacon’s translation is not always reproduced in the Welsh version, complicating the relationship between the texts:

- (10) A Phawl a ddoedodd y gossode Anghrist ei **babell** yn heml Dduw (DFf 1908: [99] = DFf 1595: fol. 50r)
- ‘And Paul said that the Antichrist would raise his tabernacle in God’s temple’
- Paulus Antichristum ait, aliquando positurum esse **tabernaculum** suum in templo Dei (AEA 1591: 98 = AEA 1584: 81 = AEA 1581: 98 = AEA 1562: [31])
- And Paul saith, that Antichrist should once set vp his owne **tabernacle and stately seath** in the temple of God (AAD 1564: [67])

Unsurprisingly perhaps, Bacon’s addition of an idiomatic phrase in the English version, *al Mum* ‘not the slightest word’, finds no parallel in the Welsh text:

- (11) yr oedd tan, a dur a hayarn, gentynt garllaw’n oestadol, eithr am yr hen Gymanfa-Gynghorau, a’r Tadeu, **mawr yw’r gosteg**. (DFf 1908: [120] = DFf 1595: fol. 60v)¹²

¹²Note again the additional doublet in the Welsh version, *dur a hayarn*.

'They had fire, and iron and steel constantly close by, but about the old councils and the Fathers, great is the silence.'

Ferrum quidem, & flammam semper habuerunt ad manum: de concilijs verò antiquis, & patribus, **magnum silentium**. (AEA 1591: 118 = AEA 1584: 96 = AEA 1581: 118 = AEA 1562: [37].

Fyer and sworde they haue had alwayes ready at hande, but as for the olde Councils & the fathers, **al Mum, not a word**. (AAD 1564: [80])

In (12), the syntactic structure of *si qui sunt qui ...* of the Latin text is faithfully replicated in the Welsh one with *od oes rai* plus relative clause, but rendered quite differently in Bacon's version:

- (12) Yr hyn beth er na choelia rhyw rai ysgatfydd, **od oes rai ni** ddaliassant graff sylw arnaw ... (DFf 1908: [1] = DFf 1595: fol. 1r)

'This, although some perhaps do not believe it, if there are some who did not pay close attention to it ...'

Id etsi alijs incredibile fortasse videri possit, **si qui sunt, qui** ista minus attentè obseruauerint ... (AEA 1591: 1 = AEA 1584: 3 = AEA 1581: 1 = AEA 1562: [2])

Albeit perchaunce this may seeme vnto some a thinge harde to bee beleueed, I meane to suche as haue scante well and narrowly taken heed thereunto ... (AAD 1564: [5])

Further evidence that Kyffin used Jewel's Latin text, either in the edition of 1581 or of 1591, is provided by a passage in which Jewel misrepresented the position of Stanislaus Hosius, bishop of Warmia (northern Poland),¹³ in a citation from the latter's *De Expresso Dei Verbo*. Jewel (AEA 1591: 108) quoted this passage as if it represented Hosius's position, whereas it actually summarizes the position of his opponents. As pointed out by Booty (1963: 117), Jewel must have realized his mistake shortly after the publication of the *Apologia*, and a sentence was added in both English translations which in Bacon's version reads:¹⁴

- (13) He dissembleth I graunt you in deede, and hydeth what hee is, and setteth fourth the matter so, as though it were not hee and his syde, butte the Zwenkfeldian heretiques that so didd speake. (AAD 1564: [72])

This sentence is not found in Kyffin's Welsh version; he translated Jewel's long marginal explanative paratext which was added to the identical Latin texts of the editions of 1581 and 1591 (AEA 1581: 108 = AEA 1591: 108; DFf 1908: [109] = DFf 1595: fol. 55r).¹⁵ Bacon (AAD 1564: [72]) has Jewel's original short paratext with only the brief bibliographical reference to Hosius's *De Expresso Dei*

¹³Not Worms, as in Booty (1963: 117).

¹⁴For the slightly different wording of the English translation of 1562, see Booty (1963: 117); see also Booty (1963: 117–25) for the context of the controversy about Jewel's misrepresentation of Hosius.

¹⁵See Booty (1963: 120); the edition of 1584 has the bibliographical reference only, see AEA 1584: 88, as has the original edition of 1562, see AEA 1562: [34i].

Verbo. Further on in the text, after the summary of Hosius and a few more sentences, Kyffin omitted a passage of the Latin version (*AEA* 1581/1591: 108–10) which is found in an expanded form with reference to Hosius in the original edition of 1562 (*AEA*: [34–5]) and in Bacon’s translation (*AAD* 1564: [73–5]).¹⁶ Booty (1963: 120) therefore overstated his case when he suggested that Jewel’s text was not altered in reaction to the controversy about his presentation of Hosius’s position. With regard to Kyffin’s reasons for the omission of text here, it must remain in the realm of speculation whether he may have been motivated by the differences between Jewel’s Latin text of 1581/1591 and Bacon’s translation and/or by the arguably controversial status of Jewel’s references to Hosius.

In conclusion, I suggest that Maurice Kyffin used Anne Bacon’s English *Apologie or answer* in conjunction with John Jewel’s Latin *Apologia* when engaged in producing his Welsh version. The relationship between the texts is complex, and Kyffin’s motivation is far from obvious.¹⁷ He had the necessary competence in Latin and had published a translation of Terence’s comedy *Andria* into English prose in 1588, after having ‘attempted the translation of *Andria* into English verse’ (Rhodes, Kendal and Wilson 2013: 432).¹⁸ Bacon’s *Apologie* may have served him as a kind of convenient ‘support translation’, Dollerup’s term for ‘the strategy in which, translating a given source text, translators check translations into languages other than their own target language in order to see whether colleagues have found satisfactory solutions to certain problems’ (Dollerup 2000: 24). The history of translations shows that such utilization of ‘support translations’ was not unusual or necessarily reprehensible. Burke Severs has made a strong argument for Chaucer’s use of two sources for his ‘Clerkes Tale’, namely Petrarch’s Latin elaboration of Boccaccio’s tale in the *Decameron* (1353) and an anonymous French prose translation of the former, *Le Livre Griseldis*.¹⁹ Chaucer, however, only acknowledges dependence on Petrarch, ‘Fraunceys Petrak, the lauriat poete’ (Severs 1942: 33) — just as Kyffin only refers to Jewel. For the early modern period, Rhodes, Kendal, and Wilson point to ‘process[es] of collation in much actual and entirely conscientious translation practice’ seen in translations into English in the Renaissance and to the specific case of translations of Biblical texts, ‘where hybridity of [source] material is held to be a guarantee of the

¹⁶I have no information on who authorized the textual changes in the editions of 1581/1591.

¹⁷For some general thoughts on the use of support translations in the process of translation, see, for example, Plack (2015: 31).

¹⁸See also Rhodes, Kendal and Wilson (2013: 432–45) for excerpts from Kyffin’s introductory paratexts to *Andria*. Here he explains his strategies for translation in terms of accessibility for the recipient which parallel the ones he will use later in *Deffynniad Ffydd Eglwys Loegr*, compare *DFf* 1908: [vi]. For a brief discussion of Kyffin’s translation of *Andria*, see C. Davies (1995: 68–70). Kyffin wrote poetry in Welsh and English, for example a patriotic poem, *The Blessedness of Britain*, published in 1587.

¹⁹See especially Severs (1942: 215–28). Severs (1942: 228) concludes: ‘We have been able to watch him [i.e. Chaucer] as he progressively scanned corresponding bits of his double originals, before composing his own stanzas; we have observed how he leaned heavily upon one favoured source [i.e., the French version], but constantly consulted the other, too’.

purity of the end product' (Rhodes, Kendal and Wilson 2013: 47, 46).²⁰ Use of a French translation as well as of the English original has been found to be not infrequent in the case of translations of English literature into German in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.²¹

An instructive taxonomy of types of mediated (or intermediate), second-hand translations ('Übersetzungen aus zweiter Hand'), which depend on or use a translation of the source into a another language, has been advanced by Iris Plack. She distinguishes between appropriation ('Aneignung'), a secondhand translation without consultation of the original, and contamination ('Kontamination'), a secondhand translation with consultation of the original. Transparent forms acknowledge the use of another translation, opaque ones do not.²² Kyffin's *Deffynniad Ffydd Eglwys Loegr* qualifies as contaminated and opaque. The reference to the Latin source on its title page and to Jewel again in the address to the reader may simply have served as a marker of authority and textual fidelity.

Huw Lewys's *Perl mewn Adfyd*, published in the same year as Kyffin's *Deffynniad*, is a Welsh example of transparent appropriation: it is a translation of Miles Coverdale's *A Spyrytuall and moost Precious Pearle [...]* (3rd edition, 1593), itself a translation of Otto Wermüller's German *Ein Kleinot von Trost und Hilff in allerley Trübsalen* (1st edition, 1548). The title page describes it as

Perl mewn Adfyd [...] a escriffenwyd yn gyntaf mewn Dwitach gann bregethwr dyscedig Otho Wermulerus, ac a droed i'r Saesonaeg gann D. Miles Coverdal, ac yrawrhon yn hwyr ir Gembraeg gann H.L.²³

'*Perl mewn Adfyd* [...] which was first written in German by the learned preacher Otho Wermulerus and translated into English by D. Miles Coverdale and recently now into Welsh by H.L.'

In his address to the Christian reader, Lewys only refers to the English version when he writes about his translation procedure: 'cansy weithieu (yr wyf yn cyfaddef) mi a rois lai, weithiau eraill, mi a rois fwy nac sydd yn y llyfr Saesonaeg' (Lewys 1929: [xxiii]) 'since sometimes (I admit) I gave less, at other times I gave more than there is in the English book'.²⁴

²⁰See Rhodes, Kendal and Wilson (2013: 45–7) for further background, and also Boutcher (2000: 50). William Morgan, for example, used a range of source materials for his translation of the Bible into Welsh, see Thomas (1997: 168–9).

²¹See Graeber and Roche (1988: 9): 'Diese *Mischformen der Übersetzung*, deren Anzahl im 17. und 18. Jahrhundert nicht gering war, nennen wir *eklektisch*' ('Such mixed forms of translation, which were not infrequent in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, we call 'eclectic'); for some examples, compare Graeber and Roche (1988: 31–2 [William Bligh], 42–3 [Alexander Dalrymple], 49 [Humphrey Ditton], 51–2 [John Elis], 59 [Benjamin Franklin], 67–8 [Joseph Hall], 130–1 [Robert Walpole]).

²²For a detailed presentation of her typology, see Plack (2015: 119–32).

²³The German author is described as 'a learned preacher Otho VVermulierus' on the title page of the edition of Coverdale's translation of 1593, see Coverdale (1593).

²⁴In his introduction, Gruffydd (1929: xxxiv) characterized *Perl mewn Adfyd* as 'Cyfieithiad o gyfieithiad', a translation of a translation. Other Welsh examples of translations of translations

Maurice Kyffin enjoyed high status in Welsh literary history as a translator and stylist. Emrys ap Iwan (1894: 10) characterized him as one of the two most outstanding Welsh translators, ‘un o’r ddau bennaf o’n cyfieithwyr’²⁵ — the other being Edward James, whose translation of the *Two Books of Homilies* of the Church in England appeared in 1606 under the title *Pregethau a osodwyd allan trwy awdurdod i’w darllein ymhob Eglwys blwyf a phob chapel* [...] (James 1606). In 1908, Edward Edwards included Kyffin’s introductory paratexts and a passage from the translation in his *Clasuron Rhyddiaith Cymru*, an anthology of ‘classic’ Welsh prose works, and commented that *Deffynniad Ffydd Eglwys Loegr* ‘will be acknowledged by everybody who can judge its Welsh, with regard to style and syntax, as among the best Welsh that was ever written’ (Edwards 1908: 61; the original reads, ‘[...] a chydabyddir gan bawb sydd yn abl i farnu fod ei Gymraeg, o ran dullwedd a chystrawen, gyda’r Cymraeg goreu a ysgrifennwyd erioed’).²⁶ In the same year, William Prichard Williams published a reprint of the *Deffynniad* with a long introduction. He too praised Kyffin’s language and style, but voiced some qualms about his syntax:

Saif rhagoriaeth Cymraeg Maurice Kyffin ar wychter ac urddas ei ymadrodd, ac ar brydferthwch cytbwys mydr ei frawddegau, yn hytrach nag ar gywirdeb ei ramadeg. Y mae ei gystrawen yn fynych yn wallus ac yn anghymreigaidd, ac ni ddeil i’w chymharu â chystrawen y ‘Bardd Cwsc’—y llyfr arall a enwir yn gyffredin gyda ‘Deffynniad y Ffydd’ fel safon rhyddiaith y Gymraeg. (Williams 1908: lxxvi–lxxvii)

‘The excellence of Maurice Kyffin’s Welsh rests on the elegance and dignity of his expression and on the measured splendour of the rhythm of his sentences, rather than on the correctness of his grammar. His syntax is often at fault and un-Welsh, and bears no comparison to the syntax of the *Bardd Cwsc*, the other book which is commonly named together with *Deffynniad y Fydd* as the standard of Welsh prose.’

Here he refers to noun-initial sentences, patterns of non-canonical agreement between subject and verb, and overt markers in relative constructions.²⁷ The

are Morgan Llwyd’s versions of works of Jacob Boehme, *Y Disgybl a’i Athro*, written in 1655 and published in 1657, and *Yr Ymroddiad*, written in 1654 and published in 1657. Both are based on English translations of Boehme’s works, *A Dialogue between a Scholar and his Master concerning the Supersensual Life and True Resignation* respectively, compare, for example, Evans (1931: 99–100), Bevan (1954: 36, 118), Thomas (1984: 18, 24) and, with textual evidence, Evans (1970: 207–8). The title page of *Yr Ymroddiad* refers to it having been translated twice, *Yr ymroddiad, neu, Bapuryn a gyfieuthiwyd ddwywaith i helpu y cymru unwaith allan o hunan ar drygioni*, but no information on source languages, first translator, or original author is provided, see [Llwyd] (1657: title page). The question of whether such background information was available to readers requires further consideration. In Plack’s typology, Llwyd’s translations would be appropriated and (not fully) transparent.

²⁵For some earlier evidence, see Williams (1908: lxxiv–lxxvi).

²⁶See Edwards (1908: 61–80) for his selection of texts.

²⁷Williams (1908: lxxvii–lxxviii, lxxxvii). He also comments on various forms and constructions used by Kyffin which are unusual.

latter two were frequently criticized also in relation to medieval translations into Welsh, but their status has recently undergone re-evaluation.²⁸ In conclusion, Williams (1908: xcv–xcvi) recommends the book to the common reader because in it the metaphorical trunk can be seen on which the Welsh literary language was grafted, as well as its growth and budding. W. J. Gruffydd (1926: 89–90) highlighted that Kyffin's language reflects the demotic speech used at home by Welsh nobles in Powys and contrasted it favourably with the learned register of William Salesbury's 1567 New Testament and William Morgan's 1588 Bible.

Will my suggestion of two sources for Kyffin's *Deffynniad* impinge on the assessment of its literary and stylistic quality? I do not think so, because the quality of a translation does not depend on the number of its sources or source languages, but on the ability of translators to avail themselves of the resources of their target language.²⁹

ABBREVIATIONS

- AAD 1562 *An apologie, or aunswer in defence of the Church of England: concerninge the state of religion vsed in the same.* Newly set forth in Latin, and nowe translated into Englishe (London, 1562).
- AAD 1564 [Bacon, Lady Anne Cooke, transl.], *An apologie or answere in defence of the Churche of Englande: with a briefe and plaine declaration of the true religion professed and vsed in the same* (London, 1564).
- AAD 2016 [Bacon, Anne], *An Apology or Answer in Defence of the Church of England: Lady Anne Bacon's Translation of Bishop John Jewel's Apologia Ecclesiae Anglicanae*, ed. by Patricia Demers (Cambridge, 2016).
- AEA 1562 Jewel, John, *Apologia Ecclesiae Anglicanae* (London, 1562).
- AEA 1581 Jewel, John, *Apologia Ecclesiae Anglicanae* (London, 1581).
- AEA 1584 Jewel, John, *Apologia Ecclesiae Anglicanae* (London, 1584).
- AEA 1591 Jewel, John, *Apologia Ecclesiae Anglicanae* (London, 1591).

²⁸For a helpful discussion of such 'traces of translation', see Luft (2016). For an in-depth discussion of Middle-Welsh agreement patterns, see Plein (2018); for relative clauses with overt markers in Middle Welsh and Early Modern Welsh, see Parina (2022).

²⁹Research for this paper was conducted within the Marburg research project 'The Welsh Contribution to the Early Modern Cultures of Translation: Sixteenth-Century Strategies of Translating into Welsh', led by Elena Parina and myself, a part of the German Research Council's (DFG) Priority Programme 2130 'Cultures of Translation in the Early Modern Period'. Translations of the Welsh quotations are my own, and I wish to thank Ceridwen Lloyd-Morgan and Barry Lewis for their help with these; I also wish to thank the anonymous reader for *Celtica*, Barry Lewis, and Oliver Currie for their productive advice and Hilary Brown for bibliographical references to work on Lady Anne Cooke Brown. The responsibility for all remaining infelicities is inevitably mine.

- DFf* 1595 Kyffin, Maurice, transl., *DEFFYNNIAD FFYDD EGLVVYS LOEGR: LLE Y CEIR GWEled, a gwybod, dosparth gwir Grefydd Crist, ag anghywirdeb Crefydd Eglwys Rufain* [...] (Llunden, 1595).
- DFf* 1908 Kyffin, Maurice, transl., *Deffynniad Ffydd Eglwys Loegr a gyfieithwyd i'r Gymraeg, o Ladin yr Esgob Jewel yn y flwyddyn 1595, gan Maurice Kyffin*, argraffiad newydd gyda rhagymadrodd a nodiadau wedi ei olygu gan Wm. Prichard Williams (Bangor, 1908).

[Digital copies of the editions of *AEA*, of *AAD* 1562 and 1564, and of *DFf* 1595 are available through Early English Books Online on the ProQuest platform]

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MITHIGH TH'ATHDHÚSGADH, A AODH
DÁN AG BROSTÚ AODHA UÍ DHOMHNAILL (†1600)¹

ACHOIMRE

Chum Uilliam Óg Mac an Bhaird (†1576) an dán seo am éigin idir na blianta 1566 agus 1576 d'Aodh Ó Domhnaill (†1600), ag cur in iúl dó go raibh clú agus rath a theaghlaigh agus a thiarnais ag fulaingt le linn a ré mar nach raibh go leor ar siúl aige le iad a chosaint agus a chur chun cinn. Tá an t-eagrán den dán atá curtha ar fáil anseo bunaithe ar an aon chóip amháin de a mhaireann, i LS G 167, Leabharlann Náisiúnta na hÉireann. Foilsíodh tras-scríbhinn den dán seo in *ABM* sa bhliain 2010 le heagarthóireacht éadrom déanta air. Tá aistriúchán Béarla ar an dán curtha ar fáil anseo, chomh maith le plé ar ghnéithe den teanga agus den mheadaracht sa réamhrá agus sna nótaí.

AN FILE

UILLIAM ÓG (mac Cormaic) Mac an Bhaird (†1576) a chum an dán seo d'Aodh Dubh (mac Mhaghnaís) Ó Domhnaill (†1600). De réir *AFM* s.a. 1576, ba é Uilliam Óg *ollamh Uí D[h]omhnaill lé dán*, agus fuair sé bás ar 22 Feabhra an bhliain sin i nDroim Mór, gar do Bhaile Dhún na nGall. Maireann, ar a laghad, ocht ndán eile de chuid Uilliam Óig, agus tá ceithre cinn acu sin in eagar go dtí seo: *Biaidh athroinn ar Inis Fáil* (Ó Cuív 1977), dán leathaoire a chum sé sa bhliain 1572, leath de ag moladh Aodha Uí Dhomhnaill, agus leath de ag aoradh iarla Thuamhan, Conchubhar Ó Briain; *Trí Coin chosnas clú Gaoidheal* (*DMU* 18), a chum sé do Chú Chonnacht Mág Uidhir am éigin idir 1566 agus 1576; *Gréas dearbhta Duan na Feirsde* (Mac a' Ghoill 2020: 103–39), a chum sé sa bhliain 1567 d'Aodh Ó Domhnaill mar gheall ar an mbua a fuair seisean ar Sheán Ó Néill agus ar a arm i gcath Fhearsaid Mhór; agus *Trom an suan-sa ort, a Aodh* (Mac a' Ghoill 2021: 295–306), a phléann an t-ábhar céanna leis an dán atá in eagar thíos. Tá na ceithre cinn eile i gcló in *ABM*:

- ABM* 230 *Fada súil Éireann re hAodh*, d'Aodh mac Mhaghnaís Uí Dhomhnaill, am éigin idir 1566 agus 1576
- ABM* 266 *Gaoidhil meallta nó mac Néill*, do Thoirdealbhach mac Néill Uí Néill, am éigin idir 1566 agus 1576

¹Ba mhaith liom mo bhuíochas a ghabháil leis an Dr Eoin Mac Cárthaigh, eagarthóirí *Celtica* agus an léitheoir a cheap siad as moltaí éagsúla le barr feabhais a chur ar an alt seo. Mé féin faoi deara gach botún agus dearmad.

*ABM 273 Gluais, a theachtairé théid siar, do Sheaán Mac Uilliam de Búrca, am éigin idir 1571 agus 1576 (?)*²

ABM 384 Olc cúitighthear comaoín Dé, dán cráifeach.

AN PÁTRÚN

Tháinig Aodh Dubh (mac Mhaghnaís mhic Aodha Dhuibh) Ó Domhnaill i gcomharbas ar a dheartháir, an Calbhach Ó Domhnaill, mar thiarna ar Thír Chonaill sa bhliain 1566 tar éis bháis an Chalbhaigh. Bhí sé i gceannas ar Thír Chonaill go dtí gur sheas sé siar ó ról na ceannaireachta sa bhliain 1592, nuair a rinneadh tiarna dá mhac, Aodh Ruadh Ó Domhnaill. De réir *AFM*, fuair Aodh Dubh bás ar 7 Nollaig 1600.

ÁBHAR AN DÁIN

Cumadh an dán seo am éigin idir na blianta 1566 agus 1576, is é sin idir an t-am a ceapadh Aodh ina thiarna agus bás an fhile. Cuireann Uilliam Óg a mhíshásamh in iúl d'Aodh mar go gcreideann sé nach bhfuil go leor bainte amach ag Aodh lena ré, nó nach bhfuil go leor á dhéanamh aige le rath a theaghlach a chinntiú. Tugann an file le fios go bhfuil clú agus rath an teaghlach ag fulaingt mar gheall air seo, agus brostaíonn sé an pátrún le dul amach agus an méid atá dlite dó ó thaobh talún agus cánach de a fháil.

Apalóg (rainn 15–25), Conn Céadchathach

Insíonn an file an scéal faoin dóigh ar bhrostaigh agus ar spreag ollamh Fhéilim Reachtmhair Conn lena chearta oidhreachtúla ar Theamhair a bhaint amach, agus gan tuilleadh ama a chur amú i mbun iománaíochta. Léiríonn an t-ollamh an drocheagar atá ar an ríocht faoi stiúir na Laighneach agus an rí Cathaoir Mór. Trí chomhairle an ollaimh, agus a oide, Conall Cruachan, tugann Conn slua Connachtach le chéile agus tugann siad aghaidh ar Theamhair. Faigheann Conn an bua ar Chathaoir Mór agus maraíonn sé é, ag tógáil na ríochta dó féin gan aon deacracht (de réir ár bhfile, 23*d*: *mar luadhail leinbh a leithéid* 'it was like child's play'). Cuireann an file Aodh i gcomparáid le Conn Céadchathach, agus é féin i gcomparáid le hollamh Fhéilim Reachtmhair. Tá an apalóg seo le feiceáil freisin le tuilleadh sonraí sa dán *Maith an locht airdríogh óige* (féach McKenna 1927).

LeithNéill

Luann an file an gaol atá ag Aodh le muintir Néill i rann 14 (14*d*: *do leath don fhuil Eóghanaigh* 'your Ó Néill-half') agus i rann 34 (34*b*: *géabhad*

²Ní bhíonn sé soiléir i gcónaí cé acu Uilliam Óg Mac an Bhaird nó a mhac, Uilliam Óg mac Uilliam Óig Mhic an Bhaird, atá i gceist nuair a chuireann scríobhaí an t-ainm seo le dán. Go hiondúil, déanann scríobhaithe idirdhealú idir an dá Uilliam Óg sna ceannscríbhinní, nó is féidir a dhéanamh amach cé acu atá i gceist ó eolas eile faoin dán (dáta, pátrún, eachtraí, srl.). Nílím go hiomlán cinnte cé acu a chum *ABM 273*.

leithsgéal í leithNéill ‘I will relay the half-Ó Néill’s excuses’). Ba í Siobhán iníon Chuinn Bhacaigh mhic Cuinn Uí Néill máthair Aodha. Léiríonn an file an naimhdeas idir an dá theaghlach, agus luann sé cairdeas idir Cineál Conaill agus na Gearaltaigh (rann 12).

LÁMHSCRÍBHINN

Ní mhaireann an dán seo ach in aon LS amháin, is í sin LS G 167 i Leabharlann Náisiúnta na hÉireann, duanaire dánta ar chlann Dálaigh. Tá alt ag Ó Cléirigh (1939) ina bhfuil cur síos cuimsitheach ar an LS seo, agus tá cur síos uirthi i gcatalóg LSí Leabharlann Náisiúnta na hÉireann chomh maith (Ní Shéaghdha 1979: 8–15). Séamus Mág Uidhir a scríobh an LS ar fad, an chuid is mó di sa bhliain 1727 (an chóip den dán seo san áireamh) agus chuir sé 19 leathanach eile léi ní ba dhéanaí, am éigin tar éis na bliana 1738. Aodh Ó Domhnaill, Ceathrú Mhic Oireacht, Co. Liatroma, a choimisiúnaigh an LS. Tá 406 leathanach inti ([viii] + 398), agus 112 dán éagsúil (chomh maith le hocht sliocht as *Saltair na Rann* ag an tús). Tá an chóip den dán seo ar leathanaigh 164–7 de réir uimhriú an scríobhaí [=172–5 in Ní Shéaghdha (1979) agus ar *ISOS*].

POLASAÍ EAGARTHÓIREACHTA

- Mé féin faoi deara ceannlitreacha, poncaíocht, suíomh an tsínidh fhada taobh istigh de shiolla, agus scaradh na bhfocal.
- Tá noda scaoilte agam i gcló iodálach.
- Tá *e*-ard scaoilte agam i gcló iodálach mar *ea* go hiondúil, ach mar *e* nó *ei* in áiteanna freisin nuair is cuí (m.sh. *géirreann*, líne 3*b*; *meirge*, líne 3*c*).
- Tá comharthaí séimhithe scaoilte agam mar ‘h’ gan a bheith i gcló iodálach ach amháin nuair atá an comhartha séimhithe mar chuid de ghiorrúchán a bhfuil consan faoi shéimhiú ann.
- Tá sintí fada bainte agam os íseal de na défhoghair *ao*, *ia* agus *ua*, ach coinnítear síneadh fada ar an défhoghar *eó*.
- Úsáidim macran le síneadh fada nach bhfuil sa LS a chur ar fáil, agus tá sintí fada neamhstairiúla bainte agam os íseal (m.sh. *fánád* > *F[h]ánad*, líne 29*c*).
- Úsáidim lúibíní cearnacha chun litreacha nach bhfuil sa LS a chur ar fáil (m.sh. *A mhic* > *A mh[e]ic*, líne 5*a*).
- Déanaim normalú os íseal ar litriú roinnt focal coitianta neamhaiceanta: *a* > *i* (= an réamhfocal *i n-*), *as* > *is* (an chopail/an cónasc); agus athraím *cc-* > *gc-* agus *tt-* go *dt-* ag tús focal.
- Tá *it*, *dot*, srl. athraithe agam go *id*, *dod*, srl. os íseal nuair a thosaíonn an t-ainmfhocal ina ndiaidh ar chonsan (m.sh. *ot bharr* > *ód bharr*, líne 13*c*).

- Tá -*rr-* athraithe agam go -*r-* os íseal nuair nach bhfuil sa dara *r* ach léiriú ar shíneadh meánach agus nach cuid de bhunlitriú an fhocail é (m.sh. *thoirrchim* > *thoirchim*, líne 7*b*).
- I gcás athruithe eile, gheofar léamha na LSe ag bun an leathanaigh.

TEANGA

Athruithe tosaigh ar lorg ainmfhocal

Tá séimhiú curtha ar fáil agam sna línte seo a leanas:

- ar lorg ainmneach uatha baininsneach i línte 7*b* (*gé trom do thoirchim c[h]odail*), 13*b* (*fine Ruairc, ríoghradh C[h]onnacht*), agus 35*b* (*dá bhfiucha fionfhuil C[h]onoill*). Níl séimhiú curtha ar fáil agam ar lorg ainmneach uatha baininsneach i líne 34*c* (*ciall toirchim fhada í Earca*) ná i líne 19*d* (*gabháil sealbha bhar sinnsear*) agus na riachtanais do shléagar arna gcomhlíonadh³ (féach McManus 1994: 357–8).
- ar lorg tabharthach uatha i línte 5*c* (*a chrithir do chaoir c[h]uradh*), 10*c* (*mosgladh as bhar dtoirchim t[h]rom*), 13*c* (*guais nach biadh, ód bharr c[h]odail*), 16*a* (*D'ionnsaighidh C[h]uinn cian ó shoin*), 25*c* (*a ghéag tharaidh do chrú C[h]uinn*), 26*c* (*re a amhsaibh i n-ucht f[h]aghla*) agus 29*c* (*ord gaisgidh i n-iadh F[h]ánad*).⁴
- ar lorg ginideach uatha firinsneach a chríochnaíonn ar chonsan caol i línte 1*d* (*sibh i n-imeal chláir C[h]onuill?*), 10*b* (*a mheic Maghnais mhúir C[h]ormaic*) agus 31*a* (*Nā trēig clú ceannais f[h]eadhma*).

An réamhfhocal 'gan'

I bhfianaise an tsampla le deimhniú meadarachta i línte 40*ab* de *Biaidh athroinn ar Inis Fáil* (i. *Ní gan fháth innisim sin / draoi Chormaic mheic Airt Éinfhir*), dán eile a chum an file céanna, tá an séimhiú a mbeadh súil leis sa teanga chlasaiceach curtha ar fáil agam ar lorg an réamhfhocail *gan* i líne 8*d* (*ní maith clú gan c[h]raobhsgaoileadh*).

MEADARACHT

Deibhí, dán díreach, meadaracht an dáin seo agus tagann leagan na LSe leis na rialacha a ghabhann leis an meadaracht seo den chuid is mó.

³Tugtar faoi deara freisin go bhfuil na litreacha -*l t-* (*ciall toirchim*) agus -*l s-* (*gabháil sealbha*) ag teacht le chéile áit a bhfuil an easpa séimhithe sa dá líne seo. Féach freisin go bhfuil an easpa séimhithe in *gabháil sealbha* deimhnithe ag uaim na líne.

⁴Tá séimhiú curtha ar fáil ar lorg tabharthach uatha i bhfianaise an tsampla le deimhniú meadarachta i línte 9*cd* den dán *Biaidh athroinn ar Inis Fáil* (i. *dob indéinimh go réidh rinn / do fhréimh fhinnÉibhir d'Éirinn*). Bheimis ag súil le séimhiú ar lorg focal sa tabharthach uatha sa teanga chlasaiceach, agus deimhníonn an sampla sin gurbh é sin an polasaí a bhí ag ár bhfile. Tá sampla eile le deimhniú meadarachta sa dán in eagar thíos (12*c* *beir beadhg as do shásadh shuain*).

Breacadh

Tugtar faoi deara go mbíonn cuibheas breise (comhardadh slán) taobh istigh de rainn/leathrainn go han-mhinic i bhfilíocht Uilliam Óig Mhic an Bhaird. Táim ag glacadh leis gur samplaí den ghléas ornáidithe *breacadh* iad seo, seachas lochtanna ar an meadaracht (féach Ní Dhomhnaill 1975: 45–54). Tá * curtha agam leis an bhfocal más é focal deiridh na líne é:

4a	—	4b	<i>sról</i>	4c	<i>chlódh</i>	4d	<i>lór</i>
17a	—	17b	<i>mé</i>	17c	<i>té</i>	17d	<i>mé</i>
19a	<i>Teamhra*</i>	19b	<i>(doimheanma*)</i>	19c	<i>Teamhra</i>	19d	<i>sealbha</i>
21a	—	21b	<i>Tabhair</i>	21c	<i>gabhaidh</i>	21d	<i>tabhair</i>
22a	<i>Tonn, mheanma</i>	22b	—	22c	<i>fonn, Teamhra</i>	22d	<i>thonn, mheanma</i>
31a	<i>tréig</i>	31b	—	31c	<i>tréig</i>	31d	<i>léig</i>
33a	—	33b	—	33c	<i>sluagh,⁵ luadh</i>	33d	<i>shuan</i>
35a	<i>choill*</i>	35b	<i>(Chonoill*)</i>	35c	<i>cloinn</i>	35d	<i>croinn</i>

Caoiche

Tá sampla amháin den locht meadarachta *caoiche* sa dán (féach ABP §2, líne 69), is é sin i línte 32cd: *fúibh nárab leaba luighe / leaba chlúimh nō cholcaidhe*. Tá sé shampla den locht céanna sa dán *Trom an suan-sa ort, a Aodh* leis an bhfile céanna (féach Mac a' Ghoill 2021: 299).

Dúnadh

Tá dúnadh cuí ann ag deireadh an dáin:

1a. *Mithigh th'athdhúsgadh, a Aodh —*

23d. *don fhuil ríogh is roimhithigh.*

CEANNSCRÍBHINN

Uilliam Óg bheós do chum so don fhior chēadna.⁶

Uilliam Óg composed this to the same man.

⁵Dar ndóigh, d'fhéadfaí *sluagh* a athrú go *slógh* leis an gcomhardadh breise a sheachaint sa chás seo.

⁶Ainmníodh Uilliam Óg Mac an Bhaird agus Aodh Ó Domhnaill roimhe seo sa LS.

TÉACS

1. *Mithigh* th'athdhúsgadh, a Aodh —
féach, trá, thort ar gach ē[a]ntaobh;
nach ná[i]r libh inneal an fhuinn,
sibh i n-imeal chlāir C[h]onuill?
2. Gabh iomad, éirigh a-mach,
córa dhuit codladh corrach —
an clār oraibh dā eagar;
tobhaigh madh ál th'airleagadh.
3. Éirigh, trá, tógaibh do cheann,
daingnigh do dhoire géirreann,
nocht do ré[a]lta móir meirge;
ar cóir déanta díbheirge.
4. Nī as f[h]aide nā bíodh i mbrios
sról maoth far mheinic áitheas;
a chlódh is gad im ghaineamh;
lór a fhad gur hosgaileadh.
5. A mh[e]ic M[h]aghnaís, nī modh linn
a fhad a-taoi in bhar dtoirchim;
a chrithir do chaoir c[h]uradh,
dhaoibh is mithigh músгалadh.

AISTRIÚCHÁN

1. It is high time to wake you up, Aodh; look around you on every side; is the state of the land not shameful, [with] you on the edge of Conall's plain?
2. Array yourself, go out; it is more proper that you should have restless sleep; the land is being taken from you; levy if you wish to be repaid.
3. Rise up, then; lift your head; fortify your woodland of sharpened weapons; reveal your great star of a banner (?) in proper array for wreaking revenge.
4. Let the soft satin, which has often brought about victory, remain stored away no longer; [attempting to] defeat it is like tying a withe around sand; it has been left unfurled for long enough.
5. O son of Maghnas, I do not consider it honourable that you have slept so long; o spark [igniting] a fireball of warriors, it is time for you to wake up.

LÉAMHA LSE

1b. trath; 1d. immeal

2a. éirghe; 2b. colladh; 2c. eagra; 2d. áil

3a. tráth; 3b. daingnidh

4a. bi, mbriocht; 4b. aithios

6. Mairg tug le gríosadh do ghruadh
oraibh éirghe as do chéadsuan,
a chraobh dar gcoill-ne is fosgadh,
mās doilghe, a Aodh, th'athmhosgladh.
 7. Acht go gcluine a gcanaim ruibh
gē trom do thoirchim c[h]odail
an uaisle béaraidh beadhgadh
gēabhaidh uaim-se an t-imdheargadh.
 8. An aithne dhuit dail na gcon?
A Aodh nach éisd red bhrosdadh,
feirrde cú maith a maoidheamh;
nī maith clú gan c[h]raobhsgaoileadh.
 9. Biaidh, fad thoirchim re treim[h]se,
dā gcluinteá-sa a gcluineim-se,
do ghruadh ar ghné na corcra;
suan mar é nī hionmholta.
 10. Dobudh mó 'nā mithigh dhuit,
a mheic Maghnais mhúir Chormaic,
mosgladh as bhar dthoirchim t[h]rom;
brosdadh it oirchill agom.
-
6. O Aodh, o sheltering branch of our wood, though it is difficult to wake you from the aforementioned slumber, woe to him who, by reddening your cheeks, made you rise.
 7. Until you heed what I am saying to you, however heavy your sleep, nobility will be made jump, [and] will be shamed my me.
 8. Do you know of the habit of hounds? A good hound is better for having been incited; o Aodh, who heeds not his incitement, fame is worthless if it is not broadcast.
 9. If you hear what I hear regarding your slumber lately, your face will turn red; a sleep like this is not worthy of praise.
 10. It is high time that you woke up from your heavy slumber, o son of Maghnas of Cormac's castle; I have an incitement ready for you.

7c. bhéraidh

8b. na heisd

10b. Corbmaic; 10c. musgladh

11. Aicme Cheallaigh chláir Mhaine
is saorchlann Bhriain Bhóraithe —
deacair tocht uadh go hiomlán —
fad shuan ort ag aithiomrádh.
 12. Síol nGearailt na ngruadh solas
ōs libh iad gan amhoras —
beir bead[h]g as do shásadh s[h]uain —
fásadh th'f[h]earg *agus* th'anbhuaín.
 13. Ōn chodladh trom-sa a-tá ort
fine Ruairc, rīoghradh C[h]onnacht,
guais nach biadh, ód bharr c[h]odail,
sa[n] rann riamh a rabhada[i]r.
 14. Nī as f[h]aide nā bíoth do bháidh
re síol Nēill — nós an leamháin;
cuir an t-each ar bhar n-aghaidh
do leath don fhuil Eóghanaigh.
 15. Do-chuala ar Chonn mac Úna
sgé[a]l is adhbhar iontnúdha,
fa bhrosdadh druadh mar do dhligh;
fa tuar cosgar don Choinn-sin.
-
11. The family of Ceallach of Maine's plain and the noble descendants of Brian Bóraithe are talking once again about your slumber — it is difficult to completely avoid [hearing about] it.
 12. Since the bright-faced FitzGerald's are undoubtedly on your side, jump up out of your slumber; may your wrath and your restlessness grow!
 13. As a result of your deep sleep, as a result of your excessive slumbering, there is a danger that the Ó Ruairc dynasty of Connacht would not be [confined with]in the district they always occupied.
 14. Let your affection lie with the Uí Néill, your Ó Néill-half, no longer — just like the elm; send your horse ahead of you.
 15. I heard an enviable story of Conn, the son of Úna, about just incitement by a druid; it was an omen of the foretelling of Conn's triumphs.

13a. *ccolladh*

14a. *bíodh*; 14c. *Eóghanaidh*

15d. *thuar*; *cosgair*

16. D'ionnsaig[h]idh C[h]uinn cian ō shoin
tig file Féilim Reachtmhair —
turas do uaisligh fonn Fáil;
Conn an uair-sin ag iomáin.
17. 'Creid uaim a n-innisim dhaoibh
gion go n-aithne mé, a mhacaoimh,
ag so an té ōr slonnadh sinn;
is mé dob ollamh d'F[h]éilim.'
18. 'Mo ghríosadh is gabhtha dhuit,
a Chuinn na gcéimeann n-ordhraic;
is diombáidh ar mbuaidh do bhreith.'
Do-chuaidh an iomáin d'éinleith.
19. 'Dhuit is córa clár Teamhra
dā dtuigthea; is dá[i]l doimheanma,
a bhranāin Teamhra na dtreabh,
gabhāil sealbha bhar sinnsear.'
20. 'Nā fuilngidh flaitheas Teamhra
ag féin Laighean loinneardha,
drong ionáigh is f[h]earr d'f[h]altaibh;
tionāil id cheann Connachtaigh.'

16. Long ago, the poet of Féilim Reachtmhar came to Conn, a trip that ennobled the land of Ireland; Conn at that time was playing hurling.
17. 'Believe what I tell you,' [said the poet,] 'though you do not recognise me, o youth, here is the person from whom my name comes; I was the ollamh of Féilim.'
18. 'You should accept my incitement, o Conn of famous deeds; it is hard to defeat us.' The hurling was put aside.
19. 'If only you understood [that] you are the one most entitled to the plain of Tara; o king-piece of Tara of the dwellings, the possession [by others] of your patrimony is a sad state of affairs.'
20. 'Do not tolerate the bright warriors of Leinster, a band fit for battle who are best at feuds, enjoying the lordship of Tara; gather the men of Connacht before you.'

17*b.* gén; 17*c.* sloinneadh

18*b.* norrdhuirc

20*a.* fuilngeadh; 20*d.* Connachtaicch

21. Comhairle do chan an fádh:
 ‘Tabhair ar cholg do chomán,
 le *feardhacht* gabhaidh an gort,
 tabhair leanbhd[h]acht ar laochdhacht.’
22. Tonn mheanma san macaomh óg
 do chuir comhrádh an druadh-ód
 gur bhuail fonn Teamhra níor thill
 a thonn mheanma mar mhínlínn.
23. Teamhair Chobhthaigh, cúirt a shean,
 Conn tre chomhairle an fhileadh
 ina seilbh fa a thuairim téid;
 mar luadhail leinbh a leithéid.
24. Táinig do theagasg an druadh
 ’s do Chonall Cruachan crannruadh
 tachar Cuinn re Cathaoir Mór
 do thuill tathaoir dā thromshlógh.
25. Fódla na b[h]fiodhbhadh sgathach
 mar do fhóir Conn Céadchathach,
 a ghéag tharaidh do chrú C[h]uinn,
 dā cabhair is tú is tualuing.

21. [Here is the] advice the druid gave: ‘Swap your hurling stick for a sword, take the land with virility, swap childishness for valour.’
22. The words of that druid incited a wave of ambition in the young man; that wave of ambition did not recede into the likeness of a small pool until it engulfed Tara.
23. Through the advice of the poet, Cobhthach’s Tara, the court of his ancestors, goes into the possession of Conn as [the poet] foretold; it was like child’s play.
24. Conn’s encounter with Cathaoir Mór, who earned reproach for his great host, came from the teaching of the druid, and from Conall of the red spears from Cruachain.
25. Just as Conn Céadchathach saved Ireland of the flowering woods, you are the one who is able to help her, o fruitful branch of Conn’s line of descent.

22c. nír

23c. tuairim

24a. Táinic

26. Cosmhail, a Aodh, th'aigheadh *grinn*
 re chéile is Conn mac Féilim
 re a amhsaibh i n-ucht f[h]aghla
 casmhail do lucht leanamhna.
27. Uaim, a Aodh, mar is eol damh,
crēad nach gēabhtha do ghríosadh?
 Dóigh *leam* dāmadh sine sinn
 nacharb[h] f[h]earr file Féilim.
28. Tuig, a Aodh, a n-abraim ruibh;
 dob é adhbhar ar n-urchair
 neimhshéan cosgar ris an gcloinn
 fa bhrosdadh Che[i]néal Conoill.
29. Róimh nī rāngadar a leas
 a mbrosdadh d'f[h]uighlibh éigeas
 ord gaisgidh i n-iadh F[h]ánad
 riamh faisgin a bhfíornámhad.
30. Iomdha ag laochraidh leithe Cuinn
 dhíot ar ndēanamh Ī Dhomhnuill
 dā gach taoibh oirichil ort;
 is roimhithigh dhaoibh dūsacht.

26. Your pleasant nature is like that of Conn, son of Féilim; your followers are like his mercenaries in the face of plundering.
27. As I know, o Aodh, why would you not accept your incitement from me? I expect, were I older, that the poet of Féilim was no better [than I].
28. Understand, o Aodh, what I am saying to you: the reason for my outburst over the incitement of Cineál Conaill is the poor prosperity of the clan [in terms of] victories (?).
29. Before you, the heroic order in the land of Fánad never needed to be incited by the words of the learned in the face of their sworn enemy (?).
30. Since you were made Ó Domhnaill, many warriors of Conn's half, on every side, are making preparations against you; it is high time you woke up.

26d. cosmhuil

28c. cosgair; 28d. cconoill

29b. éicceas; 29c. i bfiadh; 29d. fasgín

30c. oirchill

31. Nā trēig clú *ceannais* f[h]eadhma,
 'na shuan nī thig *tighearna*;
 trēig suantathamh *agus* sí[o]th,
 léig ar chuartachadh coigcríoch.
32. Gurab duille is dīon duit-se,
 dhaoibh *gurab* fleadh fíorusige,
 fúibh nārab leaba luighe,
 leaba chlúimh nō cholcaidhe.
33. Ōn tráth fá n-éireōcha Aodh
 is *tearc* duine *acht* a dhearbghaol
 sluagh Gaoidheal ōs dā luadh linn
 aoinfhear 'na shuan nī shaoilim.
34. Fáth a shuain cuirfead i gcéill;
 gēabhad leithsgé[a]l í leithNéill
 ciall toirchim fhada í Earca
 oirchill aga ar fháidheachtra.
35. Tre mhac Siobháin, slat ōs c[h]oill,
 dā b[h]fiucha fíonfhuil C[h]onoill,
 tuar coinghleaca re cloinn Néill —
 na *croinn* oirdhreaca a hao[i]nfhréimh.
36. Grīosadh Aodha ar aithris Cuinn —
 ithir uasal chlann gConuill,
 sól nī fhuil isin ithir —
 don fhuil rīogh is ro[i]mhithigh.

31. Do not abandon a reputation for battle-leadership, a lord does not attain success when asleep; abandon sleep and peace, set out on a circuit of other territories.
32. May leaves be your shelter, may spring-water be your drink, let you not lie on a bed of feathers or quilts.
33. From the time that Aodh rises, I do not believe that a single man of the Gaelic host of whom I speak, very few people except his close kinsmen (?), will sleep.
34. I will explain the reason for his slumber; I will relay the half-O'Neill's excuses: the reason for the long sleep of Earc's descendant is his preparation for his prophesised venture.
35. If Conall's noble blood boils because of Siobhán's son, [the] branch above a forest, it will be an omen of conflict with the Uí Néill, those famous trees from a single root.
36. There is [currently] no seed in the noble soil of Conall's descendants — it is high time for the blood of kings to incite Aodh to imitate Conn.

32c. lúighe; 32d. choilchthíghe

34d. aige

35a. Siubhain; 35d. oirdhearca

NÓTAÍ

2a. Tá *éirghe* na LSe athraithe agam go *éirigh* le líon na siollaí sa líne a réiteach. Seo an leasú atá molta in *ABM* 339 chomh maith.

Tá an chéad líne seo sa rann á léamh agam ina dhá leath, agus an dá bhriathar sa mhodh ordaitheach, 2 uatha. Tagann an léamh seo le stíl líne 3a (*Éirigh, trá, tógaibh do cheann*).

3c. Tá *do réalta móir meirge* aistrithe agam go litriúil mar ‘your great star of a banner’ agus níl cinnte céard go díreach atá i gceist leis seo.

4a. Tá *mbriocht* na LSe athraithe agam go *mbrios*, agus bainim an chiall ‘in a press’ (.i. i stóras) nó ‘pressed’ (.i. fillte) as seo, agus tá sé aistrithe agam thuas mar ‘stored away’. Tá an t-aon sampla eile den fhocal seo a bhfuil teacht agam air san filíocht chlasaiceach sa dán *Dia libh, a uaisle Éireann* le hUilliam Óg (mac Uilliam Óig) Mac an Bhaird, agus an céile cuibhis céanna aige: 12*cd Sgaoileadh bhar mbratach a brios / maoidheadh atach go háiteas* ‘Let the **un-furling** of your banners be a call to victory.’ Féach Mac Cárthaigh (2002: 97), agus nóta. Seans maith go raibh an dán thuas os comhair Uilliam Óig mhic Uilliam Óig agus é ag cumadh *Dia libh, a uaisle Éireann* sa bhliain 1641.

Tá *bi* na LSe athraithe agam go *bíodh* (modh ordaitheach, 3ú uatha) le líon na siollaí a réiteach, agus atá níos fearr ó thaobh céille de.

4c. *gad im ghaineamh*: Tá leagan den nath seo in *A Miscellany of Irish Proverbs* (O’Rahilly 1922: 130–1), 371: *cuir gaid um ghainimh* ‘put a withe around sand’.

5c. *do chaoir churadh*: Féach go n-úsáideann Uilliam Óg an íomhá chéanna seo sa dán *Gréas dearbhtha Duan na Feirsde*, 42: ‘*S iad ag triall mar táid a lán / clann Uibhilín, clann Chathán / caor churadh nar clódh i dtroid / do shlógh Uladh ní fhágmaid*’ ‘Travelling like many others, the MacQuillans, the O’Kanes; **the fireball of warriors** who have not been defeated in a fight, we will not leave them out of the host of Ulster’ (Mac a’ Ghoill 2021: 53).

6c. Tá mé ag déanamh go bhfuil *coill* mar fhoirm an tabharthaigh uatha ceart go leor anseo. Tugtar *caill* agus *caille* in *DIL* s.v. 1 *caill* mar fhoirmeacha inghlactha an tabharthaigh uatha, cé gurb í *coillidh* foirm a mbeifí ag súil leis de réir *IGT* ii §191.

8. Leanaím an t-aistriúchán a thugann McManus (2018: 177) ar an rann seo: ‘Are you familiar with the habit of hunting-hounds, O Aodh who heed not your exhorting? A good hound is the better/braver (?) for being incited; fame is useless if not broadcast.’

10b. Níl séimhiú curtha ar fáil agam ar lorg gairmeach uatha (den chineál a séimhítear ar a lorg de ghnáth sa teanga chlasaiceach) i líne 10b (*a mheic Maghnais mhúir Chormaic*) agus na riachtanais do shléagar arna gcomhlíonadh (féach McManus 1994: 357–8).

12b. Tá *ós libh iad* aistrithe agam mar ‘since they are [...] on your side’ seachas mar ‘since they are [...] yours’, a bheadh ní ba litriúla.

14ab. Tá *biodh* na LSe athraithe agam go *bíoth* le cuibheas breise inmheánach sa leathrann seo a sheachaint (.i. *bíodh* : *síol*).

Tá *nós an leamháin* aistrithe agam mar ‘just like the elm’, agus tá mé ag déanamh gur tagairt é seo don seanfhocal *Ding de féin a scoilteas an leamhán* ‘it takes the wedge of its own timber to split an elm’, ag tabhairt le tuiscint go dtiocfaidh turnamh mhuintir Néill trí Aodh, duine a bhfuil gaol acu leis.

15d. Is ar mhaithe le ciall an rainn atá *fa thuar* (*fa*, réamhfhocal) athraithe agam go *fa tuar* (*fa*, an chopail) anseo.

17c. Tá *sloinneadh* na LSe athraithe agam go *slonnadh*. Glactar leis an dá fhoirm (-*nn*- a bheith caol nó leathan) de réir *IGT* ii §10.

Níl an t-iarméarla *ór báite* ar lorg *té* agus dhá ghuta fhada ag teacht le chéile (féach Ní Dhomhnaill 1975: 32).

19ab. Tá *dál* na LSe athraithe agam go *dáil* le cuibheas breise inmheánach sa leathrann seo a sheachaint (.i. *clár* : *dál*).

20a. Tá *fuilngeadh* na LSe athraithe agam go *fuilngidh* (modh ordaitheach, 2 uatha) ar mhaithe le ciall an rainn.

23c. Tá séimhiú curtha ar fáil agam ar lorg an fhorainm shealbhaigh *a* sa líne seo. Ní léir dom aon bhealach eile leis an líne seo a léamh.

28d. Tugtar faoi deara go nglactar le *ceinéal* mar fhoirm cheart an ghinidigh uatha, mar atá sa líne seo, taobh le *-iúil*, *-íl*, agus *-éil* de réir *IGT* ii §77. Tá an t-urú a leanann é i leagan na LSe bainte agam san eagrán. Is minic a fhaightear urú ar lorg focal san ainmneach uatha a bhí neodrach sa tSean-Ghaeilge, cosúil le *síol* agus *ceinéal*, nuair is cuid d’ainm teaghlaigh iad, agus is dócha gur faoina thionchar sin a bhfuil urú ar lorg *ceinéal* sa LS.

29c. Tá *bfiadh* na LSe athraithe agam go *n-iadh* le huaim a chur ar fáil sa líne a thiocfadh le polasaí an fhile séimhiú a chur ar fáil ar lorg tabharthach uatha (féach an plé mar gheall air seo sa réamhrá thuas). Tá an dá fhocal seo ar aonbhrí lena chéile agus níorbh ionadh é iad a fháil in áit a chéile i leaganacha LSí.

29d. Tá *faisgin a bhfiornámhad* aistrithe agam mar ‘in the face of their sworn enemy’ agus níl mé go hiomlán cinnte faoin tuiscint seo.

30c. Tá na leaganacha *oirichill* agus *uirichill* tugtha in *IGT* ii §150 agus deirtear linn go bhfuil *uirichil* lochtach (agus *oirichil* leis, glacaim leis). Tá dornán samplaí eile sa chorpas den litriú *oirichil* le deimhniú meadarachta; ina measc tá sampla as dán le Tadhg Dall Ó hUiginn don Aodh céanna, leis an gcéile cuibhis céanna: *ó a-tá sé d’oirichil air / is roimhithigh é d’fhéaghain* ‘since it awaits him it is high time to face it’ (*TD* 4.40cd).

32cd. D’fhéadfaí *lighe : choilc(th)ighe* a chur ar fáil anseo freisin.

35a. Tá litriú ainm mháthair ár bpátrúin ceartaithe agam ó *Siubhain*, mar atá sa LS, go *Siobháin*. Luaitear Siobhán sa dán *Trom an suan-sa ort, a Aodh chomh maith agus tá litriú a hainm deimhnithe ag an gcuibheas ansin i línte 14cd: mac Siobháin ar dtocht a-tuaidh / sluaigh thionáil thort as gach tír* (Mac a’ Ghoill 2021: 302).

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MANX MANUSCRIPT SERMONS, 1696–1863: LANGUAGE AND HISTORICAL CONTEXT¹

ABSTRACT

Approximately 650 manuscript sermons written and preached in Manx by the Anglican clergy of the Isle of Man survive from the period between 1696 and 1863, exceeding the number found in Irish and Scottish Gaelic combined. Most of the sermons have identifiable authors and contain precise dates and places of preaching, as well as details of re-use and adaptation, and are thus a rich source of information on the island's social, religious and linguistic history. In linguistic terms, the texts shed new light on the evolution and standardization of Manx orthography, and on phonological and morphosyntactic variation and change. This article outlines the extent of the corpus and its linguistic value, as well as examining questions of composition, translation, and societal bilingualism and diglossia. The discussion draws particularly on a current project to transcribe the portion of the corpus predating the completion of the Manx Bible in 1772.

1. MANX LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE

MANX WAS THE dominant vernacular of the people of the Isle of Man until the late eighteenth century, before a range of socioeconomic forces led to language shift to English. This was substantially complete by the second half of the nineteenth century, although a handful of elderly native speakers and semi-speakers remained until the mid-twentieth century (Broderick 1999). As a result of early social and political separation from the wider Gaelic world, Manx is notable for divergent linguistic developments, and for its English-based orthographic tradition. The roots of this tradition go back at least to the early

¹We would like to thank the British Academy, the Leverhulme Trust and Culture Vannin for funding the research on which this article is based; Manx National Heritage and the National Library of Wales for generous assistance in accessing their manuscript collections; and Erin McNulty, James O'Meara, Edit Wenelius and Professor Max W. Wheeler, who, in addition to the present authors, contributed towards the transcription of the sermon corpus. We would specifically like to thank Dr Tim Grass, Professor William Gibson, Dr Michael Hoy, Professor Ciarán Mac Murchaidh, Fiona McArdle, Dr Síle Ní Mhurchú, Dr Daniel Reed, Dr Domhnall Uilleam Stiùbhart, Wendy Thirkettle and Professor Wheeler as well as the participants at an online seminar series on Manx sermon manuscripts held at Aberystwyth University in 2021, for useful discussion. We also acknowledge the helpful comments of an anonymous peer reviewer. Any remaining errors are our own.

seventeenth century (Thomson 1953; Wheeler 2019), and it had achieved a substantial level of standardization by the time of the completion of the Manx Bible translation in 1772.

Owing in part to a number of structural, practical and ideological factors,² relatively little attention has been paid to Manx within wider Gaelic and Celtic scholarship. Manx linguistic and literary studies have hitherto mostly focused on the relatively accessible printed material from the eighteenth and nineteenth century, especially the Bible, as well as transcribed and recorded speech from the last generations of native speakers (Rhŷs 1894; Marstrander 1932; Jackson 1955; Broderick 1984–6). There have also been important editions and analyses of certain individual manuscript texts, including most notably Bishop Phillips's Prayer Book translation, which dates from *c.* 1610 (Moore and Rhŷs 1895; Thomson 1953; Wheeler 2019, 2020a), as well as secular song material. However, the two largest manuscript corpora, namely the carvals ('carols' or religious ballads),³ and the sermons, have remained greatly under-studied to date. The present article articulates the linguistic, sociolinguistic and wider historical value of the Manx manuscript sermon corpus as well as outlining potential future research avenues.

2. THE MANX MANUSCRIPT SERMON CORPUS 1696–1863

2.1. *Extent of corpus*

The vast majority of the extant Manx manuscript sermon material is housed at the Manx National Heritage (MNH) Library at the Manx Museum in Douglas; all manuscript references in this article are to material in this repository unless otherwise stated. The MNH sermon material was recently catalogued by the Manx scholar Fiona McArdle.⁴ The catalogue contains approximately 650 whole or fragmentary sermon texts in Manx from the period when the language was in regular liturgical use in the Manx church, from the late seventeenth to the mid-nineteenth century. There are also six manuscript sermons in the National Library of Wales (Sir John Rhŷs papers A3/10), and three further sermons exist

²These factors include the status of the Isle of Man as a distinct national jurisdiction, but lacking significant research institutions and funding bodies of its own; the lack of accessible primers, reference works and university-level courses which would make Manx accessible to scholars of the Gaelic languages; long-standing biases within Celtic Studies towards medieval literature (Thomson 1969: 178); and assumptions among Gaelic philologists regarding the perceived anglicized nature of Manx grammar and orthography (Lewin 2017).

³Carvals are lengthy original compositions concerning Biblical themes and narratives, often with dozens of stanzas, traditionally performed after the Christmas Eve church service into the mid-nineteenth century (Gilchrist 1925; Clague 2005), and preserved in manuscript carval books dating from the 1770s onwards, although some of the compositions are considerably older. A selection of carvals was published in Moore (1891) as well as in various local newspapers and periodicals, but there are as yet no modern scholarly editions or analyses. Clague's (2005) catalogue of the carval manuscripts and printed sources in the Manx Museum archive reveals that the corpus comprises 325 carvals, attested in over a thousand individual copies or variants. Like the sermons, the carval texts show a significant degree of orthographic and linguistic variation.

⁴The sermon and carval catalogues are available on request in the form of spreadsheets from Manx National Heritage.

in editions, the originals presumed lost. The rest of the material in the McArdle catalogue includes sermons in English (116 items), twentieth-century Manx sermons and prayers from the revival context (23 items), and miscellaneous devotional and liturgical material from the native Manx period.

Of the sermons in Manx, forty-five are bilingual, with English and Manx text in parallel columns or pages; this practice is largely restricted to a single author, William Crebbin (Vicar of Jurby, *fl.* 1743–82), although other authors have English and Manx versions of the same sermon in separate notebooks, and an indeterminate number of the remaining Manx sermon corpus are likely to be translations of English originals now lost (see §5.1 below). At present twenty-five individual authors have been securely or tentatively identified, with approximately seventy sermons having unidentified authors.⁵ The authors and users of this material were the parochial Manx clergy of the Diocese of Sodor and Man within the Church of England, most of whom were Manx-born, and Manx-speaking, well into the nineteenth century. Virtually no material survives from the nonconformist denominations,⁶ although the Wesleyan Methodists are known to have used Manx in their services and preaching, in some cases to a later date than the established church (Jenner 1876: 190).

Apart from an early outlier from 1696 (Lewin 2015), the oldest surviving sermons date from the 1720s and 30s and are the work of Philip Moore (1705–83), later the general editor of the Manx Bible, although there are references to preaching in Manx from the early seventeenth century onwards (Moore and Rhŷs 1895 i: xxii; Craine 1994: 30, 39; Grass 2021: 99). The numbers of extant authors and individual compositions begin to pick up substantially from the middle of the eighteenth century, with the bulk dating from the final decades of the century and the first half of the nineteenth. Some of the extant sermon corpora from individual ministers (not including monolingual English texts) are very substantial indeed:

William Crebbin (*fl.* 1743–82): 48 sermons

John Clague (*fl.* 1773–1812): 120 sermons

John E. Harrison (*fl.* 1823–49): 103 sermons

Thomas Howard (*fl.* 1827–63): 89 sermons.

As language shift to English accelerated in the mid-nineteenth century, use of Manx in church services gradually declined (Jenner 1876), with 1863 being the latest preaching date recorded in the McArdle catalogue.

As well as manuscript sermons, twenty-two of the English-language sermons of Thomas Wilson, the island's bishop from 1697 to 1755, were translated

⁵These figures must be considered provisional, given that it has not been possible within the scope of the current project to examine the whole corpus of Manx sermons in detail.

⁶Apart from some twentieth-century sermons from the language revival context, the only item of Methodist provenance in the MNH catalogue is MS 10949, a single page fragment dating from 9 January 1848 by John Jaughn [Joughin] of Kirk Bride, giving the text for a sermon preached at Little London chapel near Peel. This absence of Methodist material likely reflects the predominance of extemporary preaching in this tradition (Davies 1961: 112, 160, 231; Dr Tim Grass, personal communication).

into Manx and published in 1783 at the expense of the late bishop's son,⁷ and there are unpublished proofs for a further thirteen of these translations.⁸ For editions and discussion of some of these sermons, see Lewin (2011) and Lewin and Wheeler (2018). In addition, six of the sixteenth-century official homilies of the Church of England were translated into Manx and published as pamphlets in the early nineteenth century; these have been edited by Thomson (1997).

Very few of the manuscript sermons have been the object of scholarly editions or analysis prior to the present project. Sophia Morrison (1859–1917), a prominent figure in the early Manx linguistic and cultural revival, edited and published two sermons by Thomas Quayle (vicar of Onchan 1759–98) in normalized orthography (i.e. that of the Manx Bible) with an introduction and brief notes on linguistic features in the *Isle of Man Examiner* newspaper in 1906. The original manuscript sources for these sermons are lost as far as is known, but three other manuscript sermons by Quayle are extant. Kavanagh (1947) edits an anonymous Manx manuscript sermon dating from 1821, presenting it in normalized orthography; this was ‘one of a number of sermons which the Rev. Canon Kermode, Vicar of Lezayre [...] sent me in 1939’ (Kavanagh 1947: 90). Inquiries at University College Cork, Kavanagh's former institution, suggest that these manuscripts, too, are now lost.⁹ Finally, Lewin (2015) edits the Woods text from 1696, with discussion of the orthography, linguistic features, and transmission and re-use of the sermon, as well as its relationship to the Phillips Prayer Book manuscript.

2.2. *Current project*

The authors were awarded a British Academy and Leverhulme Trust Small Project Grant for the period 2020–2, with additional financial support from Culture Vannin (the Manx Heritage Foundation), for a project entitled ‘Variation and change in the language of Manx sermons’, based in the Department of Welsh and Celtic Studies at Aberystwyth University. Given the extent of the corpus, it was decided to focus our initial attention on the subset of the material predating the completion of the Manx Bible in 1772, on the hypothesis that manuscripts from this period would be more likely to show variation in orthography and linguistic features (which is not to say that variation is absent in texts of the later period). The cut-off date is of course to some degree arbitrary, especially with regard to those authors whose floruits straddle 1772. Eighty-two Manx or bilingual manuscript sermons with known authors were identified for

⁷ According to Cubbon (1939: 798), the translator was Thomas Corlett (vicar of Lezayre 1773–1803), but in a letter to Philip Moore dated 18 April 1781 and printed in Wilson (1782a: xix–xx), Henry Corlett (vicar of German 1761–1801) states that he is presently engaged in translating some of Wilson's sermons and hopes to see them published ‘for the use of such of my countrymen as scarcely understand any other language but their own’. It thus seems clear that Henry, rather than Thomas, Corlett was responsible for at least some, and probably all, of the extant printed translations. We are grateful to Professor Max W. Wheeler for bringing this source to our attention. There are also three manuscript translations by John Clague (vicar of Rushen 1782–1816) of some of Wilson's sermons (see below §5.1).

⁸ As far as is known, only a single copy of these proofs exists, currently in private hands.

⁹ Our thanks to Dr Síle Ní Mhurchú of UCC for her help in relation to these manuscripts.

the period 1696 to 1772. We excluded those portions of an author's *œuvre* post-dating 1772 and also undated manuscripts, with a few exceptions, namely two undated sermon fragments by Philip Moore and one undated sermon by James Wilks, owing to these individuals' importance as early Manx sermon writers, the probable early date, and the relatively small size of Moore's and Wilks's extant corpora; we also included Wilks's sermon from 1775 (MS 13221/3/3), bringing his total to three texts. In addition, three sermons pre-dating 1772 but with as yet unidentified authors (two evidently in the same hand) were included, bringing the total number of sermons transcribed to ninety, amounting to 13.7% of the known pre-revival Manx manuscript sermon corpus of 656 texts.¹⁰ All of the material in this sub-corpus is in the Manx National Heritage Library, with the exception of one text in the John Rhŷs papers in the National Library of Wales. In all cases the original manuscripts are extant and were consulted, except for the two sermons by Thomas Quayle transcribed in normalized orthography by Sophia Morrison (1906), which we included for the sake of completeness, with the proviso that the original orthography is lost apart from the samples given in Morrison's footnotes. Details of the sermon authors are given in Table 1 (p. 131).

The primary aim of the current project has been to transcribe and diplomatically edit the ninety manuscript sermons in the sub-corpus, with the intention of making this material available to scholars, the Manx language community and the wider public in an open-access online searchable format. Further outputs will include a number of article-length studies and textual editions.

2.3. *Manuscripts and texts*

Our texts are generally written in small octavo notebooks typical of Anglican sermons of the period (Chamberlain 2012: 48). There is usually a title page outlining the topic and/or occasion of the sermon, and the sermon invariably opens with a short passage of scripture or 'text' around which the sermon is structured. Dates and places of preaching are usually listed at the beginning or end of the sermon. These details were presumably considered important in order to avoid preaching the same sermon too often to the same congregation, and to keep track of loans and guest preaching between parishes.

Where relevant, other details may be given in the manuscripts, such as numbers of communicants at communion services; details of the deceased in the case of funeral sermons; sums raised for particular causes or persons upon the preaching of charity sermons; details of individuals performing penance under sentence of the church courts; and information about reuse and adaptation by other preachers. In the case of bilingual sermons, the language of delivery may be noted, as in the following example from William Crebbin (curate and then vicar of Jurby 1743–1803), which is an abridged translation of a series of sermons by Tillotson (1717: 676–88, 696–701) (§5.1):

¹⁰This figure, which includes the MNH and NLW material, derives primarily from the McArdle catalogue and must be regarded as a working estimate, given that we have not had the opportunity to examine the entire corpus firsthand, nor to search for possible omissions.

Table 1. Sermon writers in the pre-1772 sub-corpus

	born	earliest dated sermon	latest dated sermon	died	total sermons	project sermons (mostly ≤1772)	clerical career ¹¹
John Woods	c. 1665	1696	1696	1739	1	1	d. 1688/9, c. German 1688–?92, p. 1694, Braddan 1692–5, ch. Castletown 1695; Malew 1696–1739
Philip Moore	1705	1723	1731	1783	11	11	dc. 1729, p. 1739, c. Bride, Marown, ch. Douglas 1736–65; Ballaugh 1751–60, Bride 1760–83
William Crebbin	c. 1717	1743	1782	1803	48	25	dc. 1743, c. Jurby 1743–51; Jurby 1751–1803
Robert Christian	c. 1727	1752	1752	1754	2	2	dc. 1750; c. Ballaugh 1750–2; German 1752–4
William Mylrea	1721	1752	1752	1795	1	1	dc. 1747; c. Andreas 1747–54; Bride 1754–60; Andreas 1760–87
<i>NLW Rhŷs A3.10</i>	–	1752	1752	–	1	1	
James Wilks	c. 1719	1753	1775	1777	3	3	dc. 1742, p. 1743; c. German 1742–4; German 1744–52, Kirk Michael 1752–71; Ballaugh 1771–7
Joseph Cosnahan	c. 1725	1756	1763	1768	3	3	dc. 1747; Braddan 1750–1768
<i>MSS 05727/I, /10</i>	–	1756	1756	–	2	2	
Henry Corlett	1736	1758	1779	1801	8	4	dc. 1755, c. Ballaugh 1755–61; German 1761–1801
Thomas Quayle	c. 1727?	1760	1765	1798	5	5	c. Castletown 1752–58; Onchan 1758–98
<i>MS 09608/53</i>	–	1761	1761	–	1	1	
Charles Crebbin	1736	1763	1802	1817	42	19	ch. St Matthew's 1765–9; Santan 1769–1817; ch. St George's 1781–1817
Thomas Cubbon	1739	1765	1812	1828	28	12	Santan 1765–9; Maughold 1769–1814; Lonan 1814–17; Bride 1817–28
Total					156	90	

¹¹Most details after Gelling (1998) (dc. = deacon, c. = curate, ch. = chaplain, p. = priest; references to parishes mean incumbency as vicar or rector unless otherwise stated).

Jurby 1753 August 19th 9 *Sunday after Trinity* — Manks
 1754 August 11th 9 *Trinity* — Manks
 1755 September 21st 17 *Sunday after Trinity*: Ballaugh Manks
 Ramsey 28th 18 *Sunday* [after Trinity] English
 Jurby October 19th 21st *Trinity* Manks
 Kirk Andrews November 2d 23 *Sunday after Trinity* Manks
 Jurby November 14th 1756 22^d *Sunday after Trinity* Manks
 Ballaugh August 7th 1757 9 *Sunday after Trinity* Manks
 Jurby November 6th 22 *Sunday after Trinity* Manks
 1758 October 29th 23 [Sunday after] *Trinity* Manks
 1760 January 27th 3 *Sunday after Epiphany* Manks
 1761 March 29th 1 *Sunday after Easter* Manks
 1762 April 15 1 *Sunday after Easter* Manks. (William Crebbin
 1753, MS 05724/4, p. 31)

Crebbin preaches this bilingual sermon twelve times in Manx between 1753 and 1762, and only once in English, and that in the chapel in the market town of Ramsey. The other occasions are all in the more thoroughly Manx-speaking rural parishes of Jurby (his own), and the neighbouring Andreas and Ballaugh. In addition to being reused on multiple occasions by their original creator, sermon manuscripts were also sometimes borrowed or inherited by other preachers (cf. Lewin 2015), as explicit notes in the manuscripts sometimes attest. How extensive these practices were and how they were arranged remains a topic for further investigation.

2.4. *Broader historical context*

Aside from their intrinsic linguistic value for scholars of the Gaelic languages, the Manx manuscripts arguably rank as one of the most important collections of Anglican sermons in existence, and have the potential to make a significant contribution to the emerging interdisciplinary field of Sermon Studies (Francis 2012). Unlike many contemporary English sermon collections (Chamberlain 2012: 47), most Manx sermons have readily identifiable writers; almost all of them are intended for regular parish preaching; and the material belongs uniformly to the established church. The language of the sermons also presents research opportunities beyond its purely philological value. The use of Manx ties their provenance to the Isle of Man, and to the tight-knit clerical networks of the Church of England's smallest diocese. The incomplete standardization of the written language provides greater scope for study of linguistic variation than the relatively linguistically homogeneous English sermons of the same period. The sermons are also of considerable interest for Manx religious and broader social history, in terms of their content, as well as additional information sometimes included in the manuscripts, such as details of penances performed by parishioners and other incidents of note in parish life, but space precludes discussion of these important matters in the present article.

Turning to the broader tradition of sermon-making in the Gaelic languages, it is useful to compare the Manx corpus with the manuscript sermons found in

Irish and Scottish Gaelic. There is no shortage of manuscript sermons copied or composed in Irish in our period (Ó Dúshláine 1996; Mac Murchaidh 2004; Tracey 2019), but they are quite distinct from the Manx material. Most importantly, the number of extant Manx sermons greatly exceeds that found in Irish; Ó Dúshláine (1996: 86–7) enumerates approximately 226 Irish sermons but this includes printed as well as manuscript sermons.¹² All of the extant chronologically comparable manuscript sermons found in Irish are of Catholic provenance, many preserved in Maynooth (Ó Fiannachta 1993), although some Protestant sermons did appear in print. A striking point of distinction between the Manx manuscript sermons and those in Irish is the anonymity of many of the Irish sermons, no doubt related to the legally liminal status of Catholic clergy in eighteenth-century Ireland (Ó Dúshláine 1996: 92–7; Ó Doibhlin 2000: 23; Tracey 2019: 111). Neither are dates of preaching found in the Irish manuscript sermons with the regularity of the Manx corpus, although some later collections such as that of Pádraig de Bhál (*fl.* 1812–33) buck this trend (Ó Dúshláine 1996: 110). Other sermons such as *Seanmóir Aoine an Chéasta*, composed by the Franciscan Seán Ó Dúlaidh in the seventeenth century have been absorbed into the manuscript tradition of the eighteenth and nineteenth century as canonical texts to be read and copied by non-clerics, rather than to be preached, and are therefore further removed from the context of composition and delivery (Ó Dúshláine 1996: 86, 89). A point which has often invited superficial comparison with the case of Manx is that a good number of the extant Catholic manuscript sermons in Irish from our period were written in an English-based orthography (Ó Fiannachta 1993; 1968; Ó Súilleabháin 1965; O’Sullivan 1944). The frequent characterization by some commentators of English-based orthographic practices as ‘repellent’ (O’Rahilly 1932: 20), ‘debased’ (Mac Lochlainn 1968: 116) or ‘barbartha’ (Ó Muraíle 2004: 79) has perhaps had the unfortunate result that such material, including many sermons, has been deemed less worthy of study.

Extant Scottish Gaelic sermons of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries are, unsurprisingly, overwhelmingly Presbyterian. The earliest surviving printed collection is that printed in North Carolina in 1791, having been preached at Raft Swamp, inland from Cape Fear (Meek 2002: 97). As with the Irish manuscripts, Scottish Gaelic manuscript sermons do not approach the volume of those found in Manx. A number of significant collections associated with individual clergymen nonetheless exist. Besides a single seventeenth-century outlier (Ó Baoill 1983: 96), the largest collections are those of the eighteenth-century clergymen Rev. Donald MacNicol of Lismore and Rev. Archibald McLea of Rothesay (approximately 90 and 37 respectively) (Gunderloch 2007: 19, 26–7). A manuscript containing 36 sermons composed by Rev. Hugh MacDiarmid during the 1770s has been preserved in Inverness Library but has largely evaded scholarly notice to

¹²Neither does the figure include the multiple copies of individual sermons found in the extensive Irish manuscript record of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. For printed Catholic sermons of the period in Irish, see especially Mac Murchaidh (2004; 2009; 2012).

date.¹³ To these one may add other eighteenth-century collections such as the eight sermons in the McFarlan papers in Glasgow University (Gunderloch 2007: 14), four sermons of Rev. Charles Stewart of Strathchur (Ó Baoill 1983: 92–3) and a smaller number composed by the Sutherland cleric Rev. John Mackay which are to be dated slightly earlier in the eighteenth century and are some of the ‘earliest examples of extended vernacular [Scottish] Gaelic prose’ (Thomson 1961). Of these Scottish Gaelic manuscript sermons, only the latter have been printed, and all await any detailed scholarly analysis.

Thus, in a greater Gaelic context, the volume of the Manx manuscript sermons is entirely exceptional. Not only does the absolute number of manuscript sermons found in Manx greatly exceed that found in either Irish or Scottish Gaelic, no individual Irish or Scottish sermon author produces the volume of sermons produced by the most prolific of the Manx authors. So too does the Manx manuscript sermon corpus, both geographically and diachronically, provide a density of coverage which is not found in the other Gaelic languages, and is rare elsewhere. The extensive paratextual apparatus relating to authorship and date of preaching so readily available in the case of Manx is generally not found in Irish and is only sporadically found in Scottish Gaelic (cf. Gunderloch 2007: 27). It is likely that the survival of so much sermon material in Manx is, in part, a fortuitous side-effect of the paucity of other genres and text types in the language, and the complete absence of the secular vernacular manuscript tradition found in Gaelic Ireland and Scotland. As a result, Manx sermons, as well as the carvals, seem to have attracted greater attention during the early period of antiquarian and revivalist interest in the language from the mid-nineteenth century onwards, while comparable material in the other Gaelic languages has ranked lower in the estimation of collectors and scholars.

3. ORTHOGRAPHY

Despite a tendency in scholarship to view Manx orthography as ‘an English monstrosity which obscures both pronunciation and etymology’ (Jackson 1955: 108), more balanced assessments (Thomson 1984: 307; Broderick 2009: 306–7; Lewin 2020: 58–80; 2022) have acknowledged that the system represents a sophisticated attempt to represent Gaelic sounds using adapted English-based conventions, balancing phonological transparency with other concerns such as semantic differentiation of homophones, real or presumed etymologies, and accommodation of different idiolects and dialects, as demonstrated in the discussion below. Extensive variation in orthography can be observed in the early manuscript sermons and other texts dating from before the publication of the Book of Common Prayer in 1765 and the final part of the Bible in 1772, alongside gradual crystallization of norms and conventions. Table 2 (pp. 136–43) shows the spelling of frequent lexical items in pre-1772 Manx sermon manuscripts and certain other texts (the Phillips

¹³Our thanks to Dr Domhnall Uilleam Stiùbhart for bringing this material to our attention. The manuscript sermons in Inverness Library are distinct from the volume of sermons printed in 1804, after MacDiarmid’s death.

Prayer Book manuscript and five printed texts).¹⁴ Dates for the sermon authors are of their earliest extant dated sermon; for other texts it is the date of printing, or probable date of composition (the Manx retelling of *Paradise Lost*).¹⁵ For the forms cited from Phillips, the extremely variable diacritics of this text (Wheeler 2020a) are ignored except in a couple of instances where they illustrate an affinity with Woods.

To gain an approximate measure of the degree to which the orthography of these texts and authors conforms to the standard of the completed Bible, each entry in Table 2 was given a score of 1 (full or substantial agreement with the standard), 0.5 (partial agreement; either an intermediate form or forms, or variation between standard and divergent forms), or 0 (full or substantial divergence from the standard). The results are shown in Chart 1 (p. 144). A second measure uses average Levenshtein distances (Sankoff and Kruskal 1983: 18; Kessler 1995) in 200-word samples from the relevant texts or authors,¹⁶ that is, the number of one-character additions, subtractions or substitutions necessary to turn the original spelling into the Bible standard orthography (see Table 3, p. 144).¹⁷ The results are shown in Chart 2 (p. 145).

The following sections discuss specific patterns which can be observed in the data.

¹⁴At the time the data were assembled, transcription of the sermon sub-corpus was approximately 85% complete. It is thus possible that some variant forms have been overlooked, although in general this is unlikely to affect the results substantially.

¹⁵Wheeler (2020c) makes a strong argument that this text was composed not by Thomas Christian (1754–1828, vicar of Marown 1779–99), as previously assumed (e.g. by Thomson 1995), but by his paternal grandfather, also Thomas Christian (vicar of Rushen 1713–27, vicar of Marown 1734–52). See also Ó Muircheartaigh (2020) for recently discovered details of the textual history of the poem. As Wheeler (2020c: 5) observes, linguistic, orthographic and typographical features of the 1796 version suggest it was printed from a manuscript of early to mid-eighteenth century provenance, and ‘appears not to have been proof-read or corrected by anyone’.

In fact, the text closely matches the orthography of one of our sermon writers, William Crebbin (curate of Jurby 1743–51; Vicar of Jurby 1751–1803). Shared forms include *caerraghey* ‘punish(ment)’ (*kerraghey*, G. *caireaghadh*), <ch> for word-internal /x/, *ec eh* ‘at him’ (*echey* ‘at him’, G. *aige*), *eiee* (*ee* ‘eat’, G. *ithe*), *goayll* (*goaill* ‘take’, G. *gabháil*), *hein* (*hene* ‘self’, G. *féin*), word-final <h> e.g. *gooh* (*goo* ‘word’, G. *guth*), <iea> for /iə/ (G. *ia*, *éa*), *unaan* (*unnane* ‘one’, G. *aonán*), *veeys* (*vees* ‘will be’, G. *bhías*, *bhíos*), *wheelish* (*wheelsh* ‘as much’, G. *a choibhéis*).

It is likely, then, that the lost manuscript which formed the basis of the 1796 printed version of the Manx *Paradise Lost* was a copy in the hand of William Crebbin, or at least that Crebbin’s own orthographic practices and those of the putative manuscript are closely connected (perhaps having acquired Manx literacy from a common source). Crebbin appears to have been a particularly conscientious and methodical writer, translator and copier of his own large corpus of bilingual sermons, which seem to be neat copies with few errors and emendations, so he fits the profile of someone who might have taken an active interest in the poem.

¹⁶With regard to the sermon writers, in most cases the opening section of the earliest dated extant text was taken. Certain words, notably proper names without specific Manx forms, were omitted as they were unlikely to show variation.

¹⁷Levenshtein distance is better known in historical linguistics as a means for measuring interrelationships between dialects (cf. Ó Muircheartaigh 2015: 65–6).

Table 2. Spelling of frequent lexical items in pre-1772 Manx sermon MSS and other texts.

<i>Bible spelling</i>	<i>English</i>	<i>Gaelic cognate</i>	<i>variable</i>	Phillips prayer book	John Woods	COYRLE SODJEH
1772 / 1819				c. 1610	1696	1707
1 aym; ayd	at me; you	agam; agad, -t	spelling	aym; ayd	ayds	aym; ayd
2 ayn; ayns	in him, it; in	ann; ins-	spelling	ayn; ayns	on; ayns (<i>Ipl</i> aynin)	ayn; ayns
3 ayrn	part	earrann	spelling	ayrn, arn, æarn	ayrn	ayrn, y niarn
4 beayn	eternal	buan	spelling	buan, byan	–	beayn
5 cha	not	cha	spelling	gha	gha	cha
6 clagh	stone	cloch	/a/, /o/	klagh	chlagh	–
7 cur; coyrt	give, put, send	cur, tabhairt	spelling	kurr, kur; toyrt	curr; hoyrt, choyrt	cur; choyrt
8 deiney	men	daoine	spelling	dene, deney	denya	deney
9 dooinney	man	duine	spelling	duyne, duyney, duny, dyne, duiney, duinyney, duyiny	dwyne, gwyne	dooinney, doinney
10 dtY	your <i>sg</i>	do	spelling	dy, tdy, thy, dthy, t'	tdy	dtY, dy
11 e	his, her, its	a	spelling	y, ý	ý	e
12 echey	at him, it	aige	spelling	agge, aggy	agge	echey
13 eh, e	he, it	é	spelling	e, é	é, e	e ‘he’, eh ‘it’
14 -ey	<i>final</i> /ə/	-a, -e, -adh	spelling	-y, -ey, -iy, -e, -a	-ey, -a, -e, -y	-ey, -eh
15 fakin	see <i>vn</i>	<i>SGc</i> faicinn	spelling	fak(k)in, fak(k)yn, fackin	fackin	fakin
16 goaill /go:ɫ/	take <i>vn</i>	gabháil	spelling	goyl	goyl	goal
17 gow /gau/	take	gabh	spelling	gou	gow	gow, gou

Philip Moore	<i>PARADISE LOST</i>	William Crebbin	<i>NOO MIAN</i>	William Mylrea	Robert Christian
1722	c. 1730–50 [pr. 1796]	1743	1748	1752	1752
aym; aad, aid	aym; ayd	aym, ayd	aym, ayd	ayd's	–
ayn, ayns	ayn; ayns	ayn; ayns	ayn; ayns	aun; ayns (<i>2pl</i> ayneeyn, <i>3pl</i> ayn-dhoosyn)	ayn; ayns (<i>3pl</i> aundoo)
aarn, arn, airn, niarn	ayrn, aarn	ayrn	–	arn	aarn
bean	beayn, bean(tys)	beoyrn	veayn	–	bean
ha, cha	cha	cha	cha	cha	cha
cloagh, chloghey, chloaghey	clagh, cloghe	–	clagh, clogh	–	–
cur; coart, coyrt	cur; curt, coyrt	cur; choyrt	cur; coyrt	chur; coart	cur; choyrt
deaney, -eh, deney, deiney, -eh	dieney	deney	deney	dheaney	yeigney, yeigne
doinch, -ey, dooineh, doinneh, dooinneey	dooinneey, doinney	dooinneey, dionney, doinney, dioonneey	dooinneey	dooinneey, ghoiney	doigne, h, dooigneey
dtty, dy	dtty, dy	dtthy, dtty	dtty	–	dy, dtty
eh, e, y	eh, e, 'e	eh	e	y	y
eckey	echey, ec eh, ecca	ec eh, ec e	echey	ecchey, eckey, ecche(h)	eggey
eh	eh, e	eh 'he', e 'it'	e 'he', eh 'it'	eh	eh
-ey, -eh, -y, -a, -ah, -ea	-ey, -eh	-ey, -eh	-ey	-ey, -eh	-ey, -eh
fakin	fakin, fackin, aikin	faikin, fakin	fakin	fackin	faakin
goal, goail	goayl(l), goaill, goal(l), goail	goayll, goayl, goall	goall	goal, goayl	goal, yhoal, ghoal, ghoall
gou, ghow	gou, gow	gou, gouh, gow	gow	gou	gow

<i>Bible spelling</i>	<i>English</i>	<i>Gaelic cognate</i>	<i>variable</i>	NLW Rhŷs A3/10	James Wilks	MSS 05727/1, /10
1772 / 1819				1752	1753	1756
1 aym; ayd	at me; you	agam; agad, -t	spelling	aym	ayms	ayms; ayd
2 ayn; ayns	in him, it; in	ann; ins-	spelling	ayne; uns, ayns	ayns (<i>Ipl</i> aynin; aynshoh 'here')	oan; ayn (ayn shoh 'here')
3 ayrn	part	earrann	spelling	ayrn	ayrn, arn, aryn, airn	arn
4 beayn	eternal	buan	spelling	–	vean, veayn	beayn
5 cha	not	cha	spelling	cha	cha, ha	ha, cha
6 clagh	stone	cloch	/a/, /o/	–	–	clogh
7 cur; coyrt	give, put, send	cur, tabhairt	spelling	cur; corte	cur; coyrt	cur; coyrt
8 deiney	men	daoine	spelling	deney	deiney, gheney	deinney
9 dooiney	man	duine	spelling	dooney, doney	dooine(n)ey, ghoine(n)ey	doinney, dooiney
10 dt̩y	your <i>sg</i>	do	spelling	dy	dt̩y, dy	dt̩y, dy
11 e	his, her, its	a	spelling	ay	e	eh, y
12 echey	at him, it	aige	spelling	eggey	echey, eggey	echey
13 eh, e	he, it	é	spelling	ey, ay	eh, e	eh
14 -ey	<i>final</i> /ə/	-a, -e, -adh	spelling	-ey	-ey	-ey, -eh, -ah, -a
15 fakin	see <i>vn</i>	<i>SGc</i> faicinn	spelling	fackin	fackin, faikin	fakkin
16 goaill /go:ɫ̪/	take <i>vn</i>	gabháil	spelling	goal, goall	goail, goaill, ghoaile	goal
17 gow /gau/	take	gabh	spelling	gow	gow	gow

Joseph Cosnahan	Henry Corlett	Thomas Quayle	Charles Crebbin	YN FER- RAAUEE CREESTEE	GOSPELS & ACTS	Thomas Cubbon
1756	1758	1760	1763	1763	1763	1765
aym; ayd	aym	aym	aym; ayd	aym; ayd	aym; ayd	ayms; ayd
ayn; ayns	aun, ayn; aunz, auns	ayne: ayns (1pl. ainde(e)n, aindi/yn, 3pl. aindoo)	ayn; ayns	ayn; ayns	ayn; ayns	oan; ayns, oans
aarn	ayrn, arn, aarn	arn	aarn, arn, ayrn, niarn	ayrn	ayrn	arn, aarn, ayrn, airn
—	beon	—	beayn, vean, beon	beayn, vean	beoyrn	biean, beayn
cha	cha	cha	cha	cha	cha	cha
—	—	—	cloghyn	clagh	clagh	—
cur; corte	cur; coyrt, curt	cur; choyr	cur; coyrt, curt	cur; coyrt	cur; coyrt	cur; coyrt, coart
deiney	deiney, dteniey, deniey	deiney	deiney, deinney	deiney	deiney	deiney, deineh, deeneh
doinney, dooiney	dooiney, dooinney, dtoinn(i)ey, dtuinn(i)ey, dtoo(n)ey, dtooniey	dooiney, dooinney	dooinney, dooiney	dooinney	dooinney	dooiney, dooinney
dtv	dtv, dthv, dy	dtv	dtv, dthv	dtv, dy	dtv, dy	dtv
e, y	e, eh	e	e, y	e	e	y, eh, e
ecchey	ecchey, ecchey, ecchysyn	ecchey	ecchey	ecchey	ecchey	ecchey
eh, e	eh, y	eh, e	eh	eh	eh	eh, e, y
-ey, -eh	-ey	-ey	-ey, -eh	-ey, -eh	-ey	-ey, -eh
fakin	fakin, fagyn, fakyn	fackin	faikin, akin, fackin	fakin	fakin	fakin
goal, goaill, goail	goail, goaill	goal	goaill, goal, goall	goaill, goail	goaill	goail, goal, goaill
ghow	gow	gow	gou, gow	gow, ghov	gow	gow, ghov

<i>Bible spelling</i>	<i>English</i>	<i>Gaelic cognate</i>	<i>variable</i>	Phillips prayer book	John Woods	<i>COYRLE SODJEH</i>
1772 / 1819				c. 1610	1696	1707
18 hene	self	féin	spelling, form	heyn, hæyn, hæyn hiyn, hieyn	hæyn	hene
19 jeeagh	look, show	déach	spelling	jeagh, jagh	jaghin	jeagh
20 lheid	such	leithéid	spelling	leid, leyd, leidg	læid	leid
21 lhisagh	should, ought	dhleasadh	spelling; /e, i, a, o/ /s, ʃ/	lessagh, le(s)shagh(t)	lissiagh	lishagh
22 (ny) lomarcan	alone, only	ina lomracán	spelling	lymyrkan, lymarkan, lomarkan, lomyrkan	lomarkyn	lomarcan
23 mastey	among	i measc	/e/, /a/ /sk/, /st/	masky, maskey	masty	maskey
24 mooar	big, great	mór	spelling; /ua/, /o:/	muar, muyr	moara, woar	mooar
25 (dy/nagh) nee, re	<i>copula</i>	an é, gur é	<i>nee</i> v. <i>re</i> , spelling	næ, ni(i), ræ, re(e)	ny, nee, ne	nee
26 ny	do not	ná	spelling	na	–	ny
27 ooilley	all	uile	spelling, /-u/, /-ə/	ully	ullu	ooilley
28 peccah	sin	peacadh	spelling	peky, pecky, pecca peke	pecca	peccah
29 seihll	world	saoghal	spelling	syyl	syyl	seihl, seihll
30 seose, heose, neose	up, down	suas, thuas, anuas	spelling <eo>	s(h)uas, syas, shus	seas; neas	seose
31 shass	stand	seas(amh)	/ʃ/, /s/	shassu	–	shassoo
32 shenn	old	sean	/e/, /a/	shan(n), shen(n)	shan	–
33 smessey	worse. worst	is measa	/e/, /a/	smassey	–	smassey
34 veagh, beagh	would be	bheadh, bhiadh	spelling, form	veagh, beagh	beagh	veagh, beagh
35 wheesh	as much	a choibhéis	spelling	ghuish, ghuis, ghuæis	wheesh	chooish
36 yeearree	desire	iarraidh	spelling	yieri, ieriji	–	gearee, gearree

Philip Moore	<i>PARADISE LOST</i>	William Crebbin	<i>NOO MIAN</i>	William Mylrea	Robert Christian
1722	c. 1730–50 [pr. 1796]	1743	1748	1752	1752
hene	hein, heen	hein, hene, heen	hene	hene	hene
jeagh	jeagh, jeeagh, jieagh	jieagh, jeagh, jeeagh	jeagh	yeaghyn	yeagh
lleid, leid	leid	leyd, leid	leid	lheid	lheid
lissagh, liassagh, lishagh	lishagh	lishagh	lishagh	lhissagh	lishagh, lhishagh, lhissagh
lomarcán, lommarcán	lomercan	lomercan, lomarcán	lomarcán	lomarkyn	lomarcán
maskey, mastey	mastey, maskey	meskey	mastey	maskey	mastey
moar, mooar	mooar	mooar, moar	moar	moar	vooar
ny, ne, nee, re, ry, reh	nee	nee, re	nee	—	ne, re
na, nah	ny, nagh	ny, na	ny	nagh, \ny/ ooilley, ooilleu, oilleu	neh, nagh ooilley, oilley
ooilley, ooilleh	ooilley	ooilley, ooilleu	ooilley		
peccah	peccah	peccah	peccah	peccah, pecca	peccah
sei(h)l	seihll	seihl(l)	seihl(l)	seihl	seyll, teill
seose; neose	seo(y)se; heose; neoy(s)e	seoyse	seose	seose	seouse
shassoo, sassoo	shassoo	shassoo	shassoo	sassoo	—
shen, shendiaght, \chandiaght/	shen, chenn	shian, chian	shen	—	—
smessey, smassey/h	smassey, smessey	smessey	smessey	smassey	—
ve(e)agh, vagh; be(e)agh, chooish, wheesh	veagh, bieagh(t) wheesh	vieagh; bieagh, beeagh wheesh	veagh wheesh	beagh wheesh	veagh, beagh whoosh
gearree, yearee, yeearreenyn	gearree, earree	yearee	yearree	yearry, yeareey, — \geearree/	—

<i>Bible spelling</i>	<i>English</i>	<i>Gaelic cognate</i>	<i>variable</i>	NLW Rhŷs A3/10	James Wilks	MSS 05727/1, /10
1772 / 1819				1752	1753	1756
18 hene	self	féin	spelling, form	hene	hene	hene
19 jeeagh	look, show	déach	spelling	jeaghyn	jeeaghyn, jeaghyn	jeaghyn
20 lheid	such	leithéid	spelling	leid	leid	leid, liead, lied
21 lhisagh	should, ought	dhleasadh	spelling; /e, i, a, o/ /s, ʃ/	–	liosagh	lishagh
22 (ny) lomarcan	alone, only	ina lomracán	spelling	–	lomarcyn, lomarkyn, lomarcan	lomarcan
23 mastey	among	i measc	/e/, /a/ /sk/, /st/	maskey	maskey	mestey, mesty
24 mooar	big, great	mór	spelling; /ua/, /o:/	mooar	moar	mooar, moar
25 (dy/nagh) nee, re	<i>copula</i>	an é, gur é	<i>nee</i> v. <i>re</i> , spelling	–	ne, re	nee, re
26 ny	do not	ná	spelling	na	na, nagh	–
27 ooilley	all	uile	spelling, /-u/, /-ə/	ooilley	ooilley, oilley, ooilleh	ooilley
28 peccah	sin	peacadh	spelling	peckey, <i>adj.</i> peckoill	peccah, pecca	peccah
29 seihll	world	saoghal	spelling	seill	seihl(l), seiltagh ‘worldly’	seihll, teihll
30 seose, heose, neose	up, down	suas, thuas, anuas	spelling <eo>	seose	seose; neose	seose
31 shass	stand	seas(amh)	/ʃ/, /s/	sassoo	sassoo	shashoo
32 shenn	old	sean	/e/, /a/	–	shen, chen	shenn
33 smessey	worse. worst	is measa	/e/, /a/	smassey	–	–
34 veagh, beagh	would be	bheadh, bhiadh	spelling, form	veagh, veeagh	veagh, beagh	veagh, beagh
35 wheesh	as much	a choibhéis	spelling	–	whoish	wheesh, wheish
36 yeearree	desire	iarraidh	spelling	yeariyn	yearee, yearynyn	–

Joseph Cosnahan	Henry Corlett	Thomas Quayle	Charles Crebbin	<i>YN FER- RAAUEE CREESTEE</i>	<i>GOSPELS & ACTS</i>	Thomas Cubbon
1756	1758	1760	1763	1763	1763	1765
hene	hene	hene	hene	hene	hene	hene, heen
jiaghyn	jeaghyn	jeaghyn	jeaghyn, jeeaghyn	jeagh, jeeagh	jeeagh	jeaghyn, jeeaghyn, yieaghyn
lheid	leid, leide	leid	leid	leid	leid	leid
lishagh	lishagh, liasagh, lhisin	lhisagh	liasagh, lishagh	lhisagh	lhisagh	lhyssagh, lhyssagh, lhyshagh
lommarcan, lomarcán	lommarkyn, lomarkyn, lommarkan	lomarcán	lommarcan, lomarcán	lomarcán	lomarcán	lomarcán
–	maskey	mast	mastey	mastey	mastey	mastey
moar	mooar, voar	mooar, moar	mooar, woar	mooar	mooar	mooar, moar
re	re, \reh/ \nee/	nee	nee, re	nee	nee	nee, re, reh
na, nagh ooilley	nagh ooilley	nagh, ny ooilley	ny, nagh ooilley	ny ooilley	ny ooilley	ny, nagh ooilloo, ooilley
peccah	peccah, pecca	peccey	peccah, phecchah	peccah	peccah	peccaa, peccah
teihl	\seihl/ seilltagh	seihl, seiltagh	seihll	seihll	seihll	seihl, seihll
seoyse, seose	seose	seose	seose	seose	seose	seose, seeose
sassoo	sassoo	sassoo	shassoo	shassoo	shassoo	shassoo
shan, chan	chen	shan, chan	shan, chen	–	chen	chen
smessey	smessey	smassey	smessey, smassey	smessey	smessey	smesseh
viagh, biagh	veagh; beagh, beeagh	veagh, vagh; beagh	veagh; beagh, beeagh	veagh; beagh	veagh	veagh, vieagh
whoosh	wheesh, wheesh, chooish	wheesh	wheesh, wheesh	whoosh	wheesh	wheesh
yearee	yeearee	yearee, gearree	yearee, yearree, yeearee, yeearee	yeearee	yeearee	yearree, yearee, giearee, gearee

Table 3. Levenshtein distances showing divergence between the opening sentence of MS 13221/2/1 (John Woods, 1696) and standard orthography

original orthography	standard orthography	Levenshtein distance
Vel	Vel	0
shiu	shiu	0
quilleena	cooilleeney	5
yn	yn	0
Chairn	Chiarn	2
mar	myr	1
sho	shoh	1
O	O	0
sley	sleih	2
ammijagh	ommijagh	1
as	as	0
gun	gyn	1
tushta	tushtey	2

Chart 1. Adherence of Manx texts c. 1610–1765 to norms of Manx Bible orthography, in 36 frequently-occurring lexical items

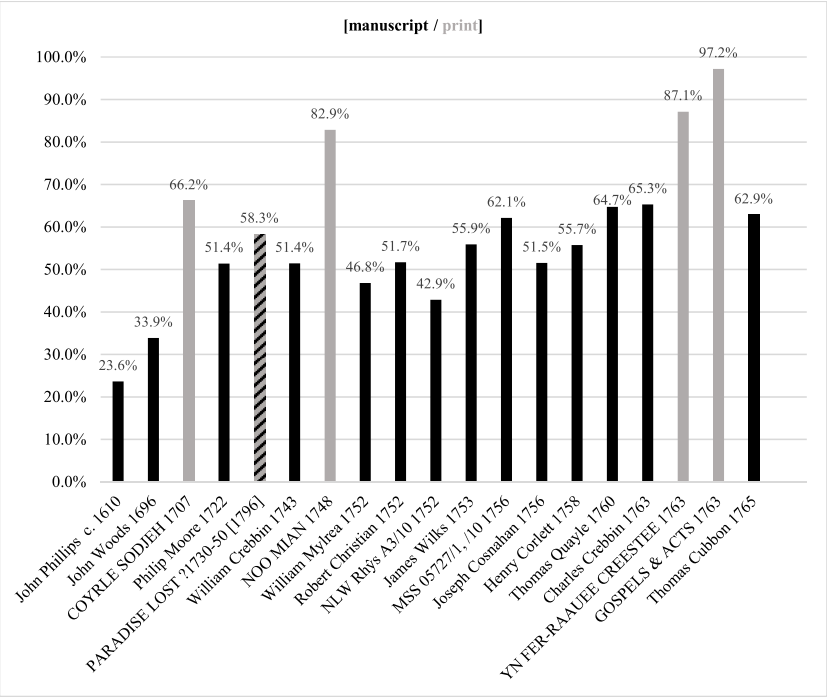
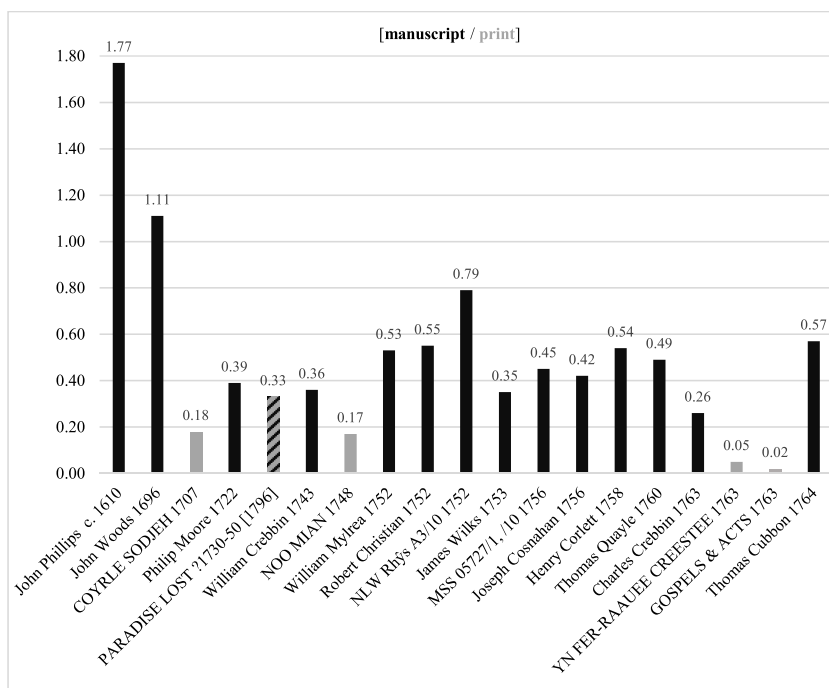


Chart 2. Divergence of Manx texts c. 1610–1765 from norms of Manx Bible (1819) orthography, Levenshtein distances in 200-word samples



3.1. Distinctiveness of Phillips

The biggest watershed is plainly between the seventeenth-century texts of Phillips and John Woods on the one hand (23.6% and 33.9% agreement with the standard respectively), and all the eighteenth-century texts on the other, all of which have scores over 40%, and most over 50%. In terms of Levenshtein distances, the two seventeenth-century texts are the only ones which score over 1, while most of the sermons range between 0.3 and 0.6, and the printed texts (other than *Paradise Lost*) are all under 0.2. It is clear that John Woods deliberately patterned elements of his orthographic usage on the Phillips manuscript which he read and revised (Lewin 2015); apart from this the Phillips system is independent of the later tradition to a significant extent, notwithstanding certain specific continuities discussed below (§3.3). Distinctive spellings shared by the two seventeenth-century texts against all or most of the later texts include:

(5) *cha* ‘not’ (G. *cha*): Phillips / Woods *gha*, rest *cha* or *ha* (reflecting the divergent representation of initial /x/ in the two systems);

(11) *eh* ‘he, him, it’ (G. *é*): Phillips / Woods, *y*, *ý*, rest *e*, *eh*, *y*;

(12) *echey* ‘at him, it’ (G. *aige*): Phillips / Woods *agge*, rest mostly *echey*, *eckey*;

(16) *goaill* ‘take’ (G. *gabháil*): Phillips / Woods *goyl*, rest mostly with <oa>, termination variable;

(29) *seihll* ‘world’ (G. *saoghal*): Phillips / Woods *syyl*, rest mostly with <ei>.

On the other hand, for (28) *peccah* ‘sin’ (G. *peacadh*), where Phillips has *pe(c)ky*, Woods goes with the later norm with <cca>. Similarly for (35) *wheesh* ‘as much’ (G. *a choibhéis*), Phillips has *ghuish*, against Woods and later *wheesh*; although some of the eighteenth-century texts, including notably *Coyrle Sodjeh*, have *chooish*, *whooish*, apparently agreeing with Phillips in pronunciation but not in orthography.

3.2. Printed and manuscript texts

Apart from the major division between the seventeenth- and eighteenth-century texts, the printed texts are notably closer to the standard than contemporary manuscripts: the three later printed texts (excluding *Paradise Lost*) all score above 80%, a figure not approached by any of the manuscripts, and the 1765 Gospel and Acts almost entirely adheres to the standard. The score of 66.2% for the 1707 printed text *Coyrle Sodjeh* is high for its period, and is not exceeded by any of the sermon writers. Charles Crebbin (fl. 1763–1802) has the lowest Levenshtein measure of any of the identified sermon writers (0.26). The level of orthographic standardization in the sermon manuscripts from Philip Moore onwards does not change dramatically, with the partial exception of Crebbin’s Levenshtein score. Crebbin’s earliest work dates from the 1760s, the period of intensifying activity on Bishop Mark Hildesley’s translation project when a number of near-standard works were published. The relatively high Levenshtein distance for Thomas Cubbon (fl. 1765–1812) shows that increasing print standardization was not necessarily followed in manuscripts, however, a discrepancy which persists through the nineteenth century.

3.3. Continuity from Phillips

Despite the general orthographic distinctiveness of Phillips (and Woods) in comparison with the eighteenth-century texts, the two groups of texts do share some idiosyncratic spellings at the level of individual items or conventions which are unlikely to be coincidences. However, whether these reflect a shared origin predating Phillips, or that the Phillips text itself had some influence on the later norms, is difficult to determine owing to the scant survival of textual material before the mid-eighteenth century, as discussed above. Perhaps the most striking is the 2 sg. possessive (10) *dty* ‘your’ (G. *do*), Phillips *tdhy* etc., Woods *tdy*, later *dty* (also *dthy*). Although the order of the letters and presence or absence of <h> varies, initial *dt-* / *td-* is idiosyncratic both from English norms and within Manx orthography.¹⁸ The probable motivations are the existence of

¹⁸However, the use of initial <dt-> in other words is a notable feature of the manuscript sermons of Henry Corlett, e.g. *dtaa* ‘two’ (*daa*, G. *dá*), *dtaue* ‘to them’ (*daue*, G. *dóibh*), *dtaney* ‘bold’ (*daaney*, G. *dána*), *dteniey* ‘men’ (*deiney*, G. *daoine*), and is found occasionally in other texts. The motivation of this usage is presumably to emphasize the dental articulation of Gaelic /d/, as

allomorphs /də/ and prevocalic /t-/ (G. *do*, *t'*) (Lewin 2015: 72–3); disambiguation from the many homophones /də/ spelled *dy* (G. *do*, *de*, *go*, *dá* etc.); and possible association with English *thy*. The convention **(14) -ey** for final schwa, which is uniformly observed in the eighteenth-century standard with a handful of lexical exceptions, is a further example of a distinctive grapheme common to the Classical Manx orthography and the Phillips text (where however it coexists with a number of other options, as it does in some of the eighteenth-century manuscripts).

In **(1) *aym*, *ayd*** ‘at me, you’ (G. *agam*, *agad*), **(2) *ayn*, *ayns*** ‘in’ (G. *ann*), and **(3) *ayrn*** ‘part’ (G. *earrann*), the eighteenth-century standard displays a further convention from the earlier period, the use of <y> as a marker of length, a feature of northern Middle English and Older Scots orthography (Vikar 1922: 9–10, 93–94; Kniezsa 1997; Williams 1994: 705). This remains straightforwardly functional in *ayrn* /a:rn/ ‘part’, with regular lengthening before the sonorant cluster (G. *earrann* > **eārn*). In *aym*, *ayd* the usage is explicable if we assume Early Manx */a:m, a:d/ with long vowels after the elision of original intervocalic /g/ (<*agam*, *agad*), although these are found with short /e/, /a/ or /i/ in Late Manx (HLSM ii, 16). Similarly, the spelling *ayn* (*ayns*, *ayndoo* etc.) for G. *ann* makes sense if we assume /a:N/ in Phillips’ time (or somewhat earlier, if Phillips was himself drawing on an established convention); compare Phillips *kian* ‘head’ (G. *ceann*) */k^ja(:)N/, eighteenth-century *kione*, the later spelling reflecting lengthening and rounding to southern Manx /k^jo:n/, diphthongal in northern Manx /k^jaun/ (HLSM i, 161). In Late Manx *ayn* is realized as southern /o(:)n/, northern /u(:)n/ (? < */aun/) (HLSM ii, 16). Possibly the spelling *ayn* was retained as a distinctive compromise spelling bridging fluctuating pronunciations, although some sermon authors have spellings such as *aun*, *oan*, *on*, which better reflect the phonetic reality.

3.4. Conventional spellings of individual lexemes

Although the sermon manuscripts in our period display significant orthographic variation, there appears to have been a feeling that certain frequently occurring items had standard spellings, or at least standard elements, which even the more orthographically divergent writers tend to observe:

- The idiosyncratic spelling **(12) *echey***¹⁹ ‘at him’ (G. *aige*) is found in *Coyrle Sodjeh* and the later Biblical standard, and it or close variants (e.g. Joseph Cosnahan’s *ecchey*) are used by most of the sermon authors,

opposed to the English alveolar stop also found in Manx in loanwords (Lewin 2020: 96). Although Corlett employs <dt> in nasalized forms such as *er nyn dtayrn* (G. *iarna dtarraing*), this is almost certainly a coincidence rather than any reflection of Irish orthographic influence.

¹⁹It is difficult to explain the spelling *echey*. Possibly it represents a folk etymology incorporating English *he*. The apparent indication of an unvoiced consonant probably represents the analogy of the simple preposition *ec* (with devoicing of final /g^h/ found also in e.g. *aspick* ‘bishop’, ScG *eas-baig*), and/or hypercorrection owing to incipient medial lenition; (cf. William Crebbin’s *omichagh* for *ommijagh* ‘foolish’, G. *amaideach*); more tentatively we might link the use of <ch> with the realization of the medial stop as a fricative [ɣ] attested in Late Manx (HLSM ii, 141).

although other spellings occur, including the more phonologically transparent *eggey*, the more orthographically rule-conforming *eckey*, and the semantically decomposed *ec eh*.

- Similarly, for **(16) goaill** ‘take’ (G. *gabháil*) most writers have standard <oa>, although there is variation as to the presence of <i> and single or double <l(l)>.
- Most writers have standard **(18) hene** ‘self’ (G. *féin*) *hene*, rather than the less ambiguous *hein* or *heen* (see below §3.8).
- **(29) seihll** ‘world’ (G. *saoghal*) usually has <ei>, often with <h>, and with variation as to single or double <l(l)>, even though a spelling such as Robert Christian’s *seyll* would less ambiguously represent the pronunciation /sə:l/.²⁰
- Most writers have standard **(28) peccah** ‘sin’ (G. *peacadh*) or a close variant thereof (*pecca*, *pecchah*, *peccaa*), consciously reflecting the ultimate Latin etymology *peccatum*, although the anonymous NLW text has *peckey*, the expected spelling under the wider conventions of the orthography.
- **(30) seose** ‘up’ (G. *suas*) is usually spelt with <eo>, even by authors who do not otherwise make extensive use of this digraph (see below).
- One might also cite the use of **(15) fakin** ‘see’ (SGc *faicinn*) ‘see’, one of the spellings in Phillips, and widely observed in the pre-1772 texts alongside other variants such as *fackin*, *faakin*, *fagyn*, *faikin*. The expected spelling in line with the historical short vowel is *fackin*; the spellings *fakin* and *faakin* may reflect incipient vowel lengthening (Lewin 2020: 406–7) (*faikin* probably represents the medial slender /k^l/), while Henry Corlett’s *fagyn* represents medial voicing; both developments are universal in the attested realizations from the last speakers (HLSM ii, 157).

3.5. Phonological transparency

The Biblical standard represents certain contrasts more unambiguously than some of the earlier eighteenth-century texts, demonstrating that a concern for sound-symbol transparency was certainly one of the pressures influencing the evolution of the orthography, if not always the decisive one (Lewin 2022: 43–5). For example, the digraph <ea> is used indiscriminately in the majority of the pre-1772 texts for both the long monophthong /e:/ and the diphthong /iə/ (G. *ia*, also ‘broken’ *é*), the latter being generally represented by <eea> in the standard orthography, as in **(19) jeeagh** ‘look’ (G. *déach*) and **(36) yeeearree** ‘desire’ (G. *iarraidh*), as well as <ia> in a couple of items, e.g. *grian* ‘sun’, Philip Moore *grean*. Indeed <eea> is absent or rare in many of the manuscript texts except where there is a syllable (and morpheme) boundary, e.g. *Creesteeaght* /'kri:sti.axt/ ‘Christianity, Eucharist’ (G. *Críostaidheacht*). It is possible that

²⁰The digraph <ei> is also used for /e:/, and tends to indicate a following slender consonant (Lewin 2020: 220–1); possibly the use of <h> in *seihll* was felt to block the latter effect.

some instances of *jeagh* represent a conservative pronunciation with unbroken /e:/, as indicated by some of Phillips' spellings of this lexical set (e.g. *beal*, *béal*, *béyl* for standard *beal* 'mouth' G. *béal*) (Lewin 2020: 158–62); but in texts which do not robustly distinguish between /e:/ and /iə/, this cannot be determined one way or the other. Similarly, some writers do not distinguish consistently between <oa> and <ooa>, so an instance of *moar* for (24) *mooar* 'big' (G. *mór*) (Munster Ir *muar*) cannot necessarily be taken as evidence of */mo:r/ over /muər/, although it is possible both forms existed.

The digraph <ea> can also represent the long central vowel /ə:/ (G. *ao(i)*, *uai*) and the fronted diphthong /iə/ (G. *ua*), a usage which persists in the standard orthography in a few items, e.g. *eash* 'age' (G. *aois*), *leagh* 'reward' (G. *luach*). However, this ambiguity is more extensive in some of the early authors, e.g. (4) *beayn* 'eternal' (G. *buan*) which appears as *bean* (Philip Moore, Robert Christian, James Wilks). The sequence <eay> in the standard predominantly represents the *ao(i)* and *ua(i)* vowels (it does not help in distinguishing between them), although it does also represent /e:/ and /iə/ in some words (Lewin 2020: 218). It is worth noting that some of the sermon authors make wider usage of the still more unambiguous digraph <eo> (including <eoy>, <eoh> etc.) for /ə:/ and /iə/, which is not used for the front vowels at all. This grapheme is found in the standard in a few words (ibid., 220), notably (30) *seose* 'up' *suas* etc. discussed above (§3.4),²¹ but finds more extensive use in some of the pre-1772 texts, e.g. *beon* (Charles Crebbin, Henry Corlett), *beoy* (William Crebbin) 'eternal' (*beayn*, G. *buan*); *seorey* (James Wilks), *seoyrey* (Henry Corlett) 'free, acquit' (*seyrey*, G. *saoradh*); *cleonagh* (Henry Corlett) 'coax, seduce' (*cleayn(agh)ey*, G. *claon*).²² The apparent disfavouring of <eo> in the standard may simply be happenstance, but possibly reflects an aversion to graphemes or graphotactic usages which are unusual or absent in English orthography (Lewin 2020: 224; 2022: 51).

Other such usages found in some of the texts, but not adopted in the standard despite their potential utility for increasing phonological transparency, include:

- initial <tch-> for /tʃ/ (G. /tʃ/) (William Crebbin, Robert Christian, Thomas Cubbon, occ. Philip Moore, Joseph Cosnahan) where the standard has <ch>, the latter being used also for initial lenited /x, ç/;
- <kh>, used by certain writers (Henry Corlett, William Crebbin, occ. Philip Moore, Thomas Cubbon) for initial /x, ç/;²³ and

²¹It also has a clearly distinct use for /o:/ in a handful of items, e.g. *ben-treoghe* 'widow' (G. *baintreabhthach*).

²²In *Coyrle Sodjeh* we find *feosle* 'relieve' for standard *feayshil* (G. *fuascail*) and *leoi* 'sooner' (standard *s'leai*, G. *is luaith*); in *Paradise Lost* there is *cheoy* 'sea' (*keayn*, G. *cuan*), *feon* 'expansive' (*feayn*, G. *fao(i)n*), *beoy* 'eternal' (*beayn*, G. *buan*), *chleosh* 'ear' (*cleaysh*, G. *cluais*), *feoyr* 'cold' (*feayr*, G. *fuair*).

²³Found in print in Psalm 19. 10 *y khere-volley* 'the honey-comb' (G. *an chíor mheala*); <kh> also appears occasionally for unlenited /k, kʰ/ as in *khyrloghe* 'brokenhanded' (G. *?cearr-*, *?corr-*, *?criothlámhach*) (Leviticus 21. 19); and both lenited and unlenited *khing* 'heads' (G. *cinn*) (standard *king*, lenited *ching*) in the 1765 Prayer Book edition of the Psalms.

- <gn> for /nʲ/, as in *gniart* ‘strength’ (standard *niart*, G. *neart*), *gne* ‘thing’ (standard *nhee*, G. *ní*) (Phillips, John Woods, William Crebbin, Robert Christian), found in the standard only in *veign* ‘I would be’ (G. *do bhiainn*), and perhaps *beign* ‘had to’ (SGc *b’ éiginn*).

3.6. Lexical contrasts

As Thomson (1984: 307) notes, Manx ‘spelling [...] has developed an iconic element, in that words of similar or identical pronunciation are as far as possible deliberately spelt differently’ (cf. Lewin 2022: 45–6). Some lexical contrasts are more robustly distinguished in the standard than in the pre-1772 texts, notably in frequently occurring function words. Compare for example the consistent use of (10) *dt̪y* ‘your’ (G. *do*), as opposed to fluctuation between *dt̪y* and *dy* in many of the pre-1772 texts. For the possessive (11) *e* ‘his, her, it’ (G. *a*) and the pronoun (13) *eh* ‘he, him, it’ (G. *é*), some of the earlier texts use *e* or *eh* or both indiscriminately for these two items; some texts make an artificial orthographic distinction between ‘he’ and ‘it’ (maintained in the standard only in contracted forms of the substantive verb, viz. *t’eh*, *v’eh* ‘he is, was’ and *te*, *ve* ‘it is, was’); and there is sometimes conflation between the possessive and the definite article as *y*, with only their differing mutational effects and context distinguishing them. This tendency is also seen in open-class words; for example, the homophones *leih* ‘forgive(ness)’ (G. *logh(adh)*) and *leigh* ‘law’ (SGc *lagh*) (both /l̪əi/) are often conflated orthographically in pre-standard texts.

3.7. By-forms

In many cases the evidence of the sermon manuscripts and the wider Manx corpus shows that two or more by-forms (some of them dialectal variants) were in widespread use in eighteenth-century Manx. In such cases, unless a compromise spelling is available (see below), the standard orthography by necessity comes down in favour of one form or the other, as in:

- (5) *cha* ‘not’ (G. *cha*) representing conservative /xa/, v. *ha* /ha/ — by Late Manx /h/ or complete loss is universal (Rhÿs 1894: 72; *HLSM* ii, 62–68);
- (6) *clagh* ‘stone’ (G. *cloch*, *clach*) with /a/ (northern pronunciation), v. /o/ in *clogh*, *clough* ‘stone’ (southern) (Rhÿs 1894: 161; *HLSM* ii, 80);
- (21) *lhisagh* ‘should’ (G. *dleasadh*), with variation in the stressed vowel and /s/ v. /ʃ/ (see discussion below §4.1);
- standard /e/ v. variant /a/ < G. *ea* in (32) *shenn* ‘old’ (G. *sean*) (southern), variant *shian* (northern) (*HLSM* ii, 398), and (33) *smessey* ‘worse’ (G. *is measa*), variant *massey*;
- standard /a/ v. variant /e/ < G. *ea* in (23) *mastey* ‘among’ (G. *i measc*), variant *meskey*;
- (23) *mastey* ‘among’ (G. *i measc*) with /st/, more conservative *maskey*, *meskey* with /sk/;

- **(31) *shassoo*** ‘stand’ (G. *seasamh*) with initial /ʃ/ v. *sassoo* with /s/, a back-formation from neutral lenited /h/ (Rhys 1894: 75).

3.8. *Compromise spellings*

In certain items, phonologically ambiguous spellings appear to have been favoured in order to bridge different by-forms:

- We have already mentioned **(2) *ayn, ayns*** (G. *ann*) in this regard as bridging dialectal variants with /o(:)/ and /u(:)/.
- Likewise, the very consistent use of <eo> in **(30) *seose*** ‘up’ (G. *suas*) may be intended to bridge by-forms in /iə/, /uə/ and /o:/, reflecting fronted and back reflexes of G. *ua* and a variant with *ó* (HLSM ii, 389; Lewin 2020: 224).
- **(18) *hene*** ‘self’ (G. *féin*) has /i:/ in attested Late Manx (HLSM ii, 220) (cf. SGc *fhìn*), clearly indicated by *heen* (Thomas Cubbon, *Paradise Lost*) and is found already in Phillips as *hiyn*; however, the older form with /e:/ is indicated by *heyn* (Phillips), *hein* (*Paradise Lost*, William Crebbin). The spelling *hene* exploits the layers of origin and ambiguity of the Manx orthography since it is interpretable under the earlier English and latinate value as /e:/ (cf. *feme* ‘need’ /fe:m/ G. *feidhm*, SGc *feum*) or under the Late Modern English sound-symbol correspondence <e_e> = /i:/.
- The conditional forms of the substantive verb **(34) *veagh, veign*** (G. *do bhiadh, do bheinn*) similarly have spellings capable of bridging by-forms reflecting the historical conditional *do bhiadh*, past subjunctive *do bheadh* (cf. ModIr. *bheadh*), and perhaps past habitual *do bhíodh* (cf. HLSM ii, 471; Broderick 2011), whereas the manuscript spellings *veeagh, vieagh, viagh* more specifically indicates a realization with /iə/; similarly *vagh* must be interpreted with /a/ (*bheadh*) or perhaps /e(:)/.

It was presumably desirable that the orthography of the printed Prayer Book and Bible should be acceptable and minimally confusing to clergy and laity across the island, hence there may have been an impetus to adopt spellings inclusive of differing pronunciations at the expense of some phonological transparency (Lewin 2020: 223–4; 2022: 51). The manuscript sermons, on the other hand, were primarily for the writer’s own personal use, rendering such concerns less relevant. Even so, the incipient standard forms are favoured in many instances. It is likely the ambiguity of these spellings would have caused little difficulty — bearing in mind that practically everyone producing or using these texts was a native or near-native speaker who knew how to pronounce the language — and indeed, such ambiguity may have been less troublesome than specifying a dialectal or idiolectal pronunciation unfamiliar to the individual reader.

4. LINGUISTIC VARIATION AND CHANGE

4.1. Variant forms, dialect and idiolect

It is clear from non-standard writing as well as recorded speech from Late Manx speakers that there was considerably more variation in word forms than is revealed in canonical printed texts. Given the degree of microdialectal variation between settlements and even households in Gaelic-speaking areas studied in recent decades (e.g. Ó Curnáin 1997, 2007; Ó Direáin 2015), it would be unsurprising if a similar degree of variation existed in eighteenth-century Man. While we cannot recover details of the spoken language with the degree of detail possible with access to living speakers and contemporary methodologies — Labov’s (1972, 1994) ‘bad-data problem’ — a good deal can nonetheless be gleaned from the orthographic and other linguistic variation in the manuscript corpus. Frequently, such variation can be traced to by-forms of long standing in the wider Gaelic speech area and literary tradition.

A useful example is the case of the defective verb spelled *lhisagh*, 1sg *lhisin*, in the standard orthography, which is the usual means of expressing ‘should, ought to’ in Manx (item (21) in Table 2). This is a conditional form of the verb *dlighidh*, originally ‘to deserve, merit’, used since Middle Irish in the sense ‘ought’ (*eDIL* s.v. *dligid*, III), a remodelling of an earlier passive construction (*dleaghar damh*). It lacks other tense or non-finite forms in Manx, although *lhiastyn* exists as a verbal noun ‘to owe’. At least six variant forms of *lhisagh* appear to be attested in seventeenth- and eighteenth-century orthographic forms, with variation in the stressed vowel between /i/, /e/, /a/ and /o/, and between /s/ and /ʃ/ for the medial consonant (Table 4):

Table 4. Forms of *lhisagh* in pre-1772 Manx texts

ʃes-	lessagh
ʃef-	leshagh
ʃas-	liassagh, liasagh
ʃis-	lhisagh, lhyssagh, lhissagh
ʃif-	lissiagh, lishagh, lhyshagh
ʃos-	liosagh

The /ʃef-/ and /ʃas-/ forms correspond directly to two forms *do dleisinn* and *do dleasaind* prescribed in *IGT* III, §35 (Bergin 1949–50: 188). On the currently available evidence, the <e> forms are restricted to the Phillips Prayer Book (c. 1610), which is unsurprising given that G. *ea* gives /a/ in most environments in the later language (Lewin 2020: 110–24), although there is a spoken form [l'ɛðq̣x] from the native speaker Thomas Christian (*HLSM* ii, 275). However, this should possibly be analysed as a particularly lax [ɪ] = /i/. The vowel /i/ may have spread from other tenses with *dligh-* forms, and similarly the /o/ form may represent *dleagh-*, if it is not an irregular development from /a/ (or from analogy with another word, perhaps *fod* ‘can’ G. *féad*). Other than the possible /e/ in Thomas Christian’s form, all the attested spoken forms from Late Manx

represent /'lʲisax/ (*HLSM* ii, 275; Broderick 2019: 56). It is quite likely then, that the standard spelling *lhisagh* represents the form which was already the most widespread in the mid-eighteenth century and was chosen on this basis, although conversely the influence of literacy in the standard orthography on spreading this form cannot be ruled out.

Some of the variant forms constitute clearly defined dialect shibboleths in Late Manx between broad northern and southern varieties, such as *clagh* 'stone' (G. *cloch*, *clach*), northern /a/, southern /o/ (*clogh*, *cloagh*); and *shenn* 'old' (G. *sean*), southern /e/, northern /a/ (*shian*, *shan*) (Rhys 1894: 161; *HLSM* ii, 80, 398). Presumably the usages of individual writers reflect to some extent their own geographic origin; for example, Philip Moore's use of the spelling *cloagh* accords with his southern origins in Douglas.²⁴ Nevertheless, such evidence should be treated with caution: while a form at variance with the standard may be taken as positive evidence of its existence in the writer's idiolect, incipient standardization means that use of the standard form is not necessarily evidence that this was the predominant spoken usage of the writer or his district. Moreover, the clergy may be less than ideal witnesses to local usage, given their relative mobility during their careers (they were liable to be appointed to whatever parish was vacant, and promoted to better livings), and in some cases, perhaps, suboptimal linguistic competence (see below §5.3).

It must also be borne in mind that the relatively clear-cut isoglosses between northern and southern forms identified in the speech of the last native speakers (*HLSM* ii, 160–6) may in part reflect the fact that, by their generation, Manx had largely retreated to certain rural districts of the south-west and the north. We have considerably less data from central and eastern parts of the island where language shift appears to have occurred somewhat earlier. Rhys (1894: 15), whose geographic coverage is more comprehensive (Lewin 2019a; Broderick 2019; 2021), provides some evidence that the central eastern parish of Kirk Braddan was a transitional zone, exhibiting the northern diphthongal realization of *doo* 'black' /dəu/ (G. *dubh*), but southern monophthongal *ooh* 'egg' /u:/ (G. *ugh*). It is interesting to note that Philip Moore's usage, as a native of Braddan, appears to conform to this mixed pattern; he has *ska dow* '[black] shadow' (standard *scadoo*, G. *scáth dubh*) (MS 05729/2, p. 6) with apparent representation of the northern diphthong, alongside typically southern /o/ in *clough* (standard *clagh*, G. *cloch*) and /e/ in *shen* 'old' (standard *shenn*, G. *sean*).

Similarly, the variant of *shassoo* 'stand' (G. *seasamh*) (item (31) in Table 2) with initial /s-/ represented by the frequent manuscript spelling *sassoo* appears to have been in free variation with the historical form with /ʃ-/ . Rhys (Broderick 2019: 64) reports fluctuation within a single family and the language of an individual speaker, and conflicting evaluations by his informants as to whether the /s-/ variant was a northern or southern feature. The fact that the *sh-* spelling

²⁴For the traditional delineation between the north and south sides of the island, see Broderick (1999: ix).

was selected in the standard and the existence of such dialectal perceptions may indicate that the /s-/ form had attracted a negative sociolinguistic evaluation.

In some cases, the sermon manuscripts provide evidence that certain forms remained in use which the evidence of printed texts might lead us to suppose were already obsolete. For example, Phillips *gygh yn, dygh yn* ‘each, every’ (G. *gach aon*) is not found in the Classical Manx printed corpus of the eighteenth century, as far as is known, where only *dagh, gagh* (G. *gach*) and *dy chooilley* (G. *gach uile*) appear. However, attestations in the sermons (*dy chun, chun* Philip Moore, *dy cun*, NLW John Rhŷs papers A3/10) show that this form remained current for at least some speakers in the mid-eighteenth century.

On the other hand, forms largely absent from the written record but later dominant in spoken Late Manx are also attested, such as *cha nel* ‘is not’ (G. *chan fheil*) (*gha nell*, Phillips, *cha nell* NLW John Rhŷs papers A3/10), whereas *cha vel* (*cha bhfeil*) is the usual written form. In the language of the last speakers, *cha nel* is universal (HLSM i, 75; ii, 321). According to Cregeen (1835) *cha nel* ‘in colloquial talk, is often the negative answer to the interrogative *vel*’, while ‘[*cha*] *vel* is always used in sacred or solemn discourse’, but Rhŷs (1894: 160–1) records that *cha vel* was still in colloquial use in the south of the island, alongside *cha nel*. The available evidence is consistent with a gradual diffusion of the *n*- form across the Manx speech area during the attested period, as well as the variant forms being a marker of register.

Sometimes an awareness of an incipient standard is shown by revisions within the manuscript texts, where divergent forms are ‘corrected’, whether by the author or a later user of the manuscript. For example, the inflected 3 pl. forms of the substantive verb *taddy* (*tá* + *-adar*) and metathesized *tar ad, tar-rad* (also past *vaddy, varrad*) which are attested into the nineteenth century (Lewin 2014: 4), are sometimes emended to the form used in the Bible and other standard texts, *t’ad* (Ir *tá siad*, SGc *tha iad*):

ga ~~tarad~~ > **t’ad**/ nish goll er nyn doshiagh keaney foast dy jean Jee cur orroo mess y ymmirkey lesh gerjagh; as ga ~~tarad~~ > **t’ad**/ cuirr ayn\\$/ jeir, dy jean ad fy yerrey buinn lesh boggey.
(Charles Crebbin 1764, MS 09608/4: 14)

‘though they now proceed crying yet that God will cause them to bear fruit with comfort; and though they sow in tears, that they will at last reap with joy’.²⁵

It is also common to find interpolated modifications to the rendering of Biblical passages to make them agree with the official printed translation as installments of this became available, although this often applies more strictly to the wording than to the orthography.

²⁵Extracts from the sermon manuscripts are transcribed diplomatically, with deletion of material shown with strikethrough and inserted text given in strokes thus \/. All alterations in these extracts are in the hand of the original scribe, although it is not always possible to tell whether they were made during original composition or at a later date. English texts provided are translations by the present authors, except where an original English text is available and included in the reference, as in the excerpts from the work of William Crebbin below.

4.2. *Morphosyntactic variation and change*

The eighteenth century was a period of considerable syntactic variation and change in Manx, especially in the verbal system (Thomson 1984: 310, 313; Lewin 2016). Inflected verb forms in the past, future and conditional tenses and the imperative and optative moods were fully interchangeable with a ‘do’-periphrasis construction involving the auxiliary *jean* (G. *déan*) and the verbal noun (e.g. *voyll mee* and *ren mee moylley* ‘I praised’, Ir *mhol mé, rinne mé mol-adh*). The latter became dominant in Late Manx, without, however, ousting the inflected forms entirely, especially in irregular verbs (*HLSM* i, 82–7, 103–4). Furthermore, in constructions involving the verbal noun there was considerable variation in direct object constructions: nominal objects can precede or follow the verbal noun (*Jee y voylley* and *moylley Jee* ‘(to) praise God’, Ir *Dia a mhol-adh, moladh Dé*),²⁶ and pronominal objects can be expressed by a possessive proclitic, a following personal pronoun, or a combination of both; preposed personal pronouns, as in Modern Irish, are also possible (*nyn moylley; moylley shin; nyn moylley shin / y voylley shin; shin y voylley* ‘praise us’, cf. Ir *ár mol-adh, sinn a mholadh*) (Lewin 2016: 181). The following examples from Philip Moore’s sermons illustrate these possibilities:

Possessive proclitic, no pronoun:

lhig doin beaghey ayns ghrai myr ta’n ostyl **dyn goyrlaghey**.
(MS 00277/4, pp. 138–9)

‘let us live in love as the apostle advises us.’

Agreeing proclitic with pronoun:

tra te **dyn vreal ad** vei chingys & \vei/ trimshey. (MS 05729/2,
p. 39)

‘when he keeps them from sickness and from sorrow.’

Generalized third person singular masculine proclitic with pronoun after verbal noun:

ta Jee **dy harey shin** dy ghellal rish, as dy herveish nyn naboo.
(MS 00277/1, p. 5)

‘God commands us to deal with, and to serve our neighbour.’

Pronoun after verbal noun:

As ta’n psalmist **ginsaghey shin**, dy lissagh shin gagh lhaa goal
padjer gys Jee. (MS 00277/2, p. 49)

‘And the psalmist teaches us, that we should each day pray to God.’

²⁶In the progressive, perfect and purposive constructions (*ta mee moylley Jee* ‘I am praising God’, *ta mee er voylley Jee* ‘I have praised God’, *dy voylley Jee* ‘to praise God’) the object can only follow the verbal noun, not precede it.

Pronoun before verbal noun:

nee shoh **shin y yinsaghey** dy ve jeh'n yn \>unn/ chree, jeh'n un
aigney, as yn un annym (MS 00277/1, p. 29)

‘this will teach us to be of the same heart, of the same mind, and
the same soul’

Unlike other aspects of variation discussed above (orthography, word forms, and to some extent morphology), syntactic variation of this kind seems to be fairly freely accepted in the standard language of the printed Bible and other works, and appears to be exploited for stylistic purposes, especially in rendering the characteristic *parallelismus membrorum* of Hebrew poetic diction (Lowth 1753: 177–96):

Shey laa nee oo gobbraghey, agh er y chiaightoo laa **gowee oo fea**.
Ayns yn niarragh, as 'syn ouyr, **nee oo fea y ghoaill**.

‘Six days thou shalt work, but on the seventh day thou shalt rest:
in earing time and in harvest thou shalt rest.’ (Exodus 34.21)

Ta'n Chiarn yn Ree, foddee'n seihll **goaill boggey** jeh: dy jarroo
foddee ny ymmodee ellanyn **boggey 'ghoaill** jeh.

‘The Lord is King, the earth may be glad thereof: yea, the multitude
of the isles may be glad thereof.’ (Psalms 97.1)

We know from the surviving Bible manuscript drafts that the editors often revised these constructions, often in a more conservative direction, and towards more concise forms (such as the inflected verb forms rather than the periphrastic constructions), perhaps with a view to reducing printing costs (Lewin 2019b; 2021). Consequently, for most of the Manx printed material, where drafts do not survive, we cannot be sure to what extent the grammar reflects the usage of the original translators. The advantage of the sermons here is that they show the writer's original usage, word count pressures were less relevant, and they allow us to track changes in the frequency of these constructions in the work of writers born over a period of almost a century and a half (John Woods, b. c. 1665 to Thomas Caine, b. 1809). While it has not yet been feasible within the scope of the current project to employ quantitative methods to investigate these topics in more detail, the potential of the corpus in this regard is clear.

5. TRANSLATION, LANGUAGE CONTACT AND BILINGUALISM

A central issue in considering Manx literature of all genres and periods is the relationship between Manx and English, both intertextually — given that most of the corpus is translated from, or at least closely follows, English models (see §2.2 above) — and in terms of the diglossic relationship between the two languages in Manx society, as well as in the bilingual linguistic competences and practices of particular social classes and individuals. The sermon corpus provides considerable insight into these questions.

5.1. Translation and transfer

Apart from certain shorter texts dating from the nineteenth century (Lewin 2014), the majority of Manx prose consists of translated material, including the Bible, the Book of Common Prayer, and various other devotional and catechetical texts. At first glance the sermons appear to buck this trend, given that most of the extant manuscripts contain monolingual Manx texts, with no explicit acknowledgement of an English original. However, there is substantial evidence that a considerable proportion of them, at least, are in fact translations or adaptations from English sources. That some Manx sermons were translations is explicitly stated or alluded to in contemporary sources. Bishop Hildesley (1761, in Bray 2005: 268) refers in relation to preaching to ‘the trouble of composing or transposing into Manx’ (see below §5.3). Three of John Clague’s Manx sermons are translations from the printed sermons of Bishop Wilson,²⁷ and Clague entitles his catalogue of his own sermon collection as ‘An Account of The Sermons I have put together & Translated from several Authors’.²⁸

Then there are the bilingual sermons with parallel English and Manx versions, which in the pre-1772 sub-corpus comprise a single sermon by Joseph Cosnahan and most of William Crebbin’s output. In some cases there are also English and Manx versions of the same sermon in separate notebooks,²⁹ which was John Clague’s practice, judging from his catalogue and extant *œuvre*. Examination of William Crebbin’s work has shown that many of his English sermons consist of (often abridged) reproductions of English printed sermons, sometimes patched together from different sources, with the parallel Manx being a translation of these composite texts.³⁰ Similarly, the anonymous sermon in the NLW John Rhŷs papers A3/10 preached at Maughold in 1752 is an abridged translation of *A dissuasive from stealing* (White 1747), by Stephen White (d. 1773), Rector of Holton in Suffolk.

Often, passages in the Manx versions read as paraphrases of more technical or abstract language in the English, a strategy obligated by the relative ‘impoverishment’ of Manx literary and technical vocabulary (Thomson 1969: 180). For the most part these paraphrases are skilful and natural enough in Cosnahan and Crebbin’s sermons, as in the latter’s discourse on the ‘perfections of God’, based on a series of four sermons by Archbishop of Canterbury John Tillotson (1630–94) (1717: 676–88, 696–701), one of the most celebrated sermon authors of the period (Gibson 2012: 3, 20):

²⁷ MSS 05727/14, 00174/14, 05727/32.

²⁸ MS 00268/47.

²⁹ Only a relatively small proportion of English sermons from the Manx clergy of our period have survived, probably reflecting the greater value placed on the Manx compositions or translations both in their original context and by later antiquarian collectors.

³⁰ We are grateful to Professor Max W. Wheeler for bringing this to our attention and identifying several of the sources for William Crebbin’s sermons.

The goodness of God is *the* foundation of our hopes & *the* fountain of our happiness, our greatest comfort & our fairest example, the joy and rejoicing of our hearts. Therefore to meditate upon it should be very pleasant & delightful to us.

The Lord is good to all: & his tender mercies are over all his works. These words are a very great argument to stir up & incite each of us to the praise of God.

In the third verse of this psalm we are told *that* great is *the* Lord, and greatly to be praised.

In the eighth & ninth verses the reason hereof is given from those properties & perfections of the divine nature which declare his goodness.

The Lord is gracious, & full of compassion; slow to anger, & of great mercy[.] The Lord is good to all: & his tender mercies are over all his works.

From which let us consider.

1. The proper notion of goodness, as it is attributed to God.
2. That this perfection belongeth to God.
3. The effects & extent of it.

Miehyss Dyee bun yn treishteil ainyn, as veih ta nan maynryss, yn ger-jaghey smoo ain, as yn sampleyr shaar dooin, e, boggey as gennallys na creechyn ain.

Shen y fa lishagh smooïnaghtyn dowin er, as dy chlashtin jeh, y ve feer vooisal as laan taitnyss dooin.

Ta'n Tchiarn mie rish ooilley: as ta eh vighynyn mneih harrish ooilley eh obbraghyn. Ta ny goayn shoh oyr feer wooar dy ghriennagh shin seoyse as dy chur er dagh unaan jin Djee y voylley.

Sy trass verse jeh'n psaum shoh, ta er na insh dooin dy vel yn Tchiarn mooar, as moylley mooar dy ve er na chur da'h.

Sy hoghtoo as yn neighoo verse ta oyr son shoh er na chur veih graysyn as ard phooaryn yn dooghyss flaunyssagh ta soilshagh magh eh viehyss.

Ta'n Tchiarn graysoil, as laan tchimmey, moail gys chorree, as jeh mighyn mooar. Ta'n Tchiarn mieh rish ooilley: as ta eh vighynyn mneih harrish ooilley eh obbraghyn.

Veih na goayn shoh lig dooin smooïnaghtyn dy dowin er.

1. Cre smoo ta dy ve toiggyt liorish miehyss, myr te ayns Djee.
2. Dy vel yn ard ghrayse shoh bentyn da Djee.
3. Na obbraghyn ta liorish as yn moads as roshtyn ec e.

(William Crebbin 1753, MS 05724/4, pp. 2–4)

In this extract, the theological terms ‘properties’ and ‘perfections’ are translated as the somewhat vaguer, but less abstract *graysyn* ‘graces’ and *ard phooaryn* ‘high powers’ respectively; similarly ‘effects & extent of it’ is expanded to *na obbraghyn ta liorish as yn moads as roshtyn ec e*, lit. ‘the works that are by it and the size and reach of it’.

Crebbin closely follows the Tillotson source text,³¹ except that certain more intellectually demanding passages are omitted; notably he omits the fourth of Tillotson's sub-topics, namely, to '[a]nswer some Objections which may seem to contradict and bring in question the Goodness of God', and the entirety of Sermon CXLV which is dedicated to this point. Knotty and potentially controversial questions of theodicy were possibly considered to risk going over the heads of the parishioners of Jurby, or awakening unedifying questions and doubts.³² Similarly, the anonymous translation of White (1747) includes the original's treatment of the more straightforward worldly and spiritual consequences of stealing, but omits, for example, a lengthy counterfactual discussion of 'the natural Tendency of Theft [...] to subvert all Government; dissolve the Bands of Society; and turn the good Order of the World, into a lawless State of Rapine and Violence' (White 1747: 10). John Clague's manuscript translation, MS 05727/14, of one of Bishop Wilson's published English sermons is likewise abridged in comparison with the full translation by Henry Corlett printed in Wilson (1783).³³ In all of these cases, some of the more intellectual or abstract digressions or flourishes in the original are omitted, but the included

³¹The corresponding passage in Tillotson (1717: 677) is as follows, with the sections reproduced more or less exactly by William Crebbin in bold:

The Goodness of God is the cause, and the continuance of our Beings, **the Foundation of our Hopes, and the Fountain of our Happiness; our greatest Comfort, and our fairest Example,** the chief Object of our love and praise, and admiration, **the joy and rejoicing of our Hearts; and therefore the Meditation and Discourse of it must needs be pleasant and delightful to us;** the great difficulty will be to confine our selves upon so copious an Argument, and to set Bounds to that which is of so vast an extent, **the Lord is good in all, and his tender mercies are over all his Works.**

Which Words are an Argument, which the Divine Psalmist useth, **to stir up** himself and others **to the praise of God:** At the 3. v. he tells us, **that the Lord is great, and great, and greatly to be praised;** and he gives the reason of this, v. 8, and 9. **from those Properties and Perfections of the Divine Nature, which declare his Goodness, the Lord is gracious, and full of compassion, slow to anger, and of great mercy; the Lord is good to all, and his tender mercies of over all his works;** where you have the Goodness of God declared, together with the amplitude and extent of it, in respect of the Objects of it; *the Lord is good to all.*

In the handling of this Argument, I shall do these *four* Things.

First, Consider what is **the proper Notion of Goodness, as it is attributed to God.**

Secondly, Shew **that this Perfection belongs to God.**

Thirdly, Consider **the Effects and the Extent of it.**

Fourthly, Answer some Objections which may seem to contradict and bring in question the *Goodness of God.*

³²This kind of simplification for particular audiences was not restricted to the Manx context; indeed, Tillotson himself 'often preached an erudite sermon to them on a Sunday and then, stripped of its learning, Latin, and legal language, preached it to a parish later in the week' (Gibson 2012: 13).

³³Clague preached his manuscript translation at Rushen, 12 January 1783. The original English sermon is Wilson (1782b), sermon 57, 'On the due observance of the Sabbath'. The printed Manx translation of this appeared the same year as Wilson (1783), sermon 17, 'Yn Aght cooie dy reayl yn Doonaght'. Possibly Clague preached his manuscript version only once because it was then superseded by the printed version. Clague's enthusiasm for this material is revealed in a recently discovered letter (Tuck 2021: 104) (MS 15116) in which he writes that the late Bishop Wilson's 'Discourses ... are, in my weak opinion inimitable — I have already begun to translate them into Manks verbatim, & the easiest I ever met with — they tell in Manks equal to the English, I might also

passages are generally translated as closely as the linguistic resources of Manx allow.

That the Manx clergy had access to extensive collections of printed sermons, and circulated these sermons among themselves, is demonstrated by Philip Moore's catalogue of his personal library (MS 00178A; cf. Ó Muircheartaigh 2020), which includes notes of loans to his colleagues. The provision of libraries for the use of clergy and students for the ministry had been a diocesan preoccupation since at least the mid-seventeenth century (Hoy 2015: 170, 187). As well as staple sermon collections such as those of Tillotson, William Crebbin's use of Burkitt's (1709) Biblical commentary as well as Beveridge's (1728) *Private thoughts upon a Christian life*,³⁴ demonstrate that other genres of devotional texts could equally be adapted for the Manx pulpit.

5.2. *Transfer features*

Even where a source text has not so far been identified, there is often internal linguistic evidence strongly suggesting that the Manx is a translation of the English and not *vice versa*. Given the cultural and functional dominance of English as the language of literacy and intellectual pursuits, the opposite direction is in any case hardly likely. On occasion we find somewhat more clumsy or slavish renderings of English phrasings, as in the nominal constructions with possessives highlighted in the following passage from Joseph Cosnahan's bilingual sermon, where verbal constructions would be more in accord with usual Manx idiom:

This is much the case of us all at **our baptism, or first entrance** into covenant with God:— By virtue of that divine institution we are cleansed & purified from the stain & guilt of original sin & tho' born in sin & the children of wrath, we are hereby made the children of grace, i.e. we are taken into *favour* with God, and are his children by adoption: so that by a constant application to God for his timely aid & assistance, we are also put into a capacity of presuming our innocence;— but if we do not duly consider the blessings and privileges of our adopted state, the continued help of our great Creator in all our dangers & temptations **upon our own clearly seeking for it**, we are also in a way of falling from our former happy state, & thus likewise lyable to the justice of God, for breaking his holy Law.

Ta shoh laan yn chooish ain ooilley eg **nyn mashteh, ny'n ched entreil ain** ayns conaant marish Jee: liorish bree yn ordaghey flaunyssagh shen ta shin er nyn ghlenney vei loght peccah nyn ged ayraghyn as gy dy vel shin ruggit ayns peccah as nyn gloan dy chorree, ta shin liorish shoh jeant nyn gloan dy ghraase, i.e. ta

presume to say, better — they are friendly & fatherly admonitions calculated to give information to every capacity & I am determined they shall not be lost on this Parish'.

³⁴For example, material from these two volumes as well as Tillotson's (1717) sermon 135 form the basis of MS 05727/3, first preached in 1764.

shin goit stiagh ayns foar Yee, as jeant e chloan liorish daltanys: myr shen liorish jiaghyn dy kinjagh gys Jee son e chooney as e vannaght femoil, ta shin myrgeddin currit ayns aght dy rheal shin hene gyn loght; agh managh vel shin jan'noo soiagh myr lishagh shin jeh bannaghtyn e state dy ghaltynys ain, jeh cooney kinjagh nyn Fer-croo smoo mie as niartal ayns ooilley ny gauenyn as ny miolaghyn ain, **er nyn ghearey breeoil as jean hucchey**, ta shin myrgeddin ayns raad dy huitchym veih'n ched state mainrey ain, as myr shen nheesht cur shin hene fo corree Yee, son brishey e leih-yn casherick. (Joseph Cosnahan 1763, MS 00147/11, pp. 270–1)

Other rather close renderings of English phraseology in this passage include *ta shoh laan yn chooish ain ooilley* ‘This is much the case of us all’, *currit ayns aght* ‘put into a capacity’, *ayns raad dy huitchym* ‘in a way of falling’. This is not unexpected, and a similar phenomenon is found in Irish sermons of the period, translated from English (Ó Súilleabháin 1965: 21). On the other hand, there are some freer paraphrases, such as *cur shin hene fo corree Yee*, lit. ‘put ourselves under the wrath of God’, translating ‘lyable to the justice of God’; and a verbal rendering *jiaghyn dy kinjagh gys Jee*, lit. ‘looking constantly to God’, is preferred for the original nominal construction ‘a constant application to God’.

In cases where only a Manx text is extant, too, there are often clear cases of phraseology based on English. Thomas Quayle, for example, has deverbal nominal constructions similar to those discussed above:

Cre erbee ny lhestallin od mad y yannoo, ta **nyn cooleeney niau-cairalagh jeh curmyn nyn gredjue**, as nyn claghtaghin peccoil, rogh flain soiljaghey, ad shoh, ny nyn leid, dy ve nyn smooiinaghtin. (Thomas Quayle 1760, MS 05903/2, pp. 3–4)

‘Whatever excuses we may make, our careless fulfilling of the duties of our faith, and our sinful habits, too plainly show these, or such as these, to be our thoughts.’

Natural idiom here would probably prefer a verbal construction, e.g. **tra ta shin cooilleeney curmyn nyn gredjue dy kiaralagh* ‘when we fulfil the duties of our faith carefully’, or perhaps **shin dy chooilleeney...* ‘(for) us to fulfil...’.

The above example also illustrates the use of the preposition *jeh* ‘of’ in place of the genitive, which is fairly widely attested in the sermon corpus:

vaddyr geagnyt dy ghoal rish dy ry shoh **va'n er casherick jeh Jee**. (Philip Moore 1723, MS 05729/2, p. 32) (cf. *fer casherick Yee*, Mark 1. 24, Luke 4. 34)

‘They were forced to admit that this was the holy one of God.’

kymmyrk na fasthee veih'n **kerraghey shickyr jeh Jee jummoosyt!** (Henry Corlett 1768, MS 00174/5)

‘refuge or shelter from the sure punishment of an angered God!’

Shaw **yn jerrey, jah leid shen dy slie**, shaw yn \jerrey/ shine daue buin, tra hig ny obbraghyn ock gyss soilshey. (anon. 1752, NLW John Rhŷs collection A3/10, p. 21)

‘This is the end of such people, this is the end they must reap, when their works come to light’

Note that at least in the last example the *jeh* construction is not directly prompted by the source text:

These are the known Fruits, which all who follow such wicked Courses, may expect to reap, whenever their Crimes are discovered. (White 1747: 17)

Overall, the expected genitive construction remains predominant at all periods, and many texts rarely if ever employ the *jeh* construction, so it is quite clear that it was not integrated as a usual part of the grammar of vernacular Manx. Another such construction occasionally attested is the use of the interrogative form of the verb in ‘if’-clauses in apparent imitation of the conditional inversion construction in English:

Cre’n soarts dy ghellal oddy’ns (dy cairal) jercal er y hon, **bea’yn** ayns condition \ny stayd/ yn dooiney shoh? (Philip Moore 1723, MS 00277/1, p. 11)

‘what sort of treatment could I (justly) hope for, were I in the condition or state of this man?’

beagh shin dy firrinagh er ny hickraghey, dy vel peccey whetal da, jannoo shine douaiagh ayns e hilley, as gin arriss ve goit er y hon, niaufit son niau as yn vainriss dybraghfarraghtin: **jennagh** shin consideral, mar’\nn/agh jen mad tregail nyn claghtaghin peccoil, agh cur le’n ad maren gys yn naiey; as dy jen, cre erbee ny yeareenin, nee mad geddin baase aindoo, freal shedjaght rooin ayns seihl ny spirridin: **jinnagh** shin, ta mee gra, dy dowin smooingaghtin er ny reddin shoh, as consideral ad lesh craweeaght erbee; te niaufossible, agh dy beagh shin trimsagh son nyn peccahin, ta fegooish arriss ny ynrican oirin jeh nyn toyrtmow shicker as dybraghfarraghtin. (Thomas Quayle 1760, MS 05903/2, pp. 15–16)

‘were we truly convinced that sin is abominable to him [God], makes us hateful in his sight, and without being repented of, unfit for heaven and everlasting happiness: were we to consider, if we do not forsake our sinful habits, but take them with us to the grave; and that, whatever desires we die in will accompany us in the world of the spirits: were we, I say, to think deeply on these things, and consider them with any godliness, it is impossible but

that we should be sorrowful for our sins, which without repentance are the sole causes of our certain and eternal damnation.’

The normal construction here would be *dy beign* (Ir *dá mbeinn*) or possibly *my veign* (with generalization of *má*). It is worth noting that in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, conditional inversion was possible with a wider range of auxiliaries than in present-day English (Denison 1998: 298–9), hence Quayle’s *jennagh shin consideral* would correspond word-for-word to eighteenth-century English ‘did we consider’, i.e. ‘if we considered’.

A further example of apparent transfer of an English construction is the use of the interrogative *quoi* ‘who’ (SGc *cò e*) as a relative pronoun:

Lhig dooin tastey y ghoal jeh Lot **quoi** va cummal ayns ardvalley moar, as niaughlen (William Mylrea 1752, MS 05722/19, p. 9)

‘Let us take notice of Lot who dwelt in a great and unclean city’

dy vel Gee myghynagh ain dy yellal rish, **quoi** nagh vel shirrey baase peccagh, agh **quoi** nee goal shin stiagh ayns e oar’ (Thomas Quayle 1760, MS 05903/2, p. 3)

‘that we have a merciful God to deal with, who does not seek a sinner’s death, but who will take us into his favour’

Agh eshyn nagh vel ny er-chlashtyn ny lommarkyn, agh myrgeddyn jeantagh jeh’n Ghoo, teh solyt rhish unaane ta jeaghyn aunz leigh firrinagh eh remyss, as tannaghtyn aun; — **quoi**, myr nagh vel eh ny er-chlashtyn jarroodagh, agh jeantagh jeh’n Ghoo, bee eh bannyt aunz eh obbyr. (Henry Corlett 1761, MS 00269/6, pp. 114–15)

‘But he who is not only a hearer, but also a doer of the Word, [he] is likened to one who looks into the perfect law of liberty, and continues therein; who, as he is not a forgetful hearer, but a doer of the Word, [he] will be blessed in his work.’ [paraphrase of James 1. 23–25]

Like the other constructions considered above, this use of *quoi* is sporadic in the corpus. It is principally found in sentences with complex syntax where the relative verb phrase is some distance from its antecedent, or from the position where the relative pronoun would appear in English; moreover, it is generally restricted to human or divine antecedents, as with English *who* and the reference of interrogative *quoi*. However, in NLW Sir John Rhŷs papers A3/10 (1752), the use of *quoi* is much more frequent, and sometimes has inanimate reference, thus equating to English ‘which’:³⁵

³⁵This text also has *cre* (*caidé*) ‘what’ as a relative ‘(that) which’, for usual *ny* (SGc *na*), e.g. *cha nee woish shen cre tamish er raa* ‘not from that which I have said’ (p. 31), *Ta shiu er clashtin cre tamey er gra riu* ‘You have heard what I have said to you’ (p. 35). Overall, this text is particularly divergent from the norm in respect of orthography (see Chart 2), lexical choice (strikingly free use of loanwords), and grammatical features. It is hoped to edit this text fully in the future, as a particularly intriguing example of the phenomena under discussion here.

Tra honnick oo marlagh ren oo consentall, huggey. **Loirish quoi** tamey smooïnaghtyn ta tuiggitt, dy cooney ny dy keilthin marlagh; **quoi** ta raw vennick jant, liorish goal as freil, ny keiltchin yn cooid gedditt eggey. (anon. 1752, NLW Sir John Rhŷs papers A3/10, pp. 10–11)

‘When thou sawest a thief, thou consentedst unto him [Psalm 50. 18]. By which I think is meant, to aid or to conceal a thief; which is too often done, by taking and keeping, or hiding his stolen goods.’³⁶

The use of *quoi* as a relative pronoun appears sporadically in printed texts (Lewin 2011: 187), including very occasional instances in the Bible, and is also fairly widespread in the carvals.³⁷ In general, however, it appears not to have been a natural part of the vernacular language: it is not attested in Late Manx speech (*HLSM* ii, 358–9), nor in the original nineteenth-century prose texts edited in Lewin (2014). There are cases of editorial removal of relative *quoi* in the extant manuscript drafts of parts of the Bible translation (MS 05690C; Lewin 2019b), suggesting it was regarded as sub-standard:

Jee, **qui** ta raunsaghey nyn greeaghyn > Jee, ta trial nyn greeaghyn
 ‘God, which trieth our hearts’ (MS 1 Thessalonians 2.4)

This is true also of the possessive construction with *jeh*:

’n sallan **jeh** connaant dy Yee > sollan conaant dy Yee
 ‘the salt of the covenant of thy God’ (MS Leviticus 2.13)

5.3. Bilingualism, diglossia and language shift

As well as features of what might be termed ‘translationese’ — that is, obviously unidiomatic renderings of English phraseology — the language of the sermons sometimes displays more subtle indications of the diglossic sociolinguistic situation of Manx and English, in the form of linguistic features which may reflect incomplete control of the grammar on the part of the authors. For example, Philip Moore frequently has idiosyncratic forms of the substantive verb which have not been noticed in other authors or texts, namely the use of the relative form *vees* (G. *bhias*) in absolute position where the independent form *bee* (G. *bídh*, *biaidh*) would be expected, and use of the unlenited dependent conditional form *beagh* (G. *go mbiadh*)³⁸ rather than the expected independent form *veagh* (G. *do bhiadh*):

³⁶Original English source text (White 1747: 7): ‘by which, I suppose, is meant the aiding or abetting a thief: which is too frequently done by receiving and concealing his stolen goods.’

³⁷We are grateful to Professor Max W. Wheeler for discussion on this point.

³⁸Nasalization or eclipsis in dependent verb forms in Manx is restricted to unvoiced stops, /f/, and initial vowels, while voiced stops remain unmutated (Thomson 1984: 314).

Veis dy chooilley ghooiney eist strieu dy ve dooie, as dy yannoo dy mie, as **veis** eh myr \carrey &/ fer-choyrlagh da eh heshey Creestee \& y naboo/. (Philip Moore 1723, MS 00277/1, p. 8)

‘Every man will then strive to be kind, and to do well, and he will be as a friend and advisor to his fellow Christian and his neighbour.’

As myr-shen, liorish tastey eh coart da’n sarey \bantee/ shoh **beagh** yn theil vee-chrauee \shoh/, (ta nish, myr dy beagh eh, roit harish lesh tranlaase, mee-chairys, as dy chooilley olkys) **beagh** shiu (ta my graa) chooish shen bannit lesh shee, lesh graiah as giastalys, as dy chooilley graase flaunyssagh. (ibid., p. 8)

‘And so, by attending to this blessed commandment this ungodly world (which is now, as it were, overrun with oppression, injustice, and every evil) [would be] you would be (I say) so much blessed with peace, with love and charity, and every heavenly grace.’

The use of *beagh* is sometimes emended in Moore’s hand to expected *veagh*, showing a conscious awareness of the standard form, at least at a later stage of revision. The opposite development, *cha veagh* with lenition after the negative particle rather than usual *cha beagh*, is found in a sermon by Henry Corlett (1759, MS 00174/1, pp. 13, 17) and the anonymous sermon dated 1752 (NLW Rhys A3/10, p. 8). This is perhaps more likely to be a genuine by-form, given variable mutation after *cha* in Ulster Irish (*cha bheadh*, *cha mbeadh*) and Scottish Gaelic (*cha sheas*, *cha seas*) and sometimes in adjectives in Manx after *cha* as negative copula (e.g. *cha vooar*, *cha mooar*, Ir *cha m(h)ór*); there are also cases of *dy veagh* for usual *dy beagh* from several sermon authors, which could have spread from the *cha* forms. Moore’s use of unlenited *beagh* is more striking however; while inconsistent application of productive mutations is not unusual in the corpus as a whole (Thomson 1969), delenition of permanently lenited irregular forms is more exceptional, and seems more likely to reflect a lack of control of morphosyntactic categories on Moore’s part.

As for Moore’s use of the future relative of the substantive verb, in the wider Manx corpus there are cases of substitution of relative *-ys* (G. *-as*) for *-ee* (G. *-idh*) in the future independent (as in certain Scottish Gaelic dialects (Watson 1994: 688–9)), including in the final printed Bible, although generally with non-lenited initial consonant (e.g. *Tayrnys e voyrn dooinney sheese dy injil* ‘A man’s pride shall bring him low’ Proverbs 29.23, for independent *tayrne*), and this development has not been otherwise noticed in the substantive verb. Beyond the verbal system, Moore frequently has non-lenition with feminine nouns, a feature associated in Late Manx with semi-speakers from the period of language obsolescence, as well as speakers from higher socioeconomic class backgrounds whose dominant language was English (Lewin 2017: 191–3; 2019: 79–82). Less frequently, Moore displays hypercorrect lenition, as in *yn theil vee-chrauee* (with expected masculine *seihll* ‘world’, G. *saoghal*) in the second example cited above.

It would not be surprising if some, at least, of the clergy who were writing Manx texts in the eighteenth century were English-dominant bilinguals with some degree of incomplete control of more opaque, late-acquired components of Manx grammar. Such subtle features of incomplete acquisition are well documented in contemporary situations of minority bilingualism, including heritage speakers of immigrant languages (e.g. Montrul 2008; 2015; Unsworth et al. 2014) and cases of ongoing language shift, such as contemporary Irish (Ó Curnáin 2012; Nic Fhlannchadha and Hickey 2017). In the case of Philip Moore, it is probably relevant that he was a member of a fairly wealthy, property-owning family (Crowe 1985) based in Douglas, the commercial capital of the island. Already several decades before Moore's birth, it had been observed that the Manx elite spoke English well, indeed indistinguishably from native Englishmen:

For their gentry are truly gentle, courteous, affable, and more willingly will discourse with you in the English than in their own language, whom I observed even of all them, not only to speak true English, but to pronounce so naturally as *that* I cou'd not observe any different tone in their pronunciation of our English as is comonly noted, both in the Irish, Scots, and Welsh, and in all strangers, neither any of these to be distinguished from our English, either by the countenance, carriage, apparel, diet, or housekeeping, but in most imitating, as Speed well observed, *the* Lancashire gentry. (Blundell 1648–56, in Harrison 1876: 55)

Notwithstanding their increasing preference for English, the Manx-born gentry from whom Moore and many of the other clergy were drawn were generally able to speak Manx in the eighteenth century, and regarded it as *tchengey ny marey* 'the mother tongue' (Philip Moore 1768, in Butler 1799: 568–9) or 'their native tongue' (Bishop Hildesley 1761, in Bray 2005: 268; see below). In many cases, however, English was likely to have been their stronger language, whether in terms of order and manner of acquisition, or later socialization, education and habitual use, as Thomson (1969: 193–4) discusses:

The clergy who undertook this translation work were locally educated, it is true, but through English and in the classics, only informally and occasionally through or in Manx, and for some of them, depending on their upbringing, it must have been a second rather than a first language in terms of status if not always in terms of order of acquisition. (Thomson 1969: 193–4)

As far as is known, there are no explicit accounts providing details of the acquisition environment and type of input in the case of the bilingual gentry of Moore's time, but some later evidence from the following century hints that members of such strata may have acquired Manx primarily through interaction with lower-status, largely monolingual individuals such as servants and labourers in their own households and the extended community, for example in the

words of the clergyman J. T. Clarke (b. 1798, chaplain of St Mark's, Malew, 1827–65):

Ec jeih bleeaney dy eash va mee abyly dy loayrt dy floaill ayns
Gailck rish cotlaryn my yishig nagh rou baarl erbee oc, as roish
va mee feed blein dy eash, va ymmodee lioaryn-veggey vaarlagh
chyndaait aym dys Gailck as er nyn gloughey son ymmyd y theay.
(J. T. Clarke, *Mona's Herald* 21 February 1872)

'At ten years of age I was able to speak fluently in Manx to my
father's cottars who had no English, and before I was twenty years
old, I had translated many English pamphlets into Manx which
were printed for the use of the people.'

Clarke was later known for 'administer[ing] that consolation to the sick and dying, the poor and bereaved, in their own native tongue — a language with which they were most conversant, and in which Mr. Clarke excelled both colloquially and grammatically above all his contemporaries of the present day' (Harrison 1878: 77); we may compare Philip Moore's reputation among his contemporaries as an expert in Manx, discussed below. Like Moore, however, Clarke's grammatical usage shows morphological idiosyncrasies with regard to lenition in noun phrases,³⁹ which may reflect a lack of fully native-like intuitions owing to suboptimal acquisition conditions, although Clarke justifies these features with explicit metalinguistic beliefs (Wheeler 2020b: ii; 2021c: 2; Clarke 1872).

Some of the more middle-class individuals interviewed by Sir John Rhys in the 1880s and 1890s also provide evidence of this kind of scenario. We may take the example of William Killip of Clyeen, Kirk Michael (b. 1834), a 'yeoman farmer' employing a Manx-speaking maid and with a wife whose dominant language may have been English,⁴⁰ and later noted as a founder member of the revivalist Manx Language Society (Broderick 2021: 123). Rhys described Killip as 'one of the best readers I have heard of his language' (Lewin 2019a: 79–80), but observes that he does not consistently maintain gender concord with feminine singular nouns, in contrast to the retention of this feature among individuals of more humble background such as the fishermen of the hamlet of Bradda in Rushen (cf. Broderick 2021: 141). In addition to English-dominant native bilinguals, there are also explicit cases in the nineteenth century of clergy learning Manx as a second language for the purposes of ministering effectively to their congregations (Lewin 2014: 18).

Returning to the case of Philip Moore, an explicit comment in one of his letters may be understood as an acknowledgement of weakness in his ability in Manx:

³⁹ As exemplified by unexpected lenition in the plural adjectives (*lioaryn-veggey vaarlagh* lit. 'small English-language books') in the extract above.

⁴⁰ She is recorded as an English speaker in the 1901 census, but as bilingual in 1911 (Broderick 2021: 123).

I do not pretend to a profundity of skill in our language, being only a plain Manks-man. My brethren, some of them, could persuade me to think otherwise,—*at non sum credulus illis* [‘but I give no credence to them’];⁴¹ They know not my imperfections half so well as I do myself. I feel them; they don’t. (Philip Moore > Bishop Hildesley, 21 January 1764, Butler 1799: 467)

This passage can be read as a general expression of modesty or insecurity,⁴² but it may also be consistent with the profile of an unbalanced bilingual speaker who is aware of some deficit in linguistic production, but is nonetheless generally able to pass as a fully fluent native speaker in the perception of others (‘I feel them; they don’t’). The morphological and morphophonemic features which mark out Moore’s language as divergent may not have been particularly salient to his contemporaries; compare Dorian’s (1977: 30) remarks on the difficulty of identifying semi-speakers on the basis of community perceptions:

Some [kinds of changes] may be more “visible” than others; that is, they become linguistic *stereotypes* (Labov 1970: 73). Analogical leveling proved to be a stereotypical form of reduction in East Sutherland Gaelic, whereas morphophonemic confusions, which are rife in the speech of semi-speakers, seem to produce no comment. (Dorian 1977: 30, original emphasis)

That some of the junior clergy had difficulty ‘composing or transposing into Manx’ is explicitly recognized by Bishop Hildesley in a letter to the clergy in 1761. Hildesley nonetheless insists in the strongest terms that it is their responsibility to their Manx-speaking congregations to overcome this and provide sermons in the native tongue:⁴³

I am very sensible that the trouble of composing or transposing into Manx is rather more than the furnishing English discourses. For doubtless [it is] such to the young clerks, lately called out from a town school education, who find it difficult to recover their native tongue, yet I shall hope that from the motive of charity to the souls of the greater number committed to their charge, the reasonableness of the thing itself, the flagrant absurdity of the reverse,

⁴¹ A reference to Virgil, *Eclogue* 9.

⁴² According to Gelling (1998: 37), Moore possessed ‘a sensitive and emotional temperament. His introspection was morbid, he continually blamed himself for real or imaginary faults, and was always afraid of incurring criticism or anger’.

⁴³ In this sense, the Church in the Isle of Man can be said to be broadly in line with the Scottish case where ‘at all levels within the Church of Scotland some importance was attached to providing a Gaelic ministry for Gaelic speakers’ (Durkacz 1981: 154). Similarly, preaching in the vernacular was well-established in the Welsh dioceses of the Church of England in our period (Morgan-Guy 2012: 184), even if exhortations similar to Hildesley’s were sometimes necessary; the founder of the Welsh Circulating Schools, Griffith Jones (Rector of Llanddowror, Carmarthenshire 1716–61), expressed the view that ‘English sermons to Welsh congregations are neither less absurd, nor more edifying than Welsh preaching would be in the centre of England, or Latin service in the Church of Rome’ (Williams 1938: 45).

and the express appointment of the ordinary [the bishop], all taken and considered together will readily determine them to act in this point, as shall be most consonant to their duty, be the trouble of their strict regard to it what it will. (Hildesley 1761, in Bray 2005: 268)

Hildesley thus suggests that it is the anglophone urban educational environment of the grammar schools which has led to rustiness in ‘their native tongue’; as Hamer (2004: 292) notes, ‘the towns functioned as vectors of linguistic change’ in the later eighteenth century. However, it should be borne in mind that lack of practice and rustiness is often appealed to as a rationalization for deeper-rooted acquisitional deficits in the absence of a full understanding of the dynamics of bilingualism in a context of diglossia and language shift (Lewin 2017; 2020: 85–9).

If little is known in detail about the clergy’s acquisition of spoken competence in Manx and broader patterns of bilingualism in the population, we are not much the wiser regarding the teaching and learning of literacy in Manx. Passive literacy, at least, seems to have been taught through the parochial schools and catechizing, with Bishop Wilson’s bilingual *Coyrle Sodjeh* being instituted for this purpose since its publication in 1707 (Keble 1863: 250–5; Hoy 2015: 191–2), and Hoy (2015: 192) remarks that the demand for Manx Prayer Books in 1763 suggests ‘a significant number of lay people could already read at the beginning of Hildesley’s episcopate’. As for more active writing skills, given that translation of texts was a core part of the classics curriculum in the period (Saunders 1993: 386–7), it is a reasonable supposition that any explicit training in Manx writing included translation exercises, most likely involving sermons and other devotional texts. Indeed, some of the manuscript sermons date from their writers’ early twenties or even teens, which may suggest they originated as translation or composition exercises in an educational context.⁴⁴ More generally, as previously noted, translation or paraphrase of scriptural, liturgical, catechetical and homiletic material, whether scripted or extemporary, had already been a central part of the Manx clergy’s pastoral activities for several

⁴⁴For example, the earliest date of preaching in Philip Moore’s sermons is 22 July 1722 at Ballaugh (MS 05728/1), when Moore was only sixteen years old, and a student at the Douglas grammar school; the same sermon is recorded as having been preached a further four times in different parishes the same year. Seven of Moore’s sermons are recorded as having been initially preached in the 1720s, all prior to Moore’s ordination as deacon in 1729 at the canonical age of twenty-three. Similarly, William Walker, a probable contributor to *Coyrle Sodjeh* as well as the translation of the Gospels, was appointed by Wilson to the chaplaincy of Douglas in 1700 when he was eighteen (Hoy 2015: 164), while in 1754 Henry Corlett was given a licence at the age of nineteen ‘to read the prayers and service of the Church as by law established, as also to read an Homily or some other practical or instructive book, as you shall be directed by the Vicars General of the Isle for the time being in such churches or chapels as you shall be desired by the said Vicars General’ (Moore 1901: 28). These practices, though irregular in the wider context of the Church of England, seem to have been necessitated by the poverty of the diocese and the difficulty of recruiting clergy (Moore 1893: 207). Keble (1863: 249) suggests that Wilson’s practice of taking prospective clergy under his wing for training in his own home gave him confidence to discern which individuals were worthy of such charges.

generations before the period in which extant sermon manuscripts become more plentiful (Grass 2021: 99).

Individual variation in skill and experience must also be borne in mind when considering variation in the quality of the sermons. It did not go unnoticed that particular individuals' aptitude for Manx writing and translation varied, as shown by the following comment by the mature Philip Moore in his role as general editor of the Manx Bible:

Tell Jack [John] Kelly [1750–1809, Moore's assistant], I have finished [revising the translation of] Ezekiel in 15 days, this day, Sunday, not reckoned. More than one half than ever was done before in the same time, considering the visionary nature and obscurity of the subject with the poor miserable translation furnished by the Rabbi of Rushen [Nicholas Christian, vicar of Rushen 1748–1782]. (Moore 1771)

Of course, it is not surprising that special care was taken in preparing official translations of Holy Scripture for publication, which could be expected to reach a reasonably wide readership and be held up to public scrutiny and criticism if they were found defective. In contrast, manuscript sermons were intended for more transitory and limited consumption, primarily as oral performances, in which any flaws could potentially be rectified in delivery or subsequent revision of the manuscript. Sermon composition (or compilation and translation) could be a very time-consuming process (Gibson 2012: 14), and the pressure of pastoral duties and worldly responsibilities may have left limited time to spare on perfecting sermons.

5.4. Lexical borrowing

Although Manx in general possesses a significant component of borrowed English lexis of late medieval and early modern provenance (Thomson 1991), relatively free use of unassimilated English items unattested in printed sources is a striking feature of some of the manuscript sermons, for example the following items are found in Philip Moore's sermons (Table 5), together with the more widely attested equivalents.

Some of these items replace, or complement, longer-established and more assimilated borrowings, e.g. *sober* for *sheelt* (< 'civil'), *spendeil* for *baarail* (< 'wear'), *condition* for *conaant* (< 'covenant'). Certain loanwords are widely attested in the printed texts in other senses, such as *condition* 'condition, state', while *conaant* is used in the sense 'requirement, term of agreement', also 'covenant'. *Possession* is used extensively in the Bible in the sense of taking or holding possession of land and goods, but other locutions are preferred to *possessit* to denote demonic possession.

Extensive lexical borrowing appears nonetheless to have been widely accepted with little reservation, at least in the earlier eighteenth century. As Wheeler (2020c: 7–8) notes in respect of the Manx *Paradise Lost*, in some contexts it may even have had prestigious connotations given the high status of English:

Table 5. Some English loanwords in Philip Moore's sermons.

Moore	Usual equivalent in printed texts
<i>ayns force</i> 'in force'	<i>ayns bree</i>
<i>belongal gys</i> 'belonging to'	<i>s'lesh, ta lesh, bentyn da</i>
<i>difference</i>	<i>caghlaa, lhiетtrimmys, lheamys, rheyynn</i>
<i>er condition dy</i> 'on condition that'	<i>er conaant dy</i>
<i>g'actal</i> 'acting'	<i>gymmyrkey oo hene</i> lit. 'carrying oneself'
<i>lake</i>	both <i>logh</i> and <i>lake</i> in Bible ⁴⁵
<i>niau-fit</i> 'unfit'	<i>neu-chooie</i>
<i>onesty</i> 'honesty'	<i>ynrickys</i> 'righteousness'; <i>onneragh</i> 'honest'
<i>possessit</i> 'possessed [by devil]'	<i>seaghnit lesh drogh-spyrryd</i> 'troubled with an evil spirit'; <i>va drogh-spyrryd ayn</i> 'who had an evil spirit in him'; <i>possession</i> [=holding of land] frequent in Bible
<i>sober as sheelt</i> 'sober'	<i>sheelt</i> (< <i>siobhalta</i> 'civil')
<i>spendyt</i> 'spent'	<i>baarit</i> (< Eng. 'wear')

To understand the significance of the density of Anglicisms in P[argeiys] C[ailit] we need an effort of imagination, to contemplate a time, in the first half of the 18th century, when Manx, though it was a culturally subordinate language, was not an endangered one. In such a sociolinguistic context, lexical borrowing from the culturally 'superior' language can be a display of learning, or of the writer's status as a person in touch with international culture. In this respect, then, Christian's borrowings from English are similar in nature to Milton's own borrowings from Latin, or, in earlier periods, Chaucer's from French, or Cicero's from Greek. (Wheeler 2020c: 7–8)

Nevertheless, more purist stances begin to become apparent later in the century and into the next. For example, the 1777 edition of the Prayer Book replaces many English loanwords with native equivalents (e.g. *beam* > *darrag*; *couchyn* > *lhiaghtyn*; *sinkeil* > *goll fo*; *watchal* > *freyall arrey*) (Wheeler 2021b: 4). This was tempered with a desire for semantic precision or cultural specificity, however; the same text also replaces *captan-keead* (lit. 'captain of a hundred') with *centurion*, *cayrn* ('horn') with *trumpet*, *gorrym-jiarg* ('blue-red') with *purple*, and *craue-roih* ('arm bone') with *cubit* (ibid., 5).

⁴⁵The use of the English term perhaps reflects the lack of large inland bodies of water in the Isle of Man, with *logh* (G. *loch*) in place-names often referring instead to wet, marshy land (Broderick 1994: xxv).

The lexicographer Archibald Cregeen (1835: ix, xv) explicitly condemns the use of the *-al* suffix (G. *-áil*) to incorporate English verbs into Manx, and commends the translators for choosing a native paraphrase *goaill padjer* ‘take prayer’ rather than ‘mongrel’ *prayll*, *prayal*:

AL, added to a verb, has the same meaning as *AIL*, *ing*, in English, and may be termed the grand Manksifier-general of English verbs; as, *trying*, *TRYAL*; *fixing*, *FIXAL*, &c., &c.; but not to the credit or honour of those who so make use of it. (Cregeen 1835: ix)

The verb *to pray* occurs above two hundred times in the English Scriptures; yet the translators have not once used that mongrel word, *PRAYLL*, or its parent, *PRAYAL* [...], which, and the like, are now generally used without reserve. I do not, however, allude to the Clergy, who, to their credit, always say *GOAILL PADJER*; *EC PADJER*; *JANNOO PADJER*, &c.; and when there is no necessity, we should not borrow from the English, but endeavour to keep the language as pure as possible. (Ibid., xv)

In general it seems that pragmatism and a desire to be understood by ordinary people — the primary purpose of Manx writing — trumped incipient purism. *Goaill padjer* and *prayal* would have been equally comprehensible and therefore the choice was a matter of functional indifference, but there seems to be no attempt to revive or devise native replacements where a loanword or calque had established itself as the only, or dominant, means to express a concept, in which case even Cregeen accepts the ‘necessity’. We may compare the explicit comment of the Irish bishop James Gallagher in the introduction of his 1736 volume of sermons:

I have sometimes made use of Words borrowed from the English, which Practice and daily Conversation have intermixed with our Language: Choosing with St. Augustine, rather to be censur’d by the Criticks than not to be understood by the poor and illiterate. (Gallagher 1736: iv)

Gallagher’s loanwords include *dragáil* ‘drag’, *druincéir* ‘drunkard’, *siútáil* ‘shoot’ (Mac Mathúna 2007: 212). According to Doyle (2015: 101), Gallagher ‘seems to have felt that a word like *druncaeir* would be more accessible to his audience than *pótaire*, even though *pótaire* does not seem to be a particularly learned word, judging by the genres in which it occurs’. It should be borne in mind, however, that once a loanword is an established part of the lexicon, the choice of a loan or native item may be essentially arbitrary, as both items may be considered equally appropriate for a given occasion; only a purist stance gives cause for a specific preference for the native (or older) word.

6. CONCLUSION

In conclusion, this article has demonstrated the wide interest of the Manx manuscript sermon corpus on several accounts, including the sheer volume

and scope of the material, both within the context of the Gaelic languages and in comparison with English-language collections, and its nature as a closed linguistic dataset with identifiable authors, dates and locations for most texts, enabling us to chart change in progress at both the individual and community level. We have also highlighted the sociolinguistic complexity of the material and the wide scope to explore issues of translation and adaptation, language contact, diglossia and language shift, as well as the value of the material for ecclesiastical and social history both in a Manx and a wider British, Anglican, Gaelic or European context. The project to transcribe the pre-1772 sub-corpus of sermon manuscripts, upon which the present article is based, has made only a relatively small dent in the larger corpus of unedited and unstudied Manx manuscript material, and the avenues for future research indicated above cannot be exhaustive. Nonetheless, in this initial linguistic and sociohistorical examination, we have demonstrated the substantial contribution the corpus of Manx manuscript sermons can make towards addressing the relative neglect of Manx within Celtic Studies and linguistics, as well as the interdisciplinary and international study of religious literature in the long eighteenth century. We have also highlighted the extensive scope for further research on the sermon as a genre within wider Gaelic literature, and on the use of English-based orthographies in the Gaelic world.

ABBREVIATIONS

- G. (Early Modern) Gaelic
 HLMS BRODERICK, GEORGE 1984–6: *A Handbook of Late Spoken Manx*, 3 vols (Tübingen).

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Ollscoil na Gaillimhe

PEADAR Ó MUIRCHARTAIGH

Prifysgol Aberystwyth

THE MANX BIBLE AND THE DATE AND AUTHORSHIP OF *PARGYS CAILLT*

ABSTRACT

This short note looks at the details (and dating where noted) of the initial Manx Bible drafts and their relation to the production of the Manx translation of (part of) John Milton's *Paradise Lost*.

1. INTRODUCTION

IN A SHORT NOTE on *Pargys Caillit*,¹ the Manx translation of sections of John Milton's *Paradise Lost*, in *Celtica* 32 (2020: 261–3), Peadar Ó Muirheartaigh calls into question the traditional authorship of the Manx translation by a Thomas Christian (1754–1828), vicar of Marown parish in the Isle of Man (1780–99, thereby succeeding his father John Christian, vicar of Marown 1753–79), and suggests that the author may have been Thomas's grandfather, also Thomas Christian, vicar of Marown (1734–52), as also believed to be the case by Max Wheeler (forthcoming).

In support of his argument, Ó Muirheartaigh (ibid.) posits the view that a manuscript copy of the poem (MNHL 0188A, formerly in the manuscript collection of Manx aristocrat A. W. Moore SHK (1853–1909)), in the hand of lexicographer and Manx Bible amanuensis John Kelly (1750–1809), apparently derives from an earlier copy, now lost, lent to him by his former grammar-school teacher and later employer Rev. Philip Moore (1705–83) in 1776 and takes 1771 (the date of publication of vol. 1 of the Manx Bible) as a *terminus ante quem* for the composition of *Pargys Caillit*, first printed c. 1796 (Thomson 1995: 1).²

In order to look at this issue more closely I append here details of the translators and editors of the Manx Bible translation, as well as details of the extant manuscript portions of the Manx Bible (accompanied by a compact overview

¹In his Notes (Title) to *Pargys Caillit* Thomson (1995: 115) advises us that the running title throughout is *Phargys Callyt* noting an unexplained lenited form. However, consonant + *h* was evidently a common orthographic device in writing Manx with no inherent meaning, particularly during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, e.g. *Mheillia* 'the finishing of reaping corn' (C 114), [mɛl'ə] N cf. Ir *meitheal* (HLSM ii, 297). *Pargys* is derived from Latin *paradisus* < Greek παρράδεισος 'enclosed park with animals, garden, abode of the blessed, paradise', a loanword from Avestan *pairi-daēza* 'enclosure', Middle Iranian **pardēz* 'garden'. Cognate with Greek τεῖχος < Indo-European root **d^heiǵh-* (Beekes 2016: ii, 1151), OIr *pardus*, *parthus*, ModIr *párthas* 'paradise, a palace or monastery, a garden', cf. Mx field name *Paarys* [pɛ:rəs] on Ballaskelly BR (*PNIM* iii, 200), also the field-name Paris [pɛ(:)rəs] on Ballaskella LE (*PNIM* iii, 450). For the *g* in *Pargys* see Thomson (1995: 115).

²No date of publication is provided by the publisher Christopher Briscoe, though it is known that he was active as a printer and newspaper publisher in Douglas between 1787 and 1800 (Thomson 1995: 1, quoting Cubbon (1933–9: ii, 1138–9)).

of the surviving drafts), thus enabling an altogether comprehensive assessment of the Manx Bible translation process.

2. TRANSLATORS AND EDITORS OF THE MANX BIBLE

As noted above, draft translations of the Bible were made by the various parish incumbents and by those in other senior positions within the Anglican Church in Man. Their names, first supplied by Weeden Butler (Butler 1799: 254–5), are listed as follows below.³ Details of place of origin and additional annotations are supplied by Manx genealogist Nigel G. Crowe, Douglas.

2.1. *The translators*

Old Testament	Translator	Position held	Place of origin
GENESIS	Rev. William Mylrea [1721–87]	Archdeacon of Man. ⁴	b. BA, ys. Dollagh Mooar BA.
	Rev. Robert Ratcliffe [1703–69]	Vicar Kk Patrick, VG	b. PA, heir to Knockaloe Moar PA.
EXODUS	Rev. Henry Corlett [1736–1801]	Vicar Kk German	b. DG (gf. Ballakoig BA, m. cous. to P.Moore).
LEVITICUS	Rev. Nicholas Christian [d. 1782]	Vicar Kk Chr. Rushen	b. MR, ys. Glenlough/Ballaquinnea MR.
NUMBERS	Rev. Wm. Crebbin [1717–1803]	Vicar Jurby.	Of Santan.
DEUTERONOMY	Rev. John Moore [1714–91]	Vicar Kk Arbory	b. ML, ys. The Abbey ML (AWM).
JOSHUA	Rev. James Wilks [1719–77]	Vicar Kk Michael	b. Peel GE, m. The Abbey ML.
JUDGES	Rev. Robert Quayle [1741–1809]	Curate Kk Braddan	?f. Malew, m. Balladoole AR.
RUTH	Rev. Robert Quayle " "	" "	" "
I. SAMUEL	Rev. Samuel Gell [1720–1802]	Vicar Kk Lonan	f. Wm. Gell, Vic. CO.
II. SAMUEL	Rev. Joseph Cosnahan [1725–68]	Vicar Kk Braddan	f. John. C. VG/Vic.BN, m. DG.
I. KINGS	Rev. Thomas Quayle [d.1798]	Vicar Kk Conchan	— no further information.
II. KINGS	Rev. John Christian [1728–79]	Vicar Kk Marown	s. Rev. Tho. C., Ballakilley Vic. MR.
I. CHRONICLES	Rev. Daniel Gelling [d. 1801]	Vicar Kk Malew	?b. BN, f. Paul Gelling, Camlork BN.
II. CHRONICLES	Rev. John Gill [1708–72]	Vicar Kk Chr. Lezayre	— no information.
EZRA	Rev. Thos. Cubbon [1739–1828]	Vicar Kk Santan	b. MR, f. B'callin MR, m., d. to James Wilks

³Also in Moore (1901: 115–16), Thomson (1979: Introduction [xi]), Gelling (1998: 35).

⁴Additional details in columns 2 and 3 from Moore(1901), Gelling (1998).

Old Testament	Translator	Position held	Place of origin
NEHEMIAH	Rev. Thos. Cubbon " "	" "	" "
ESTHER	Rev. John Crellin [1737–1808]	Chaplain of Ramsey	b. GE 1737, f. Thos. Crellin.
JOB	Rev. Thomas Corlett [d. 1803]	Curate Kk Bride (d. 1803)	— no information.
PSALMS	Rev. John Gill [1708–72]	Vicar Kk Chr. Lezayre	— no information.
	Rev. Philip Moore [1705–83]	Rector of Kirk Bride and Chaplain of Douglas	b. Douglas, f/m Douglas.
	Rev. Mr. [?R] Teare (fn. 7)		?h/br. Wm. Walker LE / AR. ⁵
PROVERBS	Rev. Thos. Wm. J. Woods [d. 1786]	Vicar Kk Maughold	f. Rev. John Woods, Vic. ML (1696–1739).
ECCLESIASTES	Rev. Chas. Crebbin [1736–1817]]	Curate, Douglas	?rel. Wm. Crebbin SA.
SONG OF SOLOMON	Rev. William Mylrea [1721–87]	Archdeacon of Man	see above.
MINOR PROPHETS	Rev. Wm. Fitzsimmons	Minister of the Episcopal Chapel in Edinburgh.	b. 1744?, f. Rich. of DG, sis. m. Wm. Kelly DG, f. of Dr. John Kelly (qv) by prev. wife.
New Testament	Translator	Position held	Place of origin
GOSPELS, ACTS	Uncertain by whom; ⁶ but under the direction of Bishop Thomas Wilson [1663–1755] and Dr. William Walker [1679–1729] ⁷	VG [1712–29]	b. LE, r. B'doole AR, m. 'Widow Teare' ⁸
1 CORINTHIANS	Rev. William Mylrea	Archdeacon of Man	see above.
2 CORINTHIANS	Rev. Nicholas Christian	Vicar of Kk Christ Rushen	see above.
1/2 THESSALONIANS	Rev. Daniel Gelling	Vicar of Kk Malew	see above.
TITUS, PHILEMON	Rev. Samuel Gell	Vicar of Kirk Lonan	see above.
1/2 PETER	Rev. Joseph Cosnahan	Vicar of Kk Braddan	see above.
1/2/3 JOHN	Rev. Thomas Quayle	Vicar of Kk Conchan	see above.

⁵See footnote 8.

⁶With regard to this, Butler (1799: 253–4) notes: 'I cannot find, says Mr [?Thomas] Cubbon [Vicar of Santan], in what proportion the rest of the Old and New Testament was divided amongst the gentlemen, but I believe, and am pretty confident, they did translate the whole. The Rev Philip Moore and Matthias Curghey, assisted occasionally by the Rev. James Wilks, revised the Pentateuch at Bishops Court, the remaining part of the Old Testament was revised by the Rev P[hilip] Moore, and the Rev. John Kelly only, and by them prepared for the Press at Douglas.' The Manx Bible (1771–5) was in fact printed in Whitehaven, Cumbria (Cubbon1939: ii, 762–6).

⁷For details of the life and times of Dr. William Walker, see Moore (1901: 21–3).

⁸Author of the lament *Illiam Walker as Robin Tear* (c. 1740) on her two sons so named (Moore 1896: xxviii, 203; 1901: 101).

New Testament	Translator	Position held	Place of origin
JUDE	Anonymous		
REVELATION 1–6	Anonymous		
REVELATION 7–12	Rev. John Crellin	Chapl. of Ramsey	see above.
REVELATION 11–22	Rev. Henry Corlett	Vicar of Kk German	see above.
THE LITURGY	Rev. Matthias Curghey [1699–1771]	Rector of Ballaugh	f. John Curghey VG, Vic. BN, m. Heather Curghey, Ballakillingan LE.
	Rev. Robert Ratcliffe	Vicar of Kk Patrick, VG	see above.

2.2. *The editors*

According to Butler (1799: 255–6), those responsible for the final version of the Manx Bible were:

Transcribers:

Old Testament, corrected editions of the New Testament and
Prayer Book: Rev. Dr. John Kelly [1750–1809].⁹

Revisers and correctors:

Old Testament, New Testament: Rev. Philip Moore [1705–83],¹⁰

Rev. Dr. John Kelly.

Gospels: Rev. James Wilks [1719–77].¹¹

Acts: Rev. Matthias Curghey [1699–1771].¹²

Epistles: Rev. Matthias Curghey.

The Liturgy: Rev. James Wilks.

Superintendents of the final version:

Old Testament, later editions of the New Testament, Prayer Book,
and Treatise on the Sacrament: Rev. Dr. John Kelly.

Epistles: Rev. Thomas Corlett [d. 1803], curate of Kirk Bride.¹³

The Liturgy: Rev. Thomas Corlett.

3. SURVIVING MANUSCRIPT PORTIONS OF THE ‘HILDESLEY’ MANX BIBLE¹⁴

The following is a report made by former Director of the Manx Museum and National Trust, Basil R. S. Megaw (director 1940–57), on the finding of the

⁹For further details see Moore (1901: 94–5).

¹⁰For further details see Moore (1901: 25–6).

¹¹For further details see Moore (1901: 26–8).

¹²For further details see Moore (1901: 24).

¹³Gelling (1998: 226).

¹⁴Mark Hildesley (1698–1772), Bishop of Sodor and Man (1755–72) ensured the complete translation of the Bible into Manx Gaelic, begun by his predecessor, Bishop Thomas Wilson (1663–1755), Bishop of Sodor and Man (1698–1755). See *DNB* 1885–1900, vol. 26. For details of Hildesley’s life and times, see Butler (1799). For details of Wilson’s life and times, see Watterson-Troxler (2004: *ODNB* (online edition)).

above manuscripts in 1955. In setting out the report typographical errors have been silently corrected, though all else (including missing brackets) is as per Basil Megaw's layout. Additions to the text set in square brackets (made presumably by Megaw) have been maintained. Additional information provided by myself is also set in square brackets, but indicated with 'GB'.

Concerning the drafts themselves, Megaw supplies the following report. Additional information from myself in this regard appears in square brackets.

These were found on 11 November 1955 with other unregistered documents in the Manx Museum Library, with the following note in the hand of William Cubbon, first librarian: 'MS. Translation of the Holy Bible into Manks, published 1771[']'.

No indication was given as to the source of the documents. The (old) Manx Society seems a likely one, and there is a collection of unregistered documents from that source in the same series of cases.

The texts are clearly (with one possible exception) the original translations of the various books of Old and New Testament in the handwriting of the translators. Many are endorsed in the handwriting of Rev. Philip Moore [1705–83], the editor of the Hildesley Manx Bible, and all bear correction, sometimes by him it would seem, but also by Vicar-General [James] Wilks [1719–77] and, probably, by [Matthias] Curghey [1699–71]. John Kelly's [1750–1809] part as copyist under Philip Moore is confirmed by various notes.¹⁵

Where dated, the New Testament texts (1764–6)¹⁶ are slightly earlier than the Old (1768–9), which agrees with the order of publication (1767 [NT],¹⁷ and 1771–3 [OT] respectively).

Many Books, of both Old and New Testament, are absent and may be presumed lost, but an important sample of the work has survived, as indicated in the following List.

B. R. S. MEGAW 17.11.1955.

[3.1.] *List of surviving sections*¹⁸

With notes of endorsement thereon — *provisional* [handwritten — GB]. (Underlinings in the following signify those believed to be in Philip Moore's hand)

¹⁵Additional information in this paragraph in square brackets supplied by GB from Moore (1901).

¹⁶i.e. the dates of the handing over of the translation of the respective books for inspection by the editors.

¹⁷The date of publication of the second part of the New Testament (the Epistles and Revelation) (Thomson 1979: [iii]).

¹⁸The following list is set out here as per Megaw's typescript.

*[3.1.1.] Old Testament*¹⁹

- A (Revised & Engrossd
(Exodus / from the Beginning to to [*sic*] 21st verse of VII Chapter —
pr. H : Corlet [*sic*].
- B (Done with these # Revised & Engrossd
(Exodus from verse 21st of the VII Chap — to Chaptr 18)
pr. H : Corlett.
- C ([Leviticus]
(The Third Book of Moses called Leviticus
([Includes Chaps. 1–13, v. 4. Corrections not in P. Moore’s hand.]
(On penultimate, blank, page the title is repeated in the translator’s
(hand, and the following notes in P. Moore’s hand:
(*** ?phen.
(For Mr J. Kelly to transcribe/fair
(At foot appears a note in a different hand, probably that of the corrector:
(Recd. Novr 26. 1768.
[In left margin in Robert L. Thomson’s hand — GB]
‘Leviticus 13.4 – 20.13 was found in the centre of this bundle. R.L.T.’²⁰
- D ([Leviticus contd. Title and following pp. lacking. Contains Chaps. 20,
(v. 14, to end of book. Corrections in same hand as last.
(On back the word “Leviticus”, probably in P. Moore’s hand.]
- E ([Numbers. Title lacking. 10 worn parts appear to include the whole
(Book of Numbers. Corrections in P. Moore’s hand.]
- F (Joshua Done
(On back: Joshua fr. 11th – ad finem. pr H : Corlett (*sic*) —
(to be revised recd at Convocation 1769 —
([Includes Chaps. 11 to end, the last 3 chaps. being a separate insertion.
(Corrections in P. Moore’s hand.]
- G (The Book of Judges; Lioar ny Briwnyn
([Corrections in same hand as Leviticus corrections. Contains Judges ch. 1
(to 11, v. 14.]
- H (Judges contd. Cover lost? Style and pagination continues from last.
(Contains ch. 11, v. 15, to 20, v. 42. On back page, in P. Moore’s hand :
(Judges by Mr Quayle of Braddan.
(The last Chaptr Wanting
(& part of the penultimate Chaptr
(Desired to be furnished sent im[m]ediately —
- [I] ([1 Samuel, ch. 1–15]
(15 Chaptrs revised / N : I :
(Mr Gell — Lonan
(1 Samll = Hoc. =

¹⁹Handwritten.²⁰This section was found misplaced in a recent (October 2019) review of the bundle. At my suggestion it was inserted between the first and third (i.e. last) sections of the Leviticus bundle — GB.

- (Transcribendum
 (Augst 17
 (1769
 (
 ([Corrections evidently in same hand as last.]
 ([1 Kings, evidently complete]
 J (Revised & Engrossd fair
 (Revd. Mr Quayle of K : Conchan
 (1st Book of Kings
 (Optimè
 (
 ([Corrections in P. Moore's hand — though there may be another.
 (Also, on back :—]
 (1st. Book: Kings Pr Mr. Quayle of / KK. Conchan / — corrected.
 K ([2 Chronicles, 1–19 (11)]
 (By Mr Gill / Transcribed pr Kelly / No. 1 —
 ([Corrections in P. Moore's hand]

[3.1.2.] *New Testament*²¹

- L ([1 Corinthians, ch. 1–8.
 (Endorsed “C” in P. Moore's style, and the corrections rather resemble his
 (writing; but otherwise lacks comment.]
 M ([1 Corinthians, 9 – end.
 (on back page :—]
 (The within Translation is submitted to the Correction and Revisal of the
 (Reverend Messrs. Curghey & Wilkes by
 (Their humble Servant
 (KK Andreas 1st Octr 1764 Wm Mylrea
 (
 ([Corrections by ? — possibly P. Moore.]
 N ([2 Corinthians. At end:—]
 (Mr Xtian of Rushen / revised in 6 Days – close attention –
 (June 27. 1766.
 O ([1 & 2 Thessalonians]
 (Transcribed
 (Yn ked Scruyn Paul yn Astyl dys ny Thessalonianee
 (D. Gelling
 ([Corrections by ? — possibly P. Moore.
 (Signed at end of book : “Dan. Gelling 1766 / Malew”]
 (1st. & 2nd. Thess:– pr Mr. Gelling — Engrossed [sic — GB]
 P (Done
 (Titus & Philemon / by Mr Gell / Octr 12. 1764 [in Wilk's (*sic*) hand]
 ([Signed at end:—] Samuel Gell. 1764 —
 ([Corrections probably in P. Moore's hand.]

²¹Handwritten.

- Q ([1 & 2 Peter] Mr Cosnahan
 ([Corrections by ?
 (Signed at end:—] KK Braddan Augst 23rd 1764.
- R ([1–3 John
 (Signed at end:—] Tho Quayle
 ([Corrections by ?]
- S ([Jude & Revelations ch. 1–6.
 (Corrections by ?]
 ([line here of some ten words deleted — GB].
- T (
(Revelations — fr. ye 7 th to the 13. — / Mr. Crellin
 ([Signed at end:—] John Crellin
- U ([Revelations, chap. 20, v. 6 to end.
 (Signed at end:—] Henry Corlett
 ([Apparently corrected in P. Moore's hand.].

BRSM [initialled — GB]
 B. R. S. MEGAW [typed — GB]
 17th November 1955.

3.1.3. *Compact overview of the surviving drafts*

Old Testament

Code²² Book

Pentateuch

- A Exodus I.1–VII.20.
 B Exodus VII.1–XXI.17 (:²³ XL.38 End).
 C1 Leviticus I.1–XIII.4.
 C2 Leviticus XIII.5–XX.13.²⁴
 D Leviticus XX.14–XXVII.34 (End/All²⁵).
 E1 Numbers I.1–X.36.
 E2 Numbers XI.1–XV.15.
 E3 Numbers XV.16–XIX.4.
 E4 Numbers XIX.5–XXIII.3.
 E5 Numbers XXIII.3–XXVII.6.
 E6 Numbers XXVII.7–XXXVI.13 (End/All).

Histories

- F Joshua XI.1–XXIV.33 (End) (lacking I.1 → X.43).
 G Judges I.1–XI.14.

²²Here with slight modification of the above coding in the interests of clarity.

²³A colon indicates that the text from this point onwards to the end is lacking.

²⁴A correction of an earlier misnumbering. See footnote 18 above.

²⁵'End/All' indicates that the draft of the Book concerned has survived in its entirety.

H	Judges XI.15–XX.42 (: XXI.25 End).
I1	1 Samuel I.1–VI.19.
I2	1 Samuel VI.20–X.25.
I3	1 Samuel X.26–XV.35 (: XXXI.13 End).
J	1 Kings I.1–XXII.53 (End/All).
K	2 Chronicles I.1–XIX.11 (: XXXVI.23 End).

New Testament

Epistles

L	1 Corinthians I.1–VIII.13.
M	1 Corinthians IX.1–XVI.24 (End/All).
N	2 Corinthians I.1–XII.14 (End/All).
O	1–2 Thessalonians (End/All).
P	Titus (End/All), Philemon (End/All).
Q	1–2 Peter (End/All).
R	1–3 John (End/All).
S	Jude (End/All). &
S	Revelation I.1–VI.17.
T1	Revelation VII.1–XII.17.
T2	Revelation XI.1–XX.5.
U	Revelation XX.6–XXII.21 (End/All).

3.1.4. *Books sent in batches for editorial correction?*

As part of the translation process each translated portion, whether it be of a whole book or part thereof, would be taken to the editors for assessment and if need be for correction. The foregoing tables list those translated books or parts of books that are extant. They number thirty-one sections in all, thereby comprising eighteen individual books. Nine of the books carry comments usually at the end (in one case, P Titus, at the beginning) giving details (with or without date) of conveyance to the editors for inspection, thereby giving us an idea of the progress of translation. The following nine books bear such comments:

With date:

A	Exodus (I.1–VII.20):	‘Recd. Nov. 26 1768’
F	Joshua (XI.1–XXIV.33 (End)):	‘To be revised recd at Convocation 1769’
M	I Corinthians (IX.1–XVI.24 (End/All)):	‘The written Translation is submitted to the Correction and Revisal of the Reverend Messrs Curghey and Wilkes by their humble Servant Wm. Mylrea, Kk Andreas 1 Oct 1764’
N	II Corinthians (I.1–XII.14 (End/All)).	‘Mr. Xtian of Rushen, revised in 6 days — close & Mention, June 27 1765’

O	I–II Thessalonians (End/All)	‘Dan Gelling Malew 1766’
P	Titus (End/All) (head)	‘by mr. Gell: Octr. 12, 1764’
P	Philemon (End/All)	‘Samuel Gell 1764’

Without date:

H	Judges XI.15–XX.42:	‘Judges by Mr. Quayle of Braddan / The Last Chapter Wanting & part of the penultimate Chapter Desired to be furnish’d sent immediately’
J	Kings I.1–XXII.53 (End/All)	‘1 st Book: Kings fr. Mr. Quayle of Kk Conchan. Corrected.’

Comment

As can be seen, those bearing a date make clear that the New Testament material was dealt with first. The dates here range from 1764 to 1766, thus mirroring the printing of earlier editions of NT or parts thereof. The Old Testament dates range from 1768 (Exodus) to 1769 (Joshua). The figures suggest that the translated portions were forwarded either individually, or in batches, as M (I Corinthians) and P (Titus), both forwarded in October 1764, demonstrate.

In addition, a marginal note in the draft of Exodus (I.1–XVII.16, MNHL MS 05690 C) at XVII.13²⁶ tells us in addition that ‘This word *Haart* I have borrowed from Mr. Xtian’s Transl. of Paradise Lost where Michael overthrows Satan.’ The same also appears in Ch. XV.1, 7, 21 of the same book. In this regard the following comments can perhaps be made:

1. Responsible for the marginal note was probably the translator of Exodus himself, i.e. Rev. Henry Corlett, Vicar of German.
2. Basil Megaw’s report also notes that the drafts were evidently dealt with by the editors in batches. Thus the first two books (here) Exodus and part of Leviticus (but probably also including Genesis originally) were received for inspection on 26 November 1768. This would suggest that the translation of Exodus had already been completed by late 1768, and by extension that the text of *Pargys Caillit* was already in being by that date.

As noted by Thomson (1995: 4), the first volume of the Old Testament, published in 1771, did not accept the *Haart*-rendering.

4. CONCLUSION

If we take it that a text of *Pargys Caillit* was already available in late 1768, then who is likely to have been its author? In this regard we seemingly have two choices:

1. If we believe that the author was Thomas Christian (1754–1828, vicar of Marown 1780–99), then he would have been fourteen years old at the latest

²⁶Also Thomson (1995: 4).

when he made his translation. This is not impossible as *Wunderkinder* do exist. Thomson (1995: 15) also accepts this possibility.

2. If, however, we believe that the author was Thomas Christian (c. 1710?–52; vicar of Marown 1734–52), then he would have had to have completed his translation before his death in 1752.

Either case is therefore possible.

ADDENDUM

In his Introduction to his edition of *Pargys Caillit*, Thomson (1995: 12–15) goes into some detail about Thomas Christian’s improprieties during his term of office as vicar of Marown (1780–99), for which he accrued to himself considerable notoriety.

However, the earlier Thomas Christian, vicar of Marown (1734–52), was also not without controversy. In his case he was accused of supporting the Jacobite Cause in a comment made by him on 29 April 1746 recognising the Pretender as the rightful king of Great Britain, rather than William of Orange. The association and involvement of the Isle of Man with the Jacobite Cause has been dealt with in detail by Frances Wilkins (2002), including the Jacobite Rising of 1745–6, headed by ‘Bonnie Prince Charlie’ (Charles Edward Stuart (1720–88)) (Wilkins 2002: 101–6), and the case of Thomas Christian (ibid., 107–8).

MANX TOWN AND PARISH ABBREVIATIONS

AR	Arbory.	ML	Malew.
BA	Ballaugh.	MR	Marown.
BN	Braddan.	PA	Patrick.
BR	Bride.	RU	Rushen.
CO	Conchan (Onchan).	SA	Santan.
GE	German.		
JU	Jurby.	Towns:	
LE	Lezayre.	CT	Castletown.
LO	Lonan.	DG	Douglas.
MA	Maughold.	PL	Peel.
MI	Michael.	RY	Ramsey.

GENERAL ABBREVIATIONS

b.	born.
C	Cregeen’s Dictionary.
cous.	cousin.
<i>DNB</i>	Dictionary of National Biography.
f.	father.
FN	Field Name.

gf.	grandfather.
<i>HLSM</i>	A Handbook of Late Spoken Manx (Broderick 1984–6).
Kk.	Kirk (in parish dedication).
m.	mother.
MNHL	Manx National Heritage Library.
N	Northern Manx.
NT	New Testament.
OT	Old Testament.
<i>PNIM</i>	Place-Names of the Isle of Man (Broderick 1994–2005).
pr.	presented by.
prev.	previous.
r.	reared.
rel.	relative of.
RLT	Robert L Thomson.
SHK	Speaker of the House of Keys (Lower House of Tynwald).
sis.	sister.
v.	verse.
VG	Vicar General.
ys.	younger son of.

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REVIEWS

The Mythological Cycle of Medieval Irish Literature. John Carey. Cork Studies in Celtic Literatures 3. Cork, 2018. iii + 78 pp. €12.00. ISBN 978-0-9955469-2-9.

Revisiting the Cycle of the Kings. Edited by Kevin Murray. Studies in Celtic Literatures 6. Cork 2022. viii + 150 pp. €15.00. ISBN 978-0-9955469-6-7.

To Marie Henri d'Arbois de Jubainville (1827–1910) we owe the commonly used classification of Early Irish narrative literature into cycles. In his *Introduction à l'étude de la littérature celtique* (1883) he identified three such 'cycles', which we usually refer to in English as the 'Mythological', 'Ulster' and 'Finn' or 'Fenian' cycles, designations that have been widely used since his time. Arbois de Jubainville also pointed out, however, that other literary cycles might be identified to classify some of the many other tales that could not be accommodated within any of the groupings he had established, and in due course a body of tales that had to do with the exploits of various legendary or historical kings was designated the 'Cycles of the Kings' by Myles Dillon in the title of his book (1946) on some of these compositions.

Classifying these medieval narratives into 'cycles' has not been unproblematic and several scholars have alluded to the difficulties of establishing criteria for assigning tales to one cycle or another or to instances where there is some overlap between the different groupings of tales. Many of these difficulties have been outlined and discussed at length in Erich Poppe's Quiggin Lecture published as *Of Cycles and Other Critical Matters: Some Issues in Medieval Irish Literary History and Criticism* (Cambridge, 2008). Despite their evident shortcomings, these cyclical designations are widely retained, both for ease of reference and for them having been sanctioned through usage over a long period. An alternative system, in which tales are classified according to theme, rather than chronology, is found in the Early Irish tale-lists. This has not enjoyed any great currency in modern scholarship but has served a useful purpose when tales are examined and compared from the perspective of their thematic structures. The basis for the classification of tales into cycles, on the other hand, is partly chronological and partly determined by the *dramatis personae*, although at an earlier period some scholars also took geographical factors into consideration in referring to tales about Fionn mac Cumhaill as a 'Leinster' cycle.

The first of these literary cycles, the Mythological, forms the subject of John Carey's booklet. Carey has already published a number of studies on aspects of this body of texts and many of the insights gained from these are included in this very interesting publication. Its six chapters deal in turn with the 'cycles' of medieval Irish literature, the Túatha Dé Danann, tales associated with *Táin*

Bó Cúailnge, other Old Irish tales of the cycle, 'Lore and fantasy in the Middle Irish period' and, finally, material from later tradition.

In his opening chapter he revisits and addresses some of the many questions and problems associated with the classification of narrative literature into cycles and proceeds from there to establish criteria for assigning tales to the Mythological Cycle. This rubric is of itself problematic precisely because most of medieval Irish saga literature can be seen to be 'mythological' in one sense or another. While he acknowledges the problems inherent in the label 'mythological cycle' and expresses his reservations about it more than once in this study, it is retained throughout the work. But the boundaries between these literary cycles do not always hold firm, as we know, and those of this cycle are not always clearly delineated. In seeking to determine what tales might be included in the 'mythological cycle', Carey has looked to those compositions in which the primary actors were viewed by the medieval literati as belonging to the otherworld, the *áes síde* of Irish tradition. By using this criterion, tales associated with the Túatha Dé Danann (or Túatha Dé Donann as Carey prefers to name them) or their opponents, the Fomoiri, establish the basis of his study.

Because of their immortal and timeless nature, Irish tradition did not subject the Túatha Dé Danann to the restrictions of chronology. This allows them to appear in texts associated with other cycles that are themselves fixed by the time-frame of Irish prehistory. We thus find that Lug makes a 'cameo' appearance in *Táin Bó Cúailnge*, the centrepiece of the Ulster Cycle, which was set just prior to the time of Christ, as does Aonghus an Bhrogha in *Tóraigheacht Dhiarmada agus Ghráinne* of the Fenian Cycle, the events of which are placed mainly in the third century AD.

Brief appearances such as these do not merit such tales being taken into consideration in the present study, but other compositions associated with the Ulster Cycle are. Chapter three deals with tales related to *Táin Bó Cúailnge*. In these tales, members of the Túatha Dé Danann appear alongside characters normally associated with the Ulster tales. These include the *remscéla* to *Táin Bó Cúailnge*, *De Gabáil int Sída*, *De Chophur in Dá Muicceda*, *Aislinge Óengusso* and *Echtra Nerai*. While some of these narratives serve to set the scene for certain important aspects of *Táin Bó Cúailnge*, the connection of *Aislinge Óengusso* to the recensions of the epic that have been transmitted to us is at best tangential. While the Connacht rulers Ailill and Medb appear alongside the Dagda and his son Óengus in this tale, its conclusion which states that Óengus subsequently was to aid the Connachta in the *Táin* (*Is de sin do-cuaid Oengus, trícha cét, co Ailill ocus Meidb do tháin inna mbó a Cúailnge* 'it is as a result of that that Oengus went with a *trícha cét* to Ailill and Medb to drive the cattle out of Cúailnge'; F. Shaw (ed.), *Aislinge Óenguso* (Dublin, 1934) 64, §15), is not borne out in any of the versions of the texts that have been transmitted to us, for Óengus, son of the Dagda, is nowhere mentioned in them. But this reference and the inclusion of *Aislinge Óenguso* among the *remscéla* to the *Táin* may suggest that Óengus had played a prominent role in a version of the great saga now lost, and in an intriguing note (p. 21, n. 10), Carey draws our attention to a reference in the Middle Irish *Dúan in Chethrachat Cest* where we indeed

find Óengus cast in the role of a slayer of many Ulstermen, although the poem does not specifically reference the *Táin*.

The tale held by many to be the centrepiece of the cycle is *Cath Maige Tuired* (*CMT*), a story that presents us with many of the figures of the Celtic pantheon, a number of whom are also known from British tradition. *CMT* has been transmitted to us both as a text belonging to the Old Irish period and in a later version written in Early Modern Irish. Each of these has been the subject of a number of scholarly studies and both are dealt with in the present work. In his discussion of the earlier tale, Carey reiterates the view he has expressed in an earlier publication that *CMT* is not to be seen as a traditional tale but rather as an innovative composition of the ninth century concerned with potential changes in Irish society occasioned by the incursion of the Vikings (p. 37).

Seen as prehistoric settlers of Ireland, the role of the Túatha Dé Danann in the pseudo-historical *Lebor Gabála* is also here evaluated, as is the part they play in the creation of many Irish toponyms, events that are narrated in various *dindshenchas* legends. Several other items of tradition belonging to the Middle Irish period are also considered and, as Carey points out, many of these appear to be retellings of older tales or 'brief anecdotes absorbed in the great systematisations of lore that are so characteristic of that time' (p. 41). A dependence on earlier literature also characterises many tales concerning the Túatha Dé Danann that were composed in the later Middle Ages. *CMT* was modernised and remoulded as a new tale. This was subsequently used as a starting point for another later composition, *Oidheadh Chloinne Tuireann*. These and later tales, such as *Oidheadh Chloinne Lir*, are discussed, with the possibility that some of them may have been written with contemporary political or religious motives in mind being also considered.

One interesting issue that arises from this material is how the medieval Irish viewed figures such as Lug, the Dagda, and the other characters who appear in these tales. The divine origins of several of these have long been recognised, but how this status may have endured and how they subsequently may have been received in literature and in popular belief is a far more complicated matter. By the late medieval period we find a figure such as Manannán mac Lir being cast simply as an otherworldly mischief-maker in burlesque tales such as *Eachtra an Cheithearnaigh Chaoilriabhaigh* or in *Eachtra Bhodaigh an Chóta Lachtna*. From an earlier stage, however, Carey has collected a number of interesting references which suggest that such supernatural figures may once have retained part of their divine status and formed part of belief systems or cults sometimes associated with certain localities in the country. The possibility that some of our tales may preserve traces of a pre-Christian belief system is touched upon more than once in this study. But while this is an issue that many will find highly interesting, it is also one that is fraught with difficulty. Carey takes care to point out that such references as we possess have been 'preserved in a Christian literature, produced in an ecclesiastical milieu' (p. 13). Bearing in mind the ever-present possibility that material transmitted to us through such a conduit may have been subject to censorship, literary embellishment or other modification, this note of caution is quite apposite. We can call to mind an assertion

made by the redactor of the seventh-century legal text *Cáin Fhuithirbe* concerning the contents of the text he wrote: *ro dílsiged la dub in díchubus* ‘that which is contrary to [Christian] conscience has been forfeit in ink’ (*Peritia* 5 (1986), 43–4). In view of the central role the church played in the transmission of our sources, it is unlikely that full agreement will be reached on the possible presence or extent of such pre-Christian traces in the corpus of medieval Irish literature, but it will doubtless continue to be a subject of enduring interest and discussion.

The Mythological Cycle of Medieval Irish Literature provides us with a very useful survey of this body of literature and explores some of the issues associated with it. It will serve as a very useful companion to those who wish to examine further traditions associated with the Túatha Dé Danann. While of necessity brief, it is written in a clear and accessible style and provides the reader with a solid introduction and many useful references for exploring this body of literature further.

Revisiting the Cycles of the Kings, on the other hand, deals with a different ‘cycle’ of medieval Irish literature. Unlike Carey’s single-author study of the Mythological Cycle, this volume represents the proceedings of a conference on these tales which was held at University College Cork in September 2020 and contains contributions from five speakers at that event together with a foreword from the editor, Kevin Murray.

Whereas the presence of the Túatha Dé Danann can be seen as the link that brings tales of the Mythological Cycle together under that heading, no such cast of characters can be found to classify the Cycles of the Kings *in toto*. A definition provided in an earlier collection of essays on this body of literature would assign to it narratives that focus on one or more native rulers (Dan M. Wiley (ed.), *Essays on the Early Irish King Tales* (Dublin, 2008), p. 14). Not subject to the constraints of chronology or of the *dramatis personae* that serve to delineate other cycles, this classification is extremely broad and within its parameters almost 140 ‘king’ narratives have been identified (Wiley, *Essays*, 54–67). The kings with whom they are concerned range from figures located in a distant prehistoric past to historical personages known from our early medieval records but whose deeds are encrusted in legend (e.g. Muirchertach mac Erca or Díarmait mac Cerbaill).

We have already noted some of the difficulties involved in establishing the boundaries of the Mythological Cycle, but this applies in greater measure to the Cycles of the Kings. Several of the compositions that are included within its broad parameters could be assigned to more than one literary cycle. A tale included in that list that serves to illustrate some of the complexities associated with such a broad classification is *Togail Bruidne Da Derga*. Its presence among the Cycles of the Kings can be justified because it deals with the life of Conaire, a legendary prehistoric ruler of Tara. However, Étaín, the mother of the tale’s main protagonist, is also the focus of *Tochmarc Étaíne*, a tale commonly regarded as part of the Mythological Cycle, while appearances made by Conall Cernach, Cormac Cond Loinges and other heroes in the narrative suggests an association with the Ulster Cycle. Indeed, because of this latter association both

Togail Bruidne Da Derga and the related *Tochmarc Étaíne* in its three versions are dealt with by Thurneysen in his *Irische Helden- und Königsage*, a volume otherwise devoted to the Ulster tales.

Within the extensive corpus of king-tales it is possible to identify groups of tales that are associated with certain rulers. A number of such minor ‘cycles’ formed the basis of Dillon’s 1946 work in which he translated and discussed the tales concerned with several different kings about whom we have a body of narratives. But the majority of king tales are concerned with individual kings who appear in one composition only and who do not fall into such groupings. This volume therefore does not attempt a wide-ranging survey of this body of literature in its entirety — and given its extent such would surely not be feasible — but each study focuses on aspects of the cycle or on individual tales or collections of tales, thus following an approach not greatly dissimilar to that adopted in Wiley’s collection of essays from 2008.

In the first paper, ‘*Scélsenchus* revisited: historical function and literary artistry in the Gaelic kings’ sagas’, Ralph O’Connor re-evaluates some of the different opinions expressed by scholars about the form and function of some of the tales assigned to this cycle. While certain scholars have praised the literary accomplishment evident in them, or bewailed the lack thereof, others have placed emphasis on the purpose that lay behind their composition in the medieval society in which they came into being. O’Connor’s wide-ranging discussion on the tension between the ‘literary’ and the ‘historical’ raises issues involving the entertainment value that such narratives may have had as opposed to their being seen simply as repositories of historical lore, or *senchas*. Other matters that arise out of this analysis concern how these tales might have been received by those who heard or read them and indeed how they might have been performed. O’Connor’s focus on the body of tales found in the twelfth-century manuscript Rawlinson B. 502 (Oxford) and referred to as *scélsenchus Laigen* provides the basis for much of his discussion. His conclusion that ‘the importance of any one saga as *senchas* did not, in itself, disqualify it from being an accomplished literary work’ (p. 24), is one with which few would disagree. This thought-provoking paper should inspire further engagement with the several issues raised therein.

Clodagh Downey, ‘Níall Noígíallach and the heroic biography’, examines the body of lore that surrounds the progenitor of the foremost dynasty in early medieval Ireland, the Uí Néill. In this essay she attempts to accommodate the biographical details that have been transmitted to us about Níall Noígíallach within the framework of the ‘international heroic biography’ as formulated by the Dutch scholar Jan de Vries and further modified by others. Examining ten of the key stages in Níall’s life, from his birth to his death, she attempts to see how the traditions about him conform to those of the international biography. The result she obtains is enlightening. While some of the details of this king’s biography might be assigned to the international pattern, it is only through special pleading and strained argument that others could be so accommodated. She wisely chooses not to follow this path and concludes that ‘the attempt to map Níall’s biography onto the international pattern cannot be said to result in a

very successful match' (pp. 55–60). This study shows that while the international pattern may have been applied with success to certain figures of Irish tradition, it clearly has its limitations. One should not expect to find this pattern or its components to be present in the biographies of every hero or king for whom tradition provides us with such details.

The text *Comthóth Lóegairi co Cretim 7 a Aided* is the focus of Ken Ó Donnchú's study, 'Interpreting Lóegaire mac Néill's conversion and death'. This brief narrative is concerned with Lóegaire, king of Tara and one of the more prominent of Níall Noígíallach's many sons. Although Lóegaire becomes a Christian through the agency of St Patrick, he is portrayed in a negative light in the literature and traditions surrounding his demise having ruled for thirty years have been the subject of a number of studies. O'Donoghue deals here with some of these traditions but also focuses on the manner in which contempt for the reluctant convert was expressed even after his burial.

Aogán Ó hIarlaithe's contribution, 'On the classification of Cath Cairn Conaill', considers the position of this tale within the Cycles of the Kings. *Cath Cairn Chonaill* (CCC) is an interesting composition which has been transmitted to us in three manuscript witnesses. Two distinct recensions are distinguished. The first recension, found in both Lebor na hUidre (LU) and in the Book of Leinster (LL), can be further subdivided between these two sources with the former containing material not found in the latter. As the version in the LL has no title and refers to a battle only peripherally, its classification as a *cath*-tale is dependent on additional information about the battle of Carn Conaill supplied in LU. This information and other supplementary material appears to have been entered at a date later than that of the original text and these additions betray political and ecclesiastical concerns one would associate with Clonmacnoise, the centre in which the LU text was most likely written. The second recension is found in a single witness, BL MS Egerton 1782, where it has been incorporated into an annalistic compilation, the saga here being formally counted as part of the historical record.

This detailed study of the different versions of CCC, and his consideration of the different focuses evident in them, lead Ó hIarlaithe to the conclusion that 'due deference must be shown to each manuscript witness to a text when attempting to categorise it' (p. 97), advice that could also be followed with profit in our analysis of other texts that are found in multiple manuscript sources. Few will disagree with his concluding plea that fresh reliable editions of very many texts are needed in order to facilitate our understanding of them and the manner in which they should be classified in the future.

The final essay in this volume is by Neil Buttimer, 'The *Bórama* revisited', who returns to a text which formed the subject of his 1983 doctoral dissertation. This lengthy prosimetrical tract is concerned with how many successive rulers of Leinster resisted paying a levy imposed on them by Túathal Techtmar, king of Ireland, for a crime carried out against his daughters by the Leinster king, Eochu mac Echach Domhlén. Having surveyed some studies that have been carried out in the course of the past four decades on the *Bórama* as a whole or on sections of it, Buttimer looks afresh at the tract and attempts to evaluate and

contextualise it in the period to which its composition is usually dated, that of late Middle Irish. Arguing that the text embodies ‘elements which came about in response to various emotive states linked to that age’ (p. 103), he lists and discusses some historical events that may have had a bearing on its composition and also looks at a number of texts likewise dated to that period that may have influenced the *Bórama* tract, or may share certain features with it that are reflective of the period in which they were written. Among these works are *Cogad Gáedael re Gallaib*, *Táin Bó Cúailnge*, *Lebor na Cert*, elements of *dindsenchas* and the somewhat later *Acallam na Senórach*. This is a very wide-ranging study in which several thoughts about the development of the text are put forward, but many of these are presented simply as ideas that require further development. Detailed discussion of the evidence he sees for the possible influence on the *Bórama* of any one of the texts he mentions, for instance, would be very welcome. As is the case with other contributors, Buttimer concludes by appealing for a critical edition of this important text, accompanied by translation and detailed commentary. (p. 127, n. 89).

Although these studies serve further to show the limitations of categorizing medieval Irish into cycles, especially in the case of the two cycles with which they are concerned, it is unlikely that the cyclical designations will be abandoned, having been employed now for well over a century. *The Mythological Cycle of Medieval Irish Literature* and *Revisiting the Cycles of the Kings* are both welcome publications, as is the series of Cork Studies in Celtic Literatures to which they belong.

RUAIRÍ Ó HUIGINN

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Bone and Marrow / Cnámh agus Smior: An Anthology of Irish Poetry from Medieval to Modern. Samuel K. Fisher agus Brian Ó Conchubhair (eag.). Wake Forest University Press, Winston-Salem, 2022. 968 lgh. \$35.95–\$55.95. ISBN 978-1-943667-00-0.

Is achrannach an rud é an cnuasach filíochta. Cé na dánta a chuirtear san áireamh? Cé na dánta a fhágtar ar lár? Céard í an tslat tomhais? Ceist achrannach í ceist an aistriúcháin chomh maith. An fearr aistriúchán atá dílis don bhuntéacs, nó aistriúchán a dhéanann iarracht spiorad an bhuntéacs a thabhairt leis? Nó aistriúchán a dhéanann aithris ar mheadaracht agus ar struchtúr an bhuntéacs? Is é *Bone and Marrow / Cnámh agus Smior*, arna chur in eagar ag Samuel Fisher agus ag Brian Ó Conchubhair, an díolaim dhátheangach is deireanaí d’fhlíocht na Gaeilge le teacht ar an bhfód, agus is cinnte go spreagfaidh sí neart díospóireachta faoi cheisteanna dá leithéid. Síolraíonn sí as an traidisiún comhaimseartha duanaireachta lena n-áirítear *A Golden Treasury of Irish Poetry* (1967), *Nua-Dhuanaire 1600–1900: Poems of the Dispossessed* (1981), agus *Leabhar na hAthghabhála* (2016). Is fairsinge agus is uailmhianáí í ná a cuid réamhtheachtaithe, áfach: 183 dán atá inti ó thréimhse na Luath-Ghaeilge go tréimhse na Nua-Ghaeilge comhaimseartha,

maille le haistí comhthéacsúla agus nótaí iomadúla. Más díol suntais méid agus fairsinge an tsothair, is díol suntais líon na meithle a bhí páirteach ann chomh maith, agus eagarthóirí éagsúla, ar saineolaithe i réimsí ar leith iad, i mbun gach caibidle.

Tá leagan amach traidisiúnta go maith ar an díolaim ina hiomláine. Ní dhéantar aon mhór-athbhreithniú ar an deighilt a aithnítear de ghnáth idir tréimhsí éagsúla d'fhilíocht na Gaeilge, agus tá an cnuasach roinnte ina cheithre mhór-rannóg dá réir: 'Tús an Traidisiúin' (tréimhse na Luath-Ghaeilge); 'Filíocht na Scol' (tréimhse na Nua-Ghaeilge Moiche); 'Ré Nua: Polaitíocht agus Guth an Phobail' (ó c. 1650 go deireadh an naoú haois déag) agus 'Sprid na Saoirse agus Saoirse na Spride' (an fhilíocht chomhaimseartha). Ní chloítear go hiomlán leis an leagan amach croineolaíoch sin laistigh de na caibidlí éagsúla, áfach, agus tugtar aitheantas áirithe do luaineacht na teanga agus do na deacrachtaí a bhaineann le 'tréimhsí' dochta scolártha a leagan anuas uirthi. I gCaibidil 7, mar shampla, ina ndírítear ar 'Amhrán na nDaoine sa naoú haois déag', féachann na heagarthóirí leis 'an chinnteacht mharfach' a bhaineann le 'tréimhsí' teanga a sheachaint, agus tá dhá amhrán chomhaimseartha san áireamh sa rogha dánta atá curtha ar fáil acu. Faightear réimse seánraí taobh le taobh i gcaibidlí eile; léiríonn an cur chuige seo gur de réir a chéile a tháinig athruithe ar mhúnlaí agus ar chineálacha na filíochta agus, ar ndóigh, ar an nGaeilge inar cumadh iad.

Ní haon ábhar iontais, i bhfianaise líon na rannpháirtithe a ghlac páirt i roghnú agus i gcur i láthair na ndánta, go bhfuil an-éagsúlacht sna haistriúcháin Bhéarla a chuirtear ar fáil sa díolaim. Pléitear an cinneadh a rinneadh gan polasaí aistriúcháin ar leith a leagadh amach ag tús na díolama ('Focal faoi chúrsaí aistriúcháin') agus is amhlaidh go raibh ceisteanna polaitiúla chomh maith le ceisteanna liteartha agus aeistéitiúla chun tosaigh in intinn na n-eagarthóirí: 'All translation faces these dilemmas. But they are more pernicious in the case of a minoritized language and a history of colonialism. A translator hopes to make something Irish into something English. So did the empire-builders. [...] we thus did not impose any strategy on the contributors. They were free to create their own translations, of whatever kind, or to choose previously published translations done by others, of whatever kind' (Ich. 30). Tá idir aistriúcháin nua agus sheanaistriúcháin, agus idir aistriúcháin liteartha agus aistriúcháin litriúla ar fáil anseo, mar sin (agus ní mór a admháil go bhfuil éagsúlacht i gcaighdeán na n-aistriúchán chomh maith). I measc na seanaistriúchán a chuirtear ar fáil tá aistriúcháin mháistriúla Eleanor Knott ar dhánta Thaidhg Dhaill Uí Uiginn, aistriúchán ar dhán le Piarais Mac Gearailt a fuarthas i lámhscríbhinn ó lár an naoú haois déag, agus aistriúcháin a cuireadh ar fáil i ndíolamaí ar nós *Poems of the Dispossessed* roimhe seo. Ath-aistríodh dánta eile. I gCaibidil 9, mar shampla, tá aistriúcháin úra curtha ar fáil ag Michelle O Riordan ar dhánta a d'aistrigh McKenna sna 1930idí agus 1940idí ('Michelle O Riordan, after Lambert McKenna'). Ní i gcónaí a thugtar an t-aitheantas céanna do na bunaistriúcháin agus do scoláireacht na mbunaistritheoirí, áfach. Níos é seo atá le cáineadh, go háirithe i gcás na

filíochta nach filíocht chomhaimseartha í, agus a bhfuil dua ar leith ag baint lena brí a thuiscint agus a shoiléiriú.

Filíocht na Luath-Ghaeilge is ábhar don chéad mhór-rannóg agus, i bhfianaise fairsinge na díolama, is mór an t-ionadh nár tiomnaíodh ach an t-aon chaibidil amháin (10 ndán ar fad) d'fhillíocht na tréimhse seo, .i. ón seachtú haois go dtí an tríú haois déag. (Is fiú é seo a chur i gcomparáid leis an 74 dán ón seachtú haois déag go dtí an naoú haois déag atá sa tríú mór-rannóg). Ceileann an éagthromaíocht seo saibhreas agus fairsinge litríocht na Luath-Ghaeilge, idir litríocht na Sean-Ghaeilge agus litríocht na Meán-Ghaeilge, agus déanann sí neamhiontas den obair mhór atá idir lámha ag scoláirí leis an réimse leathan seánraí a cleachtadh sa tréimhse seo a thabhairt chun solais. Is deas, mar sin féin, an rogha dánta atá curtha ar fáil ag Joseph Nagy agus ag Natasha Sumner sa chéad chaibidil; tá 'clasaicí' ar nós *Messe ocus Pangur Bán* (Dán 1), *Fuit co bráth!* (Dán 6) agus *Is acher in gaíth in-nocht* (Dán 9) ann — dánta a foilsíodh go minic cheana i ndíolamaí ar nós *Early Irish Lyrics, A Golden Treasury* agus *Medieval Irish Lyrics* roimhe seo — mar aon le dánta nach bhfuil eolas chomh fairsing sin orthu, sleachta as *Serglige Con Culainn* (Dánta 3 agus 4) agus *Agallam na Senórach* (Dán 5) ina measc.

Más easnamhach an freastal a dhéantar ar fhillíocht na Luath-Ghaeilge, a mhalairt is fíor do thréimhse na Nua-Ghaeilge Moiche. Is don dán díreach, an réimse is airde d'fhillíocht chlasaiceach na bhfilí próifisiúnta, a thugtar tús áite sna ceithre chaibidil sa dara mór-rannóg, 'Filíocht na Scol'. Suirbhé ginearálta a chuirtear ar fáil sa chéad chaibidil díobh seo (Caibidil 2 sa chnuasach), agus tá saothair leis na mórphilí Tadhg Óg Ó hUiginn, Fearghal Óg Mac an Bhaird, agus Giolla Brighde Mac Con Midhe i measc na ndánta a roghnaigh Peter McQuillan agus Rory Rapple. (Tá stádas áirithe bainte amach ag formhór na ndánta seo cheana féin, agus cuid díobh arna bhfoilsíú in *Irish Bardic Poetry* agus in *Nua-Dhuanaire* roimhe seo). Leagann caibidil Michelle O Riordan (Caibidil 3) béim ar an tionchar a bhí ag ionradh na nAngla-Normannach ar chumadh na filíochta agus léiríonn a rogha dánta siúd an réim fairsing a chleacht na filí: tá dán ar stíl ghruaige phátrúin (Dán 22), dán bréagcháinteach (Dán 23), agus dán ar an Maighdean Muire (Dán 27) ina measc.

Cuirtear aiste fhíorspéisiúil ar fáil ag tús na ceathrú caibidle ('An Reifirméisean, an Concas Eilíseach, agus Deoraíocht thar Lear'), ina leagann Mícheál Mac Craith agus Geraldine Parsons béim ar an litríocht a chum na Gaeil ar an mórthír agus ar thionchar ghluaiseachtaí Eorpacha ar an litríocht in Éirinn. Cuirtear dánta ar fáil anseo a cumadh i Sasana (Dán 33), i Lobháin na Beilge (Dán 35) agus sa Róimh (Dán 39), dánta a leagann béim ar chomhthéacs Eorpach léann na Gaeilge. Is ar Phlandáil Uladh a dhíríonn Síle Ní Mhurchú agus Brendan Kane sa chéad chaibidil eile ('Freagairt Fhileata ar Phlandálacha'), agus tá ísliú céime na filíochta de dheasca athruithe polaitiúla agus sóisialta ina théama ag cuid mhaith de na dánta a chuirtear ar fáil (*Cáit ar ghabhadar Gaoi-dhil?* (Dán 43) agus *Ceist! Cia do cheinneóchadh dán?* (Dán 44) ina measc). Tá laoi fianáíochta agus dán grá san áireamh sa chuid seo chomh maith; téacsanna a luíonn lasmuigh den ghnáth-thuiscint atá ar an téarma 'Filíocht na Scol', ach a chuireann i gcuimhne dúinn nárbh í an fhillíocht dhocht chlasaiceach amháin

a bhíodh á cumadh le linn thréimhse na Nua-Ghaeilge Moiche (rud nach léir ar fad ón mórpheictiúr a chuirtear ar fáil sa rannóg seo, ina leagtar béim ar leith ar an bhfilíocht pholaitiúil).

Filíocht ón seachtú go dtí an naoú haois déag is ábhar don tríú rannóg, ‘Ré Nua: Polaitíocht agus Guth an Phobail’. In ‘Filíocht agus Polaitíocht Apacailipteach (1641–1660)’, tugann rogha Kane agus Fisher léargas dúinn ar ‘chuid de na foirmeacha, téamaí agus réimsí teanga a fheictear sna dánta ... a cumadh le linn tonnbnhriseadh na thréimhse réabhlóidí’ (lch. 312). Cuimsíonn a rogha téacsanna idir dhánta clasaiceacha nár foilsíodh i ndíolamaí roimhe seo agus nach mbeadh cur amach ag an bpobal mór orthu (ar nós *Deireadh flathis ag féin Gall* le Gofraidh Óg Mac an Bhaird (Dán 52)) agus mhórdhánta aiceanta lár na haoise ar nós *An Síogaí Rómhánach* (Dán 60) agus *Tuirneamh na hÉireann* (Dán 61). Dánta le Dáibhí Ó Bruadair iad sé cinn (as deich gcinn) de na dánta atá roghnaithe ag Fisher i gCaibidil 7, ‘An t-athréimniú agus Cogadh an Dá Rí’. Dánta iad seo a léiríonn an cumasc ‘de shotal uasaicmeach fraochta agus caoineadh léanmhar cultúrtha, idir phearsanta agus pholaitiúil’ (lch. 386) atá le sonrú i bhfilíocht na haoise sin. Tá teacht chun cinn na hAislinge chun tosaigh i gCaibidil 8 (arna cur in eagar ag Niall Comer, ag Wes Hamrick agus ag Éamonn Ó Ciardha), agus cuimsíonn a rogha dánta siúd mórshaothair ar nós *Gile na gile* le hAogán Ó Rathaille (Dán 73), mar aon le dánta a léiríonn gnéithe níos imeallaí den traidisiún, ar nós *A Athair Niocláis, mo chás id luí thú* leis an mbanfhile Cáit de Búrca (Dán 80) agus an dán macarónach *As I was walking one evening fair* le Donnchadh Rua Mac Conmara (Dán 78).

Is fairsing réimse na ndánta i gCaibidil 9 (‘Ón Seacaibíteachas go dtí an Gorta Mór (1700–1850)’), atá in eagar ag Liam Mac Mathúna, ag Deirdre Nic Mhathúna agus ag Pádraig Ó Liatháin (agus atá dhá oiread chomh fada le formhór na gcaibidilí eile). I measc na ndánta atá in eagar anseo tá dánta a bhfuil stádas ar leith bainte amach cheana féin acu ar nós *Cúirt an Mheán Oíche* (Dán 95), *Caoineadh Airt Uí Laoghaire* (Dán 92), agus dánta le hAogán Ó Rathaille agus le Máire Bhuí Ní Laoghaire. Cuirtear leis an gcanóin sheanbhunaithe seo chomh maith, áfach. Tá dán ann le Mícheál Óg Ó Longáin, mar shampla, ar fearr an aithne atá air mar scríobhaí, agus dán le Tadhg Ó Neachtain, a léiríonn an borradh a tháinig faoi shaothrú an léinn i mBaile Átha Cliath sa chéad chuid den ochtú haois déag. Cuireann caibidil den scoth, *Amhráin na nDaoine sa Naoú haois déag*, deireadh leis an rannóg. Cuireann na heagarthóirí, Lillis Ó Laoire agus Siorcha Nic Lochlainn, i gcuimhne dúinn go bhfuil an teanga scríofa agus an teanga béil nasctha le chéile, agus go ndéantar ‘éagóir ar an litríocht lámhscríofa agus chlóite agus ar an litríocht bhéil araon nuair a dhealaítear óna chéile iad’ (lch. 612). Cuirtear rogha gléineach amhrán ar fáil ó Ghaeltachtaí éagsúla, agus cuirtear i gcuimhne don léitheoir gur dlúthchuid de na hamhráin seo an ceol a ghabhann leo, agus go ndéantar iomlánú orthu trína ngabháil os ard.

Filíocht chomhaimseartha na Gaeilge is ábhar don cheathrú cuid den leabhar seo, ‘Sprid na Saoirse agus Saoirse na Spride’. Sa chéad chaibidil, ‘Ré na hAthbheochana: Filí, Rannairí agus Véarsadóirí (1880–1940)’, tugann

Philip O’Leary agus Brian Ó Conchubhair tús áite do na filí sin ‘a thréig na seanmhúnláí agus a d’aimsigh múnla neamhthraidisiúnta a d’oir dá nguth agus dá bhfís phearsanta féin’ (lch. 706), seachas d’fhilí a rinne ‘aithris lom bhalbh ar dhánta na nglúnta a d’imigh rompu’ (lch. 704), agus tá dánta le Pádraig Mac Piarais, le Pádraig Ó hÉigeartaigh, agus le hÁine Ní Fhoghlú i measc na ndánta a chuirtear ar fáil. Dánta a bhfuil eolas fairsing orthu i measc léitheoirí na Gaeilge iad na dánta ar fad atá roghnaithe ag Daniela Theinová agus ag David Wheatley i gCaibidil 12 (*Adhlacadh mo Mháthar* le Seán Ó Ríordáin (Dán 135), *Ó Mórna* leis an Direánach (Dán 141), *Aifreann na marbh* le hEoghan Ó Tuairisc (Dán 146) agus *Ceathrúintí Mháire Ní Ógáin* le Máire Mhac an tSaoi (Dán 142) ina measc), agus is cinnte go bhfuil a n-áit tuilte acu sa díolaim seo agus go mb’easnamhach í dá n-uireasa.

Is ar fhilí ár linne a dhírítear sa dá chaibidil dheireanacha den díolaim. Tugtar aitheantas d’fhilí *Innti* agus do thréimhse ar leith i stair fhilíocht na teanga i gCaibidil 13. Tá dánta leis na filí siúd a bhí ‘mar chroílár an ghrúpa’ (lch. 812) — Michael Davitt, Nuala Ní Dhomhnaill, Liam Ó Muirthile agus Gabriel Rosenstock — curtha ar fáil ag Caoimhín Mac Giolla Léith agus ag Clíona Ní Ríordáin, mar aon le dánta leis an dara ‘baicle’ d’fhilí, lena n-áirítear Louis de Paor agus Colm Breathnach. Tá tionchar mór *Innti* ar an gcéad ghlúin eile le feiceáil sa chaibidil dheireanach, ‘Deireadh an Áil? Glúin Y agus Z’. Is suaithinseach láidreacht ghuth na mban anseo, agus dánta le Caitríona Ní Chléirchín, Aifric Mac Aodha, Doireann Ní Ghríofa agus Ailbhe Ní Ghearbhuigh san áireamh. Má tá an dúchas le sonrú go láidir ar dhánta na bhfilí áirithe sin, tugtar aitheantas d’fhoirmeacha nua filíochta agus do thábhacht na teicneolaíochta mar mheán don fhilíocht sna saothair a chuirtear ar fáil le Ciará Ní É agus le hOla Majekodunmi. Ar na téamaí is mó a ndéantar cíoradh orthu sa rogha seo dánta tá cúrsaí inscne, ceisteanna féiniúlachta agus díothú an chultúir. Léirscrios na timpeallachta is ábhar don dán *Apacailipsis* le Matthew Ryan Shelton (Dán 173). Is spéisiúil nach bhfuil an ghéarchéim aeráide níos lárnaí sa chaibidil seo, áfach; léiriú, b’fhéidir, ar dhroghall fhilí na Gaeilge dul i ngleic leis an mórcheist seo.

Más tuar dóchais é líon na ndánta le mná i gcaibidlí deireanacha an chnuasaigh seo, shílfeá go mb’fhéidir nach raibh ceist na hinscne chun tosaigh ar fad in intinn na n-eagarthóirí agus iad ag cuimhneamh ar an díolaim ina hiomláine. Ní haon ionadh, ar ndóigh, gur fhir a chum formhór mór na ndánta a chuirtear ar fáil — níos lú ná 20% den iomlán a leagtar ar mhná — agus léiriú é seo ar a imeallaithe agus a bhí traidisiún liteartha na mban go dtí le fíordheireanaí. Mar sin féin, shílfeá go bhféadfaí ardán níos mó a thabhairt don fhilíocht sin dá bhfuil ar marthain ó pheann na mban. Is trua, mar shampla, nach bhfuil dánta le Caitilín Dubh ná le Fionnghuala Ní Bhriain — beirt bhanfhilí a bhí ag cumadh filíochta sa seachtú haois déag — sa chnuasach (cé go luaitear Caitilín Dubh san aiste ag tús chaibidil 4) agus, ós rud é go bhfuil dornán dánta ó thraidisiún na hAlban sa díolaim, nár cuireadh saothair le leithéidí Màiri Mhòr nan Òran agus Sileas na Ceapaich san áireamh. Ochtar ban agus sé fhear déag a bhí páirteach i roghnú na ndánta, rud a fhágann nach lárnach ar fad go fóill ról na mban i mbunú chanóin liteartha na Gaeilge.

Sa réamhrá a cuireadh leis an díolaim seo, maíonn na heagarthóirí gurb é a ‘ndóchas go mbeidh an díolaim seo ar na díolamaí dátheangacha is leithne agus is cuimsithí dá bhfuil ar fáil faoi láthair maidir le dánta, le haistí agus le nótaí de agus go dtabharfar léargas cuimsitheach anseo ar stair agus ar chultúr na hÉireann ón gcúigiú haois ar aghaidh’ (lch. 26). Is cinnte go n-éiríonn leo an sprioc sin a bhaint amach, agus ní beag an t-éacht an méid sin féin. Éiríonn go háirithe lena n-aidhm spéis a spreagadh i bhfilíocht na Gaeilge ‘mar fhoinse do stair agus do chultúr na hÉireann’ (lch. 27), agus tús áite tugtha do chomhthéacs stairiúil agus polaitiúil na ndánta tríd síos. Tá an díolaim féin tarraingteach agus snasta, agus an Ghaeilge agus an Béarla leagtha amach le taobh a chéile go soiléir, paiteanta. Is trua, áfach, nach ndearnadh eagarthóireacht níos cúramaí ar an leabhar sular cuireadh chuig an gclódóir é. Tá go leor neamhréireachtaí beaga ann, agus sleachta iomlána ar iarraidh nó san áit mhícheart i gcásanna áirithe. Shílfeá go mb’fhéidir go ndeachaigh rudaí áirithe amú ag pointe éigin le linn an phróisis eagarthóireachta, nó gur cuireadh athruithe i bhfeidhm i dteanga amháin, agus gur fágadh gan leasú sa dara teanga iad. (Sa chur síos a dhéantar ar dhán 30 (lch. 191), mar shampla, is sa leagan Béarla amháin a cuirtear alt faoin bhfile, Tadhg Óg Ó hUiginn, ar fáil, agus shílfeá go mb’fhéidir gur cheart go mbainfeadh sé le dán 27 (mar a bhfuil an t-alt céanna ar fáil sa Ghaeilge). Ar an gcaoi chéanna, is cosúil gur fágadh cuid den eolas ar lár sa leagan Gaeilge den chur síos a dhéantar ar an dán *Mac an Cheannaí* (lch. 462)).

Pé locht a gheobhaidh léitheoirí acadúla ar ghnéithe áirithe den chnuasach seo (agus is cinnte nach sásódh saothar atá chomh huailmhianach agus fairsing seo gach uile dhuine go deo), níl aon amhras ach go mbeidh fáilte ag pobal na Gaeilge agus acu siúd ar spéis leo cultúr agus stair na hÉireann roimhe, agus go bhfuil a áit féin tuilte aige i dtraidisiún fada duanaireachta na Gaeilge.

DEIRDRE NIC CHÁRTHAIGH

Institiúid Ard-Léinn Bhaile Átha Cliath

The Ó Neachtain Window on Gaelic Dublin, 1700–1750. Liam Mac Mathúna. Cork Studies in Celtic Literatures, Cork, 2021, iv + 110 pp. €12.00. ISBN: 978-0-9955469-3-6.

The fourth instalment in the series *Cork Studies in Celtic Literatures* is, as the author informs us in his preface, ‘an account of Gaelic scholarship in an urban setting, told from the inside ... in a modernising, bilingual city, ... early eighteenth-century Dublin’ (p. iii). The two principal figures discussed, Seán Ó Neachtain (c. 1647–1729) and his son Tadhg Ó Neachtain (c. 1671–post 1752), hardly require introduction. Their contribution to the Irish manuscript culture of their day, and the activities of the ‘circle’ of Irish scholars who gathered about Tadhg’s house in St. Catherine’s Parish, Meath Street, Dublin, has been acknowledged widely since T. F. O’Rahilly printed the now well-known poem *Sloinfead scothadh na Gaoidhilge grinn* in 1913. In truth, it was Edward O’Reilly (1820: ccxiii–ccxvii, ccxxvii–ccxxix) who first set down in print, almost a century earlier, an account of the huge number of texts composed

by the Ó Neachtains. However, O’Rahilly’s selection of *Sloinfead scothadh na Gaoidhilge grinn* for publication demonstrates his understanding of that particular text’s significance as a record of collaboration and antagonism between a number of eighteenth-century scribes located in an urban setting — to which most of them were non-natives. The text had, of course, been previously edited by Thady Connellan. In the years following this, writings such as Fr Lorcán Ó Muireadhaigh’s articles titled *Poets and Poetry of Kilkenny* and Corkery’s *Hidden Ireland* began to shape some idea of the eighteenth- and nineteenth-century scribal tradition, and the interactions between scribes in so-called ‘scribal circles’, latterly ‘scribal networks’.

In the last forty years or so, a number of scholars, such as the author of the book here under review, as well as Alan Harrison, Cathal Ó Háinle, William J. Mahon, Nicholas Williams, Nioclás Mac Cathmhaoil, M. H. Risk, Vincent Morley, and others, have delved into the work, lives and associations of the ‘Dublin’ scribes of the eighteenth century. Studies of the cultivation of the Irish manuscript tradition in other urban areas have appeared over the last half-century or so, with some very notable gaps. The traditions of Belfast, Cork and Limerick, in particular, have been very well described; the county-by-county *History and Society* series has also filled in considerable parts of the picture. A very substantial step forward was made with the publication of *Saothrú na Gaeilge Scríofa i Suímh Uirbeacha na hÉireann, 1700–1850* in 2016, edited by Liam Mac Mathúna and Regina Uí Chollatáin. In the foreword, the editors have noted that the manuscripts produced in eighteenth-century Dublin seem to have retained their primacy, however: ‘Tá sonrú ar leith á chur ag go leor de thaighdeoirí na linne seo san fhianaise leathan a mhaireann maidir le dálaí léann na Gaeilge san ardchathair ...’ (Mac Mathúna and Uí Chollatáin 2016: [vii]). There is certainly no doubt that the unusual scope of the extant material for Dublin City has had a large part to play in the interest shown in this region, in comparison to the more scattered records available from towns such as Drogheda, Athlone, and the larger Dundalk district.

As the principal objective of *Cork Studies in Celtic Literatures* is to produce ‘short studies’ which ‘will provide convenient access points ... to topics of interest to students and scholars alike’, it is obvious that little more than a general survey of the Ó Neachtains and their contribution to the Irish manuscript tradition could be attempted. Nevertheless, Mac Mathúna has succeeded very well in addressing the needs and expectations of the general reader, the student and the scholar. Considerable thought has been given to the layout and clarity of the text throughout. The body of the text consists of three main chapters, and a short conclusion. Aside from the bibliography, there is also an index of first lines and titles of texts, as well as a comprehensive index of names and places, including (under the entry ‘Manuscripts’), a detailed listing of all the manuscripts cited in the text, which is of great use. The arrangement of the material is very successful, with each of the three individual chapters focusing on different aspects of the lives and works of the Ó Neachtains, while avoiding unnecessary duplication. Each chapter employs a primary source as a starting point for the discussion. Chapter one, which sets out a good deal of

biographical and background information relating to the Ó Neachtains, is developed from Tadhg Ó Neachtain's records of family events (mainly deaths). Chapter two, a discussion of the group of scholars commonly referred to as the Ó Neachtain 'circle' commences with notes on *Sloinfeadh scothadh na Gaoidhilge grinn*, further information being brought into the discussion in the latter part of the chapter. The last main section, chapter three, uses the lament Tadhg Ó Neachtain composed on his father, where many of his compositions are recalled, to provide an outline of the literary works of both father and son; texts of particular interest, or considered representative of the Ó Neachtain output as a whole, are then reviewed in greater detail.

Chapter one (pp. 1–26) provides a very adequate account of the available information regarding the background and personal lives of Seán Ó Neachtain and Tadhg Ó Neachtain, as well as details relating to their wives and children. The urban context is set in a short description (pp. 1–3) of the population of St. Catherine's Parish, Meath Street, where Tadhg seems to have spent the greater part of his life; the available statistics on the prevalence of the Irish language in the region are also considered. This is followed by an account of the early life of Seán Ó Neachtain (pp. 4–7), his son Tadhg, and Tadhg's four wives and children (pp. 7–20); the chapter concludes with some notes on Tadhg's relationship — both personal and literary — with his father (by means of extracts from the conversations in 'Eólas ar an Domhan', pp. 21–5), and an account of Tadhg's son, Peter Naghten (*al.* Peadar Eagnachán Ó Neachtain, pp. 25–7), whose later career as a Jesuit is viewed as 'a logical extension of the constant social interaction his father and grandfather had with their many clerical friends' (p. 26). Much of the information contained in this chapter has already appeared in print throughout the years, including in a number of Mac Mathúna's own publications, but this new account provides a very useful synthesis of the available facts. For the general reader, the biographical details are given in a sufficiently lucid and brisk manner; the references, and all the necessary emendations that go with the territory, are relegated to footnotes. Readers with a particular interest in the subject, on the other hand, will especially appreciate the up-to-date information collected here, such as the notes concerning the new approximation (*c.* 1647) of Seán Ó Neachtain's date of birth (pp. 3–4).

Unsurprisingly, considerable use has been made of the family records preserved by Tadhg Ó Neachtain (the 'man of lists', as Emma Nic Cárthaigh described him) in his Irish manuscripts. Mac Mathúna has noted (p. 10) that the detailed records Tadhg has left us regarding his son Peter's birth on 29 June 1709 at Cole Alley may be 'the first comprehensive contemporaneous record in Irish of a child not born into the nobility', insofar as it contains 'careful detailing of the temporal and spatial circumstances attending Peadar's birth'; Tadhg's associate and fellow Irish scribe, Risteard Tuibear, also maintained similar records of the dates of his children's births (p. 9, n. 33). Some ten weeks after this, Tadhg completed a copy of 'Foras Feasa ar Éirinn', which he 'bestows' upon his infant son in a scribal colophon dated 15 September 1709, again noting the date of his son's birth. An interesting statement of Tadhg's

aspirations for his son's future education, certainly, there are few other direct references of this type among the surviving eighteenth-century manuscripts.

Such genealogical information always runs the risk of becoming dull, especially to the general reader, but Mac Mathúna has enlivened the account by providing extracts from a number of compositions written by Seán and Tadhg on members of the wider family, particularly the well-known poems concerning their wives. The compositions regularly attributed to Tadhg's third wife, Máire Ní Reachtagáin (*ob.* 1733) are also mentioned: Mac Mathúna has taken them to be the genuine work of Máire Ní Reachtagáin herself, while also acknowledging that other writers have come to different conclusions (p. 18, n. 49). The authorship of these texts, especially the lament on Máire's brother, Seoirse Ó Reachtagáin (*ob.* 1725) of Laracor, Co. Meath, has been a matter of some uncertainty for years; and the solution probably lies in the interpretation of the titles in the two manuscript copies of the lament that have survived. The matter has already been discussed by Ó Háinle (2005: 65 n. 32), and need not be repeated here. Mac Mathúna also notes that Tadhg's close relationship with the Ó Reachtagáin family seems to have lasted beyond Máire's death. It is mentioned elsewhere (p. 44) that 'Brother Tom', i.e. Tomás Ó Reachtagáin, had books on loan from Tadhg in the 1730s; Tadhg also composed a lament concerning 'Bás Eastair Nui Bhreasail bháin', the widow of Seoirse Ó Reachtagáin, in February 1741/2 (p. 20). It may be of some relevance that the registries of St. Catherine's Parish, Meath Street, record that a certain Thady Norton was present as a witness to the marriage of Michael Burk and Mary Ratican on 29 November 1747. Less than two years later, and in the same registry, there is recorded the baptism, on 6 August 1749, of Cecily Burck, daughter of Michael and Mary Burck, the gossips being Francis Tipper and Margaret Cutter. This, then, seems to explain why Tadhg had included the entry '1749 ausguit [*sic*] an 5.ughadh la rugad Sisilia Búrc' among his records (see pp. 12–13): her mother was a certain *Mary Ratican*, but whether she was one of Seoirse Ó Reachtagáin's children or not will probably never be known.

Chapter two (pp. 27–57) is titled 'Scholarly collegiality and clerical friendship', and, as such, focuses on the associations between the Ó Neachtains and other Irish scribes and the Roman Catholic clergy. As already noted, the discussion begins with a source which will be familiar to many readers: the poem *Sloinfead scothadh na Gaoidhilge grinn*, which Tadhg Ó Neachtain composed on twenty-six other Irish scholars (including his father) with whom he was associated in Dublin during the first quarter of the eighteenth century. Since it was first printed from the only (autograph) manuscript copy by O'Rahilly (1913), who fixed the date of composition in 1728 (or thereabouts), this poem has been tapped again and again by researchers for information relating to eighteenth-century scribes and their 'scribal networks'. Rather than reprint the text, Mac Mathúna has extracted (pp. 30–3) the names of the twenty-six scholars mentioned in it (as well as Seán Ó hÉidéin, the twenty-seventh member who is mentioned in a late addition to the text), and their native districts where noted (or where they can be ascertained from other sources). Members of Tadhg Ó Neachtain's 'inner circle', as formerly defined by Harrison (1988: 41), are

also distinguished, while under the name of each are provided ‘the first lines of poems addressed to other scholars by either of the Ó Neachtains’ and some other notes. The members include the well-known and prolific scribes Risteard Tuibear, Muiris Ó Nuabha, Stiabhna Ríghis, and the somewhat elusive Seon Mac Solaidh (as his name is now generally spelt, though the scribe himself usually wrote Seon Mhac Solaidh or similar in his manuscripts). Seán Ó hÉidéin and Aodh Buidhe Mac Cruitín are the final two members considered to have been members of the ‘inner circle’.

This is followed by notes (pp. 33–42) on about a dozen of these scribes. Mac Mathúna notes that the three known Catholic clergymen in the list are accorded first place, reflecting ‘the pre-eminent position accorded to the Catholic clergy among the native Irish at that time’. They are followed by Tadhg’s father, Seán, who is referred to as ‘niamh na scol’. Not all of the members were scribes, or even Irish scholars, in the strictest sense, however. The conclusion formerly reached by William J. Mahon (2016: 67) regarding the nature of the members of the circle is highlighted: ‘it constituted more than a simple network of scholars and scribes: most of the members ... should be regarded as forming part of Tadhg’s wider “textual community,” a concept which allows for the bonding of a larger group of people, including the technically illiterate as well as scholars, around his manuscript texts’ (p. 27). The number of different districts from which these scholars and scribes originated has been a subject of previous discussions. While this aspect of the tradition has been described before, and while the influence of the manuscript tradition and contemporary outside sources on the productions of Seán Ó Neachtain and his son Tadhg has been explored already, comparatively little has been done to assess the influence of the Ó Neachtain circle on the texts and types of literature copied and composed in other districts. One of the simplest steps that could be taken to his end would be to compile a list of manuscripts from other districts containing the compositions of Seán Ó Neachtain and his son Tadhg. Towards this end, an interesting set of extracts based on Ní Mhunghaile (2016) is printed (p. 29 n. 13) in a footnote, which lists a number of eighteenth-century and nineteenth-century Meath manuscripts containing texts composed by the Ó Neachtains. While the proximity of Meath to Dublin has naturally led to the transmission of a considerable number of Ó Neachtain texts in that county, it would be interesting to see information for other districts further afield. To give a few examples, a copy of the text ‘Stair Éamoinn Uí Chléirigh’ was made by a scribe named Seán Mac Ciar of Clogher, Co. Tyrone, into NLS 72.2.5 in the year 1738, ‘being the first of his Irish writting [*sic*]’. Another manuscript copy of ‘Stair Éamoinn Uí Chléirigh’, now TCD 2174, was pulled from a bog on the Westmeath–Cavan border about 1840, apparently on the property of the grandfather of Archdeacon William Plunkett Webb (1885–1949), formerly of St. Audoen’s (Church of Ireland), Dublin [? presumably William Webb, gentleman, of Co. Westmeath]. A number of other copies of Ó Neachtain texts found their way into the manuscripts of the Louth–Armagh–Down region, many of which seem to have been ultimately derived from manuscripts written by Aodh Ó Néill, such as COFLA MF9 (1802–3). The same Aodh Ó Néill, by his handwriting, had a loan of BL

Egerton 165, containing ‘Cath Bearn Chroise Brighde’, from Seon Tancart (*al.* John Tankard) of Mary’s Lane, Dublin — himself an old associate of Muiris Ó Gormáin — between 1796 and 1797. Finally, the Monaghan scribe Aodh Mhac Cába copied one of Seán Ó Neachtain’s poems into NLI G1423 in 1801.

While Mac Mathúna observes that Tadhg was in general ‘firmly Catholic and anti-Protestant in outlook’ (p. 37), his connections with two Church of Ireland ministers, Dr Uaithne Réamonn (*al.* Anthony Raymond, F.T.C.D.), and Dr Francis Stoughton Sullivan, F.T.C.D., are noted. Dr Francis Stoughton Sullivan will be principally remembered as the patron of Aodh Ó Dálaigh, another scribe who appears to have vexed Tadhg at some time in the 1720s: it is tempting to argue that this hostility may have been driven by the prospect of Dr Sullivan’s patronage. Aodh Ó Dálaigh was still copying for him into the 1760s. One small point deserves a mention here: Mac Mathúna has suggested that the scribe Aodh Ó Dálaigh may have been a Munsterman (p. 32), but the reasons for this do not appear. J. H. Lloyd (1912: 20) claimed that Aodh Ó Dálaigh was probably a native of the Meath or Oriel region, on the basis of dialectal forms appearing in a text compiled by him; Lloyd’s assertion was then argued against by editor T. F. O’Rahilly (Lloyd 1912: 20–1), on the basis of the same information. Further research into this question would be of interest, since Aodh Ó Dálaigh was, as noted by Lloyd (1912: 19), ‘a fairly prolific scribe’, whose reputation as an inaccurate copyist has been reassessed by Ó Macháin (2006) in recent years. While discussing Trinity College, Dublin, it is worth mentioning that Mac Mathúna’s summary (pp. 38–9) of the supposed links between the Ó Neachtain circle and Dean Swift’s writings is balanced and sensible.

The next two documents to be considered are the lists (dated 1737 and 1736 respectively) that Tadhg compiled of ‘books out abroad’, which are of interest in establishing the members of the circle who were still in contact with Tadhg by the late 1730s. Readers familiar with the surviving manuscript corpus of the Ó Neachtain circle will be well aware that there appears to have been a considerable falling-off in the number of manuscripts produced after the death of Seán Ó Neachtain in 1729, although the two events may be completely unrelated. In reality, the picture that emerges from the available manuscripts seems to show that the so-called ‘circle’ would have consisted of a chain of associations, being formed and breaking off at different times: early members, such as Uilliam Ó Loingsigh and Tadhg Ó Duinnín, seem to have associated with the Ó Neachtains in the 1700s; scribes such as Seon Mhac Solaidh and Muiris Ó Nuabha appear in the 1710s and continue into the next decade, from which books written by others such as Vailintín Ó hAnluain and Aodh Ó Dálaigh have survived; towards the latter end of the 1720s and into the 1730s, Seán Ó hÉidéin comes to the fore. All of this information, of course, is based only on the material which has happened to survive. The two lists mentioned above were already considered by Ó Háinle (2005: 63–4), who drew different conclusions relating to the date of the first list. Seven members of the circle mentioned in *Sloinfead scothadh na Gaoidhilge grinn* have been noticed in the lists: Dr Eoin (*al.* Seán) Ó Fearghusa, 1736, 1737; Seán Ó hÉidéin, 1736, 1737; Stiabhna Ríghis, 1736; Aodh Buidhe Mac Cruitín, 1736; Risteard Tuibear, 1736; Vailintín Ó hAnluain

(as ‘Hanlon’), 1736; Muiris Ó Nuabha (as ‘Newby’), 1736. The identities of some other individuals mentioned in these lists are also considered; more revealing still are the notes on the books which these scribes had on loan, many of them containing texts composed by the then-deceased Seán Ó Neachtain (pp. 42–5).

The final part of this chapter focuses on the relationship between the Ó Neachtain family and both Roman Catholic and Church of Ireland clergymen. Mac Mathúna (pp. 45–52) also describes Seán Ó Neachtain’s friendship with Fr Pól Mac Aodhagáin, as revealed through a series of poems. Two compositions relate to Fr Pól Mac Aodhagáin’s imprisonment in the Black Dog in 1711, one of which is littered with grammatical errors (**gur táim-si*, etc.) and code-mixing, ostensibly mirroring the pidgin Irish of one of Fr Pól Mac Aodhagáin’s fellow priests and prisoners. Himself a Popish schoolmaster, Seán Ó Neachtain composed another piece, *Mo bheannacht leat, a p[h]aipeir*, after he was obliged to temporarily take refuge in the Dublin Mountains. An account of the associations between the Ó Neachtain circle and Dr Éamonn Ó Broin (Dr Edward Byrne, Roman Catholic Archbishop of Dublin) and the Church of Ireland clergyman, Dr Uaithne Réamonn (Dr Anthony Raymond, F.T.C.D.), concludes the chapter.

Chapter three (pp. 58–90), as Mac Mathúna points out, seeks to highlight various aspects of the autograph manuscripts and literary output of Seán Ó Neachtain and his son Tadhg, texts relating to family members and to ‘clerical and scholarly friends’ having been discussed already in the first and second chapters respectively (p. 60). Given the enormous amount of compositions that have survived from the pens of both men — over sixty pieces in the case of Seán Ó Neachtain, and ‘just over’ fifty in Tadhg’s case, according to Mac Mathúna (p. 60) — the approach taken here has been to focus on a small cluster of texts which are representative of the main themes appearing in the Ó Neachtain compositions as a whole, which vary from ‘extremely grave matters, such as those by Tadhg responding to the famine of 1740–1’ to ‘light-hearted’ pieces, which betray, at times, a ‘carefree, rather Rabelaisian outlook’ (p. 60). The supposed division between Seán’s earlier, coarser verse, and his later religious compositions — a shift often said to have been brought about by the death of his wife, Úna Ní Bhroin (*ob.* 1706/7) — while apparent to some degree, is clearly ‘not absolute’ (p. 61; see also p. 7). A useful list is provided (pp. 58–9) of the surviving manuscripts of Seán Ó Neachtain (four manuscripts, mostly autograph copies of his texts) and his son Tadhg (twenty-five manuscripts: fourteen in full; eleven in part); the small number of manuscripts from Seán’s hand being compensated for by the substantial number of copies of his work made by other members of the Ó Neachtain circle. There are probably further manuscripts or manuscript scraps yet in existence which remain uncatalogued or unknown. On the other hand, as Mac Mathúna notes, ‘there is very little evidence of Tadhg’s own creative works passing into circulation’ (p. 58).

As mentioned already, Mac Mathúna begins his discussion of Seán Ó Neachtain’s texts by listing (on pp. 61–5) those enumerated in his lament, A

bharda Éireann, an dear libh grá mo chroí, composed by Tadhg Ó Neachtain. Some of the surviving manuscript copies are listed, generally those generated by members of the Ó Neachtain circle, or within the confines of Dublin City. The piece itemises most of Seán Ó Neachtain's important religious and romantic texts, as well as a number of his poems. For further discussion of his more earthy compositions, Mac Mathúna has selected *Do bhí Ludar cróin Mac Lōbuis* (pp. 66–7) and 'Cath Bearna Chroise Brighde' (pp. 67–70), in the second of which Risteard Tuibear appears as a character. The religious and political side of Seán Ó Neachtain is explored in the pieces *Is trom do chodladh, a Mhuire mhór, Do ghuidh me Muire Mhathair, A Mhuire Óigh fhionnghlan fhíor* and *Treisi dúthchas ná oileamhain* (pp. 71–3), the first three of which address the Virgin Mary, and the fourth St. Patrick: in all four pieces, they are rebuked for ignoring the prayers of the Irish, and of those who worship them the most fervently. His Jacobite poems are very briefly noticed, as are a number of his romantic tales. 'Stair Éamoinn Uí Chléirigh' receives considerable attention as a sample text particularly for its allegorical character and literary influences (pp. 74–8). It is followed by an account of the 'inherited' material in the Ó Neachtain manuscripts, including the extracts made by Tadhg Ó Neachtain between the 1720s and 1745 from the Book of Ballymote, including those copied by him into a volume he described as *Psaltair na Teamhrach* (pp. 78–81), and the number of copies of the works of Séathrún Céitinn generated by members of the Ó Neachtain circle, including Tadhg, is noted.

The chapter is concluded with a long but very interesting account (pp. 82–9) of the various notices and translations of newspapers found scattered throughout the manuscripts of Tadhg Ó Neachtain, particularly RIA 24P41 (1404). Mac Mathúna rightly observes (p. 83) that Tadhg's interest in world affairs and history is demonstrated in 'Eólas ar an Domhan', while current politics receive mention elsewhere in his work, but in these translations from newspapers, we see that he was keeping a close eye on both local news and matters further afield. Indeed, the extracts he translated come from a number of different papers — the *Castle Courant*, *Faulkner's Dublin Journal*, *Harding's Dublin Impartial News Letter*, and others (p. 84). Other items of news are recorded from or alongside Tadhg's own personal observations; the manner in which his notices of the execution of a condemned Jacobite, Moses Nowland, and of the death of George I, are framed speaks volumes of the opinions Tadhg entertained of them (pp. 85–7). Some of Tadhg's notes regarding the Famine of 1740–1, which notes have already been printed elsewhere and which are of real interest, are discussed. The final entry we have from Tadhg Ó Neachtain's hand, as far as is known, is a note regarding the commencement of 'New Style' dating and the Gregorian Calendar in Ireland on 14 September 1752, when he would have been in his early eighties. 'Characteristically', writes Mac Mathúna (p. 89), 'it relates to the process of modernisation...'. A short conclusion, titled chapter four (p. 91), completes the body of the text.

In summary, this publication presents all the necessary information relating to the Ó Neachtains, their family and associates, as well as their literary

accomplishments. The author's ability to sustain a narrative while balancing the diverse needs of different types of readers is admirable. As such, it would be an excellent reference book for the student or any individual interested either in the Irish manuscript tradition or the literary heritage of Dublin city. As already stated, the thoughtful ordering of the material into three chapters has ensured that readers unfamiliar with the subject will have no difficulty in following the arguments made by Mac Mathúna, nor in interpreting their significance in relation to the preceding material. The researcher will find here a very useful reference source, ideal as a starting point for further studies in the area: the appearance of a straightforward, reliable and up-to-date version of the Ó Neachtain story can only be welcomed. A word must be said on his use of English translations alongside Irish language excerpts and quotations: all but a very small number of readers will find such translations of great use and benefit. Even those competent in Modern Irish will find the English versions useful in navigating the sometimes wayward orthography of the eighteenth-century scribes (including, it must be said, that of Tadhg Ó Neachtain); these translations will also allow other readers to appraise for themselves the strengths and weaknesses of some of the Ó Neachtain compositions.

There are a few small omissions in the 'Index of First Lines', etc., as might be expected in any book, but overall this is a model of clarity and succinctness, which will hopefully lead to new research, both on the works of the Ó Neachtains and on the scribes of other regions both urban and rural. There is still a bewildering amount of material to be catalogued, sifted and understood.

ABBREVIATION

COFLA Cardinal Ó Fiaich Library and Archive, Armagh.

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FINTAN KEEGAN

Roinn na Nua-Ghaeilge, N.U.I. Maynooth

Kindheit in der Gründerzeit zwischen Alster und Elbe: Kuno Meyers Tagebücher, 1868–1874. Edited by Bernhard Maier. Bibliotheca Academica, Geschichte, Band 4. Ergon Verlag, Würzburg, 2016. 311 pp. €48.00. ISBN 978-3-95650-163-0.

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Kuno Meyer und Wales: Letters to John Glyn Davies, 1892–1919. Edited by Bernhard Maier. Bibliotheca Academica, Geschichte, Band 8. Ergon Verlag, Würzburg, 2017. 171 pp. €32.00. ISBN 978-3-95650-267-5.

No one did more than Kuno Meyer to make the study of early Irish literature ‘respectable’, and if Douglas Hyde’s *Love-Songs of Connacht* (1893) and his subsequent publications could be said to have set a light to the Irish literary revival of Yeats and Lady Gregory — at least insofar as they revealed for the first time to them and their like the riches of modern Irish literature in the vernacular — it was Meyer’s various translations from the earlier manuscripts that first revealed the treasures that lay buried in the older literature in Irish. The

full extent to which those two great pioneering scholars corresponded on these subjects was only recently revealed (see Dáibhí Ó Cróinín, 'Letters of Kuno Meyer to Douglas Hyde, 1896–1919', *Studia Hibernica* 42 [2016], 1–64); before that readers had Seán Ó Lúing's excellent biography (1991) to draw upon for the general picture of Meyer's mature years as an established scholar of Irish. Now, however, with the publication of these four marvellous volumes, Bernhard Maier of Tübingen has cast extraordinary new light on Meyer's youth and early formation and revealed, in over a thousand pages of annotated text, and in astonishing detail, the origins of his interest in Ireland and its literature and the enormous range of his contacts and influence.

Kuno Meyer was born on 20 December 1858. The fragmentary diaries that have survived for the years 1868, 1869, 1870 and 1871, the first of Maier's discoveries, reveal a happy and comfortable, if not lavish home life in Hamburg. Kuno reports regular outings and trips, with Papa, Mama, Edu [his older brother Eduard], Toni [his sister Antonie], and his younger brother Albrecht; the family appears to have been a very happy one. Kuno occasionally punctuated his daily diary entries with pencil drawings (his artistic skills improved with time, as did his handwriting); he was a talented artist and draughtsman. The phrases *nichts merkwürdiges* and *nichts Bedeutendes* appear with regularity, with equally regular lists of the presents that Kuno and his siblings received either for birthdays or for Christmas. It is not to be expected that a youngster of his age would comment on contemporary developments in the outside world, though the Franco-Prussian War of 1870–1 does intrude, with regular bulletins on the course of the hostilities. Closer to home, the occasional reference to school-mates who were struck down by fatal illnesses (including rheumatoid arthritis) presages the medical problems that Kuno himself was to labour under all his life and for which he sought periodic cures (mostly without success). It is somewhat surprising to discover that he was not particularly precocious in school, and required help from his father with Latin and Greek and from his brother Eduard with mathematics. Eduard, for his part, was to become one of the leading historians of the ancient world (ranked alongside the great Mommsen and Eduard Schwarz), and there is a sense in all of Kuno's surviving diaries and letters that he was throughout his life in awe of his older brother. Kuno's lists of books that he had read each year show him already well initiated into Greek and Latin, as well as English (compulsory even then). A less than distinguished school career, together with a restless spirit, might have seen Kuno head off into the world (as his brother Albrecht did, to the Yucatan, where he died tragically in 1881), but destiny intervened in 1874 when his parents noticed a small advertisement, forwarded by the director of his school, stating that *ein erblindeter deutscher Gelehrter, sein name ist Heinrich Weisse, ein Mann von 56 Jahren, auf 2 Jahre ein 15jährigen Knabe suche, der ihm als Vorleser u. Begleiter den Verlust seiner Augen ersetze* (full text p. 286 n. 258). The parents — to their eternal credit — leapt at the chance and on 14 April 1874 Kuno set sail for Edinburgh. The rest, as they say, is history.

The second of Bernhard Maier's discoveries in the Staatsbibliothek Preussischer Kulturbesitz in Berlin, namely the letters that Kuno sent back to his

family during those two formative years that he spent in Scotland, offers an almost day-by-day insight into his life in Edinburgh and a detailed and fascinating account of what was happening around him in Victorian Scotland. The man to whom he came as *amanuensis*, Heinrich Weisse, had been educated to university level in Berlin before being struck by blindness, but his disability in no way halted his activities as a teacher of German. With Kuno as his eyes and ears, he gave regular private lessons to a range of interested students (mostly women), whose spoken grammar and pronunciation he corrected himself, but whose written exercises Kuno then read and corrected. Kuno also had the daily task of reading *The Scotsman* to Weisse every day — in its entirety; it usually took Kuno three hours to get through it from cover to cover! — together with a weekly Berlin newspaper that kept up Weisse's contact with happenings in the homeland, as well as a range of books on language and science and contemporary affairs. Kuno also had the use of his not inconsiderable library.

The holidays offered the promise of a trip to the island of Arran. When he eventually got there in July 1874 he marvelled at the fact that only Scots Gàidhlig was spoken there ('*Es sprechen dort alle Leute nur Gälisch und das Englische wird als fremde Sprache in den Schulen gelernt*', p. 81; and p. 90). The encounter was to provide the spark for his later devotion to the Irish language, and he even toyed with the idea of trying to learn it ('*vielleicht lerne ich ein bisschen, obgleich es sehr schwer sein soll*'). In a letter to his father in English (to show off his progress in the language) he quoted the Professor of Oriental Languages in Edinburgh to the effect that 'Without a considerable knowledge of Gaelic no person can make any proficiency whatever in philology' (p. 109), but bemoaned the want of good instruction material in the language. He also learned a couple of songs in Scots, and noted the distinctiveness of the language (p. 107; 130–2). He read David Herd's *Ancient and Modern Scottish Ballads* (1776), but felt that Scottish ballads were 'all murder and mayhem' ('*Es ist alles Mord und Totschlag in den Dichtungen der Schotten u. selten begegnet man einem anmutigen, lustigen Liedchen*'; p. 202). As an alternative he recommends to his brother Albrecht *Gems of Moore's Irish Melodies*: '*Es ist alles das reinste Englisch*' (p. 200). '*Gleich das zweite Lied ist die bekannte "Letzte Rose", die er nun im Original lesen, lernen und singen kann*'.

In light of his later career, it is amusing to read that Kuno agreed with the view of John Blackie (Professor of Greek in Edinburgh University, one of Herr Weisse's acquaintances) that the study of 'Celtic' was important, but that the Celtic Muse was not to be compared to that of the Greeks and Romans ('*obgleich sich die Muse dieses Volkes der griechischen u. römischen wol nicht an die Seite stellen kann*', p. 198). All the while he was working away at Cicero and Herodotus, the *Poetae Lyrici Graeci*, Tacitus's *Germania* and some books on English and Gothic grammar, several of which he was able to borrow from Weisse's university friends. It was during those two years too that he acquired that mastery of English which was to be the hallmark of his translations from the Irish in later years, though for those who wonder what his accent was like, he recounts a story (p. 227) of how, after reciting Robbie Burns's *Tam o' Shanter* in company, a listener remarked: 'Indeed, you're speakin' like a real Scotchman!'

This daily routine at 1 Darnaway Street is described by Kuno in letters to his sister Toni, his brothers Albrecht and Eduard, and the parents, *‘ein Konvolut von 361 Blättern’* (as Bernhard Maier describes them) that remained in private hands until 1986, when they went to the Stabi in Berlin. Herr Weisse himself comes across as a very pleasant individual. Almost equally fascinating was ‘Madame Weisse’, his wife, who could play anything on the piano and who seems to have taken to Kuno; so much so that he remarked at one point that the Weisses offered, half in jest, to adopt him and to send their son, John, to Hamburg in exchange! The relationship was cemented by their regular attendance at concerts, though Kuno was not always enthused by what he heard: of some modern *Zukunftsmusik* that they heard he remarked *‘Ich möchte übrigens die Zukunft nicht erleben, wo solcher Unsinn Musik genannt wird!’* (p. 152). A later encounter with Scottish bagpipe music (p. 186) shows him trying to tune his classically trained ears to the different style of the native sound (*‘Zuerst kam es mir vor, daß es nichts als melodiloser Unsinn sei; ... lange dauerte es, ehe ich die Melodie heraushören konnte’*). The Christmas pantomime season was the occasion of his encounter with *‘ein kleiner Gesang’* that was *‘besonders hübsch’*: ‘For the fox and the bear, / And the hound and the hare, / And the birds in the greenwood tree, / And the pretty little rabbits / So engaging in their habits / Have all their mate but me.’ It survives to this day in the singing tradition of West Cork.

‘Madame W.’ was no shrinking violet: there is a hilarious account of how she thwarted a would-be mugger who made off with her purse; the perpetrator got a sentence of nine years for his trouble! In response to queries from home about possible romantic attachments to one or other of the young ladies who came to Herr Weisse for German lessons, there is a tantalising mention of a Mary Jane Todd from Dublin whom Kuno appears (p. 234) to have envisaged as a future wife (*‘eure künftige Schwiegertochter’*). But there is no more word of her. Kuno was even less fortunate in his later engagement to Mary, one of the two Weisse daughters, which he broke off.

His description of a Free Church of Scotland service that he attended with Weisse’s son John (p. 172) offers a rare glimpse of his interest in religion; he was not impressed. Weisse senior made his own distaste for Catholicism clear in debates with James Cowan, Lord Provost of Edinburgh (1816–96), who had an unseemly tolerance (*Neigung*) towards Catholic rites and beliefs (according to Weisse; p. 171) that derived from a period spent living in Bavaria; Kuno’s own view of Catholicism emerges only later, and then only fleetingly. In recounting his new acquaintance with a visiting Professor of English from Germany (p. 206), he describes his wife as ‘a Catholic from that nest of priests Regensburg’ (*‘eine Katholikin aus jenem Pfaffenneste Regensburg’*). Kuno’s then view of the Irish is reflected in a striking statement: *‘Die Irlander sind viel fleißiger und ordentlicher als die Schotten und ganz mit Unrecht so gescholten und verachtet’* (p. 194). His verdict on the English, by comparison, is amusing: *‘Alle Engländer sind nur große Kinder’* (p. 199), though he does admit that his fellow countrymen lag behind the English in many things, e.g., in the quality of their matches (*Streichhölzer*) (p. 198)!

Though Weisse's circle of acquaintances included several prominent political figures, there were only occasional intrusions of politics, foreign and domestic, into Kuno's routine; e.g., the Home Rule Bill of 1874, the defeat of the second Home Rule Bill of 1886 (p. 95 n. 124) and the outbreak of the second Boer War in October 1899 (p. 129 n. 210), while in March of that year he reported in great detail on the pomp and ceremony of a state funeral granted to Sir James Hope Grant (1808–75), who had served with distinction in China, India and the Crimea: *'Jedenfalls war es ein großartiger Anblick, und der Eindruck ein sehr mächtiger'* (p. 163).

Students of philology will be surprised to read Kuno's account (173) of the revelation that many of the statements in Dwight Whitney's *Lectures on Language* (1867) were lifted verbatim from Max Müller's publications. Müller was prompted to make the revelation following an attack on him by a son of Charles Darwin, who thought that some of Müller's statements ran counter to what his father had written. Kuno's verdict on the affair: *'Von dem Whitney nimmt kein Hund mehr ein Stück Brot'*.

Kuno's rhapsodic description (p. 206) of his first encounter with a real velum codex (the so-called 'Auchinleck MS.' in the Advocates' Library) gives a first inkling of what was to come, and we may well trace his later love of manuscript studies to that moment. By the end of 1875 he seems to have made up his mind (p. 266) that Celtic Studies, rather than Anglistik, were to be the subject of his future calling (*'bei der Wahl eines Lebensberufs entschließen'*). How that career worked out is marvellously revealed in the correspondence that Kuno conducted with colleagues in Germany and Austria during the years 1874–1919; it numbers 335 letters and postcards that have been tracked down by Bernhard Maier in various European archives and libraries. These run parallel in many respects to the letters and cards that he exchanged with Douglas Hyde (see above); together they present an intimate portrait of Kuno's early school years in Hamburg, his student years in Leipzig (in the footsteps of his brother Eduard), and his time as a private tutor to the Arnold family in Lowestoft in England, before his appointment to the Chair of German in Liverpool University in 1884 and his succession to Heinrich Zimmer as Professor of Celtic in Berlin in 1911. The nearly four years (1914–17) that he subsequently spent in the United States, promoting the cause of American-German relations (with a view to keeping the US out of the First World War) were seen by many of his English, Scottish and Welsh friends (and many Irish ones as well) as a tragic mistake on his part and the ill will generated by his activities resulted in the rescinding of the Freedom of the City that he had received in Dublin in July 1911 (it was restored posthumously) and of Edinburgh. E. C. Quiggin, for whom Kuno wrote several letters of recommendation to colleagues in Germany (p. 123), campaigned relentlessly for the rescinding of the honorary degree that Liverpool had bestowed on him, while the writer George Moore published a particularly vituperative condemnation in the English newspapers, calling him a traitor (p. 221).

Foremost amongst Kuno's German teachers (and later his colleagues) was Ernst Windisch in Leipzig, with whom he had already started learning Irish

just a week after his arrival there (p. 29). Theirs was to be a lifelong friendship. By 1881 Kuno was already editing Old Irish texts and was encountering that particular brand of *odium Celticum* that first appeared in Zimmer's *Keltische Studien* (1881), which spoke of Windisch in terms that shocked his colleagues (p. 45). He was himself to be at the receiving end of a similar diatribe from Standish Hayes O'Grady in 1886 ('*leider in ihrem Ton stark an Zimmer erinnernd*'; p. 93 and n. 119). In an unpublished letter to Windisch dated 21 August 1885 in the Leipzig University Archive (UAL NA Windisch 2, 187) O'Grady wrote of Meyer's book *Cath Finntrágha* that 'it is, from cover to cover, unmitigated rubbish. It conveys no one item of information and shews manifestly that he knows no Irish — except perhaps as a comparative philologist'! One wonders if Meyer's several failed attempts to meet O'Grady when in London had persuaded the Irish scholar that Kuno was trying to avoid him. At any rate he did not hold the attack against him, but was loud in his praise of O'Grady's famous *Silva Gadelica* (1892), even though he wondered, in a letter to Windisch of 1893 (p. 109) how O'Grady could be so wayward in his translations. He notes his passing in 1915, describing him as '*mein alter Widersacher*' (p. 280). The roll-call of scholars with whom Kuno corresponded subsequently is a veritable *Who's Who?* of Celtic Studies: Henri d'Arbois de Jubainville, Graziadio Ascoli, Robert Atkinson, Osborn Bergin, John Glyn Davies (whose correspondence Bernhard Maier has published separately; see below), Georges Dottin ('*Er ist ein sehr liebenswürdiger & munterer Gesellschafter*'), Henri Gaidoz, W. M. Hennessy, Joseph Loth, Carl Marstrander, Eoghan O'Growney, Julius Pokorny, Rudolf Thurneysen (who, it is revealed, worked on code-breaking during the war; p. 267), and many more, as well as scholars in other fields, such as Charles Plummer, Robert Priebsch and Eduard Sievers. And, of course, there were also the lifelong intimate friendships with Douglas Hyde and Whitley Stokes, whom Kuno visited regularly in London.

In 1884 Meyer was in Dublin, where he was pleasantly surprised to find that his reputation had preceded him ('*mein Name war überall bekannt*') and where the Royal Irish Academy made him a gift of its several facsimiles of Irish manuscripts (p. 61). He applied for the position of Todd Lecturer in the Academy, but was unsuccessful (he did receive the honour in 1904). He also reported (p. 102) how the Dublin archivist and historian, J. T. Gilbert (1829–98), had been advocating that more international scholars be recruited to publish editions of early Irish texts for the RIA, a plan that he said Stokes had declined to endorse, preferring rather that more facsimiles be published (while noting drily that Stokes could afford to buy photographs of any text he was interested in). It is quite astonishing to realise that, in between all these various activities and travels, Kuno was also instrumental in establishing the *Archiv für celtische Lexikographie* (published in three large volumes between 1898 and 1907), the *Zeitschrift für celtische Philologie* (still the premier journal of Celtic Studies), and the School of Irish Learning in Dublin (with the generous help of Alice Stopford Green).

All this time 'strange things were happening in Ireland' ('*In Irland gehen seltsame Dinge vor*'; p. 125). He wrote again in January 1899 to Windisch to

tell him about the notorious contributions of J. P. Mahaffy and Edward Gwynn to the Royal Commission hearings about the place of Irish in the national school curriculum; 'Irish literature, when not religious, is either silly or indecent', Mahaffy intoned, thereby setting in train the correspondence with Hyde and others that galvanised the Gaelic League into action and which resulted in the famously successful campaign to have Irish taught in the schools.

Perhaps the highlight of the entire correspondence is Kuno's letter to Windisch (pp. 132–3), dated 28 February 1900, in which he describes the occasion when a group of scholars and friends, gathered in Stokes's London home, ostensibly to celebrate his birthday, surprised the great scholar with the *Festschrift* that had been compiled in his honour. Stokes told him subsequently that he had taken the book to bed with him that night!

The letters from Kuno's years in the States, 1914–17 (pp. 201–308) make for painful reading, for the most part. He stated as his mission in going there baldly: '*Hier ist meine Hauptaufgabe, die Deutschen & Iren fester zusammen zu schließen*' (p. 221). Though it was to be expected that he would patriotically support the wartime efforts of his fellow-countrymen (his brother Eduard was even more active back in the homeland), the sinking of the *Lusitania* cast a shadow over everything, as Kuno well knew (p. 239); from that point on — and especially with the declaration of an unrestricted U-boat campaign in the Atlantic from 7 May 1915 — even the most pro-German elements in the USA (and the Irish-Americans as well) — found it more and more difficult to support the German side. His honorary freedoms of the cities of Dublin and Edinburgh were both rescinded (p. 236), and he knew of other moves against him back in Britain and in Ireland: '*Best & Bergin sind ebenfalls ganz antideutsch*' (p. 224), but he was grateful for their discretion in the matter. There are tantalising references to Big Jim Larkin (p. 261), a former student of Kuno's in his Liverpool days, as also was William Smith O'Brien, whom he encountered again in Chicago (p. 234), and to Roger Casement ('*der arme Sir R.*', p. 290), with whom Kuno had met several times, not just for conversation; he worried for him after the fiasco of his capture in 1916 and wrote that he thought he could have talked him out of his scheme to bring German arms to the Irish Volunteers ('*Ich glaube, wäre ich in Berlin gewesen, ich hätte es ihm ausreden können*', p. 289). Kuno mistakenly believed that Eoin MacNeill had fallen during the Easter Rising and adds, intriguingly, that MacNeill had travelled to Berlin (in 1910 presumably) to purchase Zimmer's library, and had visited Meyer in Liverpool on the way. Gradually, however, the activities of censors and the final outcome of the war reduced Kuno's correspondence to a trickle, and by Spring of 1917 he was back in Berlin.

Sadly, the entire war experience in America soured many of Kuno's personal relationships and his general outlook on life. There is a hint of the infamous 'stab in the back' accusation in a comment at the end of a brief letter of November 1918: '*Wir sind verraten und verkauft*' (p. 314), though he reports in 1919 that there are still some in England who were writing to him ('*Ich hatte wirklich schöne Briefe von einigen alten Freunden aus England, die trotz allem treu geblieben sind*', p. 321). He died of a heart attack on

11 October 1919 following a minor operation. His sister Antonie, in a letter to Edith Best in Dublin, wrote: 'He looked lovely, the painful expression had gone from his face and he appeared much younger. I put three red roses into his hands as his life had been given up to Dark Rosaleen' (p. 331).

Kuno Meyer's reputation as a scholar and activist rests principally on his activities in behalf of Ireland and her literature. However, the fourth part of Bernhard Maier's 'quartitych', an edition of almost all the 280 letters that he wrote to his Welsh friend of long standing, John Glyn Davies (1870–1953), reveals that his efforts were almost equally devoted to support for the Welsh language and its medieval and modern literatures. Davies was one of Meyer's earliest pupils in Liverpool and was for many years assistant lecturer in the university there, then director of the the Celtic Studies department from 1920 to 1936. Though none of his own letters to Kuno appear to have survived, what there is, both in Kuno's correspondence and in the detailed accounts of his activities that were reported in the Welsh national press, makes clear the extent of Kuno's interest in Welsh poetry and music, and cultural life in general, and his activism in support of the language (he learned Middle Welsh while still a student in Leipzig and some Modern Welsh from his pupils in Liverpool), as well as his untiring efforts to set up a library of Welsh books in the university. All these activities are reflected also in his regular bulletins to Ernst Windisch in Leipzig and others, and help to fill in the picture of his daily routine in Liverpool during his almost thirty years' teaching there, ending only with his departure for Berlin in the autumn of 1910, to take up the chair of Celtic left vacant by the tragic death of Heinrich Zimmer.

Bernhard Maier points out (p. 16) how the best efforts of Meyer to stir up interest in the Liverpool Welsh, in a speech in defence of Welsh at an Eisteddfod in 1874, fared no better than those of John Rhys (who had also been a student in Leipzig) in the very same year, when he gave a series of talks in Aberystwyth that subsequently appeared in print as *Lectures on Welsh Philology*, leading to his appointment to the first ever chair of Celtic in Oxford in 1877. Kuno received a rather backhanded compliment from a Welsh journalist, who described him as 'A German, who knows Welsh as well as any Welshman, and who has published a somewhat dull edition of the "Mabinogi of Peredur"' (p. 18)! It was not all plain sailing, either, in his relationships with native Welsh scholars. The palaeographer John Gwenogvryn Evans (1852–1930) actually sued Kuno for alleged breach of copyright on some material that he had used; the dispute even made it to the papers of the Welsh press, who gave a blow-by-blow account of Evans's bizarre courtroom testimony (pp. 56–7). Kuno coined a hapax legomenon to describe Evans: '*ein Arschgesicht*'!

Though the bulk of Kuno's letters to Davies are concerned with the daily *minutiae* of teaching and proselytising, as well as the usual academic tittle-tattle and idle gossip, they do provide an invaluable insight into his relationships with Davies and all the others, in Liverpool and beyond, with whom he came into contact; most impressive of all is his constant advice and encouragement to Davies himself to persist with his studies (in particular, to take himself either to Thurneysen in Freiburg or to Zimmer in Berlin, pp. 92–3) so that he could

eventually take up a university position in Scotland or Wales. Sadly, the correspondence peters out with the latter years of the war, but not before leaving a remarkable image of a remarkable man.

There are well over a thousand printed pages of text in these four books. Bernhard Maier would have earned our admiration for the task alone of transcribing and typesetting all the letters (I have found only half-a-dozen or so typos in the entire corpus), but the fact that he discovered these letters and published them, with expert annotation and invaluable introductions, makes the measure of his achievement even more remarkable. There are doubtless other Kuno Meyer letters out there somewhere, but with these volumes Professor Maier has succeeded handsomely in making Kuno Meyer the best known of all that generation of German scholars of Celtic who followed in the footsteps of the great Johann Caspar Zeuss.

DÁIBHÍ Ó CRÓINÍN

Gaillimh

ABBREVIATIONS

The following abbreviations are accepted for general use in *Celtica*, along with such universally known ones as p., ibid., etc. Any other abbreviations should be defined on first use and a list of them should be provided at the end of the article.

<i>ABM</i>	D. McManus and E. Ó Raghallaigh (eds), <i>A Bardic Miscellany: Five Hundred Bardic Poems from Manuscripts in Irish and British Libraries</i> , Léann na Tríonóide/Trinity Irish Studies 2 (Dublin, 2010).
<i>ACL</i>	Whitley Stokes and Kuno Meyer (eds), <i>Archiv für celtische Lexikographie</i> , 3 vols (Halle a.S., 1898–1907).
<i>AFM</i>	John O'Donovan (ed.), <i>Annála Ríogachta Éireann: Annals of the Kingdom of Ireland by the Four Masters</i> , 7 vols (Dublin, 1848–51).
<i>AI</i>	Seán Mac Airt (ed.), <i>The Annals of Inisfallen</i> (Dublin, 1951).
<i>AL</i>	R. Atkinson, W. N. Hancock, W. M. Hennessy, T. O'Mahony and A. G. Richey (eds), <i>Ancient Laws of Ireland</i> , 6 vols (Dublin, 1865–1901).
<i>Anecdota</i>	O. J. Bergin, R. I. Best, Kuno Meyer and J. G. O'Keeffe (eds), <i>Anecdota from Irish Manuscripts</i> , 5 vols (Halle a.S., 1907–13).
<i>AU</i>	Seán Mac Airt and Gearóid Mac Niocaill (eds), <i>The Annals of Ulster (to A.D. 1131)</i> (Dublin, 1983).
<i>BBCS</i>	<i>Bulletin of the Board of Celtic Studies</i> .
<i>BL</i>	British Library.
<i>Br</i>	Breton.
<i>CIH</i>	D. A. Binchy (ed.), <i>Corpus Iuris Hibernici</i> , 6 vols (Dublin, 1978).
<i>CMCS</i>	<i>Cambridge Medieval Celtic Studies</i> ; from number 25 onwards <i>Cambrian Medieval Celtic Studies</i> .
<i>CModIr</i>	Classical Modern Irish.
<i>Co</i>	Cornish.
<i>CSANA</i>	Celtic Studies Association of North America.
<i>DIAS</i>	Dublin Institute for Advanced Studies.
<i>DIL</i>	<i>Dictionary of the Irish Language and Contributions to a Dictionary of the Irish Language</i> (Dublin, 1913–76; compact edition 1983).
<i>EC</i>	<i>Études Celtiques</i> .
<i>eDIL</i>	<i>Electronic Dictionary of the Irish Language</i> (www.dil.ie).
<i>EMod</i>	Early Modern (in combinations EModIr etc).
<i>GPC</i>	<i>Geiriadur Prifysgol Cymru</i> (Cardiff, 1950–2002).
<i>GPC²</i>	<i>Geiriadur Prifysgol Cymru</i> , second ed. (Cardiff, 2003–).
<i>GPC Online</i>	<i>Geiriadur Prifysgol Cymru</i> , online ed. (www.geiriadur.ac.uk).

GMW	D. Simon Evans, <i>A Grammar of Middle Welsh</i> (Dublin, 1964).
GOI	Rudolf Thurneysen, <i>A Grammar of Old Irish</i> (Dublin, 1946).
IEW	Julius Pokorny, <i>Indogermanisches etymologisches Wörterbuch</i> , 2 vols (Bern, 1959–69).
IGT	Osborn Bergin (ed.), ‘Irish Grammatical Tracts’, supplements to <i>Ériu</i> 8 (1916), 9 (1921–3), 10 (1926–8), 14 (1946) and 17 (1955).
Ir	Irish.
ISOS	<i>Irish Script on Screen</i> (www.isos.dias.ie).
ITS	Irish Texts Society.
JCHAS	<i>Journal of the Cork Historical and Archaeological Society</i> (1892–).
JCS	<i>Journal of Celtic Studies</i> .
JRSAI	<i>Journal of the Royal Society of Antiquaries of Ireland</i> .
LEIA	<i>Lexique étymologique de l’irlandais ancien</i> (Dublin and Paris, 1959–).
LL	R. I. Best, O. Bergin, M. A. O’Brien and A. O’Sullivan (eds), <i>The Book of Leinster</i> , 6 vols (Dublin, 1954–83).
LModIr	Late Modern Irish.
LU	R. I. Best and O. Bergin (eds), <i>Lebor na hUidre/Book of the Dun Cow</i> (Dublin, 1929). Where necessary, the hands of the three scribes may be distinguished as <i>LU(A)</i> , <i>LU(M)</i> and <i>LU(H)</i> .
M	Middle (in combinations M _{Ir} , M _W , M _{Br} , M _{Co} etc.).
MD	Edward Gwynn (ed.), <i>The Metrical Dindshenchas</i> , Todd Lecture Series 8–12 (Dublin, 1903–35).
ML	The Milan Glosses on the Psalms, Bibl. Ambr. C. 301, in Whitley Stokes and John Strachan (eds), <i>Thesaurus Palaeohibernicus</i> , 2 vols (Cambridge, 1901–3; reprinted Dublin, 1975), i, 7–483.
Mod.	Modern (in combinations Mod _{Ir} , Mod _W , Mod _{Br} , Mod _{Co} etc.).
MV	Rudolf Thurneysen (ed.), ‘Mittelirische Verlehen’, <i>Irische Texte</i> III.1 (1891), 1–182.
NLI	National Library of Ireland.
NLS	National Library of Scotland.
NLW	National Library of Wales.
O	Old (in combinations O _{Ir} , O _W , O _{Br} , O _{Co} etc.).
PBA	<i>Proceedings of the British Academy</i> .
PRIA	<i>Proceedings of the Royal Irish Academy</i> .
QUB	Queen’s University Belfast.
RC	<i>Revue Celtique</i> .
RIA	Royal Irish Academy.
SC	<i>Studia Celtica</i> .

<i>Sg.</i>	Glosses on Priscian, Codex Sangallensis no. 904, in Whitley Stokes and John Strachan (eds), <i>Thesaurus Palaeohibernicus</i> , 2 vols (Cambridge, 1901–3; reprinted Dublin, 1975), ii, 49–224.
<i>SGc</i>	Scottish Gaelic.
<i>SGS</i>	<i>Scottish Gaelic Studies</i> .
<i>SnaG</i>	Kim McCone, Damian McManus, Cathal Ó Háinle, Nicholas Williams and Liam Breatnach (eds), <i>Stair na Gaeilge in Ómós do Phádraig Ó Fiannachta</i> (Maynooth, 1994).
<i>TBC I</i>	Cecile O’Rahilly (ed.), <i>Táin Bó Cúailnge: Recension I</i> (Dublin, 1976).
<i>TBC LL</i>	Cecile O’Rahilly (ed.), <i>Táin Bó Cúailnge from the Book of Leinster</i> (Dublin, 1967).
<i>TBC St.</i>	Cecile O’Rahilly (ed.), <i>The Stowe Version of Táin Bó Cuailnge</i> (Dublin, 1961).
<i>TCD</i>	Trinity College Dublin.
<i>Thes</i>	Whitley Stokes and John Strachan (eds), <i>Thesaurus Palaeohibernicus</i> , 2 vols (Cambridge, 1901–3; reprinted Dublin, 1975).
<i>THSC</i>	<i>Transactions of the Honourable Society of Cymmrodorion</i> .
<i>Tur.</i>	The Turin Glosses on St Mark, in Whitley Stokes and John Strachan (eds), <i>Thesaurus Palaeohibernicus</i> , 2 vols (Cambridge, 1901–3; reprinted Dublin, 1975), i, 484–94.
<i>UCD</i>	University College Dublin.
<i>VKG</i>	Holger Pedersen, <i>Vergleichende Grammatik der keltischen Sprachen</i> , 2 vols (Göttingen, 1909–13).
<i>W</i>	Welsh.
<i>Wb.</i>	Glosses on the Pauline Epistles, Codex Paulinus Wirziburgensis, in Whitley Stokes and John Strachan (eds), <i>Thesaurus Palaeohibernicus</i> , 2 vols (Cambridge, 1901–3; reprinted Dublin, 1975), i, 499–712.
<i>ZCP</i>	<i>Zeitschrift für celtische Philologie</i> .