

Aided Chúanach mac Cailchíne

Aggressive Tribes and Agressive Trees: a Critical Edition

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Introduction

The tale of Mór Muman and the Violent Death of Cúanu¹ is a treasure for the editor. It offers a wealth of possibilities to explore. Not only language and date were scarcely researched but also literary motifs and political messages, artistically entwined, were still waiting to be unraveled. In this thesis, I have tried to look at as many of these options as possible, with the risk of becoming overinclusive and superficial. For me, the most important point was to provide a thorough study of the date of both the prose and the poetry together with a new edition, and all this can be found in the first few chapters. I have also tried to survey different layers of meaning of this text; medieval genre, literary motifs, historical context and manuscript context will all pass in review. They will of course provide a mere framework, a platform, which hopefully will inspire more discussion and research from different angles. Much has been left for further study in both the subjects here studied as well as in all the other possibilities of the text that I have not touched upon. Therefore I hope that my humble exploration will be just one of many more works to explore the possibilities of Mór and Cúanu. In this light, I would like to say that I am indebted to Anne Matheson for providing me with a chapter of her unpublished PhD thesis on biblical parallels of Mór's madness. Although I received this too late for me to incorporate its most important finds, it has been very helpful and informative.²

On a more personal note, this work marks the end of a period of five years of my life and I would like to take the opportunity to thank all those who have continued to inspire me during those five years: prof. dr. Peter Schrijver, dr. Ranke de Vries, dr. Bart Jaski, dr. Mícheál Ó Flaithearta and dr. Margo Griffin-Wilson of Utrecht University as well as prof. dr. Damian McManus and dr. Jürgen Uhlich of Trinity College Dublin. I would also like to thank all my fellow students both here and abroad, for good brainstorming and nerdy discussions. Likewise my family and friends, who were not up for nerdy discussions but nonetheless took the time to listen to me. Special thanks however to Ranke de Vries, who provided me with many useful comments and helpful suggestions. Any remaining errors are, of course, still my own.

¹ Some call this text Mór Muman 7 Aided Chúanach, but in the diplomatic edition of LL and elsewhere it is usually called just Aided Chúanach mac Cailchíne, I shall therefore keep to this convention for the sake of clarity.

² From Anne Matheson, I also learned of two previous master-thesis editions of *Aided Chuanach*, unfortunately, I have not been able to acquire those in time either. However, some of their basic themes have come through to me through dr. Matheson's PhD and references to these themes have been made when appropriate. I realise this is highly insufficient and I duly apologize for it.

1. The Manuscripts

1.1 H2.15a and b (Or 1316/1)³

The story of the Violent Death of Cúanu mac Cailchíne is found in three different manuscripts: TCD H.2.15a and H.2.18 (the Book of Leinster)⁴ and RIA 23E29 (Book of Fermoy). H.2.15a is a very varied manuscript was formerly bound together with H.2.15b. It consists of both vellum and paper.⁵ The catalogue does not provide much details about the manner of composition, for example whether the different compounded vella all come from the same manuscript or from several. The catalogue does state it is a 15th century manuscript, whilst a memorandum written by Hugh son of Conor Mac Egan appears to be written in 1350, which would push back the date of that part at least a century.⁶ Another memorandum, on p68, claims to be written in the year Donnchadh O’Kennedy assumed the archbishopric of Cashel, he died in 1252 and this again could push back the date of the manuscript, or at least of this part of it, but it might also have been copied from an older manuscript along with the other material.⁷

As the catalogue does not provide any information on the external characteristics or composition of H.2.15a and since the manuscript has not been digitalized by the Irish Script on Screen project,⁸ I will include here a short description of the page on which *Aided Chúanach (AC)*⁹ has been written. Drypoint ruling and prickings can be found on the right margin of the page. There are two columns that are both defined by this drypoint ruling. The colouring is mostly done with red but some capitals have been coloured with green. The left margin is severely damaged and might be missing both prickings as well as *rosc*-notification,

³ Based on the information as found in the Catalogue of Trinity College, see n2. Anne Matheson, *Unpublished PhD-thesis* 135, includes this information on the manuscript: Anne O’Sullivan has noted that pp. 67-70 (containing our text) and pp. 97-104 belonged originally to one manuscript, another fragment of which is preserved in RIA ms. Di 1 or 1237 and marked “I (Additional”) Thornton, ‘Aided Chúanach’ 80-82, based on O’Sullivan’s unpublished notes for a new TCD catalogue). These fragments have been identified by Ó Concheannain as being in the hand of Tomás Cam Mac Fir Bhisig (fl. 1397-1432).

⁴ Also known as respectively: TCD 1316/1 and 1339. T.K. Abbot and E. J. Gwynn, *Catalogue of the Irish Manuscripts in the Library of Trinity College Dublin* (Dublin 1921) 90-94, 158-161. 1316/1 is numbered in pagenumbers in the catalogue, I shall here follow this system.

⁵ Abbot, *Catalogue*, 90.

⁶ *Ibid.*, 91. ‘At the bottom of p. 36 is a memorandum in Irish, written by Hugh, son of Conor Mac Egan, in the year 1350 (...).

⁷ Abbot, *Catalogue*, 91. ‘Account of the royal road of Alexander the Great. This is followed by a memorandum stating that this was written in the winter in which Donnchadh O’Kennedy assumed the archbishopric of Cashel. This archbishop died A. D. 1252.’

⁸ <http://www.isos.dias.ie/> cooperative project of the Dublin Institute of Advanced studies with different Irish libraries in which many important manuscripts have been put on line.

⁹ None of the manuscript variants has the appropriate lenition of the gen. sg. Cúanach after the feminine *aided*. For the edition this lenition shall be inserted, as lenition markers are easily forgotten or left out in manuscripts.

as the last-mentioned do appear in the other margin. There is a hole in the vellum at p69b in lines 9-14, but this hole is clearly part of vellum as the scribe has written around it. The top corners and the top middle (in between columns) are severely damaged and have been repaired with glue in more recent times. The glue reflects the light and makes reading difficult. At the top of the page in between columns '35' seems to be written in pencil. It says '69' in a younger hand at the top-right corner. There are not that many stains, only in 69a halfway the column. It seems that p68 is written by the same hand, only 69 seems to be written in smaller letters. The last word of line 70 of p69a, the only word of that line, is decorated with a small drawing. The contents of H.2.15a are very varied, as mentioned above, consisting mostly of historical and ecclesiastical material. It starts off with a medical fragment on laxatives. It then continues with portions of the *Senchas Már*, a historical fragment on the demolition of Conaing's Tower on Tory Island and the Expulsion of the Déisi from Meath.¹⁰ The manuscript contains a short story on a soul released from purgatory, an account of the royal road of Alexander the Great, which is followed by AC. After this, there is various ecclesiastical¹¹ and some miscellaneous¹² material. I include this information because chapter 9 will treat the possible relation between the content of the manuscripts and the tale of AC.

1.2 The Book of Leinster (LL)

Significantly more has been written about the Book of Leinster (LL). A facsimile edition has been made by Best and Bergin (1953-1983) and various scholars have published on the patronage, scripts and date of the manuscript as it contains a wealth of Old and Middle Irish material.¹³ It contains several vernacular texts like the *Táin Bó Cuailnge*, *Togal Troi*, *Mesca Ulad* and *Scéla Muicce Mac Dathó*. There also is some poetry and a text on metrics, texts on Tara and praise on Leinster and its kings. On the other hand, it also contains a papal Bull, the Martyrology of Tallaght and a text on St. Moling. This combination of interests has led O'Sullivan to conclude that LL is much more a scholar's book than a patron's book, as was suggested by O'Curry in 1861.¹⁴ This makes that 'the presence of such a professional

¹⁰ This is a later version of the tale as found in Bodleian MS, Rawlinson B502.

¹¹ A homily on Michael the Archangel, fragment of the Latin text of Ezekiel, a book on ecclesiastical law in Latin, fragment of a sermon on Mary Magdalene and a discourse on John the Baptist. Account of the deluge and early history of the Jews, succession of the patriarchs, some heptads and a printed calendar.

¹² On the seven degrees of poets, genealogies and the history of Troy.

¹³ Abbot, *Catalogue*, 158-161. R.I. Best and O. Bergin et al., *The Book of Leinster, formerly Lebar na Núachongbála* (Dublin, 1954-1983). A. Gwyn, 'Some Notes on the History of the Book of Leinster', *Celtica* V (1960) 8-12. W. O'Sullivan, 'Notes on the Scripts and Make-up of the Book of Leinster', *Celtica* VII (1966) 1-31.

¹⁴ O'Sullivan, 'Notes', 25. E. O'Curry, *Lectures on the Manuscript Materials* (Dublin 1861), 186.

document as the Martyrology of Tallaght is much more easily understood in this purely ecclesiastical context of a manuscript written by ecclesiastics for themselves'.¹⁵ O'Sullivan also emphasized the importance of the time-frame in which the manuscript came to be (on which more below) and calls it 'the last fling of the learned ecclesiastics of the unreformed Irish church'.¹⁶

O'Sullivan has identified four hands in the manuscript, named A, F, T and U. A stands for the writing of Áed Ua Crimthainn; F represents the style in which a letter of bishop Find Ua Gormáin to Áed appears in the manuscript. T is for the style used in the *Táin* and the *Togail Troí*, U for the style that is characterized by the frequent use of the uncial a in medial positions.¹⁷ There are some decorations in the manuscript and they can also be divided along the lines of this fourfold division. F employs 'the finest great beast with snakes type initials', A uses the same range of designs but his level of execution appears to be lower, U and T have some characteristic drawings of little human heads.¹⁸ According to the table made by O'Sullivan, the vellum on which AC appears (facs. p274-5, old foliation clxxxxiv-cc) is written by the hand of F, which he classifies as the 'finest hand'. He briefly speculates that it may have been the handwriting of the bishop himself, but immediately notes that this cannot be confirmed by the dating of the manuscript.¹⁹ A peculiarity is that the scribe uses the Greek symbol phi (φ) to indicate the quatrains of poetry that occur. It is known that in the later Middle Ages, mostly lay-out and rhyme were used to warn the reader that a particular piece of text should be read as poetry, together with a *punctus* after a line or with *litterae nobiliores*.²⁰ Bischoff does make mention of Greek being particularly advocated in the insular regions,²¹ but I have not been able to trace any reference to this usage of this specific letter as a device to create a lay-out for poetry.

The compilation is dated to the 12th century. Gwynn provides us with a detailed *post* and *ante quem* for the first part of the manuscript. The first *post quem* is based on the reference to the Battle of Móin Mór (1151) in some quatrains written by Finn. The second the death of the *coarb* Finn son of Célechar Ua Cinnétig (1152), because the main scribe of the

¹⁵ O'Sullivan, 'Notes', 26.

¹⁶ Ibid., 26. See also chapter 9.

¹⁷ Ibid., 'Notes', 6-7. There are also two subsidiary styles, M and S.

¹⁸ Ibid., 12-13.

¹⁹ O'Sullivan, 'Notes', 7. 'If a leading twelfth century Irish scholar and prominent ecclesiastic can write as fine a hand as Áed there is no reason why F, the finest hand, should not have been written by Bishop Find himself, but certain dating complications suggest that it was more likely the work of his scribe.'

²⁰ Malcolm Beckwith Parkes, *Pause and effect: an introduction to the history of punctuation in the West* (Aldershot 1992) 97-114. Although for the development of punctuation a lot of attention is paid to the Irish developments, in this chapter on the palaeography of poetry he provides no examples from Irish manuscripts.

²¹ Bernhard Bischoff, *Palaeography: Antiquity and The Middle Ages* 9th ed. (Cambridge 2006) 44, 154, 171ff.

manuscript, Áed Ua Crimthainn, was his immediate successor. Therefore the entry can hardly be written earlier than 1152. On the other hand, it cannot have been made any later than that either, according to Gwynn. He bases this on the title *árdríg Leithi Moga*, given by Finn to Áed. The only likely possessor of this title around that time is Toirdelbach Ua Briain, king of Munster, who was forced to leave his kingdom in 1153.²² Of course, many later entries are to be found, but as a starting point for the creation of this manuscript, this date sounds plausible. O’Sullivan has also done some work on the date of the various parts of the manuscript. He says that ‘when he [Finn] died in 1160 the materials that make up the manuscript had not all been written, probably not even all those from F’s hand’.²³ The pages of AC, however, most probably had been written by that time. This assumption is partly based on the arguments mentioned by Gwynn above, O’Sullivan: ‘The evidence of his letter makes it certain that the sections ff. clxxxvii-ccvi had been [written], and probably also the work of S, ff. ccvii-ccxvi.’²⁴

1.3 Book of Fermoy (BF)

The manuscript from the Royal Irish Academy, 23E29 or the Book of Fermoy, has been extensively documented by James Henthorn Todd.²⁵ He distinguished three different stages in the manuscript composition and has also distinguished the different ‘staves’.²⁶ The first couple of staves (1-16) probably dates from the fourteenth century and consists of the *Lebhor Gabhala Éirinn*. The second part (17-216) contains several closely related but different styles of handwriting and is seen by Todd as the ‘original’ Book of Fermoy. The third part (217-233) consists of medical material and also dates from the fifteenth century. However, dr. Flower has suggested that BF should be seen more as a ‘collection of manuscripts’ than as a single one, which would also explain the close correlation with the British Museum MS. Eg. 92 (both in material and scribe): the two manuscripts could have once belonged to the same library.²⁷ The manuscript appears to have been in the possession of the Roche-family of

²² Gwynn, ‘Some Notes’, 9-10. Donncha Ó Corráin, *Ireland before the Normans*, The Gill History of Ireland 2 ed. James Lydon and Margaret Maccurtain (Dublin 1972) 150-162.

²³ O’Sullivan, ‘Notes’, 27.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, 27.

²⁵ James Henthorn Todd, *Descriptive Catalogue of the Contents of The Manuscript Commonly Called the Book of Fermoy* (Dublin) 1868.

²⁶ The word ‘stave’ is ambiguous, it could stand for an older English word of ‘chapter’, I take it to mean the palaeographic term ‘quire’ here.

²⁷ Robin Flower and Standish Hayes O’Grady, *Catalogue of Irish Manuscripts in the British Museum* (London 1926-1953). The first part is medical and written by Donnchadh Ó Leighin whose family were physicians to the Roches of Fermoy. It also contains theological material on Molaga, the saint of Fermoy and some epic tales. ‘It once formed part of the collection of manuscripts known as the Book of Fermoy.’

Fermoy for a long time, as much of the contents are actually written about them and written directly for them. The names of several scribes occur and also many names of members of the Roche family. The manuscript in its present state is very large and its contents are thus too varied to be enumerated here. Again, it is a mixture of religious, historical and genealogical texts, including a large portion contemporary material devoted to the Roche family.

1.4 Other manuscripts containing related texts

1.4.1 TCD H.3.18 and H.2.16²⁸

TCD H.3.18 (not dated in the catalogue) contains two versions of the glossary *Dúil Dromma Cetta* called D1 and D2.²⁹ In both versions, with the headword *droch* ‘chariotwheel’, a part of a poem from AC is quoted. :

Droch .i. maith, ut est. droch do drochuib. Dagh do daghaib. Droch dano .i. roth carpat, ut dixit mor muman.

IS annam iar nimrim,
iter caisil 7 loch
inid aithenn findabrach
feras arán frim da droch³⁰

The manuscript cannot really be seen as a coherent volume, as it contains fragments from different sizes and different books.³¹ The D1 version is longer than the D2 one, but both contain the entry with the quatrain. This same entry can be found in H.2.16 O’Mulconry’s Glossary.³²

1.4.2 RIA D.iv.1(b) (Cat. No. 538)

This manuscript was written by an unidentified scribe in a neat regular hand at an undefined date. The *Catalogue of Irish Manuscripts in the Royal Irish Academy* proposes a date in the 14th/15th century. The manuscript consists of a mere ten folios the outer pages of which are so soiled and worn that all trace of the writing which they once contained is now obliterated. The

²⁸ TCD 1337 and 1318.

²⁹ For a full discussion of *Dúil Dromma Céta* and its relation with the other glossaries see: Paul Russel, ‘*Dúil Dromma Céta* and Cormac’s Glossary’, *Études Celtiques* 32 (1996) 147-174

³⁰ D1 and D2 through the Early Irish Glossaries Project: <http://www.asnc.cam.ac.uk/irishglossaries/>. D2: D² 139 **Droch dano** .i. roth carpait. ut dixit Mor Muman (MARG .r.) IS annamh iar nimrim, iter chaisil 7 loch, inid aithend finnabhrach, ferass arán frim da da droch. See chapter 4 and 5 for a translation and discussion.

³¹ Gwynn, *Catalogue*, 14-158.

³² Early Irish Glossaries Project: <http://www.asnc.cam.ac.uk/irishglossaries/>. Yellow Book of Lecan (TCD, MS 1318 (H.2.16)), cols. 88–122. **OM¹ 355 Droch** .i. roth carpait, **ut dixit** Mor Muman. As annaln iar n-imrim, iter Caisil ocus loch, inad atend findabrach, feras amran frim dá droch.

principal text is the *Imtheachta na n-Óinmhideadh* and it contains a text on the sister of Mór, Ruithchern (or Suithchern as she is called here).³³ Also Lebor Gabála can be found an incomplete *Life of St. Cuímine Fota*.³⁴

1.4.3 National Library of Ireland MS. G 7

The manuscript that contains *Mesce Chúanach*, a Modern poem on Cúanu, is dated to the sixteenth century and is probably of West-Midland origin. The scribe is James mac Quigge and it contains a wealth of native Irish texts as well as the life of St. Mochuta and a *Laudate Dominum*.³⁵

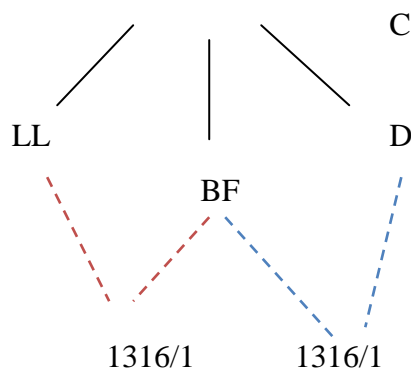
³³ Gearóid S. Mac Eoin, 'Suithchern 7 Rónán Dícolla', *Zeitschrift für Celtische Philologie* 38 (1978) 65-66.

³⁴ Thomas O'Rahilly et al. (ed), *Catalogue of Irish Manuscripts in the Royal Irish Academy* (Dublin 1926-1970).

³⁵ Nessa Ní Shéaghdha and Pádraig Ó Machaín, *Catalogue of Irish Manuscripts in the National Library of Ireland* (Dublin 1961-...).

2. Stemma

All three versions of *AC* are very closely related to each other. Often words are the same in all three manuscripts, and the instances where they diverge are usually examples of scribal omission or just of a slightly different spelling. The manuscript 1316/1 offers the most examples of a later stage of Irish and as they are minor and can be attributed to scribal innovation (like confusion d/g, c/g, unstressed vowels and *an* for the article, with older forms in LL and BF), these variations have not been incorporated into the textual notes or stemma. 1316/1 presents the final stage in the transmission of our text. LL usually preserves the oldest reading compared to the other two manuscripts. It must be said that BF, which also preserves very good readings, is damaged to such a degree that it is often impossible to compare its contents with the other two manuscripts. LL and BF are most closely related, after that BF and 1316/1. There are some small instances where LL and BF are similar in wording. For a stemma an hypothetical manuscript C, which is the exemplar of all related manuscripts is necessary since the texts are so closely related.³⁶ As to the origin of 1316/1 there are several possibilities. It corresponds closely to the text in BF but has some similarities with LL too, this may be due to a relationship to LL or to a relationship to another unknown MS source in the family (for example D).



The poetry in 1316/1 is probably innovative to this manuscript, considering the fact that the language of the prose and the poetry share the characteristics of the same era, the early modern period. Towards the end of LL and BF there are some minor differences in the poetry (which is lacking in 1316/1) but these do not majorly affect the metre or the meaning.

³⁶ In the unpublished masterthesis by Donna Thornton, which was unavailable to me except for some information that I acquired through the unpublished dissertation of Anna Matheson, it is suggested (based on palaeographical evidence) that LL was the exemplar of a lost text that lay at the basis of both 1316/1 and BF independently (Matheson, *Unpublished*, 135. Although it is impossible to conclude anything without studying her argument carefully, I am not sure this can account for the Old Irish forms that are found in BF but not in LL.

3. Dating the Text

3.1 Brief Introduction

As with any language, Irish can be divided into several historical stages, usually defined by a spectrum of major changes in syntax, phonology, semantics and/or morphology. The earliest phase of the language that does not strictly belong to the realm of reconstruction, is what is generally called ‘Archaic Irish’. This is found on for example ogham-stones and is dated to the period before 700AD. After this follows the most famous period of the language, Old Irish, which covers a period of the beginning of the eighth century to the mid tenth century.³⁷ After this period follows a sort of transition period between Old Irish and what is called Early Modern Irish (beginning from the late 12th century onwards). This phase in between the two strictly regulated forms of the language is called Middle Irish. It shows in many ways a language in transition. Of course, strict definitions are wont to get those who make them into trouble, which became all the more clear with the groundbreaking article by Kim McCone ‘The Würzburg and Milan glosses: our earliest sources of Middle Irish’.³⁸ He showed that these transitional developments are already to be found in the glosses from the 8th and 9th century, generally regarded as the core of Old Irish material. McCone explains this by introducing the term ‘register of speech’ to the field of Irish linguistics. With this, Old Irish as found in the glosses, turns into an artificial literary standard that exists next to a more colloquial form of the language that is used in speech. This tension naturally grows stronger as the spoken and written language diverge more and more, a situation that proved not to be tenable. Thus Middle Irish in its written form is generally dated as covering the mid-tenth to the mid-twelfth century, but, outside of the books, developments of this kind had been going on since the eighth or ninth century and only now had begun to slip in into the literary language. An incredible amount of changes took place in this period and it resulted in, among others, a greatly simplified verbal and noun system. The characteristics of these changes can be used to date a text found in later manuscripts. An example is one of the most important phonetic development of Middle Irish as opposed to Old Irish: the falling together of vowels in final, unstressed syllables to a ‘schwa’ sound. This meant that complete paradigms of nouns that were based on the difference in final vowel, remained indeclinable:

³⁷ See among others: Kim McCone, *The Early Irish Verb* (Maynooth 1987) 176. Liam Breatnach, ‘An Mhéan-Ghaeilge’, *Stair na Gaeilge: in ómós do Pádraig Ó Fiannachta* ed. Kim McCone, Damian McManus et al., (Maynooth 1994) 221-222.

³⁸ Kim McCone, ‘The Würzburg and Milan Glosses: our earliest sources of Middle Irish’, *Ériu* 36 (1985) 85-106.

‘Ritheann gutaí deiridh gearra neamhaiceanta (cf. II 10.6) ina chéile mar schwa a litrítear de ghnáth le *e*, *i*, nó uaireanta le *iu*, i ndiaidh chonsain chaoil, agus le *a*, nó uaireanta le *o*, *u*, i ndiaidh chonsain leathain.’³⁹

Final, short, unstressed vowels run together as a schwa that is usually spelled with an *e*, *i* or sometimes *iu*, after a slender consonant, and with an *a* or sometimes *o*, *u* after a broad consonant.

The transition of Old to Middle Irish has been covered in detail by Kim McCone and Liam Breatnach.⁴⁰ The following paragraphs are not meant to provide a full introduction to Middle Irish but will just mention the developments as they pertain to *AC* factwise. If more information is required by the reader concerning this, I recommend these outstanding works.

3.2 Phonological Changes

3.2.1 Final Short Unstressed Vowels

AC has many examples of confused final vowels due to this pronunciation as schwa, but of course it differs per manuscript. The final vowels as they are found in the poetry are most important, since there are strict rules concerning rhyme in Old Irish poetry. These rules required final vowels to be exactly the same. In *AC* there are sixteen rhyming couples of open syllables, of which fifteen appear to be correct. The pair *fri grithu : fri cure* (l.104-5) has been spelled with a schwa, even though it does confirm to the metrical rules from an Old Irish perspective (*fri* + accusative plural of masculine *io*-stem *cuire*: *cuiriu*). Another definite Old Irish pair is *Chaireda : dó* (l. 27-8 with variant *Chairedo : dó* in a later couplet l. 40-1), because if *Caireda/o* is the genitive singular of *Cáirid* (*Dún Cairido/a*, the Fort of Cairid, presumable an *i*-stem), it means the older ending in *-o* is required by the rhyme with *dó* (cf. Rudolf Thurneysen, *A Grammar of Old Irish (GOI)*⁴¹). *LL* generally seems to preserve the best spelling in final vowels.

The name of one of the main characters, *Cúanu*, does occur with an immense variation in final vowels in the nominative sg: *Cúano*, *Cúanu* and *Cúana*.⁴² Taking the evidence collated in footnote 21, it is a guttural stem which is used correctly in the closed unstressed syllables with a palatal end-consonant in the accusative and dative and a broad end consonant in the genitive singular. However, confusion about the final vowel in the open syllable is great,

³⁹ Liam Breatnach, ‘An Mheán-Ghaeilge’, *Stair na Gaeilge: in ómós do Pádraig Ó Fiannachta*, ed. Kim McCone et al. (Maynooth 1994), 230. Translations of *Stair na Gaeilge* are my own unless otherwise stated.

⁴⁰ Kim McCone, *The Early Irish Verb* (Maynooth 1987). Breatnach, ‘Mheán-Ghaeilge’, 221-334.

⁴¹ Rudolf Thurneysen, *A Grammar of Old Irish*, 6th ed. (Dublin, 2003), 61, 190-191. ‘From the beginning of the eighth century on, retained *-o* is interchangeable with *-a*; e.g. *betho* and *betha*, *tricho* and *tricha*, *úaso* and *úasa*.’

⁴² A list: *Cuano* (ns var. *Cuano*, *Cuana*), *Cúanu* (ns var. *Cuano*, *Cuana*), *co Cuanraig* (as same all MSS), or *Cúanu* (ns, var. *Cuano* both MSS), *Cúanu* (ns var. *Cuano*, *Cuana*), *Cuanach* (gs), *Cuanach* (gs) 2x, *Cuano* (ns *Cuana* 2x), *Chuanach* (gs), *Cuanraig* (as), *Cúanu* (ns var. *Cuano*, *Cuana*), *Cuanach* (gs) 3x.

though each manuscript is roughly uniform in its choice. The correct vowel of the nominative singular should be –u, a common form of a man’s name, cf. GOI §319. This vowel is correct in LL in four of the six instances. The final vowels in the prose are correct in the majority of the examples, especially in LL. Of course, since it is prose, it cannot be checked whether this is caused by pure coincidence or by a possibly older exemplar. However, it is noteworthy that the majority of the examples is correct. This might point to more than just coincidence and to a level of adherence to an older exemplar.

3.2.2 Vowels in Closed Unstressed Syllables

The dative ending –(i)u- is preserved in a number of instances: *in deriud* 5; *do Chaissiul* 8; *di argut* 15; (BF new weak conjugation with f-future but with correct –u- *natannubsa*) 16n24; *oc cainiud* 48; *timchiull* 51; *oca chainiud* 95; BF *fechtus* with LL *fechtas* 98. Incorrect usage appears only in *admilliud* (2) where it should read *aidmilled*. In most other cases the vowels are correct, the above mentioned *natannubsa* and its form in LL *nat-aini-siu* show that the unstressed vowel of *no* was also spelled *a*. Also the word *adnacol* (26) is a variant of *adnacul* that was already recognized in the Old Irish period.⁴³ *Taffond* (120), the verbal noun of *do-seinn*, seems to be half way in between the Old Irish variant *tofonn* and the slightly later *tafann*.⁴⁴ Furthermore there is LL *deithber* (LL) 78 for *deithbir* (which is found in BF) and *étail* for *étoil* 88. There are instances of rhyme between for example *Cūanach* : *nech*, but this might be due to the greater freedom allowed to rhyme in unstressed syllables and not to their pronunciation as a ‘schwa’, see the discussion of the poetry in Chapter 4.

3.2.3 Vowels in Stressed Syllables

There is quite some confusion in the diphthongs of stressed syllables.⁴⁵ As described in SnG *áe/aí/óe/oí* changed to a long *e* or *i* which allowed for a potpourri of spellings of this sound,⁴⁶ reflected for example in *robuí* for *roboí* 2 etc; *gaíth* for *gáeth* 7; *caírcha* for *cáercha* 16; *oc coé* and *a choí* for *caí* 92, 83; *itoéb* for *toíb* 75. There are only two examples of *e* before a guttural that turns *eo*: *cia deochaid* 7 (but BF *dechaid*) and *do neoch* 124 (but BF *nech*).⁴⁷ The

⁴³ Thurneysen, *Grammar*, 64. An unstressed vowel between a u-quality and a neutral consonant *o* or *u*.

⁴⁴ E.G. Quin (ed.), *Dictionary of the Irish Language; Compact Edition*, 3rd ed. (Dublin 2007) (DIL): *tafann*: O.Ir. *tofonn*. Thurneysen, *Grammar*, 447 ‘tofunn’.

⁴⁵ Breatnach, ‘An Mheán-Ghaeilge’, 233. 3.8 Fianaise d’athrú an défhoghair *áe/aí/óe/oí* go gua fada (...). Also 3.9 – 3.11.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, 233.

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, 232.

confusion between *ai* and *ei* in stressed syllables also shows in some cases,⁴⁸ note for example *at-raig* for *at-reig* 16.

3.2.4 Hiatus

Although hiatus forms do not really occur in the poetry, which could prove their disyllabic nature, there appear to be some clues in the text that hiatus words are preserved. *Láa* 4 etc, is consistently spelled with double *a*, which of course may be a simple lengthening device, but if so, this is not employed for other long vowels. Also, the older form of *lúa* ‘*laithe*’ (81 and 137) occurs, tellingly, only in the poetry (see Chapter 4). The dative singular of the disyllabic word *áer* ‘*aiur*’ (3n2) is preserved in BF, though not in LL, as is the disyllabic spelling of *dúae* in *dua* 6. Here the BF preserves the older readings it is probable that we miss many other such readings due to the sorry state of the manuscript.

3.2.5 Consonants

Only 1316/1 shows signs of the confusion between lenited *d* and *g* and *m* and *b*: *luig dano*, *ciarraidí*, *diasuigi*, *ronuadad*, *romeabaid*.⁴⁹ However, examples of the confusion *nn/nd* are widespread in all manuscripts⁵⁰: *ann* 9 and *and* 10, *Glennamain* 22 and *Glendomuin* 23, *Uilind* 65 for *Uilenn*. Prosthetic *f* and confusion between lenited *b* and *d* also only occur in BF and 1316/1 (*dubid* and *dubib* 147n112, *dofainic* 15n21).⁵¹

3.2.6 Unstressed Words

The only noteworthy change that is to be found in the unstressed words of AC is that the first syllable of the genitive singular and plural article is lost. Only once *inna rigna* 18 is found, in all other cases *na* is written. The preposition *i* with the article though, is still written out full, so in all cases: *is(s)in*, *issa* is used (10 etc).⁵² Only one example of the confusion between *no/na* can be found: *nat-ainisiu* for *not-ainisiu* (for s-future *not-ainsium*). There seems to be no confusion between the prepositions *de/do* or between the preverbal particles *ro/do/no*.

⁴⁸ Breatnach, ‘An Mheán-Ghaeilge’, 233.

⁴⁹ These will not be referred to in line numbers as they are not indicated in the footnotes (see discussion of Editorial Policy). They can be found in the diplomatic edition in Appendix 5.

⁵⁰ Although Aéd Bennán is written consistently with –nn- in LL, not so in BF.

⁵¹ Breatnach, ‘An Mheán-Ghaeilge’, 234-235.

⁵² *Ibid.*, 235-236.

3.3 The Pronouns

In Middle Irish, independent pronouns came to be used more often than they were in Old Irish. In Old Irish, the only instances where one could use the independent pronoun was with the copula or with the verb *ol* (later *ar*, *or*), in all other situations the infixed pronoun was used.⁵³ In Middle Irish the independent pronouns spread at the expense of the infixed pronoun,⁵⁴ which had already come under pressure because of the gradual disappearance of the compound verb. *AC* only contains one instance of the third singular feminine pronoun *í* used as subject of a passive verb, *nochon accas í* 95 ‘she was not seen’. This is one of the earlier occurrences of the pronoun outside its original context, according to Kim McCone:

‘Independent subject pronouns seem to have become established first with the copula, where the boundary between subject and predicate was not always clear, and with the passive-impersonal, which used infixed pronouns as subject outside the third person in old Irish.’⁵⁵

Although it is difficult to see the difference between the emphasizing feminine pronoun *si* and the personal feminine pronoun *sí* in manuscripts, the use of the other forms of the emphasizing pronouns in the same position after verbs, instead of personal pronouns, suggests that this is to be regarded as the emphasizing pronoun in all instances, for example: *nat-aini-siu* 16, *anfaid-si* 19, *atraig-si* 16.

Infixed pronouns are still widely and correctly used in this text in all three manuscripts. The classes A, B and C are correctly used in their correct place in the compound-verb or after the conjunctions. A few examples: *conda tarlaic* 10; *noda-sloinne* 14; *nat-aini-siu* 16; *nim-aithgen* 30, 35; *at-chuas* 47; *dos-n-arraid* 109; *atan-comnaic* 120; *immus-retís* 133. There are no instances of the petrified third singular neuter pronoun in compound verbs like *as-beir*. Yet the verb *at-reig* (16), which automatically takes an infixed pronoun in accordance with the subject,⁵⁶ does not appear with a fem.3sg. infix, and thus some state of confusion had already appeared.

One example of a suffixed pronoun 3sg. appears in *saigmit* 121. According to Thurneysen, the first plural was an exception to the rule that a suffixed pronoun could only be used with a third plural.⁵⁷ McCone however, seems to disagree and considers it the beginning

⁵³ Thurneysen, *Grammar*, 254-255.

⁵⁴ Breatnach, ‘An Mheán-Ghaeilge’, 264-265.

⁵⁵ Kim McCone, *The Early Irish Verb* (Maynooth 1987) 192.

⁵⁶ DIL: under ‘at-reig’: ‘with inf. pron. agreeing in number, person and gender with subject in meaning rises (often also rises and goes, goes) (...) Later with gradual obsolescence of inf. prn., beginning where verb is in dependent position, and ultimately as simple verb *éirgid*.’

⁵⁷ Thurneysen, *A Grammar*, 270-271.

of a Middle Irish development remodeling the first plural on basis of the third plural.⁵⁸ Liam Breatnach considers it to be an alternative verb-ending that is already found in Wb but that gains the upperhand towards the end of the Old Irish period and the beginning of the Middle Irish,⁵⁹ considering that *saigmit* is the only example found, this too might be seen as a sign that the text belongs to transitional period between Old and Middle Irish. *Saigmit* can be used as an intransitive verb and with the preposition *co* it means ‘journey towards’, here: ‘towards Cúanu we journey’. Thus, the suffixed pronoun does not necessarily bear any specific meaning in this context and can be considered as a later development (though not necessarily Middle Irish).

3.4 The Article

The most important developments of the article in Middle Irish were the loss of the distinctive neuter forms, the distinctive masculine nom.pl. *in(d)* (to *na*), the loss of the dat.pl. *-(a)ib*, replacement of *inna* with *na*, the loss of the distinctive form before lenited *f, l, n, r* and vowels (*ind*) and the reduction of the article after certain prepositions.⁶⁰ As seen above, the loss of the first syllable of *inna* is common throughout the text (only one instance of *inna*). The article generally seems to conform to the Old Irish standard. It is clear that the distinctive form before lenited *f, l, n, r* and vowels is still very much alive, only three times of fourteen the newer form is used: *in rigan* 16 (for *ind rigan*), gs. *in airdcheoil* 29 (for *ind airdcheoil*, which is found in BF) and *riasin rig* 99 (for *riasind rig*).

There is evidence of the loss of the neuter article, *lóa* is always accompanied by the masculine article (even the archaic form *laithe* has the masc. article *cossin* 139), but against this note *issa rigthech* 10. *Frisin mairb* 86 has no congruency, and it is likely that BF is correct in writing *forsin marb* (acc. sg. both in article and noun).

3.5 The Noun

Of course, it was not just the neuter article that disappeared, the neuter gender in general was disappearing. In addition to the article, this development can be seen in the disappearance or wrong use of the nasalization after the nom.sg. of a neuter noun and in the concordance with the adjective. Here it is noteworthy that *lóa*, though accompanied by the masc. article, does

⁵⁸ Kim McCone, *Early Irish*, 189-190. ‘Since, however, there seem to be no unambiguous instances of *-it* as a meaningful suffix with a first person ending and any such usage would contravene the otherwise well established restriction of suffixed pronouns to third person absolute endings, it is both unnecessary and undesirable to explain 1sg. fut. or 1pl. *-(i)t* as a suffixed pronoun in origin.’

⁵⁹ Liam Breatnach, ‘The Suffixed Pronouns in Early Irish’, *Celtica* 12 (1977) 104-107.

⁶⁰ Breatnach, ‘An Mheán-Ghaeilge’, 258-259.

have the appropriate neut. nasalization in most cases (if not in LL, then in BF): *lāa n-and* 4, 10 etc, and *laa and* 4 but with BF *laa n-and*. On the other hand, this could be considered to be a petrified expression, like ‘once upon a time’, and might therefore not reflect real status of *lāa*. With most other neuter words however, there is no clue as to whether they already had changed to either masculine or feminine. *Fecht*, a word that in its temporal sense was always either masc. or neut., does not show nasalization and has thus probably already made the transition to the masculine gender (see for example line 22-23).⁶¹ The other declensions provide no other solid clues for Middle Irish innovations apart from some confusion in final vowels. LL gives us a new acc.sg. *i mbethu* 134 for Old Irish *i mbethaid*. 1316/1 preserves the this older form.⁶² There is no sign of other new developments in the io/iā-stems (new dat.pl. in a dental), the ā-stems (adoption of acc/dat.sg. as nom.sg.), ī-stems or the consonantal stems. Only the late 1316/1 contains a new i-stem genitive plural, *fidbaidi* 75n56. In the consonantal stems *somtha* 58 is a peculiar form, which might be *sommata* ‘rich’ used as a noun (as is given by DIL in one example). This form is needed in stead of the noun *sommatu* because this vowel would not rhyme with previous nom.pl. u-stem *tomtha*.⁶³ It might be considered to be an example of the dismissal of an unstressed syllable to fit the metre: *som'tha*, as is also the convention in modern poetry.

3.6 The Verb

3.6.1 Compound versus Simple Verb Morphology

Old Irish made use of many compound verbs, consisting of one or more preverbal particles and a verbal root. These preverbal particles were unstressed when not preceded by any other preverbal or conjunct particles. However, when they were preceded by such a particle, the stress would fall on the first syllable (thus the preverbal particle) which resulted in immense changes of the morphology of the verb, the most famous and loved example being *do-sluindi – ní díltai*. Such incredible complexity in a language could not exist for too long, as languages (or their speakers) are always looking for general principles and predictable changes. The development of the verbal complex in Middle Irish was thus characterized by the demise of these compound verbs. New verbs were created from the verbal nouns or from the prototonic form of compound verbs, often receiving weak verbal inflection irrespective of the strong or weak origin of the verb. In addition, this development is also characterized by absolute

⁶¹ Although one might expect nasalization here anyway, because it could appear in a temporal accusative, GOI §249.3.

⁶² Except for this older form, some innovations might be found in 1316/1 like nom.sg. *ríg* and *co dorus taig*.

⁶³ The u-stem ending nom.pl. in –a already appeared in Wb., see Thurneysen, *Grammar*, §312.

inflection in independent position, a dummy preverb to avoid awkward deuterotonic and prototonic alternance, general confusion of unstressed *no*, *do* and *ro*, different syncope patterns, and an inserted prosthetic *f*- in deuterotonic verbs as hiatus-filler or as a result of main-clause lenition after conjunct particles.⁶⁴ Connected to this development was the change of the preverbal particle *ro* to a conjunct particle. This meant that instead of being infixes in a compound verb, it would appear in front of it, which was then easily combined with the development of compound verbs to simple verbs (where the development of *ro* as conjunct particle started).

As stated in Paragraph 1.3 above (infixes pronouns), many compound verbs still occur correctly in *AC* with the correct infixes pronoun. This at least points to a very early stage in the development of the verbal complex, as this would not be possible without great confusion in later stages. There are, however, some compound verbs that occur as new simple verbs without doubt: *ro deraig* 13 of the compound verb *do-érig*, *fácbais* 13 as a new verb from *fo-acaib* with absolute weak inflection and *ro fuacraid* 111 from *fo-úacair*. *Cona dermatar* 83 is a pass. pres. sj. of the new verb *dermataid* (for old Irish *do-ruimnethar*), a 3pl. t-pret (which it is presumably used) would not be fitting in the context. *Cuirfithir* 113 is an f-future passive of the new verb *cuirid* that in time replaced both *do-cuirethar* and *fo-ceird*. *Dingned* 88 is a Middle Irish form of the future of *do-gní*, *-digned*.⁶⁵ *Tarcaid* 15 is found for *do-faircid*, but DIL notes that this verb usually appears as *targaid* and that the deuterotonic forms are no doubt back formations.⁶⁶ There are also some examples *tanic* (for example 98) where one would expect *do-anic*. Because compound verbs with *to*, *ro*, *do* + V could occur in their prototonic form in independent position, a so called contracted deuterotonic, they can tell us nothing about their status.⁶⁷ This also applies for *tucad* 24 (*do-uccad*). In all other cases the deuterotonic form occurs correctly (with or without infixes pronouns) or it occurs in a position where it is impossible to distinguish between a prototonic form and a possible new verbal formation (for example the imperative or in dependent position). There is one occurrence of lenition after *ro*, *coro shir* 7.

⁶⁴ McCone, *Early Irish*, 206-221.

⁶⁵ Thurneysen, *Grammar*, §648. DIL however notes, that it ‘most usually [appears] with stem dingn-‘ (under **do-gní**).

⁶⁶ DIL: under ‘do-fairget’.

⁶⁷ McCone, *Early Irish*, 209.

3.6.2 Weak Inflections

In the ‘program’ of simplification, strong-verb inflection did not fit because this again created irregularities and unpredictable paradigms. In Middle Irish therefore, weak inflections spreads rapidly to strong verbs both simple and compound. There are a few examples of strong verbs that have adopted weak inflection: a new s-preterite in: pf. 2sg. *ro renais* 19 for old *ro-rir*, *ro deraig* 13, 3sg. pf. from *do-érig* (old t-pret.) and the above mentioned *fácbais* 13 from *fo-acaib*. *Coro gonad* 110 (pass. pf. from *gonaid*) used to have a reduplicated preterite stem. Only one example of the spread of weak-inflection outside the past tense is found in the BF and 1316/1, though some confusion might already have crept in in LL: *nat-aini-siu* 16 (LL)/*nat-anub-sium* (BF, 1316/1) are two forms that are supposed to be 1sg. pf. fut. of the verb *aingid*, however LL employs the original s-future albeit with an extra vowel, probably due to a scribal error. BF and 1316/1 employ a new weak f-future inflection.

3.6.3 Augmented vs Unaugmented

The change from preverbal particle to conjunct particle is not the only change that *ro* was involved in. *Ro* was used as an augment to give a perfective mood to verbs or a force of potentiality (GOI §530-531). In the praesens, imperfectum, future and conditional, these forms were already very uncommon, but in the past the perfective mood ceased to be marked as the augmented form began to take over the unaugmented form in the past narrative tense (the preterite).⁶⁸ According to Rudolf Thurneysen, this development had already started in the ninth century and is thus one of the early developments of Middle Irish, starting in the gloss material.⁶⁹ In AC there are many instances of the augmented preterite (old perfect) is found with simple past force (i.e., are used where a preterite would be expected in Old Irish): *ro boí* 2, *ro batar* 3, *do-ralad*, *coro ling*, *cona fess* (last three in 6), etc. On the other hand, there are also quite a number of unaugmented preterites to be found: *co cuala* 4, the suppletive preterite *luid* 10 of *téit*, *marb* 21, *dos-n-arraid* 109, *dot-bí* 165, as well as of t-preterites of the verbs *as-beir* and *do-beir*. Out of a total of 78 verb forms, there are 43 augmented preterites. Of these, 26 are used where one would expect an unaugmented form.

3.6.4 Other

There might be one example in AC of the newly developed main-clause lenition, that originated with petrified infixed pronouns. As mentioned above, the 3sg. neuter infixed

⁶⁸ McCone, *Early Irish*, 198-206.

⁶⁹ Thurneysen, *A Grammar*, 341.

pronoun class A caused lenition to the following consonant. During the Middle Irish period, this pronoun became petrified and introduced main-clause lenition after a pre-tonic preverb where previously no lenition had been (because there would be no infix pronoun). According to Kim McCone, this development is parallel to the petrification of the infix pronoun class B –t + lenition in verbs like *as-beir*.⁷⁰ The example, *do theigtis* 48, is however only found in LL and in none of the other manuscripts.

There is one example of the lengthening of the imperfect 3sg. ending: *immus-retís* 133.⁷¹ Furthermore, there are many important developments that appear to have not yet taken place in AC or for which no evidence can be deduced from the text (because the particular forms are absent). Old Irish *ol* ‘said’, is not to be found in AC, having been replaced in all cases by the innovative *ar* or *or*. Furthermore, the Old Irish *nícon* had been replaced by Middle Irish *nocho n-* (12, 96, 113). An old stressed *ō* maybe retained in the title *rī Irlōchra*, which later often occurred as *rí Irluachra*.⁷²

3.7 Conclusion Linguistic Evidence

‘As students of late Latin texts as a source of information about the rise of the Romance vernaculars have long recognized, occasional innovatory forms or hypercorrections traceable to vernacular usage outweigh countless cases of adherence to the literary standard when it comes to finding out what was really going on in the spoken language at the time when the Latin text in question was written.’⁷³

This is exactly what Old Irish is, a literary standard, a language on paper that poses a challenge to the intellectual writing it. Just like Dutch students nowadays sometimes have immense trouble deciding whether a verb ends in –d or –dt (because there is no real difference in pronunciation anymore) or when learning English cannot decide whether to write *knight* or *night*, Old Irish was a convention of writing and not of speech. This explains the lapses into a more colloquial language known to us as ‘Middle Irish’ in the written language of what we consider the Old Irish era. McCone points out that all the above mentioned developments are already found in the Milan glosses, dated to the end of the eighth century. Although the confusion is not as great as later on in history, you can just imagine the scribes pondering on a word like modern Dutch students ponder on the verbs –d/dt and occasionally doing it right by accident or hypercorrectly using the form they perceived of as right or as being in accordance with the standard. In AC the adherence to the literary standard is generally quite strict. There

⁷⁰ McCone, *Early Irish*, 187-188.

⁷¹ Breatnach, ‘An Mheán-Ghaeilge’, 298-299.

⁷² Thurneysen, *Grammar*, 40.

⁷³ McCone, ‘The Würzburg’, 86.

are definitely many Middle Irish forms to be found, but these are accompanied by just as many ‘proper’ Old Irish forms.⁷⁴

Developments in the verb and the article are more telling, since they usually stand out in a text if they have been changed, in contrast to other words. It is interesting to see the differences in verbal inflection between LL and 1316/1, where LL no doubt preserves the literary standard best and 1316/1 already shows an inflection more in the realm of Early Modern Irish.

The first editor of *AC*, T. P. O’Nolan dates the text as being ‘not later than the tenth century’.⁷⁵ There are two other editions but these are unpublished mastertheses and unfortunately were not available to me at the time of writing.⁷⁶ Murphy, in his *Early Irish Literature*, says that the story of Mór is ‘extant in a ninth century version’, but unfortunately gives no further references as to why he thinks it should be dated thus.⁷⁷ Proinsias Mac Cana, who devotes an entire chapter of his tripartite work on the role of the Goddess of the territory to Mór Muman, makes no statement concerning the date of the text itself nor its contemporary function. He focuses mainly on the seventh century characters of the tale and their intrinsic significance.⁷⁸ Taking into account the multiple Old Irish forms, especially in the article and the verbal complex, I would agree with both Murphy and O’Nolan by dating the text to the turn of the tenth century. A late ninth and early tenth century provenance would be a compromise that reflects the text’s interesting position between two tongues.

⁷⁴ With these Middle Irish innovations it is always wise to take the scribes into account, how easy is it for certain forms to slip in? In a little personal experiment, during which I transcribed a Middle Dutch text with the strict intention of copying it exactly, I made a lot of small mistakes in those words that were still very similar to Modern Dutch. The mistakes were usually spelling mistakes of words very common to me and I often made these mistakes in small groups where one word initiated a chain of Modern Dutch alternations. All this happened strictly subconsciously. Likewise it must be easy to change *as-beir* into *at-beir* etc., and the fact that these are not attested in *AC* is very telling.

⁷⁵ T. P. O’Nolan, ‘Mór of Munster and the tragic Fate of Cúanu son of Cailchin’, *Proceedings of the Royal Irish Academy* XXX (Dublin 1912-1918) 262. Also available through www.archive.org.

⁷⁶ As noted above, some information from these theses have come through to me through the chapter that Anna Matheson kindly provided of her unpublished dissertation. Apparently, both editors also date *AC* to the beginning of the tenth century.

⁷⁷ Eleanor Knott and Gerard Murphy, *Early Irish Literature* (Dublin 1966) 138.

⁷⁸ Proinsias Mac Cana, ‘Aspects’, 76-114

4. Poetry

4.1 Poetic Analysis

Poetry has always had an important status in Ireland, one only has to think of the abundance of poetry in Late Classical Irish but also of the fact that almost every Old or Middle Irish prose text contains at least some poetry. So does *Aided Chúanach mac Cailchíne*, which contains about 21 quatrains, always uttered in direct speech by the characters themselves. In fact, almost all the direct speech is uttered as poetry, except for Fíngen mac Áeda and his first queen who have a conversation in what appears to be an everyday manner. The poetry of this text is all syllabic, mostly heptasyllabic and can be considered to be of the *deibide* type where the first two lines rhyme with each other and so do the last two.⁷⁹ At a certain point in the history of Irish poetry, the poets combined the previously known forms of a rhymed stanzaic form with that of the syllabic poetry with fixed end-fee. By doing this, they created a new type of poetry that used the strict syllable count, rhyme but also the stanzaic shape. This form remained popular from its origin in (probably) the eighth century to far into the seventeenth.⁸⁰ Usually stressed syllables rhyme with each other, but it can also happen, especially in *deibide*, that as a style pattern a non-stressed syllable could rhyme with an unstressed one, this is called *rinn agus airdrinn*, or rhyme and highrhyme. This is commonly done in fixed patterns, so that if the first two lines have rhyme with a monosyllabic word and a polysyllabic one (mostly two or three), the other two lines will follow this very same pattern. This is notated as 7¹7³;7¹7³, which stands for seven syllables with end words of respectively one syllable and three, that rhyme with each other. The poetry of *Aided Chúanach*, however, has taken very little care of the syllable count of final words and there are thus very few stanza's that can be classified according to the schedule laid out by Gerard Murphy. In table 1. I have notated all the different patterns and the classification, if any. Striking is that in between all the *deibide* there are two instances of *rannaigecht*, where the first and the third line rhyme, as do the second and the fourth (so a and c, b and d).

Table 1. Metre of the Poetry in Aided Chúanach

Person	Metre (line)	Classification
Ruithchern	7 ³ 7 ¹ ;7 ² 7 ² (28-31)	

⁷⁹ For the development of Irish poetry see: Gerard Murphy, *Early Irish Metrics* (Dublin 1961), Liam Breatnach, 'Poets and Poetry', *Progress in Medieval Irish Studies* (Maynooth 1996) 65-78. A description of *deibide* from Murphy, 46n2: As from *de-bithe 'cut in two', to indicate that the first couplet of the quatrain is not normally bound by rime to the second. Together with the *rannaigecht* considered as the more common forms of poetry.

⁸⁰ Murphy, *Early Irish*, 18-20.

Ruithchern + Mac Dá Cherda	7 ² 7 ² ;7 ¹ 7 ¹ (35-39)	
Ruithchern	7 ³ 7 ¹ ;7 ² 7 ¹ (40-43)	
Ruithchern + Mór	7 ¹ 7 ² ;7 ¹ 7 ² (50-73)	Deibide n-imrinn fota ⁸¹
	7 ² 7 ² ;7 ² 7 ²	
	7 ² 7 ² ;7 ¹ 7 ³	But see <i>Aesa Cerdda</i> c).
	7 ² 7 ² 7 ¹ 7 ¹	Rannaigeacht
	7 ¹ 7 ¹ 7 ³ 7 ¹	Rannaigeacht
Cathal	9 ² 12 ³ (77-78)	
	7 ¹ 7 ² ;7 ¹ 7 ¹ (80-88)	
	7 ¹ 7 ¹ ;7 ² 7 ²	
Mór	7 ² 7 ¹ ;7 ¹ 7 ³ (90-93)	
	7 ² 7 ² (101-102)	
	7 ² 7 ² ;7 ² 7 ² (104-107)	Deibide nguilbnech recomarach
Aesa Cerdda	7 ¹ 7 ² ;7 ² 7 ³ (124-141)	Deibide scailte fota
	7 ³ 7 ³ ;7 ¹ 7 ²	
	7 ² 7 ² ;7 ¹ 7 ³	But see Ruithchern + Mór c).
Mac Da Cherda	7 ¹ 7 ² ;7 ¹ 7 ² (153-171)	Deibide n-imrinn fota
	7 ¹ 7 ¹ ;7 ² 7 ³	
	7 ³ 7 ² ;7 ² 7 ²	
	5 ² 5 ² ;7 ¹ 7 ²	

This irregularity of syllable-count in the endwords is recognized by Liam Breatnach in his article for *Progress in Irish Studies*, where he states that: ‘(...) rhyming verse with regular syllable count in the line but not in the endword, as found, for example, in the poems edited by O Daly (1960) or Carney (1964, 90-111), is ignored in Murphy’s new classification’.⁸² Unfortunately, very little has been written on it, even in the editions that have encountered it (those mentioned by Breatnach, O Daly and Carney).

There is very little evidence of any other ornamentation. Alliteration is not abundant at all, nor is internal rhyme (see Appendix 3). The end-rhymes are usually correct, however some instances show evidence of the freer treatment of unstressed rhyme that is common in *deibide*. Carney notes:

⁸¹ Possibly 7¹7¹7¹7² since the last word of the second line is *atúaid*, OIr. *antúaid*, stressed on the second syllable which would be *deibide do-cheil a chubaid*.

⁸² Breatnach, ‘Poets and Poetry’, 68. He also questions the possibility of defining a poem only by syllable count of lines and endwords.

The common acceptance of such weak rimes may be connected with the primary characteristic of *deibide*: that the rhyme between stressed and unstressed is somewhat freer. But this is hardly a complete explanation, for, as has been pointed out in II 25 b (note) such rhymes as *chenn: crann* are found in the *Irish Gospel of Thomas* and occasionally in other very old sources. This perhaps suggests that in certain dialects such words as *nem, cenn* were already pronounced as *n'av*, etc., and hence *nem: amrathar*, so far as the finalvoaclism is concerned, could give a reasonably good rhyme.⁸³

In AC we find: *tech: Cūanach* (124-125), *ech: Cūanach* (133-134), *nech: Cūanach* (155-156), *innocht: Cūanach* (178-179).

One of the quatrains in *rannaigeacht* shows perfect consonance: *ech: loch: finnabrach: droch* (70-73). The other one has a rhyme that seems to have consonance though looks more like some sort of cross-rhyme: *Uilind: con-gair: Cend: mair* (65-68). Consonance between class L and class I seems to be possible, as it also occurs in the example given by Murphy: *ferainn: do-muinim: do-gegainn*.⁸⁴ For the rhyme *Findig: imbir* (101-102) I have altered the LL-reading *Findnig* to BF *Findig* for matters of rhyme and because the name *Findig* appears to be more common than *Findnig*.⁸⁵

Also, in a couple of di- and trisyllabic words, there is not complete rhyme of the vowels of the stressed syllables, though the consonants always have the same quality (as also noted by Carney), but this could also be due to greater freedom in rhyme in *deibide*:⁸⁶ *thua-sa: innou-sa* (= *indáu-sa* 77-78), *grithu: cure* (= *cuiriu* 104-105), *tailcibe: shuide* (106-107), *athforbai: amrai* (163-164). The final vowels however, are always correct and the most telling example is *dó: Chaireda/o*, where the old dat. sg. –o is necessary for the rhyme (as discussed in paragraph 3.2.1). Carney mentions an example very similar to this (*Mairedo : dó*) in his article on dating early Irish verse and calls it evidence of ‘particular importance’.⁸⁷ The verbal noun of *cíid*, *caí* ‘act of weeping, wailing, lamentation’, rhymes with *amne* in this poem and is

⁸³ James Carney, *The Poems of Blathmac son of Cú Brettán* (Dublin 1964) xxxii. ‘The common acceptance of such weak rimes may be connected with the primary characteristic of *deibide*: that the rhyme between stressed and unstressed is somewhat freer. But this is hardly a complete explanation, for, as has been pointed out in II 25 b (note) such rhymes as *chenn: crann* are found in the *Irish Gospel of Thomas* and occasionally in other very old sources. This perhaps suggests that in certain dialects such words as *nem, cenn* were already pronounced as *n'av*, etc., and hence *nem: amrathar*, so far as the finalvoaclism is concerned, could give a reasonably good rhyme.’

⁸⁴ Murphy, *Early*, 34. See also this book for an explanation on the different classes of consonants in rhyme. There were six classes: voiced stops, voiceless stops, voiceless spirants, voiced spirants and weakly pronounced liquids, strongly pronounced liquids, and finally /s/.

⁸⁵ Murphy, *Early*, 32. This does not work for clusters, nor is the name *Findnig* attested further. The name *Findig* appears also for a *Deichtre mac Findig* (DIL: *Deichtre*. Dáibhí Ó Cróinín, ‘Ireland 400-800’, *A New History of Ireland* vol. 1 *Prehistoric and early Ireland* ed. Dáibhí Ó Cróinín (Oxford 1976) 196-7.

⁸⁶ Carney, *The Poems*, xxxii. Also noted in Máirín O’Daly, ‘On the Origin of Tara’, *Celtica* 5 (1960) 17. ‘In *Deibide* there is greater freedom of rhyme, amounting sometimes in mere consonance’, and she gives some examples, of which *cachta: comblechta* is important for our examples.

⁸⁷ James Carney, ‘The Dating of Early Irish Verse Texts’, *Éigse* 19/2 (1983) 196-8.

written as *coē* 92. According to DIL *caí* is indeclinable but it seems to also occur with *-oe*, so that unstressed rhyme with *amne* would be possible. The rhyme *attā dam : damnatan* would be impossible if one were to see *dam* as *do* + 1st sg. pers. prn., which in Old Irish should be *dom*. However, DIL (under **1. do**) states that already in ML it is written *dam*.

One of the peculiarities of poetry is that it tends to keep a certain ‘archaicness’ in its language, and a lot of discussion has preceded this paper on how archaic exactly certain features are. Some claim that the oldest forms can dated to the sixth century, and many have put examples of poetry from narrative prose texts further back in time than the prose narrative itself. Others say that it was merely a feat of antiquarianism or of style by later authors. For this paper, we need not go as far back as the sixth century, because rhyming syllabic poetry only occurred after some experimentation in the eighth century. Mac Eoin has stated that the poetry from AC is ‘linguistically older’ and should thus be seen as ‘having been composed to fit into a version of the tale earlier than that which has been preserved’,⁸⁸ unfortunately he gives no evidence of what he considers to be these linguistically older forms. Except for the correct final vowels, there are only a few hints that would put the text in an older stratum than the prose. For example, the older form of *lāa* ‘day’, *laihthe* appears only in the poetry (81, 138).

However, for the matter of dating poetry, Briain Ó Cuív has introduced an interesting experiment into the field, in which he tested it chronologically on a few characteristics of *dán direach* and found that a tendency towards growth in ornamentation arose from the ninth and tenth century. *Dán direach* is a stricter form of poetry that arose out of the older, more free type of *deibide* poetry. To name the rules:

- (1) There must be seven syllables in each line
- (2) The final word in *b* must have one syllable more than the final word in *a*, and the final word in *a* must make perfect rime with the unstressed syllable(s) of the final word in *b*; similarly in the case of *c* and *d*
- (3) each stressed word (other than the last) in *d* must make perfect rime with some word (other than the last) in *c*;
- (4) a non-riming stressed word may not occur between riming words in *c*;
- (5) each line must have alliteration and the alliteration in *d* must be between the last two stressed words;
- (6) vowels may (or must) be elided in certain circumstances.⁸⁹

In his research he looked at three featur only: *rinn-airdrinn*, the internal rime in *c-d* and alliteration. He then takes the percentages of score on the, let us say, *dán-direach*-scale and compares these over time. His results begin around 700 AD with a poem on the virgin Mary, that scores a 17% on *dán direach* ornamentation. He then proceeds to the poems of Blathmac

⁸⁸ Mac Eoin, ‘Orality’, 160.

⁸⁹ Ó Cuív, ‘Some Developments’, 277.

(dated to 750-770), who scores a 32%, the ninth century poem *Pangur Bán* scores 44% and thus one sees the percentage grow until it reaches its climax in the twelfth century. However, poets were still allowed to compose in the older, freer style and this was called *ógláchas*, and of course, it is wise to take into account that ‘twelfth century poets considered themselves free to follow their own inclinations’.⁹⁰ Still, I think it would be interesting to look at the results the poetry from AC would yield, as it is clearly very little ornamented.

Rinn ⁹¹	Rime	Alliteration	Total
9/36=25%	0/20=0%	22/80=27% ⁹²	31/136=23%

Compared to the examples given in Ó Cuív’s article, this could make the poem somewhat older than the prose text. It would fit somewhere in between the earlier examples of the eighth century and the ones that were written in the ninth century. As mentioned above, Ó Cuív does not look at elision. I will take a short look at it, since this also could point at date but also because it is an important feature of the poetry as such. Of the seven cases where elision could occur, it only actually happens in one case: *car nech na dingned th’etail* (87) for *do etail*. Maybe, one other instance might be noted, in the line *maccain co ngair airdcheoil* (35), *maccain* is not likely to be a plural. It could be that the vocative particle *a* was elided with the vowel of the last word of the previous line, *dó*.

Another important article on rhyme is the article by David Sproule on the origins of deibide-rhyme. He states that early examples of rhyme seem to point to a period where the poet worked from the final syllable backwards, whether that syllable was stressed or unstressed.⁹³ Although deibide is known for the rhyme between stressed and unstressed words, it is obligatory to have one word that carries a stressed rhyme, which is not always the case in the poetry from AC.⁹⁴ Sproule states that

it is easy to imagine how deibide would have arisen, by the rhyming of words of differing length, at a time when final unstressed rhyme in both rhyming words was practised. In other words, the stressed/unstressed effect would have been a secondary result originally resulting from the rhyming of a one-syllable word (which would, of course, have given a stressed rhyme) with a polysyllable.⁹⁵

⁹⁰ Ó Cuív, ‘Some Developments’, 287.

⁹¹ I have taken out the metres in *rannaigeacht*, since *rinn 7 airdrinn* is not as common for this metre.

⁹² Of which 6 are in between lines, though Ó Cuív never mentions this type of alliteration, I decided to include it nonetheless.

⁹³ Sproule, David, ‘Complex Alliteration, Full and Unstressed Rhyme, and the Origin of Deibide’, *Ériu* 38 (1987) 199.

⁹⁴ There are 18 cases of unstressed rhyme, 5 of stressed with stressed and 17 of stressed with unstressed.

⁹⁵ Sproule, ‘Complex’, 199.

This again might point to an earlier origin of the poems, half way into the development towards a strictly regularized type of *deibide*. However, it is important to keep in mind that there is not enough linguistic evidence to date it to the eighth century without any reservations. This would make it part of the core of Old Irish composition, it would be the simpler hypothesis and thus often the better one to date it as contemporary with the prose. On the other hand, the great rise of interest in poetry from the ninth and tenth century onward is hard to overlook with texts like the *Mittelirische Verslehren* springing into being. For these later centuries a more structured approach of the poetry would be expected and for this reason I would still like to posit an eighth century date for the poetry.⁹⁶

4.2 Poetry from the Glossaries

In Chapter 1, I mentioned that a quatrain from Mór's poetry also occurs in the glossary *Dúil Dromma Cetta* (DDC) and the glossary of O'Mulconry (O'M). It differs slightly from the version of AC:

AC	D1	O'Mulconry
IS annam iar n-imrim ech eter Chassel 7 Loch	IS annam iar nimrim iter caisil 7 loch	As annaln iar nimrim iter caisil ocus loch
Iníáite Én Finnabrach feras amran imma droch"	inid aithenn findabrach feras arán frim da droch	inad atend findabrach feras amran frim dá droch

The first line of both poems misses the final word of AC, 'ech', this makes the total of the syllable count of that line six instead of seven, and it now also lacks consonance with the main rhyme *loch: droch*. Therefore I would suggest to keep *ech* in the line. It also differs in the placename, the *loch* mentioned in AC is Iníáite Én Finnabrach, which can be found in the *Onomasticon Goedelicum* (OG) as such.⁹⁷ In the glossaries it appears as Loch Inid Aithenn Findabrach, or something the like, this is the same as OG Loch Imdaithend Finnabrach, since the difference between imd- and inid- in insular script is very difficult to tell. It is hard to tell what the proper name of the lake might or should be. In the last line, AC has *amrán* where D1 has *arán*, it would seem that *amrán* is the correct reading, since granting a 'bread' around someone's wheels sounds somewhat out of place. It also has *frim da droch*, which would be

⁹⁶ The two unpublished mastertheses do not pose an earlier date for the poetry, Matheson: 'Thornton and Gillespie however, do not indicate that the language of the verse and prose of our text reflect different dates of composition.' 137. And 137n26: 'While Thornton has not noted a difference in language between the verse and the prose, she does suggest that some of the poems have been reworked by the compiler in order to connect Mór's tale to suithchern's.'

⁹⁷ Edmund Hogan, *Onomasticon Goedelicum: locorum et tribuum Hiberniae et Scotiae. An index, with identifications, to the Gaelic names of places and tribes* (Dublin 1910), visited through <http://publish.ucc.ie/doi/locus> .

‘against my two wheels’, instead of *imma droch* ‘about it’s wheel’. ‘Against my two wheels’, might be a more meaningful option, but I have left LL *imma droch* in the edition because this cannot be determined with certainty.

The exact relation of this quotation in the glossaries with our text is complicated. This piece of material in *O’M* and *DDC* seems to be related to *Sanas Cormaic* (*SC*) in some way, but *SC* does not include the little quatrain.⁹⁸ It is generally thought that the glossary tradition found its origin in Munster but *DDC* is mainly associated with the Northern regions, especially its later tradition. The manuscripts of *DDC* are known to have originated in the MacEgan school in Connacht,⁹⁹ just like 1316/1. This does not tell us anything of the origins of *DDC* though, and its close relation to *SC* might suggest another provenance. The entry on *droch* is found in *SC* too but without the quatrain. In D2 the quatrain is found as a marginal note, but this does not seem to be the case for the other manuscripts. Paul Russel dates the core of the material of *DDC* to the end of the ninth century,¹⁰⁰ but comparative research of the manuscripts needs to be carried out to determine whether the quatrain was a later addition or not. It could have well been added in the MacEgan school, since one would expect the quatrain in *SC* under *droch* too if it was an early entry, considering the close relationship between these glossaries. The MacEgan school was already in the possession of *AC* and might have made the link with this rare word in the poetry of *AC* and in the glossary.

4.3 Poetry from the Annals

Mac Cana, in his famous article on the sovereignty goddesses, points to two little poems that are inserted in the Annals of Tigernach and the Annals of Innisfallen at the death of Cathal mac Finguine and Fíngen mac Áeda respectively.¹⁰¹ As we shall see later, there appears to be some confusion concerning the Cathal’s involved but that needs not concern us here. Both the quatrains are in the same metre and are said to be spoken by either Mór or by ‘the wife of Fíngen’, which we presume would be Mór too.

Fingen mac Aedha, ri Muman, mortuus est, de quo coniunx dixit,

In Muma

re linn Fingen maic Aeda (Bennan a Bregha added in MS.)

robdar lan[a] a cuiledha

robdar torrtigh a treba

⁹⁸ Paul Russel, ‘Dúil’, 147-174.

⁹⁹ Russel, ‘Dúil’, 162.

¹⁰⁰ Ibid., 165.

¹⁰¹ Mac Cana, ‘Aspects’, 79n1, 82-3.

i.e. The land of Munster at the time of Fíngen son of Áed, full were its storerooms, fruitful were its homesteads.¹⁰²

In tImblech

ro-sáer Ailbe dia bachail

is óen ina erdarcus

a úr dar étan Cathail

i.e. In tImblech (Emly), which Ailbe has ennobled by his crozier one thing famous about it (or, it is alone in its fame), its earth covering Cathal's brow!

Mac Cana observes that they are both in *Ae freslige bec*¹⁰³ and that both include *conachlann*¹⁰⁴, so that both must have belonged to a poem from some other version of the Mór Muman story.

¹⁰² Whitley Stokes, 'Annals of Tigernach', *Revue Celtique* 17 (1896) 174.

¹⁰³ Murphy, *Early Irish*, 62-63.

¹⁰⁴ DIL: *conchlann* c) metr. linking by repetition of the last word of one stanza at the beginning of the next.

5. Editorial Policy

The critical text printed below is based on LL, with an occasional addition from BF. LL and BF preserve the oldest readings in all instances where 1316/1 uses modernized language of the early modern period. Where context seemed to require it I have used variant readings from BF in the critical text, this is indicated in the footnotes. This was done frequently in the poetry, where lines or words from BF often provided correct rhyme and heptasyllabic lines. The footnotes in the edition otherwise provide significant variant readings from BF and 1316/1, or, when a word is supplied from BF, from LL and 1316. Should the reader wish to see all variants because of a different focus in research than mine, it is possible to consult a full diplomatic edition of all three manuscripts in Appendix 5. 1316/1 is peculiar in that it contains entirely different poems in almost all instances, these quatrains can be found in Appendix 4.¹⁰⁵

There were some lengthmarks in the manuscript, and they have been kept in the text. The remaining accents have been added by me using a macron. Abbreviations are expanded in cursive script and so is lenition. Nasalisation is only separated if it occurs before vowels. Hyphens are only added with compound verbs or with preverbal particles that contain infix pronouns. I have not intended to reconstruct any Old Irish forms in the poetry, where it is possible to do so, it is mentioned in either chapter 3 or chapter 4. Some small emendations or additions have been made by me and they have been put between square brackets so that this is immediately clear. Personal names have been given capitals and so have place names. Modern punctuation like quotation marks and commas has been applied and I have divided the text into paragraphs with line numbers for easy reading and easy comparison with the translation.

In translating I have not tried to modernise or to freely interpret. Any *praesens historicum* I have translated as a past tense for the sake of consistency. I have also left out some of the temporal interjections like *didiu*, because their frequent occurrence does not fit well in an English text. Besides these minor changes, I have stayed quite close to the Irish text, both in syntax and in sayings. I have done this to provide a clear connection between text and translation on a grammatical level and to prevent all too subjective interpretations from my side. The text as it stands is to provide a mirror of the Old Irish that not only reflects my

¹⁰⁵ A translation of this poetry was supposed to be incorporated into this edition, but due to lack of time it has been left for further research. The language is, as said, early modern so its emission should not have any negative effects on the research carried out on AC as found in the oldest variants.

own image, but should also still be able to reflect the images of others interested in interpreting it.

6. Critical Text and Translation of Aided Chúanach

1. **Á**ed Bennáin rī Irlōchra¹⁰⁶, dá mac déc lais & tēora ingena. Senfhocul leó: ‘Ni amail for-acaib Áed Bennáin a maccu’. **M**ór Muman ingen Áeda Bennáin. **R**o buí admilliud¹⁰⁷ fuiri i tossaig. **N**ī thēissed¹⁰⁸ acht co dorus tige. “Rot-mairg, a mór” ar in guth assind áer¹⁰⁹ úastu¹¹⁰. Ro batar immurgu rīgrad hĒrenn oca cungid-si.¹¹¹ Lāa and¹¹² didiu co cuala¹¹³ in nguth. “[Ro]t-mairg a mór.” “Ba ferr lim do-bertha oldaas a bith-tarngire.”¹¹⁴ “In ba i tossaig nó fa i nderiud¹¹⁵?” “I tossaig immurgu” or sisi. Do-ralad¹¹⁶ ĩarsin fūalang fóthe coro ling dar dūa ind liss cona fess cīa deochaid.¹¹⁷ Coro shir¹¹⁸ hĒrinn da blādain. Coro dubai fri greín 7 gáith hi certib 7 lōthraib¹¹⁹. Cona tarlai do Chassiul.
2. Fīngen mac Áeda¹²⁰, is é ba rí andside¹²¹. Ingen rīg na nDēsi leis. Boí oca chaīr[ib]¹²² side tri thráth. Lāa n-and luid issa rīgthech ĩarsin dingairiu¹²³. Conda tarlaic frisin tenid. “Curid,” or Fīngen “in cale¹²⁴ ucut¹²⁵ immach.” “Rot-bia mo delg,” ol ind rīgan, “7 foí lee ínocht.” “Nī maith¹²⁶” or Fīngen. “Cencop maith, bid it ēcen.¹²⁷ Nocho n-ifamni¹²⁸ coro-fhoa-su¹²⁹ lési.” “Bid ēicen,” or Fīngen, “tucthar dam in delg”¹³⁰ Sísi ro-deraig dóib .i. ind rīgan.¹³¹ Fácbaís¹³²

¹⁰⁶ 1316/1: Irluachra

¹⁰⁷ BF: aidmilliud 1316/1: aidmillead

¹⁰⁸ 1316/1: niteigea BF: nithecht

¹⁰⁹ BF: aiur. Forms with a fada also occur, see DIL ‘aer’.

¹¹⁰ BF: uasbi

¹¹¹ 1316/1: arba mor acaime

¹¹² BF: Laa n-and

¹¹³ 1316/1: co cualaid

¹¹⁴ BF: taringiri1316/1: a tairngiri duid

¹¹⁵ BF: uel fri dered 1316/1: om.

¹¹⁶ 1316/1: do-radad

¹¹⁷ BF: cia dú dodechaid 1316/1: cia do teachaid

¹¹⁸ 1316/1: corshir

¹¹⁹ BF: hicerdchaib lothrai 1316/1: hicerdchaib lothrai

¹²⁰ BF: aetha

¹²¹ BF: and 1316/1: ann

¹²² LL: oca cairib side 1316/1 aga cairibside.

¹²³ LL: isin dingairiu BF: ĩarsin dinghaire 1316/1: ĩarsinningaire

¹²⁴ BF: incail__ 1316/1: an cailin

¹²⁵ 1316/1: ud

¹²⁶ BF, 1316/1: Ni maith sin

¹²⁷ BF: bidithecen 1316/1: bid eigin

¹²⁸ BF: faifemni 1316/1: faitheamne

¹²⁹ 1316/1: faidisi

¹³⁰ BF: Atnaghar dho. 1316/1: adiagar dó.

¹³¹ BF: atnaghar dho. sisi roder[...] doib 1316/1: adiagar dó. sisi rodeirig doib

¹³² BF: Facbaís annsain 1316/1: Fagbaís arsin

1. Áed Bennán, king of Irlúachair, had twelve sons and three daughters. They had a proverb: ‘Not as Áed Bennán has left his sons’. Mór Muman was Áed Bennán’s daughter. A derangement was on her in the beginning [i.e. of her life]. She could only go to the doorway of the house. ‘Woe to you, o Mór’, said the voice out of the air above them. Nevertheless, the princes of Ireland were wooing her¹³³. One day then she heard the voice ‘Woe to you, o Mór’, ‘I would prefer that it was given to me than that it is always being promised’. ‘Will it be in the beginning or in the end?’, ‘In the beginning then’, said she. A frenzy was put on her after that and she leaped over the rampart of the dwelling and it was not known where she went. And she wandered through Ireland for two years. And she grew dark from the sun and the wind [dressed] in rags and fleece. And she came to Cashel.

2. Fíngen mac Áeda was king there. The daughter of the king of the Déisi was his. The aforementioned [Mór] was with his¹³⁴ sheep for three days. One day she went into the royal house after the herding¹³⁵ and she sat herself down by the fire. ‘Put’, said Fíngen, ‘yonder maid outside’. ‘You will have my broach’, said the queen, ‘and spend the night with her’. ‘[That is] not good’, said Fíngen. ‘Though it is not good, it is necessary for you. We will not spend the night [together] until you sleep with her’. ‘It will be necessary’, said Fíngen, ‘Let the broach be brought to me.’¹³⁶, ¹³⁷ She made the bed for them, that is, the queen.

¹³³ 1316/1: for her beauty was great.

¹³⁴ *a* lacks lenition in LL and 1316/1, I take the reading from BF where *a* is masc. in accordance with the following lenition.

¹³⁵ LL: while she was herding.

¹³⁶ it was brought to him (BF, 1316/1).

¹³⁷ BF, 1316/1: it was impelled to him, she herself made the bed for them.

ind ingen na ceirte alláthís 7 téit chuce issin n-imdai. “Can duit a ingen?” or Fīngen. Is and noda-sloinne 7 do-nn-ānic¹³⁸ a cial¹³⁹. “Maith,” or Fīngen. Tarcaid side comthrom di argut¹⁴⁰ friesi hi tossaig. Amal ropo matan atraig-si do ēirgi lasná caīrcha. “Nathó,” or Fīngen. “Nat-aini-siu¹⁴¹ ar in rīgain.” At-raaig in rigan co mbaí oc gārib¹⁴² impu. “Gaibid,”¹⁴³ or Fīngen, “in mbrat corcra ucut impe 7 delgh inna rīgna ina bratt.”¹⁴⁴ “Nība i com-airich¹⁴⁵ as frim-sa.” or ind rīgan. “Bīd fīr,” or Fīngen, “A n-í ro renais ní chom-raicfe fris. Anfaid¹⁴⁶-si or is ferr a cenēl.” or Fīngen.

3. Is fria trā do-fedar¹⁴⁷ cech degben in hĒrinn¹⁴⁸ .i. fri Móir Muman. Buī-si i fail Fíngin co rruc mac dó .i. Sechnasach mac Fīngin. Marb Fīngin ĩar sudiu. Co ndecheid-si co Cathal mac Finguine .i. co rríg Glenmain .i. rīge Muman a Casiul in tres fecht,¹⁴⁹ a Glennamain in fecht aile a hAíne in fecht aile¹⁵⁰ .i. Ēogonacht sin uile. Luid didiu co Cathal i nGlendomuin.

4. Tucad dano siur dī-si i ngait aníar .i. Ruithchern ingen Āeda Bennāin combaí oc Dún Chaireda i crích .húa. Liathán oc ingairiu i ndoírí¹⁵¹. Ba hé didiu a hannacol¹⁵² .i.

φ “Locht mór do¹⁵³ Dún Chaireda

Innach Lúachair bo ngar dó¹⁵⁴

Maccāin co ngāir in airdcheóil

Sech nīm-athgén nīm athgēoin¹⁵⁵”

5. Co tucad Mac Dá Cherdda cuce. Óinmit side 7 fáith Dē. “Gaib sin, a ingen.” or sē.

¹³⁸ BF: dofainic 1316/1: dofainig

¹³⁹ 1316/1: a ciall di.

¹⁴⁰ 1316/1: d’argad

¹⁴¹ Leg. s-future *not-ain-sium* BF: Notannubsa 1316/1: Natanabso

¹⁴² 1316/1: agairi

¹⁴³ 1316/1: Gabar

¹⁴⁴ 1316/1: 7 delg nairgaid and

¹⁴⁵ 1316/1: nibiacomarbus

¹⁴⁶ BF: anfhaidsi 1316/1: afhaigsi

¹⁴⁷ 1316/1: om.

¹⁴⁸ BF: inderinn

¹⁴⁹ 1316/1: an darna feacht

¹⁵⁰ 1316/1: an treas feacht

¹⁵¹ BF: daeri

¹⁵² BF: hanocul 1316/1: hanacail

¹⁵³ 1316/1: ó

¹⁵⁴ LL: bongair dó 1316/1: bungarg da

¹⁵⁵ LL: sechninathgen nimaitheoin BF: sech nimaitheoin nimaitheoin 1316/1: seachnimaitheoin nimaitheoin

The girl left the rags down below and went to him into the compartment. ‘Who are you, girl?’ said Fíngen. It is then that she named herself and that her sense came to her. ‘Good’, said Fíngen. He offered her her weight in silver at first. When it was morning, she got up to set forth with the sheep. ‘By no means,’ said Fíngen, ‘I will protect you from the queen.’ The queen got up and was laughing at them. ‘Put’, said Fíngen, ‘the purple cloak yonder around her, and the brooch of the queen on her cloak.’ ‘She shall not be as noble as I am’¹⁵⁶, said the queen. ‘It will be true’, said Fíngen, ‘that which you have given up, you will not join with. She will stay for her kindred is better’, said Fíngen.

3. It is with her then that every noble woman in Ireland was compared, that is with Mór Muman. She was with Fíngen and bore him a son, that is, Sechnasach mac Fíngin. Fíngen died after that. And she went to Cathal mac Finguine that is to the king of Glendemain, that is, the kingship of Munster [was] in Cashel the third time, in Glendemain the one time and in Aíne the other time, that is [they are] all Éoganacht. She then went to Cathal in Glendemain.

4. A sister of her then, was taken in captivity from the west, that is, Ruithchern daughter of Aéd Bennán and she was at Dún Cairedo in the territory of the Uí Liatháin herding in captivity. This then was her dirge, that is:

[It is] a great blemish for Dún Cairedo
That it is not Lúachair that is near to it
O youth with the shout of high music
Neither did you recognize me nor did he recognize me

5. And Mac Dá Cherda was brought to her. He was a fool and a prophet of God. ‘Sing that [again], o girl’, he said.

¹⁵⁶ i.e. of equal status.

“Maccāin¹⁵⁷ co ngāir in ardcheóil
Sech nīm aithgēn nīm athgéoin”

“Int-í con-gair ō Loch Léin”
ar Mac Dá Cherda¹⁵⁸
“Is dáig immon etarcēin.¹⁵⁹”

φ “Locht mōr do Dún Chairedo¹⁶⁰
Innach Lūachair bo ngair dó¹⁶¹
Nī fil locht fair acht mad óen
Nād¹⁶² fil Lúachair ima thoeb”

“De Ēogonacht Locha Léin dond ingin.” ar Mac Mocherda¹⁶³.

6. At-chúas do Móir. Do-chuaid side cona tuc¹⁶⁴ cuicce co mbuí ina farrad. Do-thēigtis
immurgu a ndís¹⁶⁵ sethar¹⁶⁶ co mbitís oc cáiniud Fhīngin¹⁶⁷. φ Is and as-bert-si:¹⁶⁸

“IN tán do-cengat¹⁶⁹ int slūaig
Timchiull¹⁷⁰ Glendomain atúaid¹⁷¹
Dībad Marbāin Locha Cend
Cia [i]mma-tái, a Ruithchernd¹⁷²

¹⁵⁷ LL: *maccan* BF: *maccain* 1316/1: *macan*. In the other couplet it is also ‘*maccain*’.

¹⁵⁸ BF, 1316/1: *Mac da Cherda*

¹⁵⁹ 1316/1: *aneidirchein*

¹⁶⁰ BF, 1216/1: *caireda*

¹⁶¹ BF: *bongar dó* 1316/1 om. *bongair dó* – ar *mac mocherda*

¹⁶² BF: *nat*

¹⁶³ BF, 1316/1: *x*

¹⁶⁴ BF: *condatuc* 1316/1: *codotug*

¹⁶⁵ BF: *a ndís amach*

¹⁶⁶ BF, 1316/1: *sechtair*

¹⁶⁷ 1316/1: *acainead fīngin*

¹⁶⁸ BF: *asbert si indí Muman .i. Mor__* 1316/1: *intí mor muman na runnasa*

¹⁶⁹ 1316/1: *concengaid*

¹⁷⁰ 1316/1: *timcheall*

¹⁷¹ BF: *atuaith*

¹⁷² 1316/1: *ar ruithchern*

‘O youth with a shout of the high-music
Neither did you recognize me nor did he recognize me’

‘He who cries out [is] from Loch Léin’
said Mac Dá Cherda,
‘It is certain on account of the great distance

[It is] a great fault for Dún Cairedo
That it is not Lúachair that is near it
It has no fault but one
That it is not Lúachair that is beside it

The girl is of the Éoganacht of Loch Léin.’, said Mac Mocherda.

6. It was told to Mór. She went and she brought her (Ruithchern) to her and she lived with her. Both sisters then used to go out and they used to be lamenting Fíngen. It is then she said:

‘When the hosts advanced
Around Glendamain from the North
The destruction of Marban of Loch Cenn
Although you are about it, o Ruithchern

Fīngin ba garg ba díglach¹⁷³

Ba géath ba báeth ba brīgach

Slemun guide, gargg tomtha

Bá forbālid a shom' tha

Fil mo dáil i lLaind Lothra

Lecht Fīngin, rēill a brotha

Issind insi atā dam¹⁷⁴

Lecht Āeda 7 Damnatān¹⁷⁵

Maccān con-gair i n-Uilind

I n-Uilind maccān con-gair

At-che femēn im Loch Cend

At-chī Loch Cend, ce nad-māir¹⁷⁶

IS annam īar n-imrim ech

Eter Chassel 7 Loch

Iníáite Én Finnabrach¹⁷⁷

Feras amrān imma droch”

7. **B**oí immurgu Cathal oc cloistecht frie-si i toíb in muini¹⁷⁸. IS and at-rarach[t] side 7 a[s]-bert.¹⁷⁹

φ “**IS** deithbir¹⁸⁰, cen cop mór, mo thūa-sa

Inid díliu¹⁸¹ imrādud in marbāin innou-sa?”

¹⁷³ From this point onwards, the poetry of 1316/1 takes an entirely independent course. See chapter.

¹⁷⁴ 1316/1: isin n-inad-sin

¹⁷⁵ LL: fil modáil illaind lothra lecht fīngin issin dinsi atta dam lecht aeda damnatān.

BF: ___ilaind lothra lecht fīngin reil___sin ata dam lecht aeda _____

1316/1: Fil modá ail a lotra leacht fīngin reillabrotha isinninad sin ata lecht naeda 7 damnadtha

¹⁷⁶ LL: canadmair BF: cenadmair

¹⁷⁷ BF: findabarach

¹⁷⁸ 1316/1: na fidbaidi

¹⁷⁹ LL: af-bert BF: Is ann atraachtside condixit 1316/1: 7 tainíg da nínnsaigi 7 is asbert. The following poetry is still very different, see chapter.

¹⁸⁰ LL: deithber BF: deithbir.

¹⁸¹ BF: imid.dili

Fíngen was fierce, was vengeful
He was wise, wild and powerful
Calm of prayer, fierce [his] threats
Joyous were his riches

There is my meeting in Lann Lorrha
The grave of Fíngen, bright his valours
On the island¹⁸² there is to me
The grave of Áed and Damnatán

The little boy who shouts in Uilenn
In Uilenn the little boy shouts
He saw it, seaweed on Loch Cenn
He sees it, Loch Cenn, although it lasts

It is lonely after the journeying of the horses
Between Cashel en Loch
Iniáite Én Findabrach¹⁸³
That grants a song about its wheel

7. Cathal then was listening to her¹⁸⁴ beside the thicket. It is then the latter arose¹⁸⁵ and said:

My silence is proper, though it would not be great
Since the thought of the dead man [to you] is sweeter than I am.

¹⁸² 1316/1: In that place

¹⁸³ See chapter on Placenames. In *Duil Dromma Cetta*: Loch Imdaithend Findabrach or Loch Inid Aithenn Findabrach.

¹⁸⁴ 1316/1: to them.

¹⁸⁵ BF: And he asked 1316/1: besides the wood and came towards them.

Cid *in marbán* ō ro bí
I *n-úir bliadnai* no lathi
Is a dagdoīnacht *con-oí*
*Cona*¹⁸⁶ dermatar a choí

A ben ucut¹⁸⁷, nā fer mol
*Frisin mairb*¹⁸⁸ do-chuaid do don¹⁸⁹
Car nech nā dingned th'étail¹⁹⁰
Con-dig fēssin do ēcaib”

“A *fhir* ucután amne
Ūair fom-āirnecc-sa oc coē.
Bīd sí¹⁹¹ do *sherc*-su bas ní
Nād *mair intī* ceta-buī¹⁹²”

Nocho n-accas ī trá oca *cháiniud-som* ōnd ūair-sin.¹⁹³

8. **D**o-rat¹⁹⁴ *didiu* Mór¹⁹⁵ in *Ruthchern* do Lonán *mac Indig*¹⁹⁶. Ro baí *side*¹⁹⁷ for fogail i fail *Chathail*. Co *tarat* Mór a siáir dó¹⁹⁸. *Fechtas*¹⁹⁹ and tānic rí na nDése²⁰⁰. **F**or laím *Chatail*²⁰¹ no bīd²⁰² Lonán. “Érig-siu,²⁰³ a Lonáin, rīasin ríg.”

¹⁸⁶ BF: conná dermatar

¹⁸⁷ BF: ucat

¹⁸⁸ BF: forsin marb

¹⁸⁹ BF: o docoid don

¹⁹⁰ BF: na dingne tetail

¹⁹¹ BF: oc//.aib.idsi

¹⁹² BF: tiadobui

¹⁹³ BF: om.

¹⁹⁴ 1316/1: Daraid

¹⁹⁵ 1316/1: in mor

¹⁹⁶ BF: *mac bhinig* 1316/1: *mac binnid*

¹⁹⁷ 1316/1: *sein*

¹⁹⁸ 1316/1: doib

¹⁹⁹ BF: *fechtus* 1316/1: *feachtus*

²⁰⁰ BF: rí nandessi 1316/1: rí na ndeisi

²⁰¹ BF: om.

²⁰² BF: mabid 1316/1: no bith

²⁰³ BF: aircsi 1316/1: airgsi

Although he is a dead man as long as he has been
In a grave, years and days
It is his good nature that preserves [him],
So that lamenting him would not be forgotten

O woman yonder, do not pour continual wailing
On the dead, who went to his grave
Love someone who would not do your displeasure
Until he himself meets death'

'O man there yonder,
Since you have found me weeping
Your love is what will be a concern
He who was first will not last'

And not was she seen keening him then from that time onwards.

8. Mór gave Ruithchern to Lonán mac Findig. The latter was fighting beside Cathal. And Mór gave her sister to him. Once upon a time, the king of the Déisi came. Lonán used to be at Cathal's hand. 'Stand up before the king, o Lonán',

φ “Nā glūais Lonán mac Findig²⁰⁴” or Mór
“aníar a síd íarr imbir²⁰⁵”.

Nība dānu fri grithu

Nība dīthu²⁰⁶ fri cure

In lāch hé, dīa tailcibe²⁰⁷

Lāch do-llēice²⁰⁸ a shuide.

9. Luid síar didiu in Lonán 7 a ben²⁰⁹ co maccaib Āeda Bennáin. Dos-n-arraid²¹⁰ Cūano mac Cailchíne ō Liathmuiniu co rruc a mnái ō Lonán. 7 coro gonad fadéin²¹¹. 7 co n-erlaí²¹² ĩarna guin co rrānic síar. IS ĩarsin ro fūacrad cath o maccaib Āeda Bennáin for maccu²¹³ Cathail .i. ar nocho ro acht ind lānamain síar dia n-inchaib. 7²¹⁴ ro boí cuít do maccaib Cathail ocont shārugud²¹⁵. “Cindas²¹⁶ churfíther in cathsa,” or fir²¹⁷ Muman, “mād²¹⁸ meic Cathail tīasat i n-agid²¹⁹ mac n-Āeda. immo tēth dóib ar chomúaill.²²⁰”

10. Tīagait²²¹ didiu meic Āeda i n-agid na n-echtartúath sair²²².i. ²²³na nDésse 7 hĒle 7 Músraige Bregoin 7 Airthir Fhemín 7 Fer Maige. Cūanu²²⁴ ba hé rí Fer Maige Fēne²²⁵. Meicc Cathail dano ar cind Chorco Loĩgde 7 Chorco Duibne 7 Cīarraige 7 Chorco Bascind 7 Chorco Mrúad.

²⁰⁴ LL: Findnig BF: Findig 1316/1: Bindig

²⁰⁵ BF: arimbir 1316/1: om.

²⁰⁶ LL: nibathiu 1316/1: niba dithu

²⁰⁷ BF: diatailcepe 1316/1: diatail.cepe

²⁰⁸ 1316/1: doleicthi

²⁰⁹ BF: 7 a muintir

²¹⁰ BF: doss_arruid 1316/1: Dosnarraid

²¹¹ 1316/1: fadeisin

²¹² 1316/1: conernlaid

²¹³ 1316/1: for maccaib

²¹⁴ LL: dā, probably dano but at a faulty position (at the beginning of the sentence), BF: om. 1316/1: om.

²¹⁵ BF: isintsharugud 1316/1: isinsarubad

²¹⁶ BF: cindus 1316/1: cindus

²¹⁷ 1316/1: or firu

²¹⁸ 1316/1: mad iad

²¹⁹ BF: ind agid

²²⁰ BF: comuaill

²²¹ -i- in superscript.

²²² BF: inagid na__ech sair 1316/1: anagaid na naithech sair.

²²³ BF: osraigi 7nandeissi..... 1316/1: osraidi 7__deisi....

²²⁴ BF: Cuano mac Ailchin didiu

²²⁵ BF: ba he ba ri fer ___ fene 1316/1: ba he ba ri fer muigi feine

“Do not move, Lonán mac Findig”, said Mór.

Southwards in peace, since you move

Not will he be bolder against shouts,

Not will he be a shelter against hosts

Is he the warrior, to whom you will concede

A warrior who leaves his seat?

9. Lonan and his wife went²²⁶ westwards then with the sons of Áed Bennán. Cúanu mac Cailchíne from Liathmuine overtook them and he carried off Lonan’s wife and he himself [Lonán] was wounded. And he escaped after his wounding and he came westwards. It is after that that the sons of Áed Bennán proclaimed war on the sons of Cathal, that is because the married couple did not arrive westwards under their protection, moreover, the sons of Cathal had a part in the violation. ‘In what way will this battle happen,’ said the men of Munster, ‘if it be the sons of Cathal who would go against the sons of Áed, they will all fall because of equal pride.’

10. The sons of Áed then went against the foreign tribes eastwards²²⁷ that is the Déisi and the Éile and the Muscraige Bregoin²²⁸ and the Airthir Femin and the Fer Maige Féne. It was Cúanu who was king of Fir Maige Féne. The sons of Cathail then [went] against the Corco Loígde and the Corco Duibne and the Cíarraige and the Corco Baiscinn and the Corco Mrúad.

²²⁶ BF: Lonán, his wife and his people

²²⁷ BF: before the vassals forwards. I take *aigid* + *i n-* to mean ‘towards’ in the sense of ‘against’ in battle, just as *ar cinn* see DIL.

²²⁸ BF + 1316/1: that is the Osraigi and the Déisi etc.

11. IN tres lāa *didiu* resin cath. Is and tānic²²⁹ *trīar* æsa cerdda co Cūanaig. **B**uī Cūano oc taffond²³⁰. Tēit *chuccu*. “Can dúib?” or Cūanu. “7 cīa no-saigid²³¹?” “Āes cerdda atan-comnaic,²³² co Cūanaig saigmít.” “Ro-marbad Cūanu hi tress *indossa*”²³³ or sē.

IS and as-bert in trēs fer:

“Anim do neoch²³⁴ bith cen tech

Māsa *fhír* athguin Cúanach

Fībthair i *mmaig*²³⁵ di *shuidiu*

Cen dēine²³⁶ do Liathmuiniu”

As-bert *araile*²³⁷:

“Nīrbo *dīthrub* cosindiu

Int *shlige* do Líathmuniu

*Immus-retís*²³⁸ *coffa ech*

Muman i *mbethu*²³⁹ *Chūanach*”

As-bert in tres²⁴⁰ fer:

φ “**C**ossin²⁴¹ *laithe* ro-n-ūagad

Ganem²⁴² im *thoíbu* Cúanach²⁴³

Ba aicde nād *airthech* ní²⁴⁴

Comla ri Dún Liathmúni”

²²⁹ BF: *tangatar* 1316/1: *tangadar*

²³⁰ BF: *ictafond*

²³¹ BF: *cianosangid*

²³² 1316/1: *cianas ragthai aes cerda inne oriadsan*

²³³ 1316/1: *om.*

²³⁴ BF: *nech*

²³⁵ 1316/1: *filta ra muig*

²³⁶ BF: *cedené* 1316/1: *cedeamne*

²³⁷ BF: *asbert arailiu* 1316/1: *Is and asbert araili*

²³⁸ BF: *immosreitís* 1316/1: *immos roithdis*

²³⁹ BF: *im bethu/aid* 1316/1: *ambethaid*

²⁴⁰ BF: *Is and asbert antresfer* 1316/1: *Is and adbert araille*

²⁴¹ 1316/1: *cosa*

²⁴² BF: *gainium*

²⁴³ 1316/1: *nochan imtaeba cuana*

²⁴⁴ BF: *baaicde ná tairthed ní* 1316/1: *bahaige natartandin*

11. The third day before the battle then, it was then that three craftsmen came to Cúanu. Cúanu was hunting, he went to them. ‘Who are you?’ said Cúanu, ‘and where are you going?’ ‘Craftsmen are we and to Cúanu we journey.’²⁴⁵ ‘Cúanu was killed in a fight just now’, said he. It is then the third men said:

[It is] A blemish for anyone to be without a house
If it is true that Cúanu has been wounded
The night will be spent in the plain of the latter
Without swiftness to Liathmuine

The other said:

Not was it a wilderness until today
The road to Liathmuine
Over it used to run the feet of the horses
Of Munster in the lifetime of Cúanu

The third man said:

Until the day that has been joined
Sand around the side of Cúanu
It was a place which nothing used to capture
The door at the fort of Liathmuine

²⁴⁵ 1316/1: Whereto will you go to?’ ‘Craftsmen [are] we,’ said they.

12. “Fo *chen* dúib,” or *sē*, “messe Cūano.” “Fē amai,” orseat, “nīt-ricfam²⁴⁶. **R**o scichis deit féin.²⁴⁷ Bia²⁴⁸ *marb rīa cind blīadnae.*” Do-ratad *īarum in cath.* **(b)**Lonān *immorro anīar*²⁴⁹ i *n-agid Chūanach.* Ro memaid²⁵⁰ *trā rīa maccaib Cathail* as *Indiu Mór* co *ILūachair nDedad.* Ro-memaid²⁵¹ *dano re maccaib Āeda*²⁵² *sair forsna athechaib*²⁵³ co *Cend Currig.* **A**d-[r]ogriind²⁵⁴ *immorro*²⁵⁵ *Lonān inni*²⁵⁶ *Chūanaig. i nDubid*²⁵⁷ *imma tarraid dóib.* **D**o-*bert* Cūanu *forgab for* Lonān co *mbuí trīt.* **O**c soud do *Chūanaig ass*²⁵⁸ *do-cuiredar*²⁵⁹ *cuilend athorbai*²⁶⁰ i ngabol *Chūanach* cona *tarla fān*²⁶¹. *Do-ber*²⁶² *dano Lonān*²⁶³ *fūasma*²⁶⁴ do gai mór ind-seom. 7 nī *thuidchid* de co tall a *chend* de²⁶⁵.

13. IS and as-*bert Mac Mocherda*:²⁶⁶

φ “**D**resfid *huinnius 7 fern*²⁶⁷

Do taig *indiu a Ruithchern*²⁶⁸

Biaid *brattān fuidb im nech*²⁶⁹

Fo *dāig ilmon-sa*²⁷⁰ *Cūanach*

²⁴⁶ BF: om. 1316/1: nircfam

²⁴⁷ BF: om. 1316/1: rosgisdais fein

²⁴⁸ 1316/1: bid

²⁴⁹ BF, 1316/1: om.

²⁵⁰ BF, 1316/1: romaid

²⁵¹ BF: *romeбайд* 1316/1: *romeabaid*

²⁵² BF: *aetha*

²⁵³ LL: co cend currig BF: *forsna athechaib cucenn curraig* 1316/1: *forsna athachaib co cend currig*

²⁵⁴ LL *Adogrind* BF: *Adogrind* 1316/1: *atrogrin*

²⁵⁵ BF: .is.

²⁵⁶ BF: *indí* 1316/1: *andiaid*

²⁵⁷ BF: *induibib* 1316/1: x

²⁵⁸ BF: x 1316/1: ass

²⁵⁹ BF: *docuiretar* 1316/1: *do-cuirithar*

²⁶⁰ BF: *athorba* 1316/1: *athorbo*

²⁶¹ BF: *faon* 1316/1: *forlar annsin*

²⁶² BF: *do-beir* 1316/1: *do-bert*

²⁶³ LL: *lonas*

²⁶⁴ BF, 1316/1: *fuasmad*

²⁶⁵ BF: *trit* co tabn- 7 níthudchid dé cotall *acenn* de. 1316/1: *trit* co lár 7 nír leig éirgi dó cotall achend de. I am not entirely sure what the abbreviation co tabn- means.

²⁶⁶ 1316/1: does not have these quatrains, only uses the last sentence of the other texts: *ni roan aicesium acht triar .i. a bean 7 a mac 7 a ingen. aigead chuana mac aicín coniugsin finit amen.*

²⁶⁷ BF: *ferd*

²⁶⁸ BF: *a ruithcerd*

²⁶⁹ BF: *darnech*

²⁷⁰ BF: *risona*

12. ‘Welcome to you’, said he, ‘I am Cúanu’. ‘Woe indeed’, said they, ‘we shall not come to you.’²⁷¹ You have wearied yourself. You will be dead before the end of the year.’²⁷² The battle was brought about then. Lonán [went] from the west towards Cúanu. The sons of Cathal were defeated from Inde Mór to Lúachair nDedad. The sons of Áed conquered the vassals to Cend Cuirrig. Lonán then pursued the aforementioned Cúanu, in Dubid they fall upon each other. Cúanu gave a blow on Lonán and it was through him. When Cúanu left him, a holly-tree sharply cut into the thighs of Cúanu so that he fell on his back. Lonán then gave him a blow with a great spear into him and he did not arise from it, and he cut his head off.²⁷³

13. It is then Mac Dá Cherda²⁷⁴ said:

A spear and a shield will break

Your house today, o Ruithchern

There will be a cloak of spoils around someone

Because of the many feats of Cúanu²⁷⁵

²⁷¹ Or, if read as *íccaid* ‘we cannot heal you’, see glossary.

²⁷² 1316/1: You have wearied yourself.

²⁷³ BF: through him with a tree trunk and he did not arise and he cut his head of him. 1316/1: through him to the middle and not did he let him get up and he cut of his head of him.

²⁷⁴ All manuscripts have Mac Mocherda here.

²⁷⁵ BF here has *risona* for *ilmonsa* ‘many feats’, I cannot think of a proper translation of this.

Sescand Cluana *maccú* Birnd.

Do-bert Bodb *ēcht* n-*amra* n-ind²⁷⁶

Dēccaid i tóeb *ind* lēnai.

Lecht Cūanach *mac* Cailchenai.

A *chuilind* *ind* athforbai²⁷⁷

Ro *lais* *ar* *coffa* *amrai*

Olc *sén* *ūare*²⁷⁸ *ar* dot-bí

Aithech *thūathi* *dia* *shlabrai*

IS *úarach* *innocht*

I *teglach*²⁷⁹ Cūanach

A *dagben*²⁸⁰, *in* *banna* *bán*

A *ingen*, a *oín-maccán*²⁸¹,

Ba *fír* *son*, *nīro* *an* *aice*²⁸² *in* *n-aidchi-sin*²⁸³ *acht*²⁸⁴ *in* *trīar-sin*. *Aided* Cūanach *mac* Ailchini *insin*.²⁸⁵

²⁷⁶ BF: *naamraind*

²⁷⁷ BF: *athorbai*

²⁷⁸ BF: *om.*

²⁷⁹ LL: *aithgelach*

²⁸⁰ BF: *cenachben*

²⁸¹ BF: *aenmaccán*

²⁸² BF: *aiciseom* 1316/1: *aiccesium*

²⁸³ BF: *om.*

²⁸⁴ BF: *acht mad*

²⁸⁵ BF: *Aided cuanach mac ailchine conici-sin genelach* cuana *sund* 1316/1: *aigead* *cuana* *mac* *ailcin* *conuigisin* *finit* *amen*. Genealogy from BF: BF: *genelach* Cūana²⁸⁵ *sund* .i. Cūanu *mac* Cailchín *mac* Dimai *mac* Findbair *mac* Findloga *mac* Deiche *maccon* File *maccu* Scraid *mac* Fhir Cuile *mac* Buain *mac* Mogauiith *mac* Fergusa *mac* Rossaruaid *mac* Rudrin 7r1

The Marsh of Cluain Maccu Birnd
Badb brought about a wonderful slaying into it
See beside the meadowland
The grave of Cúanu mac Cailchíne

O holly-tree of the sharp cutting
You have overthrown the feet of a wonderful person
Bad the luck because
The vassal of the country struck you for his cattle

It is cold tonight
The household²⁸⁶ of Cúanu
His noble wife, the fair womanly one
His daughter and his only little son

That was true, only those three remained near him that night (that is his son, his daughter and his wife). That [was] violent death of Cúanu mac Cailchíne.²⁸⁷

Book of Fermoy Genealogy:

²⁸⁶ Different in LL, aithgelach ‘new moon of Cúanu’?. See grammatical notes.

²⁸⁷ BF + 1316/1: The violent death of Cúanu son of Cailchíne as far as that.

6. 1 Grammatical Notes

- 1.3 past subj. 3sg cj. *nī thē(i)ssed* 2. It is difficult to translate the subjunctive in this sentence. To translate it with ‘would’ would make it more of a conditional and to translate it with ‘could’ more of a potentialis. It however renders (in principle clauses) a willed or commanded action, see Thurneysen §516, therefore I have chosen to use ‘could’, as it is as close as possible to a willed or commanded action.
- 1.5 *hi tosaigh nó i nderiud*. I take this to that the voice wishes to know whether Mór wants to have her derangement now, or later at a later stage in her life.
- 1.9 I have taken the lenited variant of the personal pronoun from BF, because it would make more sense for the sheep to be Fíngen’s in stead of Mór’s.
- 1.10 LL has *isin dingairiu* BF *iarsin dinghaire*, so it is either ‘while she was herding’, (with *i* as being in a state or condition, see 1.12.) or ‘after the herding’, I have taken the BF ‘after the herding’ because it more logical to go into the house after a long day of herding, but the other option is just as legitimate.
- 1.12 *nochon ifamni*, this is a fut. 3sg. of the verb *foaid* which should be *-fhifamni*. However, the lenited *fh-* has disappeared in LL and Old Irish *níco* has been replaced by *nocho n-*. BF has *-faifemni*.
- 1.12 *it ēcen*. The preposition *i* can also denote ‘being in the state or condition of (DIL *i* 2). Here meaning something like ‘it is in a state of necessity for you, thus ‘it is necessary for you’.
- 1.14 *can duit*, later also *can dúib* 121. DIL gives ‘who is/are..’, under the headword **can** + **do**. However, under the headword **do** it gives ‘whence is/are...’. In either case, it is clearly a question concerning someone’s identity, which is provided by either name or homeland, both options are probably correct.
- 1.17 pres. 3sg. *at-raaig* 17 this form with double *-a-* might be the result of a Middle Irish development in the perfect: ‘the form *at-raacht* occurring occas. in mid. Ir. may be a dissimilation-form from the perf. *at-raracht*’, see DIL under **at-reig**. *at-rarach* side (BF *at-raacht* 75n65). Perhaps this spread to the present, or perhaps it is just a slip of the pen.
- 1.16 LL has fut. 1sg. *nat-ainisiu* 16, read the (reconstructed) s-future *nat-ain-sium*, BF and 1316/1 contain the newer weak f-future conjugation, see chapter 3.

- 1.21 is fria...do-fedar, (pass. pres.). This is the only example given in DIL of the verb do-fed-, ‘brings leads’, followed by *fri* in the sense ‘brings beside, compares to’, (DIL s.v. do-fed) but it seems legitimate considering the context.
- 1.29 bo ngar dó, adj. ‘short time, space, near’, variant from BF. LL has a palatal ending which does not fit the context, since the adjective is supposed to be a nominative. It might have been confused with the subst. *gair* ‘shortness, short time’.
- 1.31ff nim-athgén, nim-athgēoin; to recognize, know. reduplicated pret. 2sg and 3sg with inf. prn. 1sg. of the verb ad-gnin. I have taken the variant nim-aithgén from BF because when the quatrain is sung again, it also contains –m- rather than –n- (and so do the quatrains in BF and 1316/1). It seems a logical assumption that nobody recognizes Ruithchern, instead of an unidentified person that is referred to by an infix. pers. prn. masc. with nasalisation.
- 1.38 int-í congair. This masculine form cannot refer to Mac Dá Cherda as he is not from Loch Léin. It might refer to the shouting boy mentioned in the poetry.
- 1.48 a ndís sethar, see 2 (DIL s.v. 2 días) ‘used in dative with possessive pronoun in apposition (dus ‘the two of them’, ‘both’) and a nom.pl. of *siur* ‘sister’, ‘both sisters used to go...’ with neutral –r instead of the palatal which would be expected in the nom. pl. Maybe we can take the palatal –r in BF as evidence for a scribal error in LL, even though both BF and 1316/1 changed the word into: *sechtair* ‘outside, beyond’.
- 1.53 Cia [i]mma-tái, a Ruithchern. I have taken this to be the 2nd pers. sg. of imm-tá ‘to be around, about’, with an infix. prn. 3sg. neuter/masc ‘although you are around it (i.e. there)’.
- 1.58 somtha, perhaps of *sommata* adj. io, iā ‘rich’ which is also used as a noun, with poetic loss of second syllable som’tha. O’Nolan takes it to be an unknown form of *soim* ‘rich’, in analogy with *dommatu* ‘poverty’: ‘somtha = (?) riches’.²⁸⁸
- 1.60 fil, see Thurn. §780.3 *Fil* is usually used after conunct particles or in leniting relative clauses but in archaic texts and poetry it may be used in other positions also with the meaning ‘there is, are’.
- 1.68 canad mair (BF cenadmair), Nolan takes this to be cé+negative, but this would be céni. It could be the conjunction *cía* ‘although’ or *ma* ‘if’ (neg. **cení**, mani) are used with an indicative verbal form without infixed pronoun, leniting **d** (**id**) is infixed, supported where

²⁸⁸ O’Nolan, ‘Mór’, 281.

necessary by **no** (...)’. It then consists of *ce + no + d mair* ‘although it lives/lasts’. It could also be a doubtful instance of *céin-mair* + inixed pronoun. *Céin máir* is a petrified expression used to say ‘long may +dat. live’, and could be used with a *dat.inf.prn.*, see Thurn. §384 on adjectives used as prepositions. See also DIL under **canad** for another doubtful instance from LL: *dober dóib muic for muin c. mair no dlig*, LL. Cf. *céin mair*. See also the *Féilire Óengusso cenasmairson* ‘Long may they live (?)’.²⁸⁹

- 1.79 *inid diliu*. I have taken *inid* in the meaning of ‘since’, consisting of *i* + relative *a* + copula, for which see Strachan has argued in *Ériu* 1 (1904) 12, containing the copula preceded by *in* ‘in which’. See also Myles Dillon in his edition of *Serlige*, who translates it as ‘when’.²⁹⁰
- 1.86 DIL translates *mol* o, m ‘praise, but also used for a reiterated refrain or noise for example a continuous lamentation’. I think the meaning ‘continuous lamentation’ is appropriate here, as *Mór* is keening over *Fíngen*. DIL states that this is possibly a figurative use of another word **mol** ‘millshaft’, in allusion to the continuous rotation or splashing of a mill-shaft.
- 1.89 *do écaib*, of *éc* ‘death’, a word that is frequently used in plural. See DIL under **éc** for examples of the *dat.pl.* used for individual deaths.
- 1.15 *do-nn-ānic*, of *do-icc* with direct object ‘comes to, approaches’. I agree with O’Nolan that this should probably be: *da-n-dá-ānic*, with the relative marker of a nasalising relative clause and a 3sg. f. Class C infix. *prn.* (see **sluindid** in vocabulary) after a *nas. rel. clause* of time, ‘her sense came to her’.
- 1.99 For *laím Chatail*. This is probably stated to demonstrate that *Lonán* was beside *Cathal* (or in any case near him) at the court, a sign of social status.
- 1.107 *dia tailcibe fut. 2sg.* with syncope perhaps of the second and fourth syllable of **to-ad-léici + -fe*, *dia t†ail†cibe*.²⁹¹ See also *tailciud* ‘releasing, letting go’. The **do** that goes with it, might have similar meaning to **do-léici do** ‘to concede to’.
- 1.115 *immo-taéth dóib*, of *do-tuit* ‘to fall’. *fut. 3sg.* with *imma n-* denoting reciprocal action, strengthened by prep. *do*, see vocabulary under **imma n-**.

²⁸⁹ Whitley Stokes (ed), *Féilire Óengusso Céili Dé: The Martyrology of Oengus the Culdee* (London 1905) 19n20. Translation of dr. Jürgen Uhlich during classes Old Irish Poetry at Trinity College Dublin, November 2009.

²⁹⁰ Myles Dillon, *Serlige Con Culainn* (Dublin 1942).

²⁹¹ For syncope see Thurneysen, *Grammar*, 67-69.

- 1.122 *atan-comnaic*, of *ad-cumaing*, pret. 3sg. with 1pl. infix., ‘reaches, happens’. With inf. pron., literally: ‘it has happened to x (to be)’, hence as verb of existence, the whole group usually being tantamount to a personal pron., in this case ‘craftsmen we are’. See also *Feidelm banfháid a Síid Chrúachna atamchomnaic-se* ‘I am Feidelm the prophetess from Sid Chrúachna’.²⁹²
- 1.126 *athguin*, *ath-* can have the meaning of Latin *re-* ‘again’ or with nouns ‘second, a further’, with nouns indicating persons *ex-* (as in *aithrí* deposed king), worn out, degenerate’. Freq. with merely intensive force, which is probably what we have here, as there is no mention of an earlier wounding of Cúanu.
- 1.128 *cen déne*. There seems to be some confusion in the manuscripts at this point, BF has *déne* 128. LL has *deme*, which could stand for *iā*, f *deime* ‘darkness’. 1316/1 has *deamna*, which might possibly be a form of *iā*, f ‘firmness, stability’. I have taken the reading from BF because it is the least ambiguous one in form, of *déine* *iā*, f ‘swiftness, speed’. O’Nolan also uses *cen dēine* ‘without hastening’ in his translation.²⁹³ Although he does not say anything on this word in his vocabulary, he has probably taken the word to be *deinmne* *iā*, f ‘eagerness, haste’. This word could explain the confusion between the *-n-* and *-m-* found in all manuscripts.
- 1.139 *ro-n-úagad*. Probably from the verb *úagid*, ‘to join, stitch, sew’. pf. pass. sg. with a nasalizing relative clause of time. The sand is here joined around Cúanu’s sides, I take this to be a euphemism for a burial. O’Nolan points to the Old and Modern Irish word *úag* ‘grave’.²⁹⁴
- 1.141 *nād airthech*. Again, a problematic form, the guttural at the end would suggest the verb *teiched* ‘flees, runs away, retreats’, with a preverb *ar-*. However, one would expect a preposition to be used with it ‘from which/to which nothing would flee’. It would only be possible with the meaning ‘to shun’, only used in one doubtful instance for this verb. The variant from BF *nat airthed* would make it an impf. 3sg. of *ar-reith* ‘accuses, captures, overtakes’ with a rel. *nád*. Only then BF has *nát* and not *nád*, but this also happened in line 43 *nāt fil*. I presume it would be very easy for these forms to be confused with the forms of the more common *do-airret*, after the *-d* or *-t* of *nā* (later simple verb *tár(r)thid*, *tair(r)thid*, *tarraid* and *tárrthaigid*), which might explain

²⁹² Leinster and Stowe versions of the *Táin Bó Cúailnge* quoted in Lysaght, *Banshee*, 204.

²⁹³ O’Nolan, ‘Mór’, 266, 272.

²⁹⁴ Patrick S. Dinneen, *Foclóir Gaedhilge agus Béarla* (Dublin 1927), *úag*. O’Nolan, ‘Mór’, 281.

- the level of confusion between d's and t's and d's and ch's in LL. The –ch would then present a later confusion of lenited *d* with lenited *g*.
- 1.144 *nīt-ricfam*. It is definitely a fut.1pl. with infix.prn 2sg. class A. However, from which verb it is a future is less clear. It could either be from **ro-icc**, ‘we shall not come to you’, or from **íccaid** (ā) ‘we cannot heal you’ with a *ro* of possibility. This is how O’Nolan understands it in his edition. Either option makes sense, the *áessa cerda* either cannot heal him from the blemish he got because of a premature lament, or they will not cosme to him because he ‘has wearied himself’, and because he is about to die anyway.
- 1.144 *orseat*. The third plural of the defective verb ‘to say’, *ol*, is formed with a verbal ending **olseat-som**, here with Middle Irish *or* for earlier *ol*.
- 1.144 *ro scichis deit féin*. Of the verb *scíthid* ‘becomes weary’. The confusion of –th- and –ch- does not appear to be uncommon and might be connected to the similar confusion between its voiced counterparts –dh- and –gh-. The other option would be the verb **scuchaid/scuichid**, which usually means ‘moves, proceeds, is finished/exhausted, ends’, with **do/de** departs from. Here translated as ‘you have wearied yourself’, it is the only example of this meaning but seems to confirm to a more literally ‘you have departed from/exhausted yourself’.
- 1.147 *dat. pl. forsna aithechaib* 147. This is supplied from BF as it is part of the common construction that accompanies the verb *maidid*. It goes *maidid re A for B*, ‘it breaks before A onto B’, so A defeats B, see **maidid**.
- 1.148 *imma-tarraid dóib*, standing for *imma + do-airret* (pret. 3sg. conj.). Here the same construction with **imma n-** is used to create a reciprocal action. See vocabulary under **imma n-**. *Do-airret* means something as to ‘overtake’, but they cannot both overtake each other. Lonán is clearly pursuing Cúanu, therefore I have translated it as ‘fall upon each other, meet each other’, DIL **do-airret** II intransitive ‘comes, arrives, fall upon’.
- 1.150 *athorbai = āith+(f)orbae, io, n vn. of for-ben* ‘act of smiting, cutting’. Possibly the adj. *áith* i ‘pointed, keen’ in compound with *forbae*, ‘a sharp cutting’. Otherwise it is the prefix *ath-* probably carrying the same instensive force as *ath+guin*, 1.126.
- 1.157 *mon, f. ‘feat, trick’*. with demonstrative and *il-* ‘many’, *ilmon-sa* 157. Of the variant from BF *rison-sa* I cannot make out the meaning.
- 1.160 *Do-bert Bodb ēcht n-amra n-ind*: ‘Badb brought a wonderful slaying into it’, I have taken *n-ind* to be the prep. *i + acc+prn.3sg.masc.*, with a nasalization after the acc.sg. of *ēcht n-amra*, which is uncommon but possibly also in accordance with the older

date of the poetry (Thurn. §237, ‘On the other hand, nasalization of a following dependent genitive or an adverbial is not consistently shown; it is, however, more frequent in Ml. than in Wb.’).

- 1.166 *olc sén ūare ar dot-bí*. See DIL under **sén**, b) an incantation, charm. **sén uaire** ‘charm for good luck, a lucky time’. O’Nolan translates *ar dot-bí*: ‘when (...) struck you’, but *ar* cannot be used as a temporal conjunction.
- 1.170 *teglach*, o, n ‘household, family’. LL has a variant *aithgelach* ‘new moon’, possibly a compound of *aith-* ‘new, second, intensifying prefix’ + *gelach* ‘moon’. *teglach* seems to make more sense in the context of a mourning family.
- 1.71 *banna*, either ‘band’ (OFr. loanword) or **banda** io, iā ‘feminine, womanly’ as subst., of which this would be the only example. It could be either in this case. However, the fact that *banna* is preceded by the article and not by the possessive pronoun (as is the case when all the members of Cúanu’s household are introduced in this quatrain) might point to an apposition with *a ben* rather than a new member of his household, ‘his band’. The quatrain is also explained after that as: ‘That was true, only those three remained near him that night (that is his son, his daughter and his wife)’. Since there is no mention of his band at all, this may be in support of reading *banna* ‘woman’, with substantive use of *banna* ‘womanly’.
- 1.174 *níro an aice*(BF *aici-seom*), 3sg. perf. of *anaid* ‘to remain’, with *oc* + 3sg. masc. ‘near him’.

7. On the Classification of the Text and Literary Themes

7.1 On Genre

There is quite a clear break in the text between the first and the second part of the story. In the first part, the actions are mainly centred around Mór and her search for a proper spouse, in the second part, the emphasis seems to have shifted towards her sister Ruithchern but all three manuscript versions end the text with *Aided C(h)úanach Mac Cailchíne (conic/coniug) insin*, a literary qualification which places the story in the tradition of *aideda/oitte* ‘violent deaths’, a genre widely appreciated in Irish tradition. However, with a substantial part of this text concerned with Mór rather than with Cúanu, does it still fit into the category *aided*? What is an *aided* in the first place and where do these qualifications come from? And how does this fit in with the theoretical background on genres as developed in other fields? The following paragraphs will deal with these taxonomic questions.

7.1.1 Theoretical Background

‘Students quickly become aware of the problem of titles. Does this kind of problem have any real importance or is it just academic nit-picking?’²⁹⁵ This is the question that Graham Runnalls asked himself in his article on genres in medieval French drama. He himself concluded that it is a serious matter and that it should be examined, but not everyone seems to agree. As with most theoretical discussions, the discussion on ‘genre’ is centered on definitions. To be able to apply the concept of ‘genre’ a definition is necessary: what exactly is genre? But, the definition of definition usually being ‘trouble’, this results in theories that are neither here nor there, too precise or too vague or just incomprehensible. This causes major discussions in modern literary studies, but it has also been widely discussed in fields relating to the Middle Ages.

The Middle Ages, however, present us with an extra problem, namely the distance in culture. In classifying medieval texts, should one use the modern qualifications for the sake of clarity? Or is this not fair in respect to these texts, being the products of totally different environments and mindsets? Sometimes there is no sign of a contemporary system, or, if there is one, we simply do not understand it - so what to do then?²⁹⁶

²⁹⁵ Graham A. Runnalls, ‘Titles and Genres in Medieval French Religious Drama’, *Tétraux* 2 (1980) 23.

²⁹⁶ The same problem has been described for non-western cultures in the field of anthropology: Melville Jacobs, ‘Titles in Oral Literature’, *Journal of Folklore* 70 (1957) 158. Peter Seitel, ‘Theorizing Genres – Interpreting Works’, *New Literary History* 34/2 (2003) 275-297. Proinsias Mac Cana, *The learned tales of medieval Ireland* (Dublin, 1980) 21-22 gives some examples of taxonomic systems of non-western cultures, some of which are very advanced.

There is no general consensus. It seems that every writer chooses his or her own approach, according to what fits the topic best. And this is probably the best solution, because genres themselves can never be stable. It has been pointed out on several occasions that the meanings of ‘genre’ fluctuate according to time, place and even internal flexibility (depending on authors and audience).²⁹⁷ Still, to disregard the idea of ‘genre’, would leave a gigantic gap in the study of texts, for they are always perceived to belong to a certain category, either by its writer or by its audience. In this discussion, perception might just be the most important word, as Paul Wackers has put it: ‘genres do not exist, genre consciousness does’.²⁹⁸ In other words, we need the concept of genre in order to understand a text, because the concept was there in the head of the author who used it, either consciously or subconsciously.²⁹⁹ Thomas Pavel examined the vocabulary of genres and the possibility of defining it. He reached the conclusion that there are several different types of terminology connected to genres:

1. Content Terms, that are shared with a moral and existential vocabulary (like ‘tragedy’)
2. Terms of Art with a simple formal definition (like ‘sonnet’, with a set number of lines and rhyme-pattern)
3. Terms of Art with extra textual properties which requires a certain level of hermeneutic dexterity from users (terms like ‘fiction’ or ‘novel’).³⁰⁰

Since the first and third set of terms given here are very closely connected to ontologic experiences that are part of a person’s life before he even hears of ‘genre’, their content cannot possibly be pinpointed to an unchangeable definition. Just like ‘sorrow’ is hard to describe and is differently perceived in different cultures, the genre ‘tragedy’ can have different sets of connotations and patterns per particluar timeframe or culture. Pavel argues that these are to be seen as ‘norms, as ‘good recipes’ that a writer can follow, more than absolute rules of behaviour. They are orientated towards accomplishing a certain goal, and if a certain model works to achieve that goal, then it is only logical that it will be repeated by other authors with a similar goal.³⁰¹

K.S. Whetter, however, is of a different opinion. He disagrees with most of the previous theories on genre; not just with the ones that declare the concept null and void (like Foucault) but also with the ones that provide a too deterministic and narrow description of

²⁹⁷ Thomas Pavel, ‘Literary Genres as Norms and Good Habits’, *New Literary History* 34/2 (2003) 201. Paul Wackers, ‘There are no Genres: Remarks on the Classification of Literary Texts’, *Reinardus: Yearbook of the International Reynard Society* 13 (2000) 237.

²⁹⁸ Wackers, ‘There are’, 238.

²⁹⁹ Pavel, ‘Literary Genres’, 202. ‘It is a crucial interpretative tool because it is a crucial artistic tool’.

³⁰⁰ *Ibid.*, 205.

³⁰¹ *Ibid.*, 209.

genre (as for example Alastair Fowler).³⁰² According to Whetter, a genre does not so much exist in the 'horizon of expectation' (Jauss),³⁰³ as it does in the recognition by the audience. The generic features both create, validate and alter the perception of a genre by the audience and the text only 'works', if they recognize its genre. The meaning of a text can only be fully grasped if its genre is fully understood too. He thus claims that genre is not only created by the presence of certain features but also by the significance and emphasis given to these features. The list of features could be possibly infinite (something also pointed out by Paul Wackers).³⁰⁴ A generic mixture is more common than pure genres, and sub-types can be the result of such mixtures where the combination resulted in something new.

The outline of his theory is not unambiguous in my opinion and when he lists the characteristics of the 'genre' of (for example) the epic, it is unclear which definition he uses. Is it a medieval one? A modern one? His own? He neglects the aspect of the audience, although he seemed to grant great value to this in his first chapter. The characteristics he mentions for the 'genre' of the epic are mostly formal, like 'elevated style, invocation of a subject or muse, marvelous action, role of Gods/the supernatural, interconnectedness of themes of vengeance, honour & glory and the focus on a heroic, semi-divine figure'. The ethos this genre seems to have, according to him, is 'recognition of the fragility of life and connection between life, death, glory and suffering'.³⁰⁵

As we shall see in paragraph 7.1.4, this definition causes trouble. It is difficult to differentiate the concepts of 'expectation' (Jauss) and 'recognition' (Whetter), and it might not be valuable to do so. When an audience listens to a text, its expectation will automatically turn into recognition, the whole purpose of genre features is that a storyteller/writer wants his audience to recognize the type of text as soon as possible, for them to be able to understand it and test their expectations.

When describing genre, we are not to mix our own categories with the perspective of the period or culture we are studying. It might be best to choose the approach that we consider most appropriate in the context of the subject as long as we are very clear about why either one was chosen. There is no right or wrong definition, all are useful, they only differ.³⁰⁶

³⁰² K.S. Whetter, *Understanding Genre and Medieval Romance* (Aldershot 2008), 9-33.

³⁰³ Hans Robert Jauss, *Alterität und Modernität der Mittelalterlichen Literatur* (München 1977). He was one of the initiators of the reader-response criticism, which focuses more on the experience of a literary work by the audience of it.

³⁰⁴ Whetter, *Understanding*, 20. Wackers, 'There are no', 248.

³⁰⁵ *Ibid.*, 51.

³⁰⁶ Following: Wackers, 'There are no', 248.

7.1.2 Writers, Audience and Genres

Modern scholarship has created its own divisions for early Irish literature, dividing most of the tales into four ‘cycles’: ‘Mythological-cycle’, the ‘Ulster-cycle’, the Historical-cycle (or Cycles of the Kings)’ and the ‘Fenian-cycle (or Finn, Ossianic)’. These are based mainly based on content, and the titles speak for themselves (thus, Ulster cycle is concerned with Ulster, Fenian-cycle with the stories of Finn mac Cumail etc). Other stories are often classified according to their supposed nature, like ecclesiastical or secular, or according to other modern categories, like ‘historical’ for the annals etc. *AC* is considered to be part of the historical- or king’s-cycle, because it is set in the historic era of royal dynasties. According to Sean Ó Coileáin, it is the unity in structure which justifies the concept of a cycle and the unifying process is that which constitutes ‘tradition’.³⁰⁷

The ethos of the heroic tales can be compared with that described by Whetter for ‘epic’, where loyalty, honour, life and death are the most important assets of life. However, the tales in the cycles of the kings are more concerned with the origins of peoples and dynasties, battles and explaining customs.³⁰⁸ Their main concern is creating identity (or what Ó Coileáin calls unity,³⁰⁹ creating a common history), identity for whoever was in charge and was in need to justify this. Prof. Kelleher has suggested that the Uí Néill started this willful creation of history and that they learned this from the best, from Charlemagne himself.³¹⁰

If we then take the function of the tales into account, we might be able to classify the cycles of the kings legitimately as a medieval genre too because it seems to have had a very particular function: that of creating identity. In the above section, my critique of Whetter was that he neglected the perception of the audience all too quickly in his description of epic. Recognition and expectation are important factors in determining genre for the audience, and in determining the genre, the meaning of the text is also revealed to the audience, for, as stated before, genre bears meaning. So if Paul Wackers is right in suggesting that medieval authors looked at their text more from a functional angle than a structural one,³¹¹ do we not need to base possible genre-divisions on this?

³⁰⁷ Ó Coileáin, ‘Structure’, 88.

³⁰⁸ Eleanor Knott and Gerard Murphy, *Early Irish Literature* (Dublin 1966) 131-132. They also note that tales in the heroic tradition of ten have little historic importance for the community.

³⁰⁹ Ó Coileáin, ‘Structure’, 89, 125.

³¹⁰ His campaigns, that is. John V. Kelleher, ‘Early Irish History and Pseudo-History’, *Studia Hibernica* 3 (1963) 113-127.

³¹¹ So, for example, not dividing texts according to characters or setting (what happened with the cycles), but according to what role they were supposed to have for their audience. One could think of entertainment, education, etc. In this case it could be the creation of a shared past, a shared identity by a certain people or tribe.

There is very little evidence as to how the Irish scribes perceived their texts but the few instances there are, are collected in the article by Erich Poppe ‘Reconstructing medieval Irish Literary Theory (...)’,³¹² and the article written by Poppe together with Patrick Sims-Williams in the *Cambridge History of Literary Criticism*.³¹³ The term that is found to denote the function of *scéla* (stories) is *gairdiugud*. This basic meaning of this term is ‘a shortening of time’, but it could also be used for the beneficent effects of preaching on people, so combining pleasure with learning.³¹⁴ One scribe approaches the text *Táin Bó Cuailnge* as a *historia*, i.e., a description of actual past events,³¹⁵ but adds that he is not entirely sure that it is not a *fabula* (invented or made up stories). The terms are part of a tradition that stretched from *Isidore of Sevilla* to *Macrobius* and twelfth-century schools of literary criticism.³¹⁶ Both Isidore and Macrobius enjoyed great popularity in Ireland during the Middle Ages and interpretations of their theories can be found in many manuscripts. Isidore was also the one to emphasize that the *historia* was meant to instruct the people as opposed to *fabula*, which could be considered fiction and thus had entirely different functions:

Fabulas poetae quasdam delectandi causa finxerunt, quasdam ad naturam rerum, nonnullas ad mores hominum interpretati sunt. (Etymologiae I.40.3)

Poets have invented some fables for the sake of pleasing, some according to the nature of things, and some are interpreted according to human character.³¹⁷

The message of this function of *historia* seems to be particularly carried out by the text *Airec Menman Uraird meic Coise* (The Device of Urard mac Coise) in which a poet uses a fictional (pseudo-historical?) narrative to get his due in the present time.³¹⁸ All in all, this genre of what Poppe calls ‘pseudo-historic prose narrative’, seems to consist of a ‘massive historical project’ of the Irish to educate, validate and create identity.³¹⁹

³¹² Erich Poppe, ‘Reconstructing Medieval Irish Literary Theory: The Lesson of *Airec Menman Uraird maic Coise*’, *Cambridge Medieval Celtic Studies* 37 (1999) 33-54.

³¹³ Patrick Sims-Williams and Erich Poppe, ‘Medieval Irish literary theory and criticism’, *The Cambridge History of Literary Criticism* vol. 2 (Cambridge 2005) 291-309.

³¹⁴ Sims-Williams and Poppe, ‘Medieval Literary’, 303-4. Also Poppe, ‘Reconstructing’, 35n8 for the meaning of *scél* both as story and as news, knowledge or tidings. Common in Latin sources too as *prodesse* and *delectare*.

³¹⁵ Generally believed to have its Irish equivalent in the term *scéla*.

³¹⁶ Poppe, ‘Reconstructing’, 36.

³¹⁷ Translation: Martin Irvin, *The Making of Textual Culture: Grammatica and Literary Theory 350-1100* (Cambridge, 1994) 238.

³¹⁸ Poppe, ‘Reconstructing’, 43-48. See also the results of the ‘Cork-school of Hagiography’ and research by Máire Herbert and Thomas Ó Cathasaigh, wherein increasingly more evidence is collected of contemporary politics reflected in, or projected on, narratives set in a more distant past like hagiographical material.

³¹⁹ Poppe, ‘Reconstructing’, 53-4, Sims-Williams and Poppe, ‘Medieval Irish’, 306: ‘Furthermore, frequent explanations of features of the Irish landscape (there is also a distinct learned sub-genre *dindshenchas*, the explanation of traditions about place-names), in both prose and verse, of the association of places with historical events, and of the origin of traditions, support the view that this corpus was part of a massive historical project, the creative appropriation and interpretation of Ireland in terms of both its chronological and geographical space’.

This might be true for the historical cycles in particular, but more research is needed to determine whether this was also true for tales contained in the other cycles. More importantly, if a theory on genre should be built upon reception-history, Poppe's term 'pseudo-historic-narrative', needs to be defined more clearly to provide a solid foundation, because his design is certainly meaningful.

7.1.3 The Irish Genres

As mentioned above, our text is classified as an *aided*, which gives out clear signals as to what the most important aspect of this text is: a violent death. This title did not appear out of nowhere. It is part of an extensive system of literary criticism developed in Early Irish culture comprising both prose and poetry. Poetry for example, was strictly divided into different classes or 'genres' by formal rules like rhyme or syllable count. For prose narrative, there were also many classifications which were strongly connected to the class of professional poets, the *filid*, whose grades, functions and compositions are intensively documented in several texts like the laws, *Auraicept na n-éces* (The Scholar's Primer) and the metrical tracts.³²⁰

Prose in turn is classified within the two extant 'Tale-lists'. They are the most well-known theoretic expositions on the classification of 'genre's' (if one may call it thus) of Irish literature. There are great differences in the way societies categorize their oral literature,³²¹ and the Irish in this case clearly chose for a descriptive approach of the main action of a tale, which is somewhere in between the formal-requirements (this action has to happen) and the content requirements, spoken of earlier (it is also associated with some experience of life like 'tragedy', there is 'love', 'wooing', etc.). As Erich Poppe noticed, 'the members of this list transcend the boundaries of modern cycles and belong to both 'religious' and 'secular' genres'.³²² The Tale-lists can (linguistically and possibly historically) be dated to no earlier than the 10th century.³²³ According to Mac Cana, these lists were not so much the curriculum of the professional poet (which is what the text purports to be), but more a manifesto of this class who felt the pressure of losing their favoured position at the court.³²⁴ Another possible

³²⁰ Rudolf Thurneysen (ed), 'Mittelirische Verslehren' *Irische Texte* III.1 ed. Whitley Stokes & E. Windisch (Leipzig 1891) 1-182.

³²¹ *Ibid.*, 21-22, provides an interesting list of classification systems and mnemonic devices from fairly simple to extremely sophisticated.

³²² Poppe, 'Reconstructing', 35.

³²³ For the full discussion see Mac Cana *Learned Tales*, 83-108, 127-131. Gregory Toner, 'Reconstructing the Earliest Irish Tale-Lists', *Éigse* 32 (2000) 88-120.

³²⁴ Mac Cana, *Learned Tales*, 127-131.

interpretation could be that it stands in the tradition of ‘patristic exegesis and medieval formalism in general’,³²⁵

One of the lists, list A, is found as an independent text, the other one (list B) forms part of the above-mentioned *Airec Uraird Menman mac Coise*). The lists first give a more general division of literature in three main areas: *senchas* ‘old lore’, *filidecht* ‘poetry’ and *scéla* ‘stories’.³²⁶ It is these *scéla* that concern us here, they are divided into an incredible amount of separate categories, based on the main dramatic action of the tale. The categories found in the tale-lists are:

List A	List B
Togla	Tana
Tána	Echtrada
Tochmarca	Coimperto
Catha	Catha
Uatha	Togla
Inrama/Lomges	Fessa
Oitte	Buili
Fessa	Tochmarca
Forbassa	Aithid
Echtrada	Tomadma
Aithid	Fís
Airggne	Serc
Tomadma	Sluagid
Fís	Tochomlada
Serc	Oirggne
Sluagid	
Tochomlada ³²⁷	

This extreme

categorization is not untypical for early Irish learned culture. Like many medieval societies, the Irish were fond of lists, but you could say that they took it to extremes. Everything you could possibly think of was divided into groups of significant numbers (three, seven, etc); the grades of poets, the different kinds of kings, even different kinds of wounding. Where the Welsh had their triads,³²⁸ the Irish had their lists. The lists probably originated as a mnemonic

³²⁵ Erich Poppe and Patrick Simms-Williams, ‘Medieval Irish Literary Theory and Criticism’, *the Cambridge History of Literary Criticism* vol. 2 ed. Alastair Minnis and Ian Johnson (Cambridge 2005) 308. Referring to Mark Scowcroft, ‘Abstract Narrative in Ireland’, *Ériu* 46 (1995) 122.

³²⁶ Although, needless to say, they overlap between each other in great degree, they all carry very different connotations.³²⁶ *Senchas* is the ‘old lore’, the laws, genealogies and the historical law. *Filidecht* is the art and learning of the poetic class (the *filid*) and *scéla* the historical and mythological lore as separate narratives.

³²⁷ Mac Cana, *Learned Tales*, 41-73.

³²⁸ Rachel Bromwich, *Trioedd Ynys Prydein: The Welsh Triads* (Cardiff, 1978). They are also present in the Old, and Middle Irish literature, and even still present in Irish tradition today: ‘Triúr nach fèidir leo mná a thuiscint: fir óga, fir aosta, fir meánaosta’, Three persons that cannot understand women: young men, old men and middle-aged men.

device in a mainly illiterate, oral culture. To remember stories or to activate the memory of a poet, some kind of classification was necessary which required some amount of abstraction.³²⁹

It is generally accepted that the Tale-lists have their origin in the oral culture of the professional poets. The fact that a lot of the stories mentioned in the lists have not come down to us in written form, or in any form, is usually taken as a support for that. Lists of battles and deaths appearing in earlier poetry, probably point to a well-established usage of this system as well.³³⁰

Looking at the categories found in the Tale Lists, we are not the only ones struggling with finding definitions and creating a neatly demarked system. Mac Cana stated:

The very system of classification, by grouping titles under common subject-headings (*togla*, *oircne*, etc.), must have presented a problem in certain cases: what was to be done with titles which did not fit easily in one of the recognized categories?³³¹

The difficulties experienced by the composers of the Tale-lists can be traced in the alterations made in some of the titles, to make them fit in a certain category, for example *Fochonn Loingse Fergusa meic Róig* is also known as *Tochomlad Loingsi Fergusa a hUlaib*.³³² Of course the fact that this list was mainly a scholarly invention (or in the words of Mac Cana ‘pedantic scholarly hairsplitting’³³³) instead of something pragmatic, did not help. From that perspective, they might not be more useful than the terminology we ‘invent’ or come up with for medieval literature, because they might be just as far removed from reality as the system found in the Tale-lists.³³⁴

7.1.4 On *aided* and ‘Aided’ Chúanach mac Cailchíne

The sub-category *aided* (pl. *oitte/aitte* or *aideda*) appears only in list A, which might seem strange, for it has been generally accepted that the ‘violent death’ (perhaps rather unnatural death) is one of the most important aspects of a warrior-society.³³⁵ Although there has been some discussion on the etymology and precise meaning of the word,³³⁶ I shall here stick with

³²⁹ Mac Cana, *Learned Tales*, 20-21.

³³⁰ *Ibid.*, 71-72.

³³¹ *Ibid.*, 67.

³³² Mac Cana, *Learned Tales*, 67.

³³³ *Ibid.*, 111.

³³⁴ N.B.: most categories (especially the ones that are in list A and B) were acknowledged and appeared frequently. However, the attempt to organize almost all tales under these headings or in a single system, is where the categorical over-enthusiasm starts.

³³⁵ Mac Cana, *Learned Tales*, 29.

³³⁶ Kikki Ingridsson, *Aided Derbforgaill “The violent death of Derbforgaill”. A critical edition with introduction, translation and textual notes*. Unpublished PhD thesis, submitted to Uppsala University 2009, 13-15. Mac Cana, *Learned Tales*, 73-74. Toner, ‘Reconstructing’, 99n44: ‘*Aided* appears to be an old ā-stem with

the meaning as given in the Dictionary of the Irish Language,³³⁷ which is still seen as the best translation of the word. Although it has been suggested that this genre originated in the stories about Christian martyrs,³³⁸ this a theory for which there is no need, since the *aitte* clearly fit into a native (heroic) tradition and since often any specifically Christian parallel is lacking.³³⁹ In a heroic society, the ultimate honour of combat, besides winning of course, is death and remembrance. Because of this, the genre of ‘violent deaths’ is so vital, because it is important to remember which important heroes fell where and how, in order to create a shared past and set an example for present and future warriors.³⁴⁰ As Mac Cana put it, it was more important for the heroic identity to be killed than to kill.³⁴¹

But if this was such an important genre, why then is it only found in list A? Mac Cana provides us with a plausible explanation. He thinks that the lists of battles and *aitte* might have been so extensive and above all common, that it was easier to mention them in specific poems (where they could be arranged according to area, tribe etc.), than to try to accommodate them in the lists.³⁴²

Recently, however, Gregory Toner has convincingly demonstrated that *oitte* were part of the traditional canon (or the ‘original list’ O, the precedent of both the hypothetical X and the List A from the Book of Lecan) by pointing out the (alliterative) structure of the list of tale-types in A. He pointed out that by dividing the piece into four lines, a quatrain of equal syllable length and with a consistent cadence appears:

Togla 7 tána 7 tochmarca
 catha 7 uatha 7 imrama
 oitte 7 fessa 7 forbassa
 echtraí 7 aithid 7 airggne³⁴³

Once a general outline of the ‘genre’ or the Irish system of definition is clear, it becomes tempting to try to get a clear definition, to understand the genres that the Tale-lists provide us with. Daniel Melia did exactly this, in his article ‘Remarks on the Structure and

Old Irish plural **aittea* giving Middle Irish *aitte/oitte* (...). See Thurneysen 68-9 for unsyncopated forms arising from levelling in Old Irish.’

³³⁷ DIL: headword ‘aided’, a) violent death (...) as a subcategory of stories: (...).

³³⁸ Mac Cana, *Learned Tales*, 73 referring to Mrs. Chadwick, *Studies in Early British History* (Cambridge 1959) 240-242.

³³⁹ Besides *Aided Chonchobar* and *Aided Chon Culainn*, but there is discussion as to what extent the original stories have been altered.

³⁴⁰ See: Sean Duffy (ed), *Medieval Ireland: An Encyclopedia* (Abingdon/New York 2005) 10 ‘aideda’ who also stress their importance and their ‘adaptability’ to contemporary political messages which resulted in their popularity from at least the eight to the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.

³⁴¹ Mac Cana, *Learned Tales*, 29.

³⁴² *Ibid.*, 71-72.

³⁴³ Toner, ‘Reconstructing’, 100-101.

Composition the Ulster Death-Tales'. He concludes with a very abstract rendering of the 'motifemes' that make up the genre *aided* (at least, the genre as it is found in the stories that can be placed in the Ulster cycle). For this, he examined the *aideda* as given in List A of the Tale lists. An abstract of the make-up he reconstructed in his article is as follows:

There are two basic variants in the *aided* tale, one is where somebody dies due to tabu-revenge, the other is where somebody dies due to woman-revenge. These then have different 'moves' of their own. Woman-revenge: 1. someone's wife is slept with illegitimately 2. the injured man takes revenge by killing culprit [usually by proxy]. Then tabu-revenge: 1. hero has tabu [or social obligation] 2. He is forced to break it [often by social obligation] 3. He dies a victim of vengeance. He goes on to the intention and message of this structure and distills it as follows:

Woman + Man > Breaking of Rules > Death. He sees it as the ultimate conflict between personal desire and social code and contrasts this with the following structure: Man + Woman = Fertility, but if Man + Woman = personal need, then = Death. He thinks that this pattern is firmly grounded in the Indo-European aspects of Irish society and that they have a very ancient origin in the repertoire of the *fili*.³⁴⁴

Although the scheme he abstracts from the stories is useful in some way, namely that of establishing possible original intent and meaning, his argument that this is specific for *aideda* is not tenable. In his article, he does not seem to take into account the background of the list he uses. He states that he uses the *aideda* from list A, because they were clearly seen as a unity by the composer of the list and therefore there must be a similar structure underlying them. However, as he notices himself, they are almost all focused in Ulster and could this in itself not be enough reason to suspect unity?

In addition, he does not seem to be aware of the context of the *aided* list, since the Tale-lists, as Mac Cana stated, were scholarly invention more than anything. On top of that, from the discussion of genres it transpired that rules are never this clearcut anyway; 'genre' is more a set of recipes than rules as strict as Melia proposes (not to mention the fact that some tales are given multiple titles).. His own circular argument that he will include *Scél Fergus mac Léti* because it has a similar structure, even though it is not called *aided* proves this volatile distinction.

If we turn to *Aided Chúanach mac Cailchíne*, which does not actually occur under this title in the tale-lists, the structure very much adheres to the structure as described by Melia. Apart from the first paragraphs, that mainly focus on Mór of Munster, the remainder of the text appears to adhere to the basic structure of woman-revenge as described above. Cúanu runs off with Ruithchern illegitimately, is being hunted down by Lonán together with the sons

³⁴⁴ Abstract of: Daniel Melia, 'Remarks on the Structure and Composition the Ulster Death-Tales.' *Studia Hibernica* 176-18 (1978): 36-57.

of Áed Bennán, and in the end is killed thanks to a freak-accident with a tree. All fits perfectly, even the freak accident, because as Melia described, a death by accident ends the cycle of vengeance that has preceded it so that the audience is never left awaiting further vengeance (so no cliffhangers).³⁴⁵

7.1.5 The Outset of the Text

There is only one problem with this neat concordance of *AC* with Melia's theory. Neither list have a title *aided Cúanach maic Cailchíne*, but both do record a story called *Aithed Ruitcherni (Suithcherne) re Cúanu mac Cailchíne* and one called *Nemen Fír Móire Muman*. *AC* ends in LL as follows: 'That was the violent death of Cúanu mac Cailchíne', and in BF and 1316/1: 'The violent death of Cúanu mac Cailchíne as far as that'. As stated before, the text may consist of two originally separate tales. Now, we have seen, that even though the manuscripts present it as a single text and even though all three variants record it as an *aided*, the second section on Cúanu may actually be an *aithed* (elopement) or part of the *aithed* mentioned in the Tale-lists while the first may be a story classified as *nemen* 'frenzy'.³⁴⁶ Ó Coileáin is not at all content with the title 'Aided', as is clear from his statement:

'The editors of LL took the concluding "Aided Cuanach meic Ailchini in sin" as their cue, and entitled it *Aided Cuanach meic Ailchini*. Mac Cana employs the abbreviation M.M. to refer to it, and apparently regards the whole as a single text, although his own treatment of it would indicate otherwise, as he finds no further use for it beyond line five of paragraph three.'³⁴⁷

He then goes on suggesting that *AC* consists of two separate tales mentioned in the Tale-lists,³⁴⁸ which was in fact already suggested by Mac Cana.³⁴⁹ I think the statement by Ó Coileáin might be unfair towards the text, for as we find it here it is clearly meant to be one text and should therefore be evaluated as such.

This demonstrates that the structure of Melia, though helpful, simply cannot be confined to *aideda* and I agree with Kicki Ingridsson that it is just a too common theme in heroic literature.³⁵⁰ Death by revenge is practically the only death a heroic culture will allow its protagonists.

³⁴⁵ Melia, 'Remarks', 42. Of course it is Lonán who in the end kills Cúanu, but the tree plays a vital part in this.

³⁴⁶ This story is not part of the tale-lists themselves but named as a 'juwel' *seoit* of the Irish stories.

³⁴⁷ Ó Coileáin, 'The Structure', 113.

³⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, 113.

³⁴⁹ Mac Cana, *Learned Tales*, 88.

³⁵⁰ Ingridsson, *Aided Derbforogail*, 14.

On top of that, the *aithed* definition brings us into even more trouble as, according to Mac Cana, in these tales the woman usually takes the initiative and compels a man to follow her.³⁵¹ This is the opposite of what happened in our tale.³⁵²

Concluding this small piece on genre and its consequences for the categorization of our text, it is clear that definitions cause trouble, be it our definitions or the ones the medieval scholars and poets made. Perhaps it is easier to view the texts in the light of the distinction made by Paul Wackers, who stresses that medieval authors may have been more focused on the functional aspects of the tale than on the structural aspects (which is more important to modern scholars).³⁵³ Although medieval Irish scholars were just as structurally occupied as we are, it is clear that the basic structure of these texts originally had the same function, namely showing the necessity of adapting oneself to the demands of society. This creates more of a unity than any structural approach by us or by our medieval Irish predecessors. However, the functional approach, as mainly demonstrated by Erich Poppe, also seems to create its own problems. He created a genre called ‘(pseudo-) historical narrative prose’, and says that the differences in functions may be very different in other genres, but what exactly does he mean here by genre? More self-created divisions? Medieval divisions?

Division shall remain a problem; many useful concepts have been named in the previous paragraphs, but they all have their own specific problems. It is clear that our text contains a certain message, a message that the audience had to interpret according to the structure or genre of the text. They most probably did not do this not by the title that is mentioned in the manuscripts,³⁵⁴ not only does this title appear at the end of the text (which is not very useful for the recognition of generic features) but it also gives the wrong impression because the whole tale is not just about Cúanu, but also about Mór Muman and her husbands. Besides that, the storytellers were very able to shift emphasis from one subject matter to the other, thus maybe renaming stories as they went along, according to the audience and situation. We shall never know whether this story was known under another title, or under two different titles, or maybe even more³⁵⁵

³⁵¹ Although *aitheda* usually also end with a violent death and also involve illegitimate unions of men and women, these are, according to MacCana, initiated by the woman and not the man.

³⁵² Mac Cana, *Learned Tales*, 74. If we take the primary action in the tale to define it, it would be more close to a *tochmarc* where a man carries off a woman without the consent of her family, though with the consent of the woman herself. On the other hand, it is tempting to speculate that the fact that there is no lenition after *aithed* in any manuscript could point to a confusion with the masculine word *aithed*, but this would be very hard to prove.

³⁵³ Wackers, ‘There are no’, 245, 248.

³⁵⁴ Titles in manuscripts are often later additions.

³⁵⁵ Titles in oral literature are wont to fluctuate very much, see the case study of Melville Jacobs, ‘Titles in Oral Literature’, *Journal of Folklore* 70 (1957).

It probably does not matter, for generally, the opening line of a story would give the reader or hearer both the principal setting as well as the characters, and these might have assisted them to recognize the generic features of the story without any need for theoretically well (or over-)defined systems like the Tale-lists.³⁵⁶ This subject deserves more attention, but an interesting start was made by Proinsias Mac Cana, in his article on narrative openers and progress markers.³⁵⁷ He observed that the first line of a story has a very specific function. The first lines are always formulated as if answering a question. Because of this, the syntax of those first lines is usually different from normal syntax, it often has a Verb-second sentence or it starts off with a *nominative pendens* or fronted adverbial *fecht n-aen/ Ane do ló / Laithe n-aen*. The last differ from progress markers that are simply used to set up a basic chronology of the tale, these specific progress makers can be found in *AC* as *laa n-and* and *fecht aile/fecht and*. *AC* uses a *nominative pendens* to start the tale off, and Mac Cana states that it is common to start the tale by ‘introducing a character of primary importance, though not necessarily the main protagonist of the tale’.³⁵⁸ It would be interesting to see whether there are differences in *incipits* that could point to a difference in perception of the tale and possible to difference in ‘genre’. It has been done for French genres, and it has shown quite an interesting difference between modern perception of French drama’s and the medieval *incipits*.³⁵⁹ but unfortunately this shall have to wait for future research.³⁶⁰ The generic features one might think of may then be chronological (is it set in the Christian past or the pagan past, or present³⁶¹), literary (poetry or prose) or in the realm of secular versus ecclesiastical (politics), and many more other divisions might be proposed. This might have been enough for the medieval audience, since they knew that whatever followed would not only entertain them for a bit, but could also bring them lasting valuable insights for their own lives.

³⁵⁶ The tale begins with ‘*Áed Bennáin ri Irlōchra, dá mac déc lais & teora ingena.*’ which gives the principle characters and the setting (Irlochir/Irlúachair, in any case Munster) of the tale.

³⁵⁷ Proinsias Mac Cana, ‘Narrative Openers and Progress Markers in Irish’, *A Celtic Florilegium: Studies in Memory of Brendan O Hehir* ed. Kathryn A. Klar, Eve E. Sweetser (Massachusetts, 1996) 104-119.

³⁵⁸ Mac Cana, ‘Narrative’, 117. On the same page he also states: ‘As for the form, the storyteller frequently underscored the opening of his narrative by using V-second word order or the *nom. pendens* construction, and sometimes he began with a historical adverb such as *fecht n-and* or *laa n-and* to set the ensuing narrative clearly in the context of *senchas* or traditions about the past.

³⁵⁹ Runnalls, ‘Titles’, 23-28.

³⁶⁰ Mac Cana, ‘Narrative’, 114: ‘At the same time it is well to keep in mind that our three types of marked openings do not appear, on the evidence of the extant texts, to have ever been used consistently to highlight either the absolute incipit of a narrative or the incipit of an in-tale or episode.’ It could be worthwhile to develop a systematic analysis of the *incipits* known to us on chronological basis or other in order to fully appreciate the ways in which authors or narrators could lead the focus of the reader/listener with the opening line.

³⁶¹ Mac Cana, ‘Narrative’, 113 states that the adverbial narrative openers (*laithe n-aen, Aen do ló* etc), indicate a historic past or a *passé défini*, which isolates what follows from the preceding narrative rather than relating it to it temporally and sequentially.

7.2 Themes and Motifs

7.2.1 Mad Women into Politics

The clearest motif by far in this tale³⁶² is that of the goddess of the territory,³⁶³ to scholars in the field of Celtic a very well-known and well-documented phenomenon.³⁶⁴

In the motif of the goddess of the territory, the territory over which a king ruled was represented by a woman. This territory could be either Ireland as a whole or one of the more local, smaller territories. In order to become king, the aspirant needed to be united with this woman ritually, in the so-called *banfheis rígi*, or wedding-feast of the kingship. The name suggests sexual intercourse as well as a great (inaugurational) feast. By marrying her proper spouse, she (the land or the goddess) will provide fertility and prosperity for the king and his people. If the king is unjust however, she will grow barren and leave him. This concept of the connection between the ‘justness’ of the king and the land is called sacral kingship.

Gerard of Wales on one famous instance, describes a ‘barbarous’ ritual from the West of Ireland, where a king has to bathe in a broth of horse blood and drink it without his hands.³⁶⁵ Gruesome as it may sound, this horse-soup bears close similarities to the Indian kingship-rituals. Comparison between the scarce medieval examples and the Indian rituals, suggest an Indo-European origin for this custom. In medieval Irish prose and poetry though, the sovereignty goddess has a more symbolic function, as it appears that the ritual had since long died out. She appears in various guises:

namely those depicting the goddess as (i) an ugly hag transformed into a beautiful lady by the embraces of the hero destined to be king (...) (ii) a wild wandering female who is restored to sanity and beauty through union with the rightful king (...) (iii) a girl of royal birth brought up among cowherds and elevated again to her due dignity through marriage to the king.³⁶⁶

³⁶² Or two, if one prefers. I shall consider it to be one text, as the version which has come down to us is clearly formed as one continuous part, even though the title may be confusing and even though the Tale-Lists give us titles of two separate tales, we know not what these were nor whether they coincide in any way with the tale as we have it. The poetry found in the annals shows that we only have a fragment of a much greater tradition.

³⁶³ This is a summary of the most important aspects of the myth and its literary shape. See for further reading: Bart Jaski, *Early Irish Kingship and Succession* (Dublin 2000) 57-88 (with excellent bibliography). Muireann Ní Bhrolcháin, ‘women in Early Irish Myths and Sagas’, *The Crane Bag* 4/1 (1980) 12-19. And of course, Mac Cana, ‘Aspects’.

³⁶⁴ The above-mentioned article by Proinsias Mac Cana was groundbreaking and is still very important. Although in his and related articles, the emphasis usually lies on the theme itself and especially on its pagan origins, recent years saw a growth in literature on the political employment of the theme by later generations in whose time the ritual itself would have been unknown, but the literary shape of which still provided a very powerful imaginary, see for example Kim McCone, *Pagan Past and Christian Present* (Maynooth 2000), chapter 5 and 6.

³⁶⁵ Giraldus Cambrensis, *Topographia Hiberniae*, ed. J. J. O’Meara (1949) *Proceedings of the Royal Irish Academy* 52C, 3,25.

³⁶⁶ Proinsias Mac Cana, ‘Aspects of the Theme of King and Goddess in Irish Literature (*suite en fin*)’, *Études Celtiques* 8 (1958) 63-4.

The most famous example of these goddesses in mortal guise is of course Medb of Crúachan, the wife of Aillil, king of Tara, who plays such a prominent role in Ireland's famous epic *Táin Bó Cúailnge*. Without knowledge of her symbolic function as representing the land, she can just appear to be a very promiscuous maiden who prefers to sleep with any hero that comes her way, or, as the story nicely puts it 'without one man in the shadow of another'.³⁶⁷ But in her function of the goddess of the land, she is merely doing her duty, selecting the men who are most capable of fulfilling the obligations of the king towards his people. Another famous example is the story of *Echtra mac nEchach*, which is the great origin legend of the Uí Néill dynasty. A hag guarding a well asks a kiss of all the brothers contesting for the kingship but only Niall is brave enough to not only kiss her but also sleep with her, for which he is rewarded with the kingship of Ireland. The maiden speaks the wise words that the kingship is not always beautiful either, and the nasty bits must be conquered too before the beautiful aspects can be enjoyed. This story is one big political message and there are signs that the hag is depicted as suffering from leprosy, so that not only associations with the old kingship myth are evoked but also associations with pious lepers, Christ and miracle-working saints.³⁶⁸

The story of Mór Muman does not contain this particular incarnation of the kingship-myth, but the one mentioned by Mac Cana as the 'wild, wandering female', restored to her old self by her proper spouse. The theme of the wild wanderer, who wanders through the woods like a wild animal for many years, is very familiar to Irish literature and might have originated in Britain (at least for the male counterpart, most famously *Suibne Geilt*).³⁶⁹ Mac Cana sees this in principle as a form of a kingship myth in which the wild wandering woman is just a different form of the deformation of the goddess. Like the ugly hag, she is the opposite of socially desirable and politically fertile. All this is to be seen as a *rite de passage*, consisting of separation from society to achieve a transition to a new phase. This is then concluded with incorporation into society. This pattern usually involves include bodily mutilation, wandering

³⁶⁷ Cecile O'Rahilly (ed), *Táin Bó Cuailnge, from the Book of Leinster* (Dublin 1967), 138.

³⁶⁸ Amy C. Eichhorn-Mulligan, 'The Anatomy of Power and the Miracle of Kingship: The Female Body of Sovereignty in a Medieval Irish Kingship Tale', *Speculum* 81/4 (2006) 1014-1054. Although this pattern is not connected to Mór Muman, it might be that her sister Ruithchern (or Suithchern) in the later story of Suithchern and Ronán Diacolla was depicted in this way as she rubbed herself into rye dough to gain the appearance of a leper (1039-1040). This is also interesting in the light of Matheson's unpublished PhD-thesis.

³⁶⁹ James Carney, *Studies in Irish Literature and History* (Dublin 1955) 129-164. Bergholm, Alexandra, *The Sainly Madman: A Studie of the Scholarly Receptionhistory of Buile Shuibhne*, PhD-thesis, handed in at the University of Helsinki 14th of November 2009.

outside of human-inhabited places, ritual food and sometimes even faked mental derangement.³⁷⁰

Pádraig Ó Riain has made a list with attributes that usually pop up in connection to men who go mad, divided into three groups corresponding to the different stages in the rites of passage, as described by Arnold van Gennep. First there is the occasion of the madness (A), secondly the state of the madness (B) and thirdly the cure of the madness (C):

- A
 - 1. The curse of a *sacerdos*.
 - 2. A battlefield experience.
 - 3. The consumption of contaminated food or drink.
 - 4. The loss of a lover.
- B.
 - 1. The madmen takes to the wilderness.
 - 2. He perches on trees.
 - 3. He collects firewood.
 - 4. He is naked, hairy, covered with feathers or clothed in rags.
 - 5. He levitates or performs great leaps.
 - 6. he is very swift.
 - 7. He is restless and travels great distances.
 - 8. He experiences hallucinations.
 - 9. He observes a special diet.
- C.
 - 1. Intervention of a *sacerdos*.
 - 2. The consumption of “blessed” food or drink.
 - 3. The act of coition³⁷¹

As can be seen above, the relation between occasion and cure of madness is connected by theme, it makes sense to cure for example love-sickness with coition, and madness through bad food with ‘blessed’ food.

Ó Riain stresses that this madness is an intermediate stage of ‘novitiate’ for each character, where he or she is looking to (re-)gain due status. The wilderness plays such an important part in this aspect of the transition, because it is geographically a limbo, an area where human laws are not valid and where boundaries are unclear. He states that ‘the wilderness is often depicted as the point of departure on the way towards the acquisition of sovereignty’ or the place where the weaker contestant for the kingship hides or takes

³⁷⁰ Ibid., 205-6. Referring to a study made by the anthropologist Arnold van Gennep, *Rite de passage* (Paris, 1909).

³⁷¹ Pádraig Ó Riain, ‘Study of the Irish Legend of the Wild Man’, *Éigse* 14/3 (1972) 182-184.

refuge.³⁷² He mentions that in for example the story *Echtra mac nEchach*, the brothers encounter the ugly hag in the wilderness at the end of their period of wandering (which again, he thinks is connected to the motif of restlessness and desire to wander characteristic of the madmen).³⁷³ The goddess of the territory is connected to the wild-motif because she is the very embodiment of a transition phase: a new king has to be picked and the phase before that happens is consequently a limbo, a chaos, a disorder, which can only be sorted out by the proper husband.

Both Mac Cana and Ó Riain connect Mór's derangement with the *geilt* or wandering madmen. After Mór hears the voice from the air, she becomes deranged and leaps over the rampart of the ford, wanders through Ireland for years in a animal-like state (blackened by the sun and wearing rags, or maybe even 'fleece') and she is not cured until she sleeps with Fíngen (containing Ó Riain's point B1, 4, 5, 7 and C3).

The literary character whose antics resemble those of Mór the closest is Mis. She went crazy after her father died (and after she drank of his blood) and also wandered through Ireland for many years, until she was restored to sanity by the music of the harper Dub Ruis and by sleeping with him.³⁷⁴ Dub Ruis has been proven by Mac Cana to be one of the candidates striving for the Munster kingship, and thus of it being another example of the sovereignty-myth.³⁷⁵

Ó Riain also thinks that Mór's state can be compared to Cú Chulainn's lovesickness in the text *Searglige Con Culainn*: 'In sum, Mac Cana's assessment of the frenzy of Mór Muman (...) may be paraphrased here to advantage by describing the hero in a state of love-stricken *seirglige* as a novice (king) without his proper spouse (queen).'³⁷⁶ Cú Chulainn loses his mind when he is spurned by his otherworld lover Fand, and leaps 'southward to Lúachair' before living in the wilderness as a deranged person. His sanity is eventually restored to him when he drinks a draft of forgetfulness. Mac Cana notes that in all three instances of the wild-theme he discusses (Mór, Cú Chulainn and St. Moling), the leaps are connected to an area called Lúachair.³⁷⁷ It is possible that the area around the mountains of Lúachair was considered particularly wild, dangerous and uncultivated so that it provided the perfect surroundings for passage rituals that were supposed to take place on the borders of human cultivation.

³⁷² Ó Riain, 'Study, 193-194.

³⁷³ *Ibid.*, 194.

³⁷⁴ Proinsias Mac Cana, 'Aspects of The Theme of King and Goddess in Irish Literature (*suite*)', *Études Celtiques* 7/2 (1956) 370-382.

³⁷⁵ He attributes his new status as 'harper' to the romantic notions that were fashionable in the later Middle Ages, that of the lowly harper surprising the king by solving a problem. Mac Cana, 'Theme (*suite*)', 376.

³⁷⁶ Ó Riain, 'Study', 192.

³⁷⁷ Mac Cana, *Studies*, 146n, 147n. Luachair is an area in the west of Munster, see paragraph 7.5.

We have seen that themes closely connected to the *geilt* tradition attached to Mór point to a sovereignty goddess: the wild wandering, her transformation after finding the king, her marrying successive kings, perhaps even her grieving (see next paragraph) and also the similar position of her sister Ruithchern. It should also be noted that both Mór and Ruithchern are depicted as herding sheep in a far off territory,³⁷⁸ which is also one of the story-lines Mac Cana mentions. It might be connected to the creation of the anti-woman that the goddess is to be at first, since herdsmen or women were of the lowest status (see paragraph 7.3). It was no problem for the scribes to interweave various stock themes into one story whilst leaving others out. They were also very capable of uniting popular traditions as they had known it from house and hearth with that which they learned in the church-schools and monasteries, as the religious allegories of the sovereignty goddess are manifold:

If the wife or lover of a king or his heir apparent can be allegorized as the Church in *Echtrae Chonlai* as in standard medieval biblical exegesis, the possibility surely presents itself that this equation was applied more or less generally to the woman of sovereignty in her benign aspect by the monastic writers of early Irish sagas. (...) The early Christian Irish 'goddess' or woman of sovereignty, then, may well be the end product of the ecclesiastical enrichment of potent native symbols with biblical concepts and exegetical insights to provide vital current concerns with appropriate historical justification and literary expression.³⁷⁹

As Eichhorn-Mulligan already noted, the different forms in which this myth appears point to the liveliness of the tradition and to the creativity of the scribes in creating ever-changing variants.³⁸⁰

³⁷⁸ Apparently, the daughters and granddaughters of Ruithchern and Mór also acquired territory-woman attributes, see Chapter 8.

³⁷⁹ McCone, *Pagan*, 158. The unpublished dissertation by Anna Matheson explores this text in this light and convincingly draws the attention to parallels with the Life of Mary of Egypt, Nebuchadnezzar and the Song of Songs. This perspective provides valuable insights into many of the themes that have been left unexplained in this edition, like the voice out of the air, the insinuations by Déisi queen and the 'blackening' of Mór by the sun. Unfortunately, I received this information in the closing stage of this work and therefore I have not been able to devote more than a couple of footnotes to this. T. O. Clancy has a similar plea in his article on the saintly madman, 'Fools and Adultery in Some Early Irish Texts', *Ériu* 44 (1993) 105-124. He states that madness was a sign of sin and that the madness is in a way a blessing, because the characters live in blessed ignorance, so to speak.

³⁸⁰ Eichhorn-Mulligan, 'The Female', 1054. The fact that king Feidilmid abducted the daughter of the king of Tara and that many kings (also in Carolingian culture) married the wife of their predecessor might point to the implications this myth had for historical reality. Mac Cana, 'Aspects (*suite et fin*)', 62. Jaski, *Early*, 69

7.3 Lamenting Voices and Maddening Voices

When Ruithchern is herding sheep far off in the mountains of the Uí Liatháin, she used to sing or recite a poem, which in the Irish text is called *a hannacol* in LL.³⁸¹ This means funeral song, dirge'. The text does not who or what she is lamenting, but the meaning is very particular to burials. This is not the only lament that appears in *AC*, the two sisters, once reunited, also were wont to go out and lament over Fíngen. They did this to such an extent that Cathal feels the need to reprimand Mór for for it. He tells her that he is the one alive and that she should be concerned with him, and not with the dead man. Beside being a very realistic image of a grief-stricken woman, this might also have a symbolic meaning, connected to Mór's mythological sovereignty aspects. A theme very much connected to the 'Wild Man Motif' of the previous paragraph, is that of the 'keening'. Angela Partridge already connected these two motifs, but I also think that the keening can be particularly connected to the goddess of the territory. Partridge states:

it is possible to show that the *bean chaointe*, the 'wailing woman', as she appears in the texts of *caoineadh* and in various references in literature, is an archetypal literary figure, in very much the same way as the *geilt*. Moreover these two archetypal literary figures show striking similarities, some of which are quite puzzling.³⁸²

She agrees with Ó Riain in that the madness is clearly a *rite de passage*, but she moves the focus slightly and puts emphasis on the aspect of loss and transition after this loss. The images of these mad women, the behaviour of the *mná caointe* from the early modern era but also the medieval images of for example the Virgin Mary, shows many of the characteristics of the madness theme. They also take great leaps, travel great distances, walk around in rags and with loose hair and they are warned by others not to go mad.

It would not be strange for this motif to be connected to the mythological sovereignty woman, the fact that a new king is to be chosen necessarily means the death or abolishment of another. The goddess of the territory, being the wife of both the old and the new king symbolically and physically (in the stories), has to mourn one husband to accomplish the transition to the new. This is very clear in the case of Mis, where the death of her father is explicitly named as the cause of her madness which lasts until the new king is found.³⁸³

³⁸¹ BF and 1316/1 have *anacol* 'protection', which is either a scribal error or could lead to an entirely different conclusion.

³⁸² Angela Partridge, 'Wild Men and Wailing Women', *Éigse* 18/1 (1980) 25-37.

³⁸³ In this light it is also interesting to note that the the goddess of the territory is not only often seen as the daughter of a king, since she is the ancestor of a peoples she is also often seen as the wife of the king, like the incestuous relationship of Fiachra and Mugain. Ó Coileáin, 'Structure', 94.

Both Mór and some of other women seen as symbols of the sovereignty are strongly connected to the *caoineadh* practice,³⁸⁴ explicitly said to compose laments for their husbands and even being reprimanded by their new husbands for excessive keening.³⁸⁵ The placenames that are mentioned in Mór's lament in *AC* are also strongly connected to the kingship or to royal seats, to wit Uilenn and Loch Cenn (see chapter 7.4). The fact that there is seaweed around Loch Cenn might perhaps point to a decrease in activity on the water of ships or a pause in the daily activities of collecting seaweed due to mourning over the dead king or due to the fact that his prosperous rule is no longer on the land. The boy shouting in Uilenn might be in a similar way connected to rituals of mourning. Indirect evidence for this might be the fact that this aspect of the sovereignty goddess lives on in the early modern and modern appearance of the *banshee*, whose main trait is lamenting deaths of the heads of important families. One part of her identity is connected by Patricia Lysaght to the sovereignty goddess.³⁸⁶

This connection might then also explain the lamenting of Ruithchern, who also shares mythological traits of the sovereignty goddess. she evidently is also in a state of limbo, without a proper spouse, having been abducted from her homelands. She is held in a foreign territory, which, according to Old Irish law leaves you no rights at all,³⁸⁷ Being outside the territory of one's tribe had severe consequences, people literally lost their identity as testified by the word *ambue*, literally 'non-person'. On top of that, she is herding sheep. The herding

³⁸⁴ However, keening has always seems to be a particular women's job. Kaarina Hollo, 'Laments and Lamenting in Early Medieval Ireland', *Medieval Celtic Literature and Society* ed. Helen Fulton (Dublin 2005) 83-94. See also: Ann Buckley, 'Music in Prehistoric and Medieval Ireland', *A New History of Ireland* vol. 1 *Prehistoric and Early Ireland* ed. Dáibhí Ó Cróinín 6 vols. (Oxford 1976-2005) 755. And of course, it is an effective literary device in a text, to evoke the emotions and compassion of the readers or listeners.

³⁸⁵ Mac Cana, 'Aspects', 361-3, 382-405. Créd, daughter of Guaire, is said to have composed a lament on Dínertach mac Guaire mac Nechtain but also for different husbands connected to her in other traditions. The story of Mis starts off by stating that she composed a poem for her husband, that is Dubh Ruis as well as for her father. A poem found in *Sanas Cormaic* apparently conveying a dialogue between Guaire and Órnait where she is lamenting her previous husband and is reprimanded by Guaire (who also the brother of the late husband). Órnait is the daughter of Cúan mac Amalgaid who got confused with Deoch daughter of Fíngen mac Áeda and Mór Muman.

Guaire: It is long since you have laughed, while we are shamed before men. I see it on the tips of your eyelashes, painful is the loss which you lament. Órnait: It were only right, if my eyelashes ceased to drop tears; Laidgnén the leper would not be joyful, if it were he who survived me.

In other instances the main character of this story must have been identified as Deoch.

³⁸⁶ Patricia Lysaght, *The Banshee: The Irish Supernatural Death-Messenger* (Dublin 1986) chapter 12. She also speaks of a modern tradition that warns grieving women to not excessively keen, because that might keep the soul of the dead person from his rest, a belief also found in Breton tradition, Lysaght, *Banshee*, 50n19.

³⁸⁷ Kelly, *Law*, 5-6. 'The law-texts distinguish between the *deorad* 'outsider' and the *aurrad* 'person of legal standing within the *túath*'. the rights of the outsider are very restricted, unless he is a *deorad De* lit. 'an outsider or exile of God' - i.e. a hermit - in which case he has special status and privileges. The law-texts refer to various types of outsider, and the distinctions between them are not always clear. There are many references to the *ambue*, the literal meaning of which seems to be 'non-person'. Heptad 16 states that it is not a legal offence to avoid payment of a body-fine (*éraig*) for an *ambue*. This would mean that an *ambue* can be killed or injured with impunity, so it is clear that this type of outsider has not come from a *túath* with which there is a treaty.'

of livestock was usually left to the unfree: ‘A task for young slaves of either sex was the herding of domestic animals’³⁸⁸ and mention of this is made in both the *Confessio* by St. Patrick and in the Life of St. Brigit.³⁸⁹ She also speaks of a boy with a shout of ‘(high)-music’, just like Mór in her lament of Fíngen, a strong indication that this might be connected to some sort of ritual.

The voice from the air is enigmatic. Carney suggested that this must be part of a native Irish tradition of the Wild Man of the Woods.³⁹⁰ He only gives two examples for this suggestion, that of Mór and that of the love-sick Cú Chulainn discussed above, who hears no voice in the air although he does make three great leaps, just like Mór leaps. He does not state on what basis he assumes that voices from the air are the cause of madness more often in a presumably native literary structure. This particular combination where a voice out of the air is combined with madness is particular to this tale, according to Thompson and Cross.³⁹¹

In fact, most of the madness themes are either particular to Irish or Icelandic narratives, which in itself is quite interesting. I have been able to find only two other references of voices out of the air in Irish literature, the first in *The Life of Senán, son of Gernan* and the second in *Giolla an Fhiughna*.³⁹² Senán does have a strong connection to the Munster area, in particular as patron saint of the Corco Baiscinn and the Uí Fhidgeinte.³⁹³ In the relatively late (14th century) episode in his Life, the voice is clearly stated to be coming from heaven and is calling the saint to go towards it and join the other saints.³⁹⁴ *Giolla an Fhiughna* is a modern tale, but Douglas Hyde mentions that tales of the protagonist Murough in connection to the otherworld were known at least in the 12th century.³⁹⁵ In one version a voice is heard, but it is not stated where it comes from. In the second version it is told that a bird speaks those same words:

‘Murough and the giant were wrenching helmets and heads, splitting bodies and necks, striving for the victory each over the other until the giant was sending the heaviest shower of the blows on Murough, when a voice spake as it were the voice of an aged person and said that great was the shame for so good a hero as he to fall by such a

³⁸⁸ Fergus Kelly, *Early Irish Farming* (Dublin 2000) 438. Or to servants: Kelly, *Early Irish*, 442.

³⁸⁹ Kelly, *Farming*, 438. See also Kelly, *Law*, 66.

³⁹⁰ Carney, *Studies*, 146n3.

³⁹¹ Tom Pete Cross, *Motif-Index of Early Irish Literature* (Indiana 1952) and Stith Thompson, *Motif-index of folk-literature : a classification of narrative elements in folktales, ballads, myths, fables, mediaeval romances, exempla, fabliaux, jest-books and local legends* (Indiana 1955-8) both under F1041.8.8.

³⁹² Whitley Stokes, *Lives of the Saints from the Book of Lismore* (Oxford, 1890) 221. Douglas Hyde (ed), ‘Giolla an fhiughna: the lad of the ferule’, *Irish Texts Society* 1 (1899) 43. Both in Cross, *Motif-Index*, F966.

³⁹³ Elva Johnston, ‘Munster’, *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford 2004).

³⁹⁴ Charles Plummer, ‘The Miracles of Senán’, *Zeitschrift für Celtische Philologie* 10 (1915) 1-35.

³⁹⁵ Hyde, ‘Giolla’, x.

hideous monster so far away from home, “and without a single woman to keene over you here, O son of the noble king of best mien.” Upon that incitement the noble blood rose in the upper part of Murough’s breast, so that he gave the giant a tremendous-strong powerful twist which sent him on his tow knees, and he gave him the second twist so that he set him on his back on the ground.’³⁹⁶

Here the voice is clearly used as an instrument to incite some sort of frenzy, it is inciting Murough to fight braver and harder and it works. But both the reason for the incitement and the purpose of it are clearly included in the phrasing, unlike the situation with Mór, where the voice merely states that bad luck will come to her without apparent reason or without apparent purpose. The voice out of the air prophesies her madness and giving it to her ‘in the beginning’³⁹⁷ A possible underlying reason for this motif is the fact that Mór was not choosing a suitable spouse. Even though the princes of Ireland were wooing her, she only went to the door of the house instead of looking for the rightful king. Furthermore the voice out of the air may have biblical precedents.³⁹⁸

7.4 Characters

Irish genealogy is not only confusing to us, it was already so for the medieval and early modern scribes, who were trying to draw up a coherent family history for their patrons or ecclesiastical foundations. As is to be expected with data covering many centuries, inconsistencies and anachronisms are abundantly present and the enormous number of tribal affiliations and intermarriages does not make it easier to create coherent system. However, instead of pointing to all these anachronisms and irreconcilable differences, Ó Coileáin thinks that the system that emerges from the Munster-cycle is surprisingly coherent. All of the characters appearing in the story will be treated in this section (in order of appearance in the text) as well as their place in the Munster-cycle and their context. Therefore, this paragraph will partly overlap with the next chapter as it treats a certain ‘historical layer’ of the tale which is set in the seventh century. They will be treated here as literary characters, for that is what they are in this text even if they ever did exist outside of this literary environment.

³⁹⁶ Hyde, ‘Giolla’, 43-4.

³⁹⁷ I take the opposition ‘in the beginning or in the end’ to be merely the opposition ‘now or later [in life]’, and Mór chooses to endure her frenzy ‘now’ rather than at a later stage.

³⁹⁸ Anna Matheson, forthcoming dissertation on biblical parallels in *Mór Muman 7 Aided Cuanach mac Cailchíne*.

7.4.1 Áed Bennán

Áed Bennán is the father of both Ruithchern and Mór, He was married to Damnat, whose grave is mentioned in Mór's lament of Fíngen.³⁹⁹ According to *AC* he had 12 sons and three daughters but in the general corpus of literature, only Ruithchern, Mór and his son Máel-Dúin appear. Apparently he left his sons very bad off, since a *senfhocul*, or proverb, arose on account of that situation: 'Not as Áed Bennán left his sons'. This might have something to do with the shift of power from west to east, as a result of which the sons of Áed Bennán lost a great inheritance. Áed's sons are mentioned in the final battle at the end of the story, in which they fight against several 'foreign' tribes. In the manuscripts, Áed Bennán was confused with his great-grandson Áed († 733 AU), not only because of their similar name, but also because both had a son named Máel-Duin

7.4.2 Mór of Munster

As has been shown above, the most important aspect of Mór is probably her role as goddess of the sovereignty of the Éoganachta for the kingship of Cashel. Her death is found in the annals under 632 (AU) and she herself is of the Éoganacht Locha Léin, marrying into the three other branches of the Éoganachta. This seems to be consistent with the other information the text provides, namely that all the Éoganachta are equal in honour and status to each other (i.e. the sons of Cathal and the sons of Áed Bennán, line 114-5)).

Mac Cana traces her character as a goddess way back by referring to her as a possible Sun-goddess, represented by the Munster proverb: 'Tá Mór ina suí', for sunny days in which the word 'Mór' is used for the shining sun.⁴⁰⁰ He also equates her with Mugain, the name Mór resulting from an error in the annals between *mors* (death) Mugain .i. Áed Bennán and *mor* Mugain etc.⁴⁰¹ and points to the interchangeability between Mugain and Mumain. Although this might be true, we here have a late ninth or early tenth century text which has a Mór Muman as its primary character, so the confusion must have arisen quite early if it ever did, and one could also say that the confusion between *mors* and *mor* could be just as great the other way around.

³⁹⁹ According to the *Banshenchas*, Ó Coileáin, 'Structure', 97.

⁴⁰⁰ Mac Cana, 'The Theme', 89.

⁴⁰¹ *Ibid.*, 92.

7.4.3 Fíngen mac Áeda Duib and Cathal mac Áeda Fland Cathrach

Both kings are known from the regnal lists as kings of Munster, and in agreement with *AC* they are each other's successors. In *AC* Fíngen mac Áeda⁴⁰² dies a peaceful death as opposed to the expected heroic death which has been discussed above in the chapter on genre. This may be connected with the blessing of Óengus king of Munster (ancestor of the eastern Éoganachta) by Patrick in the *Vita Tripartita*, where he states that none of his successors would die a violent death.⁴⁰³ In *AC* there seems to be some confusion between Cathal mac Áeda (†628 AU) and Cathal mac Fíngine († 742 AU) who was in fact third in descent from Cathal mac Áeda. It is therefore not confusing that the Annals of Inisfallen contain a quatrain, supposedly spoken by Mór, on the occasion of the at the death of Cathal mac Fíngine(Chapter 4.3).

7.4.4 Ingen Ríg na nDéisi

The unnamed wife of Fíngen who is ousted by Mór is said to be the daughter of the king of the Déisi. Ó Coileáin took her to be the daughter of Máel-Ochtraig, king of the Déisi (see Appendix 1).

7.4.5 Ruithchern or Suithchern and her Men

Ruithchern or Suithchern are the two names under which the sister of Mór appears in the medieval Irish literature. Suithchern is her name in the two texts 'Suithchern 7 Rónán Dícolla' edited by Gearóid Mac Eoin. Both were dated by him to the 14th or 15th century. Here she is associated with the Rónán Dícolla, king of the Uí Liatháin. As was mentioned in the chapter on sovereignty, her role is quite similar to that of her sister Mór: she too marries kings. Even her names pinpoint her to a sovereignty-figure, being either derived from *so-tigern or *ro-tigern, good ruler or great ruler.⁴⁰⁴ In *AC* she is abducted to the territory of the Uí Liatháin where she is herding sheep. She utters a poem in which she seems to lament that she is far away from home (Lúachair) and that nobody knows who she is. Mac Dá Cherda, a well-known fool and prophet (see 7.4.5) uses this poem to identify her as one of the Éoganachta of Loch Léin and when Mór hears of this she goes to pick her up and brings her to live with

⁴⁰² According to DIL, his name is a derivative of *fín* and is thus spelled with an accent. The gen. Finguine (of Cathal mac Finguine) is generally not spelled thus in secondary literature and therefore I have kept that spelling.

⁴⁰³ Francis Byrne, *Irish Kings and High-Kings* (London 1973) 190.

⁴⁰⁴ Mac Eoin, 'Suithchern', 63.

herself and Fíngen. Mór then marries her off to Lonán mac Findig⁴⁰⁵, who is king of the Éile Tuaiscirt.⁴⁰⁶ Lonán is not mentioned in any of the other tales of the Munster-cycle which would make the following husband of Ruithchern a more logical persona.⁴⁰⁷ On the other hand, the Éile seemed to have had a strong connection to the Éoganachta in the origin legend of the finding of Cashel. It also appears that the Éile were regarded higher in status than the Déisi, as Mór reprimands Lonán for getting up before the king of the Déisi, see for this paragraph 8.2. So the involvement of the Éile might not be entirely out of place in this tale.

In first text edited by Mac Eoin, as said, Suithchern is married to Rónán, king of the Uí Liatháin. She is cursed by her father (Áed Bennán) and leaves home, but then returns for unclear reasons (because the condition of the manuscript is so bad the pages can hardly be read). It is clear that she leaves again to go to her sister. Mór asks her to come live with her and Fíngen again, but Ruithchern wants to go to the residence of her lover, Cúanu mac Cailchíne, king of Fer Maige. She gets lost, finds the house of Rónán and stays there in her ugly disguise.⁴⁰⁸ This ugly appearance makes the queen challenge Rónán to sleep with her. He accepts and she makes the bed. In the meantime Ruithchern has been bathed and transformed into her beautiful self, Rónán sleeps with her and all is well that ends well.

The second text edited by Mac Eoin tells how Rónán is bothered by the fact that he still does not know who his beautiful wife is. She is always reciting a particular poem but nobody seems to know the matching couplet. Macc Dá Cherda does and completes and interprets the quatrain, just like in the Mór story, and she asks directions to the home of Cúanu. The end of the story is a mystery as the manuscript ends there but if it be compared to what we know from the story of Mór and the title found in the Tale-lists, it is possible to reconstruct an ending.

Ruithchern probably ends up with Cúanu in some way and a fight over her probably followed. It is noteworthy that in our tale, Ruithchern is held captive in the territory of the Uí Liatháin, the kingdom ruled by Rónán. Here too it is stated that nobody knows where she is, and again Mac Dá Cherda identifies her through completing her quatrains. It is also noteworthy to see that Ruithchern here actively seeks Cúanu, whilst in AC she is abducted.

⁴⁰⁵ Lonán's surname receives various spellings in the manuscript, from Findnig to Bindig. In chapter 4 I have already remarked that for the rhyme the name Findig is necessary and that I kept this spelling also because there are more occurrences of it than of Findnig or Bindig.

⁴⁰⁶ Ó Coileáin, 'The Structure', 116.

⁴⁰⁷ Ibid., 117.

⁴⁰⁸ This disguise consists of rye-dough which is rubbed all over her. Eichhorn-Mulligan, 'The Anatomy', connects this to the leper-motif.

Her active role would be more in keeping with what one might expect from an *aithed*, and may conform more closely to the *aithed* title already present in the Tale-lists, as discussed in the chapter on genre. Although this story is much later, it seems to preserve much of the tradition we find in our tenth-century tale.⁴⁰⁹

7.4.6 Mac Dá Cherda

Mac Dá Cherda (also sometimes Mac Mocherda, as for example in the LL version of *AC*) is a complicated figure because his lineage comes in a couple of different versions. Sometimes he is made descendant of the Uí Rossa Déisi, in other instances he is transferred to the main line of the Déisi tree (See Appendix 3). He is famous for being a prophetic fool, a common figure in medieval tales. As a madman he has visions from God and knows things by divine inspiration.⁴¹⁰ O’Keeffe explains his name as: ‘the Son of Two Arts-viz., the extreme of folly and the extreme of knowledge’.⁴¹¹ According to Clancy the main function of his character is, besides reciting poetry, that of a ‘discoverer of identities’. He was also a uterine (brother through the mother’s side only) brother to Guaire Aidne and Cummíne Fota (see Appendix 1, he was also the patron saint of the Éoganacht Locha Léin⁴¹²) and functioned on an important Déisi-Éoganacht Locha Léin axis.⁴¹³ Clancy connected his madness (and those of other characters from medieval Irish literature) with the concept of sin and blessing. Madness was a sign of sin in the Middle Ages and is often explained as a form of penance. These madmen are never restored to their old selves because their new self is blessed by this extreme form of penance.⁴¹⁴

7.4.7 Marbán

In the poems several names occur, of which Marbán is one. Marbán is again a known participant of the Munster-cycle but apparently never ‘fully rooted’.⁴¹⁵ He was a uterine brother to Guaire and Cúanu (see Appendix 1) and in a dialogue between king Guaire and his

⁴⁰⁹ It might have been assumed as common knowledge that Ruithchern was actively seeking Cúanu and was first also married, or at least associated with, Rónán and the territory of the Uí Liatháin, so common that it was not worth mentioning in our story, where the focus also lies on the relationships of Éoganachta, and not so much with the other tribes like the Uí Liatháin and the Fir Maige Féne. Although a certain prominence is given to the Éile, as argued in the unpublished masterthesis by Donna Thornton (through Matheson, *unpublished*).

⁴¹⁰ T. O. Clancy, ‘Comgán Mac da Cherda’, *Celtic Culture: A historical Encyclopedia* (ed) J.T. Koch (Santa Barbara 2006).

⁴¹¹ J. G. O’Keeffe, ‘Cummíne Fota and Mac Dá Cherda’, *Ériu* 5 (1911) 18.

⁴¹² T. O. Clancy, ‘Fools and Adultery in Some Early Irish Texts’, *Ériu* 44 (1993) 113.

⁴¹³ Ó Coileáin, ‘Structure’, 92.

⁴¹⁴ Clancy, ‘Fools’, 114-115.

⁴¹⁵ Ó Coileáin, ‘Structure’, 104.

half-brother in the form of a lyric poem, Guaire says that only six of his *comalta* are alive: ‘Órnait, Lugna, Laidgén, Ailirán, Marbán and Cluithnechán’.⁴¹⁶ Kenneth Jackson focuses on the links that Marbán has with the motif of the ‘wild man of the woods’, as discussed before.⁴¹⁷ Ó Coileáin argues that Marbán already existed in tradition as a hermit figure and brother of Guaire and that he simply ‘followed in the latter’s train’.⁴¹⁸

7.4.8 Cúanu Mac Cailchíne

Cúanu mac Cailchíne⁴¹⁹ is a reasonably well known figure in the Munster-cycle. He is also known as Láech Líathmuine and in addition to the *aithed* found in the Tale-lists, he may also be the subject of the tale *Linne Laich Líathmuine*.⁴²⁰ He also features in the Life of Molaga and in the *Imtheachta na hÓinmhideadh*,⁴²¹ and of course in the text mentioned under 7.3.2 where Ruithchern (or Suithchern) is actively seeking him. He also appears in a rather late poem, edited by Máirín O Daly called *Mesce Chúanach*, wherein his generosity is compared to that of Guaire Aidne and Cronán of Ros Cré.⁴²² According to O Daly, he probably left no descendants of the male line: ‘That he did not leave descendants in the male line is indicated by the genealogy of the Uí Chuscraid: Ceallach m Caichir m Cuscraid m Cailcine m Dima ..., Lecan I24rbi I’⁴²³ of which the Caicher is probably a nephew of Cúanu (see Appendix 1). This, however leaves us with the problem that the final stanza of Mac Dá Cherda’s lament tells us that there were three people mourning him that night: *a ben, in banna ban/ a ingen, a oín-maccán* ‘His wife, the womanly fair one/ his daughter and his only son’. It could be that *a* should be translated with ‘her’, and that ‘her daughter and her only son’ refers to Ruithchern’s children by a different man, but that seems highly unlikely, since it is more likely that keening would be done by the direct relatives of Cúanu and not by his step- children (and also since that would often cause h-mutation: *a hingen*).⁴²⁴ It may be too rash to exclude any male descendants, though we know of none. Perhaps his only son was not made of the material that

⁴¹⁶ Mac Cana, ‘Theme (suite)’, 366.

⁴¹⁷ Kenneth Jackson, *Studies in Early Celtic Nature Poetry* (Cambridge, 1935) 121-2.

⁴¹⁸ Ó Coileáin, ‘Making’, 50-1.

⁴¹⁹ It is unclear what the origin of the name Cailchíne is exactly, There are various manuscript spellings with and without accent and even with or without the initial –c-. The disappearance of the –c- is easily explained by the abbreviation *m̄* or *mē* for son, which in the case of Cúanu could easily be mistaken for a name without a c: *m̄cailchíni*. Most secondary literature spells his name as Cailchíne, and I have kept this spelling.

⁴²⁰ Ó Coileáin, ‘Structure’, 120. Only known from a reference in the Tale Lists.

⁴²¹ *Ibid.*, 120-122.

⁴²² Máirín O Daly, ‘Mesce Chúanach’, *Ériu* 19 (1962) 75-80.

⁴²³ O Daly, ‘Mesce’, 75.

⁴²⁴ On top of that the h- infix characteristic of the feminine possessive pronoun is missing in all three variants.

gets you in the history books and therefore was forgotten.⁴²⁵ His daughter is mentioned in the life of St. Mochuda under the name Flandnait.⁴²⁶

Ó Coileáin also points out that Cúanu was a uterine brother to Guaire (see also Appendix 1, together with Marbán) through Rím (or possibly Mugain, as there was some confusion between the two).⁴²⁷ It is in this way that he is also related to Comgán Mac Da Cherda and Marbán. The episode in *Betha Molaga* is extensively treated by Ó Coileáin, and shall be quoted in full here, as no recent edition has been made of this text (unfortunately, no translation has been made either, and Ó Coileáin does not provide one either):

‘But perhaps the most inclusive statement of his [Cúanu’s] genealogical position and place in tradition is that which occurs in *Betha Molaga*. This shows him to have been of Clann Dímma of Uí Chúscraid of Fir Maige Féne, and states his relationship to SS. Molaga and Mochuille who belonged to different branches of Uí Chúscraid. (...) As the theme of Guaire’s own generosity is reduced to the absurd in *Tromdám Guaire*, so this context in liberality between Cúanu and Guaire is ridiculed in a savage little intale in *Betha Molaga*. Instead of the tribe of poets who make outrageous demands on Guaire’s hospitality, it is Guaire’s own *druid* who, presumably at Guaire’s instigation, presents Cúanu with the impossible choice of being himself satirized or allowing Carn Cuillinn to be plundered:

Is hi immorro cathair as mó dobí ar scath Molaga isin aimsir sin .i. Carn Cuillenn gurab an tan sin tangattar tri druidh Guaire mic Colmain righ Connacht cona ccliaraibh do chungidh neic for Cuana mac Cailcin .i. glámhadh. Deonaighidh tra Cúan crodh an bhaile dona druidhibh sin .i. do macuib Lir .i. Fiach et Eriach et Eniach. Móa immorro dornsat-somh ina amail dodeonaigedh doibh ar romúrsat uile an baile et roloiscseat et romarbhsat a dhaeine ach aenbhen roélo uaithibh 7 lámh a leinimh triana taobh iarna guin. Slánaighis Molaga an mnaoi sin 7 cuiridh lamh an leinib anunn et geallaidh gomadh hí an lamh sin nomuirfedh Cuana iarttain, et is edh ón recomhallnadh.

It is not easy to reconcile the statement that the unborn child of the lone woman who escaped fulfilled Molaga’s prophecy and killed Cúanu with the *Aithed* tradition that Lonán mac Findig was his slayer. Perhaps one of the lost tales describes the woman’s flight to Éile Tuaiscirt where Lonán was born, although this would not quite explain his Éile pedigree. The passage seems to be related to the visit of the triar aesa cerdda who prophesy his death to Cúanu in the *Aithed* section of the LL composite tale as in each case the prophecy of Cúanu’s death inevitably fulfilled is preceded by the visit of three savants.⁴²⁸

The statement that Lonán be born of this woman seems a bit farfetched, and we should probably assume that there is some discontinuity in the cycle. However, the similarity of the

⁴²⁵ I have not been able to trace any ‘mac/maic Cuanach’ that fit the right chronological and geographical area. I did stumble across a poem in *Bodleian Library Laud 615 f58*, that starts with ‘Éist rim ma(i)c cuanach’. Considering that the poems in this manuscript are attributed to St. Colum Cille, it could be Cúanu mac Cailchíne which is spoken of, as his uterine brothers Guaire and Marbán are also connected with him, see footnote 421. <http://image.ox.ac.uk/show?collection=bodleian&manuscript=mslaudmisc615>.

⁴²⁶ O Daly, ‘Mesce’, 76.

⁴²⁷ Ó Coileáin, ‘Structure’, 92, 121.

⁴²⁸ Ó Coileáin, ‘Structure’, 121-122.

three druids with the three ‘áesa cerda’ that come to Cúanu in *AC* is striking. It is still unclear what the three craftsmen meant when they told Cúanu that he had ‘wearied himself (or possible ‘left himself’, see vocabulary under *íccaid* and *ro-icc*)’; it is clear in any case that death is not to be played with. Cúanu’s trick was probably meant to see whether the strangers were ‘good folk’. By stating that Cúanu had died he was provoking a reaction from the three craftsman that could either be positive or negative about him. However, it resulted into a prophecy of death when he told the craftsmen that he is Cúanu and that there was no fight. The poets recognize this when they tell him that he will die within the year.⁴²⁹ I think it is likely that this is an entirely different version of the death of Cúanu than is related in the life of Molaga. I would posit that the three ‘craftsmen’ are poets, since *óes cerdd* can refer to practitioners of any kind of craft,⁴³⁰ often refers to poets in general.⁴³¹ This would also explain their poetic lament for Cúanu and their ability to see the future, probably connected to the premature lament. The words of poets could cause illness, physical injuries and even death if satire was intended⁴³² and one can imagine that a lament, originally intended to praise a dead man, could turn into a dangerous piece of work when spoken over a person who was still alive.

7.5 Geographical Space of the Tale and Tribal Names

To make a story fully dimensional in the mind of a reader, it is necessary to understand its geographical space. In the previous chapters we have discussed several layers of meaning that can be found in a text, and just like genre, geography too can carry meaning. It is like saying ‘Amsterdam’, to a tourist or ‘Rome’ to a Catholic. The tale uses a number of significant placenames, to begin with, Áed Bennán is called *rí Irluachra*, or the king of Irlúachair.⁴³³ Lúachair stands for the area that stretches out around the north west of Munster, as can be seen on the map in Plate 2. This is a title that fell out of use after the eighth century with the downfall of the Éoganacht Locha Léin and here we see a tenth century text still using this title (for this see chapter 8.1). Loch Léin can be identified as the Lakes of Killarney according to *OG*. It is clear that *AC* emphasizes the distinction between west- and east-Munster, thus

⁴²⁹ Literally because: ‘you have wearied yourself’. It is not entirely clear what this is supposed to mean in the context, but I do think his prophesied death must be connected to his trick.

⁴³⁰ DIL, ‘cerd’, craftsman, artisan (most often goldsmith), craft, skill.

⁴³¹ Kelly, *Law*, 44n40 *fer cerda*, 48, 48n84.

⁴³² *Ibid.*, 44-6.

⁴³³ *OG*: *iorluachair*: in Mun., Mi.; ¶ v. Irlochair. irlochir, comprised SE. of Kerry (Lg. 45), with the adjoining parts of Limk. and Cork. The Paps mts. and the country round Kingwilliamstown were in it, Loch Léin or Killarney in it, Ll. 197; ¶ and Éoganachta Locha Léin, q.v.; ¶ Aod Bendan, of the Éoganachta of Iar Luachair, Mi.

between the inner circle of the Glendamnach, Áine and Chaisil on the one side and the Éoganacht Locha Léin on the other. Ó Coileáin notes that this is in accordance with the final themes of Munster history as described by Ó Buachalla:

‘The final cataclysmic battle reflects what Ó Buachalla regarded as the two principal themes of early Munster history: the conflict between Éoganachta and Érainn and “the strife between the rival east and west divisions of the Éoganachta which went on from the mid-fifth century right up to the early ninth century.”’⁴³⁴

Another place mentioned in *AC* are Dún Cairedo ‘Cairid’s Fort’, in the territory of the Uí Liatháin where Ruithchern is herding sheep. There is only one reference of this fort in the *OG* which comes from our text, there are however certain references to a *túath Cairedo* that resided in this area.⁴³⁵

Fíngen lives in Cashel, the most important place for the eastern Éoganachta, which later came to dominate the western parts of Munster as well. It is only appropriate for the king to reside there, although we see that Cathal mac Áeda, Mór’s subsequent husband, lived in Glendmain. This probably served to emphasize the fact that there was rotation of kingship between the three main branches of the eastern Éoganachta. Glendmain is probably to be equated with present day Glanworth, co. Cork.⁴³⁶

Many placenames occur in the lament uttered by Mór and Ruithchern over Fíngen, and these too appear to be laden with symbolic meanings. They mentions Loch Cenn, around which there apparently is seaweed. Then she speaks of a boy crying in Uilenn. According to *OG*, both these places stand for the seat of the king of Munster, though it must be said that there is only one reference of Uillenn.⁴³⁷ She also mentions Lothra, which is probably Lorrha in present day co. Tipperary. This used to be a monastic site of some importance, supposedly founded by St. Ruadán⁴³⁸. The last place that she mentions is a lake in our version noted as: *Loch Iniaite Én Finnabrach*. This place also occurs in the glosses and *OG* as *Loch Imdaithend Finnabrach*. It is obscure where this lake might be or what its function is in the lament or even the meaning of the name, as this is the only reference to it noted by *OG*.

⁴³⁴ Ó Coileáin, ‘Structure’, 115. Quoting: L. Ó Buachalla, ‘Contributions towards the political history of Munster, 450-800 AD’, *Journal of the Cork Archaeological and Historical Society* 56 (1951) 87–90, 57 (1952) 67–86, 59 (1954) 111–26, 61 (1956) 89–102. Unfortunately this important article was not available in any Dutch library nor online and at the date of writing it was too late to have it sent over from Ireland. I sincerely apologize and I hope that I got a correct gist of the article from other sources quoting it.

⁴³⁵ *OG*: *tuath*. chaireda; an Aitheachthuath tribe in Uí Liathain and in Uí Mic Caille in Munster.

⁴³⁶ *OG*: *glen*. amain: Glanworth, c. Cork.

⁴³⁷ *OG*: *loch. cenn*: Mi.; ¶ seat of K. Mun., Lct., Lec. 377, Lis. 743 a; ¶ nr Glendmain (g. Glenamnach), Ll. 274; ¶ 69 a (of MS. omitted); ¶ L. C. in Mun. bewails the death of Cormac mac Cuilindain, Lis. 183 b; *uilleand* seat of K. of Cashel, Lec. 377.

⁴³⁸ Byrne, *Irish*, 97-99.

Cúanu, he was king of Fir Maige Féne, which is presentday Fermoy. He was also known as *Láech Líathmuine* and Líathmuine itself is also mentioned in the poems prematurely lamenting Cúanu. There are multiple possibilities as to the location of the Liathmuine but we know at least that one of them belonged to the Fermoy territory.⁴³⁹

The battle at the end of *AC* is fought up to Cend Cuirrig, current Kincurry near Waterford, by the sons of Áed.⁴⁴⁰ The sons of Cathal fight the battle from Inde Mór (of unknown location) to Lúachair nDedad, which is in Desmond.⁴⁴¹ Finally, there are two more obscure placenames. First there is the Marsh of Cluain Maccu Birnd, or Sescand Cluana Maccu Birnd. Again, it is unknown where this place might be as this is the only reference we have to it. The same goes for Dubid, where Lonán overtakes Cúanu.

⁴³⁹ OG: *liath. muine*: in Munster; bás Cailchínn mic Dimma ó L., Cúanu mac Cuilchinn rí Feramuighe, .i. Laech Liathmuine, Rc. xvii. 181, 187.

⁴⁴⁰ OG: *cenn. cuirrig*: Kincurry tl. on S. side of Suir, in c. Waterford.

Ó Coileáin, 'Structure', 115, thinks it is built around the battle of Cenn Con or Cathair Chinn Chon.

⁴⁴¹ OG: Luachair Dedad.

8. Historical Layers

8.1 The History of the Éoganachta

The characters that take the spotlight in *AC* are all said to be of the Éoganachta, be it the Éoganacht Locha Léin (Mór and Ruithchern), Chaisil (Cathal) or Glendamnach (Fíngen). The focal point of this text seems to be their communal superiority with regard to the other tribes, that are in our text called *na n-echtar túath* ‘the foreign tribes’. This becomes particularly clear when the people of Munster say to each other:

“Cindas churfíther in cathsa mad meic Cathail tiasat i n-igid mac n-æda. immo tæth dóib ar chomuáill.” In what way will this battle happen if it be the sons of Cathal who would go against the sons of Áed, they will all fall because of equal pride.⁴⁴²

This is peculiar for there existed great rivalry between the eastern Éoganachta and the western branch. The eastern Éoganachta consisted of the Éoganacht Chaisil, Éoganacht Áine, the Éoganacht Airthir Cliach and the Éoganacht Glendamnach. The western Éoganachta were the Éoganacht Locha Léin and the Éoganacht Raithlinn. There were some other branches but these declined in significance in the eighth century and were of little importance for Munster history afterwards.⁴⁴³

The western area of Munster might have been the origin of all the Éoganachta. The Éoganacht Locha Léin are often considered to be the oldest fraction of the family although little is known of their origins.⁴⁴⁴ Maybe it was the handicap of a headstart, but this older west-division was not able to retain a hegemony over all of Munster and in the eighth century their power declined and the eastern branch took over. In their own territory of west Munster however, they seem to have stayed in control. This is indicated by minor branches attaching themselves genealogically to the Éoganacht Locha Léin. They were also known as Éoganacht Irluachra or Uí Chairbne. Irlúachair is another name for Iarmumu, or west-Munster,⁴⁴⁵ named after the area known as Lúachair that lies between the borders of Cork, Limerick and Kerry. It seems that the Éoganacht Locha Léin were rising to prominence in the seventh century,⁴⁴⁶ after which the power shifted to the eastern branches with great internal strife in the eighth

⁴⁴² Line 113-114.

⁴⁴³ Ó Corráin, *Ireland*, 1-9. Ó Coileáin, ‘Structure’, 115. Dan M. Wiley, (ed), *Essays on the Early Irish King Tales* (Dublin 2008) 30-4.

⁴⁴⁴ Gearóid Mac Niocaill, *Ireland before the Vikings*, The Gill History of Ireland 1 ed. James Lydon and Margaret Maccurtain (Dublin 1972) 5.

⁴⁴⁵ Ó Corráin, *Ireland*, 2. Jaski, *Kingship*, 203-6.

⁴⁴⁶ Mac Niocaill, *Ireland*, 115. See also: David Sproule, ‘Origins of the Éoganachta’, *Ériu* 35 (1984) 31-37 for a theory on the origin of the ‘federation’ of Éoganachta and the looseness of their hegemony. Sproule states that as late as the eighth century, several tribes took on the Éoganachta name in analogy with the ‘Connachta’ of the north.

century.⁴⁴⁷ Donncha Ó Corráin describes how, from about 700AD onwards, several of the subkingdoms of the Éoganacht Locha Léin began to embarrass them and overpower them, resulting in the fact that around 803 their kings are given the title *rí Locha Léin* instead of the *rí Irluachra/Iarmuman* ‘king of West-Munster’ title they had before.⁴⁴⁸ Around the same time their clients shifted alliance to the eastern branches, notably the king of Cashel.⁴⁴⁹

It seems to be a general characteristic of the Éoganachta rule that they only enforced a very loose rule on their subject kingdoms, which may have had part in their general downfall during the tenth century.⁴⁵⁰ The names of the subject tribes we have encountered in the text, they were the *Déisi*, *Éile*, *Airthir Fhemin*, *Fir Maige Féne*, *Uí Fhidgeinte*, *Osraige*, *Corco Loígde*, *Uí Liatháin*, *Corco Baiscinn*, *Corco Modruad*, *Cíarraige Luachra* and the *Muscraige*. From a subbranch of the *Déisi* would later arise the powerful *Dál Cais* who would overthrow the eastern Éoganachta in the tenth century.⁴⁵¹ According to the tenth-century *Frithfhólad Muman*, ‘the counter-obligations of Munster’, of these subkingdoms the peripheral Éoganachta (namely the Uí Fhidgeinte, the Éoganacht Locha Léin and the Éoganacht Raithlín) were the most important after the royal Éoganachta. Their bond with the Éoganacht Chaisil, Áine and Glendamnach was called *comchairde* or ‘mutual friendship’. However, the text never calls them ‘Éoganachta’, thus effectively excluding them from any royal pretenses.⁴⁵²

The same tendency is found in the seventh-century myth concerning the finding of Cashel, in which the Éoganacht of Loch Léin are said to be descendent from the child of an inferior Pictish woman who was very aggressive towards its fostermother.⁴⁵³ After above-mentioned tribes, followed the Osraige and Corco Loígde because they had shared the kingship in the past.⁴⁵⁴

The position of the Múscraige and the Éile is a bit unclear, Ó Corráin states that they at least seem to have been ranked at roughly the same level as the Éoganachta themselves, because their shepherds discovered Cashel.⁴⁵⁵ He also states that the Uí Liatháin appear to

⁴⁴⁷ Mac Niocaill, *Ireland*, 133.

⁴⁴⁸ Ó Corráin, *Ireland*, 2. Jaski, *Kingship*, 203, he states that they already lost their title in the annals from about 791 changed.

⁴⁴⁹ Jaski, *Kingship*, 203.

⁴⁵⁰ Ó Corráin, *Ireland*, 5, 8.

⁴⁵¹ *Ibid.*, 8.

⁴⁵² T. M. Charles-Edwards, *Early Christian Ireland* (Cambridge 2000) 534, 540.

⁴⁵³ Byrne, *Irish*, 193. McCone, *Pagan*, 252. Dáibhí Ó Cróinín, ‘Ireland 400-800’, *A New History of Ireland* vol. 1 *Prehistoric and early Ireland* ed. Dáibhí Ó Cróinín (Oxford 1976) 222.

⁴⁵⁴ Charles-Edwards, *Early Christian*, 540.

⁴⁵⁵ Mac Niocaill, *Ireland*, 31.

have ranked highest, followed by the Déisi and the Fir Maige,⁴⁵⁶ whilst Charles-Edward grants prominence to the Múscraige and then the Fir Maige Féne after the Osraige and Corco Loígde.⁴⁵⁷

In any case it is clear that the Éoganachta periphery was the most important, followed in different degrees by the sub-tribes surrounding them. As Ó Corráin noted, Munster is probably the richest region of the Irish provincial kingdoms but in contrast to what one would expect, it produced few notable kings. This was partly due to the indeterminate nature of the Éoganachta royal succession and also partly to their relatively soft rule over their subjectkings.⁴⁵⁸

The larger families of the other territories, like the Uí Néill, confined their succession to a very narrow group, but the Éoganachta allowed the kingship to be shared between many different groups of the family. After the first king of whom there is some trustworthy historical record, Feidlimid (†590), there were some fifteen kings who were all of different branches of the Éoganacht Chaisil with family relations that could go back to prehistory.

As stated above, the texts of the eighth century onwards however, show a dominance of the Éoganachta that were centred around the Galty Mountains. AC is stating that the kingship was altered between the Éoganacht Glendamnach, the Éoganacht Áine and the Éoganacht Chaisil. This is a supposition that is also found in the king lists of the Laud Synchronisms and the *Frithfholad Muman* and that appears to have been true for at least the period of the beginning of the seventh to the mid-eighth century.⁴⁵⁹ Although the neat geographical concordance of the ruling septs seems to point towards a genealogy based on these political alliances, the division must foremost be genealogical as the Áine are said to have ‘recently’ come to Cashel, here geography is made to fit the genealogical line of argument.⁴⁶⁰ This genealogical argument ran as follows:

The most inclusive view [of Éoganachta relationships] allowed all the descendants of Corc to be Éoganachta; the middle view allowed the title to the descendants of Corc’s son Nad Froích; the most exclusive view, that of ‘Conall Corc and the Corco Luigde’, allowed the title and status only to the descendants of Nad Froích’s son, Óengus, excluding the Éoganacht Áine (alias Uí Éndai or Cenél nAngsae) who were descended

⁴⁵⁶ Ibid., 31.

⁴⁵⁷ Charles-Edwards, *Early Christian*, 540-544.

⁴⁵⁸ Ó Corráin, *Ireland*, 111.

⁴⁵⁹ Charles-Edwards, *Early Christian*, 534, referring to: Kuno Meyer, ‘The Laud Synchronisms’, *Zeitschrift für Celtische Philologie* 9 (1913) 478-9. Byrne, *Irish*, 204. MacCana, ‘aspects’, 83: if however, we examine the succession of the Munster kingship, we find that from the opening of the seventh century to the middle of the eighth, it was held exclusively by the eastern Éoganachta septs. See also John Mac Neill, ‘On the Reconstruction and Date of the Laud Synchronisms’, *Zeitschrift für Celtische Philologie* 10 (1915) 81-96.

⁴⁶⁰ Charles-Edwards, *Early Christian*, 536.

from his other son, Ailill. As the political stance shifted from inclusive to exclusive, so more branches were denied the title of Éoganacht.⁴⁶¹

8.2 Checking Grammar against History

If we are to set this tale in its original historical context, it is necessary to find out who of the characters of early Irish history would have been able to generate such an interest in, or who had himself an interest in, setting up promotional material. For it is generally accepted that, in the words of Bart Jaski, ‘political ambitions and literary culture were entwined in early medieval Ireland, and (...) the preservation of genealogies in compilations mainly depended on the initiative of kings, and not much on purely scholarly interest.’⁴⁶²

There are a number of strong kings who are known from saga material and annals in Munster after the seventh century. The list starts with Cathal mac Finguine †742 who, in the slightly biased Annals of Tigernach, was named as one of the five Munster kings who ruled the whole of Ireland.⁴⁶³ In 721 he devastated Brega and in 735 he attacked Leinster and until his peaceful death in 742 he seemed to have ruled Munster without too much ado.⁴⁶⁴

From the second half of the ninth century the Uí Néill began to take advantage of the weakening Munster divisions and in 860 Mael Sechnaill took hostages of the Munster king. He also intervened in the second period of the Viking wars when the Éoganacht kings were apparently no longer able to defend themselves against the invasions.⁴⁶⁵

At the beginning of the tenth century the Éile and the Osraige were defeated in a battle (AD 905) by Cellach mac Cerbaill, probably to strengthen the position of Cormac mac Cuilennáin.⁴⁶⁶ Cormac was one of the two important kings of this last tumultuous period before the ultimate collapse of the Éoganachta. Cormac was both bishop and king of Munster from 902-908. Although the suggestion has been made that he was an Uí Néill appointee, Ó Corráin rightly notes that:

‘If Cormac was ever under Uí Néill auspices, he shortly broke with the Uí Néill and became a formidable threat to them. In 905 and again in 906, the king of Tara, Flann mac Máel Sechnaill, found it necessary to make expeditions into Munster and to take hostages. This failed to quell Cormac. In 907 he marched northwards and defeated the forces of the Uí Néill, under the command of the king of Tara himself, in a battle at Mag Léna. Later in the same year, Cormac went on an extensive campaign into the

⁴⁶¹ Ibid., 536-7.

⁴⁶² Jaski, ‘Genealogical’, 333.

⁴⁶³ Kim McCone, *Pagan Past and Christian Present* (Maynooth 2000) 240. Ó Corráin, *Ireland*, 97.

⁴⁶⁴ Byrne, *Irish*, 210.

⁴⁶⁵ Ó Corráin, *Ireland*, 80-110, 112.

⁴⁶⁶ John V Kelleher, ‘The Rise of the Dál Cais’, *North Munster Studies: Essays in Commemoration of Monsignor Michael Moloney* ed. Etienne Rynne (Limerick 1967) 235.

lands of the Uí Néill and of Connacht. He took hostages of Connacht and he may well have taken hostages of the Uí Néill.⁴⁶⁷

It all went wrong in 908, when Cormac was slain at Belach Mugna, which left the kingship of Munster in abeyance for a while. Cormac was very influential not only in his politics, but also in culture and religion. From the literature an image arises of a learned man, stimulating intellectual life while at the same time trying to expand his worldly power. The famous *Cormac's Glossary* is of course attributed to him and so is the second revision of the Psalter of Cashel.⁴⁶⁸ His lineage is unknown. Jaski states that his pedigree does not attach him to either the Éoganacht Chaisil or the Éoganacht Glendamnach and that it is probably fabricated. His genealogy (as it can be found in Jaski's *Early Irish Kingship*) does show Cormac to be at least a descendent of a son of Nad Fróich's (See Plate 1),⁴⁶⁹ Oengus, thus allowing him into the exclusive-Éoganachta inner-circle as described by Charles-Edwards.⁴⁷⁰

After Cormac, Cellachán became the new king of Munster in 939. His family had not been involved in Munster kingship since the seventh century but he managed to assemble an army of Déisi and Vikings and to ravage the borders of the Uí Néill territory until he was taken captive by Muirchertach mac Néill and until the Dál Cais grew too strong for him.⁴⁷¹ He was of the Éoganachta Chaisil, descendent of a brother of Fíngen mac Áeda Duib, the very same as found in *AC*.

It is now time to look at the picture that emerges from *AC*. It can be seen that the text is mainly focused on the Éoganacht, and especially inner-circle Éoganachta. It has been suggested that the transition of Mór from her father's place in Írlúachair to the eastern Éoganachta, is meant to symbolise the transition of kingship from west to east.⁴⁷² This seems very plausible in the light of their general decline in the eighth century and is also reflected in the texts of the finding of Cashel and the 'counter-obligations of Munster'. However it must be kept in mind that the sovereignty woman usually seems to prefer a king from outside of her territory: 'the future spouses of kings [are] often represented in early Irish literature as spurning advances nearer home for love of their hitherto unseen intended'.⁴⁷³ It might be

⁴⁶⁷ Ó Corráin, *Ireland*, 113.

⁴⁶⁸ Bart Jaski, 'The Genealogical Section of the Psalter of Cashel', *Peritia* 17-18 (2003-2004) 295-337.

⁴⁶⁹ Jaski, *Early Irish*, 312-3.

⁴⁷⁰ Byrne, *Irish*, 214: The pedigree of Cormac mac Cuilennáin shows plainly that he did not belong to the inner dynastic circles of the Éoganachta Chaisil, and he too must have been a compromise choice. The traditions about him, admittedly semi-hagiographical in tone, stress that he was a religious man and scholar, averse to the wordly cares of kingship (...).

⁴⁷¹ Ó Corráin, *Ireland*, 113-4.

⁴⁷² Ó Coileáin, "Saint" 38-39.

⁴⁷³ McCone, *Pagan*, 110.

significant in this case that Mór not only chooses the king from an outside territory, but also leaves her own lands, so that a transfer of sovereignty really is intended.⁴⁷⁴

It can also be deduced that the kingship of Cashel did in fact rotate between the three main branches of the eastern Éoganachta from the seventh to mid-eighth century, just like the note in the text says, a situation confirmed in the Laud Synchronisms and *Frithfholad Muman*. Instead of reflecting seventh-century Munster politics, like Ó Coileáin argues,⁴⁷⁵ the tale seems rather to be deeply rooted in some sort of political agenda of the eighth century. Could it be worthwhile to connect this political agenda with the activities of the before-mentioned Cathal mac Finguine?

The text itself has been dated to the turn of the tenth century, end of the ninth or beginning tenth century, but it does not seem to reflect a political situation of that day and age. Although it might have been written down under the rule of Cellachán Caisil, who was himself of the Éoganacht Chaisil, his reign seems to be a bit too late and the text lays greater emphasis on the kingship of Cathal mac Áeda, who is of the Éoganacht Glendamnach. It would be more logical to assign its reworking (if one may assume an eighth-century version, which is suggested by the date of the poetry) to the reign of Cormac mac Cuilennáin, a ruler known for his interest in culture and tradition. Not only was he the main incentive of the compilation of the *Sanas Cormaic*, or Cormac's Glossary, he is probably also responsible for a redaction of the Psalter of Cashel and probably many more literary works or their reworkings. Perhaps it was enough for him, to record the tradition as he found it to at least show the pre-eminence of the Éoganachta inner-circle (to which he seems to have belonged).

Mac Cana suggested that *AC* might have been written down as a counterweight to the growing power of the Dál Cais in the tenth century. However, this branch of the Déisi appear in the annals as 'Dál Cais' for the first time in 934 and this would seem to be a bit too late for the linguistic evidence from the text.⁴⁷⁶

Cathal mac Finguine was of the Éoganacht Glendamnach (and he succeeded a king of the Áine)⁴⁷⁷, the stock with whose kingship the text ends (even though it is stated to rotate between the three greats, the Áine are not present). There might be two *termini ante quem* that can be used to further strengthen this claim that the basic outline of this tale could very well have been written down during his reign.

⁴⁷⁴ Also the fact that she turns down the princes that were wooing her in the beginning of the tale, presumably to be taken as local suitors.

⁴⁷⁵ Ó Coileáin, 'Structure', 116.

⁴⁷⁶ Ó Corráin, *Ireland*, 9.

⁴⁷⁷ Byrne, *Irish*, 207.

Firstly, there is the fact that the title *rí Iarmuman* or *rí Írluachra* was not used (at least in the annals) after 791, the death of one of the last powerful kings of the Éoganacht Locha Léin.⁴⁷⁸ Then there is the fact that the Éoganacht Glendamnach do not gain much prominence after 821, with the death of their king Art-Rí,⁴⁷⁹ and thus after that period would not have been assigned such a great amount of prominence in the tale. In fact, after the reign of Feidlimid mac Crimthainn (†846), the kingship of Munster was almost entirely dominated by the Éoganacht Chaisil.⁴⁸⁰

If we may compare the possible preservation of *AC* with the evolution of the psalter of Cashel as described by Bart Jaski, we find interesting parallels. They both start with an origin in the political propaganda of Cathal mac Finguine, who was not so much trying to attain the overkingship of the whole of Ireland but merely to retain the Uí Néill and rule his part (Leth Moga).⁴⁸¹ This is reflected in *AC* because it does not focus on the relation with Leth Cuinn (the Northern part) but merely on internal relationships of tribes within Leth Moga. Both then continue under the literary activities of Cormac mac Cuilennáin, a king-abbot who was known for his interest in tradition and his efforts to preserve this.⁴⁸²

The second part of the text seems to reflect hostilities between the smaller tribes that functioned under the Éoganachta. Lonán, who is of the Éile, slays Cúanu of the Fir Maige Féne. Byrne stated that the Fir Maige Féne were hostile to the Éoganachta. The Éile seem to be on good foot with the Éoganachta and were on roughly equal level with the Osraige,⁴⁸³ since it was their swineherd that had discovered Cashel. Apparently (according to the *Frithfholad*) they received protection money from the Éoganachta.⁴⁸⁴ It could be deduced that the Éile were at least more closely related to the Éoganachta than the Fir Maige Féne, whose king was slain after his unlawful union with Ruithchern. Perhaps this was an attempt to nip in the bud any claims to the kingship of the Éile territories or Munster in general (since Ruithchern seems to represent some kind of sovereignty too)?

The Éile seemed to have been higher in status than the Déisi at least, since our text is particularly hostile towards them. First, Mór ousts the daughter of the king of the Déisi, then

⁴⁷⁸ Jaski, *Early Irish*, . Ó Coileáin, 'Saint', 44.

⁴⁷⁹ Ó Corráin, *Ireland*, 5.

⁴⁸⁰ Byrne, *Irish*, 215.

⁴⁸¹ Byrne, *Irish*, 203. This in contrast to his renowned successors Feidlimid mac Crimthann and Cormac mac Cuilennáin who seemed to have aimed for the high-kingship. Ireland was traditionally divided into two parts, the southern half was called Leth Moga and the northern half Leth Cuinn, the boundry being from Dublin to Galway.

⁴⁸² See also: James Carney, 'Language and Literature up to 1169', *A New History of Ireland* vol. 1: *Prehistoric and Early Ireland* ed. Dáibhí Ó Cróinín (Oxford 2005) 485-6.

⁴⁸³ Charles-Edwards, *Early*, 544.

⁴⁸⁴ Byrne, *Irish*, 198.

she reprimands Lonán for getting up before the king of the Déisi. It could be that this was caused by some interrelationship between the Éoganacht Locha Léin and the Déisi, since their genealogy shows that Fiachu of the Déisi and his daughter both married into the Éoganacht Locha Léin, the main rivals to the eastern kingship of Munster.⁴⁸⁵ The Uí Liatháin, to whose king Ruithchern was married in the fourteenth-century tale, was one of the tribes who also claimed Éoganachta descent at a later stage in history. They did this together with the Uí Fhidgeinte, so it should come as no surprise that Ruithchern was either married to their king Rónán or was at least travelling to that territory - it is all part of the bigger Éoganacht-picture.

But much about these smaller tribes remain uncertain, as they are less well documented in the early material.⁴⁸⁶ Ó Coileáin points to the remarkable correspondance on a genealogical and mythological scale, for it seems that for the kingship of Munster there is only one requirement in the genealogies, namely a family relationship to Mór.⁴⁸⁷ This can either be through her sister Ruithchern but also through one of her daughters. Noteworthy is the fact that Cathal mac Finguine too is married to a family member of Mór, namely the granddaughter of Ruithchern.⁴⁸⁸ This might explain the significance of the second part of the tale about Ruithchern, because while focused on smaller tribes in Munster, it represents a direct line with the reign of Cathal mac Finguine.

The note that the kingship switched between the Éoganacht Glendamnach, Éoganachta Chaisil and the Éoganachta Áine might be put down as an ‘antiquarian note’, as Seán Ó Coileáin has put it. If this is the case, then it might be attributed to the tenth-century composer, as the rotation stopped around the mid-eighth century. The author might have recognized the tradition as found in the contemporary *Laud Synchronisms* and the *Frithfholad* in the two tales he wanted to combine, namely that of Mór and Fíngen and that of Mór and Cathal mac Áeda. On the other hand, we cannot exclude the possibility that the note was part of a hypothetical eighth century original, as this very rotation was always part of the political propaganda of the inner Éoganachta circle. Especially combined with the evidence from the poetry, that seems to suggest an earlier origin in some form.

8.3 The Death of the Cycle

This conclusion confirms the statement of Ó Coileáin, who claims the same date for the entirety of the stories connected to the royal dynasties of Munster:

⁴⁸⁵ Ó Coileáin, ‘Structure’, 103. See also the genealogy in Appendix 1.

⁴⁸⁶ Charles-Edwards, *Early*, 544.

⁴⁸⁷ Ó Coileáin, ‘Structure’, 117. See also genealogy.

⁴⁸⁸ See Genealogy, Appendix 1.

This collapse does not seem to have taken place in Munster until the mid-eighth century, and coincides with the death of Cathal mac Finguine. This type of legend-making process does not seem to have proceeded beyond his reign; although Feidelmid mac Crimthainn gave rise to another set of legends in the following century, they are essentially of a different kind. I am not claiming that the legends were composed prior to 742, the date of Cathal mac Finguine's death, but simple that the time-frame to which they refer belongs to the seventh and early eighth centuries.⁴⁸⁹

For this tale I would not agree with a seventh century state-of-affairs. Although the Éoganachta Locha Léin are clearly still important (considering the title *rí Irluachra*, the fact that they provide the sovereignty-figure and the fact that they are all considered to be of 'equal status'), the kingship is clearly a matter of eastern rule. It is probably a reflection of the fact that the eastern Éoganachta were on the rise⁴⁹⁰ and it confirms the Munster-focus of Cathal's policy of inland politics (as opposed to aggressions towards the Uí Néill and the so-called *Leth Cuinn*). Ó Coileáin proposes a *terminum ad quem* for the basic unity as being 900AD:

Whatever may be made of individual figures the structure as a whole cannot be dismissed lightly, and since it is consistently reflected in such diverse sources it must have been established at an early date. I do not see how a retrospective unity could be achieved after the ninth century, and so I would propose 900 AD as a *terminus ad quem* for the establishment of the basic frame of reference.⁴⁹¹

It seems likely, however, that it was already established during the earlier reigns of for example Cathal mac Finguine. Mac Eoin has discovered a very similar pattern for the tale of Cath Chonaill, which is dated to c. 900 but which contains poetry that might be dated to the eighth century.⁴⁹² From the evidence he collected he posits that there were loose anecdotes circulating already in the eighth century about events in the seventh.⁴⁹³ Some were written down at that stage but others kept circulating orally for a while until committed to writing. According to him, authors started to combine these anecdotes into longer units in the second half of the ninth century, which became the convention of saga-writing.⁴⁹⁴ Thus the research of Mac Eoin shows that already in the eighth century these anecdotes were alive and kicking and that the compilation and reworking of tales took place somewhat later. This is very similar to the pattern not only of AC but also of the Tale-lists in which the stories are

⁴⁸⁹ Ó Coileáin, 'Structure', 119. Also *ibid.*, 125.

⁴⁹⁰ Wiley's remark that: 'the individual king tales tend to be set – though they were not all written – during the period when the dynasties of their protagonists were either on the rise or at their height of their power. Otherwise during their heyday.' seems a bit superfluous but is true nonetheless. Wiley, *Essays*, 54.

⁴⁹¹ Ó Coileáin, 'Structure', 101.

⁴⁹² Gearóid S. Mac Eoin, 'Orality and Literacy in Some Middle-Irish King-Tales', *Early Irish Literature – Media and Communication*, eds. Stephen N. Tranter and Hildegard L. C. Tristram (Tübingen 1989) 170.

⁴⁹³ Mac Eoin, 'Orality', 182.

⁴⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, 182-3.

recorded. All these texts might have well been the result of this trend towards compilation and restructuring of older materials.⁴⁹⁵

⁴⁹⁵ Donna Thornton argues that the text has a strong Éile bias and that the connecting factor between the two parts of the text is the strong anti-Déisi attitude of Mór, both in the first part with her marriage to Fíngen as well as in the second part where she reprimands Lonán for getting up for the king of the Déisi. Of course also in the fact that she gives her sister to Lonán, king of the Éile. Matheson argues that Fíngen is depicted as a parody, in his inability to stand up against his queen. Again, as I have not read this thesis, I will not be able to comment on this theory in any detail, but it is certainly a note worth mentioning.

9. The Story and the Manuscripts

In recent scholarship there has been a development that focuses more on the manuscripts as organic wholes, as pieces that functioned in their entirety in a certain context.⁴⁹⁶ It has proven very helpful for the understanding of a text to not only look at it by itself, but also to look at how a tale works in the manuscript, why it has been incorporated into it and how this fits into the historical picture surrounding it. Although this could be the topic of a masterthesis in itself, I would still like to devote a chapter to it, if only to refer the reader towards certain trends and possible clues that may exist in the manuscript tradition of *AC*. In my opinion, it is a very legitimate and valuable way to look at the medieval manuscripts, especially in the case of medieval Ireland where there often was such a great gap between the time of composition of a tale and the time when it was written down. I do wish to make clear that, as this is neither my specialism nor the purpose of this edition, much shall have to remain unsaid and unstudied.

After the dust of the Anglo-Norman invasion of 1169 had settled, the mid-fourteenth century saw a rise of interest in the Gaelic past of Ireland.⁴⁹⁷ This rise of interest lasted until about the early sixteenth century and is often referred to as ‘the Gaelic resurgence’. It was shared by both the native Irish lords as well as the Anglo-Norman settlers who had become increasingly ‘Gaelicized’ by that time. Although there is some contention over the question whether the Anglo-Irish lords really were as assimilated as is often stated,⁴⁹⁸ it is a fact that interest in Gaelic literature grew and that the hereditary bardic families flourished. These bardic families composed poems for their patrons but they also copied manuscripts and composed new stories based upon the older tales found therein.

As has been stated time and time again, the Anglo-Norman invasion did not lead to an ‘immediate or dramatic abandonment of older types of narrative’.⁴⁹⁹ The earlier narratives

⁴⁹⁶ See for this mainly: *Speculum* 65 (1990), pp. 1-108 on ‘New Philology’.

⁴⁹⁷ Katharine Simms, ‘Charles Lynegar, the Ó Luinín family and the study of Seanchas’, *a Miracle of Learning: Studies in Manuscripts and Irish Learning. Essays in Honour of William O’Sullivan* ed. Toby C. Barnard et al (Ahsgate, 1998), 274. James Carney, ‘Literature in Irish, 1169-1534’, *A New History of Ireland* vol. 2 *Medieval Ireland 1169-1534* ed. Art Cosgrove 6 vols (Oxford, 1976-2005), 690. John Ryan, S. J., ‘The Historical Background’, *Seven Centuries of Irish Learning: 1000-1700* ed. Brian Ó Cuív (Cork, 1961) 14-19.

⁴⁹⁸ Steven Ellis, ‘Nationalist Historiography and the English and Gaelic Worlds in the Late Middle Ages’, *Interpreting Irish History: The Debate on Historical Revisionism 1938-1994* ed. Ciaran Brady (Dublin, 1994) 161-180. Ellis contends that the developments that took place in Ireland in the period of the ‘so-called’ Gaelic Resurgence had, first of all, nothing to do with the internal state of affairs but with the renewed contact with the Scots-Gaelic world. Secondly he states that the ‘Anglo-Irish’ lords were more strongly connected to the English crown than is generally supposed, he thinks this is due to ‘nationalist historiography’.

⁴⁹⁹ Carney, ‘Literature in Irish’, 700, whether or not this was really due to a ‘lack of any literary tradition of their own’ (Ryan, S. J., ‘The Historical Background’, 15).

were still being read, copied and compiled by the learned classes and James Carney notices that only a few of the manuscripts from that period contain works that are actually contemporary.⁵⁰⁰ Original works created during that period depended heavily on the older tradition and were used to recreate an image of Ireland as it had been in the past and as it should be in the present. This was the case not only for the narratives but also for the genealogies and chronicles. The latter were also supposed to provide legitimization for the ruling classes (both for the Anglo-Irish as well as for the native Irish) by using the past to justify their present rule, as the control from the Dublin government diminished in that period. Although both the Anglo-Irish as well as the Irish themselves spoke Gaelic (to some extent), the copied Old and Middle Irish tracts must have become increasingly unintelligible by that time. The manuscripts therefore might have had other functions as well, as for example a form of currency or a form of art.⁵⁰¹ The learned classes however, did manage to maintain some knowledge of the older forms of the language. The tradition of studying the early law-texts was as much alive in the fourteenth to the fifteenth century (and even up to the eighteenth century, albeit on a much smaller scale) as it was in the Old-Irish period and compilations of the Old Irish law-texts and chronicles may have served as archives or teaching resources for the learned classes or ‘*seanchaidhe*’s schools’.⁵⁰²

The three manuscripts which contain AC all tell a different tale. LL, stemming from the twelfth century, probably finds its origin in the enthusiastic scholarly work of the unreformed church. 1316/1 on the other hand is the endproduct of the collecting frenzy of the learned families of the later fifteenth and sixteenth century. The Book of Fermoy is one of those books that found its origin in the above-mentioned Gaelic Survival.⁵⁰³

9.1 Terryglass and the Book of Leinster

In the first chapter, I provided a very general introduction to the book of Leinster. It was considered the result of the last spark of learned interest of the unreformed Irish church. It came in existence in the middle of great struggles between Munster and Connacht. During the tenth and eleventh century the church regained some of its wealth and authority,⁵⁰⁴ and the

⁵⁰⁰ Carney, ‘Literature in Irish’, 693.

⁵⁰¹ Ibid., 693.

⁵⁰² Simms, ‘Charles Lynegar’, 274.

⁵⁰³ Carney, ‘Literature in Irish’, 692.

⁵⁰⁴ Kathleen Hughes, ‘The Irish Church 800-c.1050’, *A New History of Ireland* vol. 1 *Prehistoric and early Ireland* 6 vols. (Oxford 1976-2005) 655.

twelfth century even saw a rise of activity in the traditional Irish orders.⁵⁰⁵ These traditional orders had a lively interest in native lore, history and scholarship and were very well integrated into lay society.

Whereas in the fifth century there had been a great void between cleric and filid, by the eleventh century the gap had almost disappeared. The close contact between Latin and vernacular learning was a source of strength to the church (...) but the secularisation of the church that resulted from it led to a need for reform.⁵⁰⁶

This church reform came in the twelfth century. One of the goals of the reform was to separate lay and ecclesiastical activities in all areas. The Cistercians made it a point to have a separate building for the lay clerics and to have the ordained brothers live strictly according to the monastic life as set out by St. Bernard of Clairveaux; chant, pray and work.⁵⁰⁷ A manuscript with a miscellaneous content like the book of Leinster makes much more sense if it is considered the result of the old order, rather than of the new, strictly separated church. Compilations like this, containing both religious and vernacular material, would only again appear from the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries onwards, in the possession of the learned families and their overlords, who combined their interest in local history with prestige and piety.

Terryglass, the monastery where LL was composed or at least partly written, is situated in Leinster. This not exactly Munster, so local interest as a reason for incorporating AC might seem far fetched. However, it is still in the famous *Leth Moga*, or the southern half of Ireland and speaks of the High-King of Munster (which is presumed to be Toirdelbach Ua Briain at the time the compilation of LL). Terryglass was always very active in the politics of the Munster kings and featured as the location for a peace conference between Toirdelbach O Connor and Toirdelbach Ua Briain in 1144.⁵⁰⁸

When we look at the inclusion of AC in LL, it was probably not included because of relevant family connections to the Ua Briain's as they were of Dál Cáis descent, nor was it altered to carry out any updated political propaganda since of AC the language is tenth century and reflects even older politics. However, with the 'mistake' in mind of *Cathal mac Finguine* replacing *Cathal mac Áeda* it could be seen as a result of the twelfth-century backwards look on the Golden Age of Munster. In the twelfth century Cathal mac Finguine was seen as the height of power in Munster's history and there might be more traces of this in the book of

⁵⁰⁵ John Watt, *The Church in Medieval Ireland*, The Gill History of Ireland 2 ed. James Lydon and Margaret Maccurtain (Dublin 1972) 41.

⁵⁰⁶ Hughes, 'Irish', 655.

⁵⁰⁷ Watt, *The Church*, 1-28 and 41-85.

⁵⁰⁸ Ó Corráin, *Ireland*, 159.

Leinster.⁵⁰⁹ Another point of interest may have been that the story has strong religious connotations, as Anna Matheson has proven,⁵¹⁰ which for a cleric of the old order would be all the justification necessary to include it in a manuscript. A tale of great age, serving present-day politics and providing religious input, interdisciplinary to its core before the very invention of the word.

9.2 Book of Fermoy

The Book of Fermoy is a manuscript containing miscellaneous documents and Carney states that it shows a ‘ (...) spirit of diligent antiquairanism’. The question as to why *AC* has been incorporated could be simply a matter of this mentioned antiquarianism, but, the Roche family being from Fermoy, this sense of antiquarianism must have been strongly directed by local interest. Of course, Fermoy was part of Munster and it played a major part in the second half of *AC*. Cúanu is the king of *Fir Maige Féne* (Fermoy) and is one of the main characters of the second half of the tale.

The Book of Fermoy is one of the few manuscripts from this period containing contemporary material like praise poems on the Roche family. The Roche family, Gaelicized de Róiste, were originally based in Munster and Wexford but are now found all over Ireland.⁵¹¹ Apparently a number of women in the family were called ‘Mór’, interesting but not astounding since it was a popular girl’s name from the tenth century up to the nineteenth.⁵¹² The manuscript shows a wide interest of antiquarian material, contemporary praise poems and religious material. As mentioned under paragraph 8.3.1, it is the typical status-symbol of a well-off family concerned with their image in this life and the hereafter.

9.3 1316/1

This manuscript was part of the collection of Dubhaltach mac Fhirbhisigh,⁵¹³ via an helper of Seán mac Domhnaill of the Burren, Aodhagán mac Conchobhair Mhic Aodhagáin. Both the name of Dubhaltach as well as that of a Hugh son of Connor mac Egan (memorandum of

⁵⁰⁹ Byrne, *Irish*, 210-11. ‘Munstermen of later times looked back to the reign of Cathal mac Finguine as a golden age. A poem in the Book of Leinster, *Teist Cathail meic Finguine*, calls him king of Munster, king of Connacht, high-king of Tara, high king Ulster, king of Clann Chonla (Airgiall), king of the Déisi, king of Clare (Thomond), king of Áine and high-king of Ireland.’

⁵¹⁰ Matheson, *Unpublished*.

⁵¹¹ Edward MacLysaght, *Surnames of Ireland* (Shannon 1969) 190.

⁵¹² Fidelma Maguire and Donnchadh Ó Corráin, *Irish Names* (Dublin 1990) 139.

⁵¹³ William O’Sullivan, ‘The Manuscript Collection of Dubhaltach Mac Fhirbhisigh’ *Seanchas: Studies in Early and Medieval Irish Archaeology, History and Literature in Honour of Francis J. Byrne* ed. Alfred P. Smyth (Dublin 2000) 442.

1350) appear in the manuscript. In any case there seems to have been some connection between the mac Fhirbhisigh family and that of the mac Aodhagán.⁵¹⁴ It had the interest of these people mainly because of the legal fragments of the *senchas mór*. It does also show a certain preference of the Munster area but also of Connacht and Leinster. Again this might be seen as an interest in the historical area known as *Leth Moga*, as a collection of wisdom meant to provide status and as a device to show piety.

9.4 The Authority of the Past

It appears that there are some works that occur quite frequently in certain manuscripts, and it could be worthwhile to check for the existence of some sort of ‘canon’ of literature in the different periods of Irish literary history (at least for those of which we have the manuscripts). We know of a sort of literary canon for the Old or Middle Irish period in the form of the tale-lists, but was there may have been such a canon for the later centuries too. Of course the *Senchas Mór* and the *Lebar Gabála Éirinn* are the best examples of texts that might have been considered works of a learned canon, being a sort of Old and New Testament of the Irish people. But also the *Togal Troi* seems to be a frequent guest and in these *Leth Moga* manuscripts so is the expulsion of the Déisi. This is yet another example of research that could yield interesting results in the future.

We may conclude this short section with a notice that the Irish respect for the past was indeed great. Because of the great gap between the composition of a text, often in the tenth century or earlier, and the actual momentum of writing it down in a manuscript, the results of applying ‘new philology’, might be less revealing and less clear than in other disciplines. It is obvious that the tales must have had an important contemporary function when composed, but this function is often not so clear in their manuscript context. Likewise, they must have had a contemporary function in the manuscripts which is hard to trace because they are often very faithful to their older exemplar. Although there is some local concern, the main focus of the scribes and antiquaries seemed to have been recording the past for the now and the future. This might or might not have had something to do with a sense of nationalism (which is always a dangerous thing to say, but nonetheless, something that must be said) in the face of the ‘suppressor’, or indeed, if that suppressor too became ‘Gaelicized’, to integrate and become a part of the surrounding culture. The Irish certainly do not appear to have practised

⁵¹⁴ Nollaig Ó Muraíle, *The Celebrated Antiquary Dubhaltach Mac Fhirbhisigh (c. 1600-1671): his Lineage, Life and Learning* (Maynooth 2002) 64. Links between the two learned families of Clann Fhir Bhisigh and Clann Aodhagáin long antedate the period of Dubhaltach’s supposed schooling at Ballymacegan.

false modesty concerning their culture. Ó Néil is said to have stated that ‘he did not feel he had anything to learn from them [i.e. the kings of France, Aragon and Castile], since the Gaelic Irish held their own customs to be the best and most perfect in the world’,⁵¹⁵ but as Watt states: ‘it is pertinent to ask how far, behind Ó Néill’s satisfaction with his own culture, there lay any kind or degree of national sentiment’.⁵¹⁶ It seems at least, that there was a strong connection between the Irish language and some nationalist sentiments which may have strengthened the respect for Irish texts from the earlier periods.

⁵¹⁵ J.A. Watt, ‘Gaelic Polity and Cultural Identity’, *A New History of Ireland* vol. 2 *Medieval Ireland 1169-1534* ed. Art Cosgrove 6 vols (Oxford, 1976-2005) 345-6.

⁵¹⁶ Watt, ‘Gaelic’, 345-6

Concluding Remarks

A tenth century prose text, possibly reworked by the famous Cormac mac Cuilennáin. A core of Old Irish poetry, dating from the eighth century, possibly written during the reign of another famous Munster king, Cathal mac Finguine. Literary motifs entwined with ecclesiastical and political messages, but above all, a literary text that has it all: love, intrigue, grief and battle. This text has so many aspects that are worth exploring and I hope that this masterthesis has done some of the work. Although someone once said that ‘history never repeats itself, historians do’, I also hope that some new aspects of this text have come to light. I almost feel like I share many things with Mór, after half a year of only going to the doorway of my house, I hope that this work of shared madness has resulted something just as beautiful and fruitful as her two marriages.

Abbreviations

acc.	accusative
adj.	adjective
adv.	adverb
conj.	conjunction/with verb forms: conjunct form
comp.	comparative
compd. ptc.	compound particle
cond.	conditional
contr. deut.	contracted deuterotonic
dat.	dative
dim.	diminutive
emph. prn.	emphasizing pronoun
fem.	feminine
freq.	frequently
fut.	future
gen.	genitive
imp.	imperative
impf.	imperfect
indef. prn.	indefinite pronoun
interr.	interrogative
masc.	masculine
neg.	negative
neut.	neuter
nom.	nominative
pass.	passive
pf.	perfect
pl.	plural
prep.	preposition
pres.	presens
pret.	preterite
prn.	pronoun
rel.	relative
sg.	singular

subj.	subjunctive
vb	verb
voc.	vocative
vn.	verbal noun
†	syncope (or year of death)
V	vowel
C	consonant
AC	<i>Aided Cuanach</i>
AI	Annals of Inisfallen
AT	Annals of Tigernach
AU	Annals of Ulster
BF	Book of Fermoy
DIL	Dictionary of the Irish Language, also online at www.dil.ie
GOI	Grammar of Old Irish, see Thurn.
OG	Onomasticon Goedelicum
LL	Book of Leinster
MI	Milan Glosses
Sg	Sankt Gallen Glosses
Thurn./GOI	Rudolf Thurneysen, <i>A Grammar of Old Irish</i> , 6 th ed. (Dublin 2003)
Wb	Würzburg Glosses

Vocabulary

- 1. a** vocative particle. a mor 2.
- 2. a** prep+dat ‘out of, from’, with article assind 2. as *Indiu Mór* 146. with infix. prn. 3sg. m/n. ass 149
- acht** prep. + acc. ‘except’. See also **má.** acht 174.
- adaig** iā, f ‘night’, temp. acc. in *n-aidchi-sin* 174.
- ad-aig do** ‘drives, impels to’, pret. pass. sg variant BF and 1316/1 *atnaghar dho, adiaagar dó* 13. The –t is the Middle Irish tautological infixed pronoun which is very common for this verb according to DIL (s.v. **ad-aig**).
- ad-cí** ‘to see’. pret. 3sg. with neuter proleptic infix at-che 67. pres. 3sg. with same infix at-chī 68. pret. pass. accas ī 96.
- ad-cumaing** ‘reaches, happens’. With inf. pron. lit. it has happened to x (to be), hence as verb of existence, the whole group usually being tantamount to a personal pron. pret. 3sg. with 1pl. infix. prn. *atan-comnaic* 122.
- ad-fét** ‘tells, relates’. pret./pf. pass. sg. with neuter infix class B at-chúas 47.
- ad-gnin** to recognize, know. reduplicated pret. 2sg and 3sg with inf. prn. 1sg *nim-athgén, nim-athgēoin* 31 etc. I have taken the variant *nim-aithgén* from BF because when the quatrain is sung again, it also contains –m- rather than –n-, and it makes more sense that nobody recognizes *ruithchern*, so infix. prn. 1st sg –m.
- ad-greinn** ‘persecutes, pursues’. ad-[r]ogrind 148.
- admilled** u, m vn of *aidmillid* ‘act of completely destroying, destruction, ruin, derangement’. The –u- would point to a dative case which is incorrect. Possibly Middle Irish vowel confusion. *admilliud* r2.
- adnacul** o, n. later m. vn. of *ad-anaig* ‘act of burying, funeralsong, dirge’. a *hannacol* 26.
- aer** o, m ‘air’ dat. sg. *aiur* 2. Forms with the fada also occur, as in this text.
- áes** u, m ‘people, folk’. *áesa cerdda* 120.
- agad, aiged** f. ‘face, countenance’. In phrase *i n-a.* ‘towards, against’. *i n-agid* 114, etc.
- aicde** iā, f ‘material, building, structure’. *aicde* 141.
- aided** f. ‘violent (or possibly unnatural) death’. *aided Cūanach* 174. Lenition would be expected after the feminine ‘aided’, but is not attested in any of the manuscripts.

aigid	‘drives, impels’. perf. 3sg. ro acht 113
aile	adj. ‘other, second’. in fecht aile 23, etc.
aingid	‘saves, protects’. fut. 1sg. nat-ainisiu 16, probably read s-future nat-ain-sium. BF and 1316/1 contain the newer weak f-future conjugation, see chapter 3.
ainim	ā, f blemish, defect’. nom. sg. anim 125.
airdcheól	ard + ceól , ‘high music’, or ard- simply as intensifying prefix. gen. sg. airdcheóil 30.
airech	adj. ‘noble, chief’. com-airech 18.
áith	adj. i ‘keen, pointed’. Possibly in athorbai ‘a sharp cutting’.
aithech	o, m ‘rent payer, vassal’. dat. pl. forsna aithechaib 147. This is supplied from BF as it is part of the construction <i>maidid re A for B</i> see maidid . nom. sg. aithech 167.
alláthís	‘down below’. allathís 14.
amae	Interjection ‘verily, indeed’ Freq. translated ‘alas!’ but this sense seems to derive rather from the context. See also fé . fē amai 144.
amail, amal	unstressed form of ds. I samail. Old Irish amal , later amail ‘like, as’. amal 1, amal 16, etc.
amne	= amein ‘thus’, also apparently reinforcing adverbs of direction and place (DIL). (ucután) amne 91.
amrae	adj. and noun ‘wonderful (person)’. gen. sg. n-amra 160. gen.sg. amrai 165.
amrán	o, m ‘singing, song’. amrán 73.
anacul	o, n vn. aingid ‘act of protection, shielding, sparing’, variant from BF and 1316/1 of adnacul , a hannacol 26.
anaid	‘stay, remain’. fut. 3sg. anfaid-si 19. In earlier language with palatal –n in future. níro an aice(BF aici-seom), 3sg. perf. of <i>anaid</i> ‘to remain’, with oc + 3sg. masc. ‘near him’ 174.
aníár	adv. ‘from behind, from the west’. aníar 25, 103, etc.
annam	adj. o, ā ‘lonely, alone’. annam 70.
1. ar	variant of ol in Old Irish, already found in Milan Glosses, ar in <i>guth</i> 2, or sisi 6, etc.
2. ar	prep. + acc./dat. ‘because of’. ar comúaill 115.
araile	Aile with double stem ala aile, alaile, with dissimilation araille (with stress on -ail-) (as adj. precedes noun; as subst. does not take article or other proclitic. araille 130.

argat	o, n ‘silver’. dat. sg. di argut 15.
ar-reith	‘accuses, captures, overtakes’. impf. 3sg. nād airthech141. This is a problematic form with the –ch, but I have taken that to be a later confusion with –dh of the impf. 3sg ending –ed. The variant from BF is not without problems either because <i>nāt airted</i> would have a –t for a –d in nád. tartandin, tairted. I have taken this to be impf.3sg. It would be very easy for these forms to be confused with the forms of the more common do-airret (later simple verb tár(r)thid, tair(r)thid, tarraid and tárthaigid), which might explain the level of confusion between d’s and t’s and d’s and ch’s.
as-beir	‘says, speaks’. pret 3sg. as-bert-si 49, etc.
as-luí	‘escape’. perf. 3sg. co n-erlāi 111.
athguin	ath- + guin . 126. ath- can have the meaning of Latin <i>re-</i> or with nouns of ‘deposed, degenerated’. Freq. with merely intensive force, which is probably what we have here, as there is no mention of an earlier wounding of Cúanu. guin i, n ‘act of wounding’.
ath(f)orbae	ath + forbbae io, n vn. of for-ben ‘act of smiting, cutting’. athorbai 150. Either with <i>áith</i> ‘sharp’, or with the intensifying prefix <i>ath-</i> , see athguin .
at-reig	‘to get up’. pres. 3sg. atraig-si 16, pres. 3sg. atraaig 17 this form with double –a- might be the result of a Middle Irish development in the perfect: ‘the form atraacht occurring occas. in mid. Ir. may be a dissimilation-form from the perf. atraracht’, see DIL. at-rarach side (BF at-raacht 75n65). imp. 2sg. érig-siu 100.
at-tá	substantive verb ‘to be’, pf 3sg ro boí 2, pf 3pl robatar 3, with ro+infix. prn in the meaning ‘to have’, rot-bia 10. conset. pres. 3sg. bīd 12. fil 60, see Thurn. §780.3 In archaic texts and poetry it may be used in other positions also with the meaning ‘there is, are’.
atúaid	‘from the North’. atúaid 51.
báeth	adj. o, ā ‘foolish, thoughtless, wild, innocent’. báeth 56.
bán	adj. o, ā ‘fair’. in banna bán 174.
banna	in banna bán 174, either ‘band’ (OFr. loanword) or io, iā ‘feminine, womanly’ as subst., of which this would be the only example. It could be either in this case, however, the fact that ‘banna’ comes with the article and not with the possessive pronoun (which occurs with all the members of Cúanu’s household in this quatrain) might point to an apposition with <i>a ben</i> rather than

introducing a new member of his household, ‘his band’. The quatrain is also explained after that as: ‘That was true, only those three (persons) spent the night nearby (that is his son, his daughter and his wife)’, there is no mention of his band at all.

- beirid** ‘to carry, bring forth, bare’. pf. 3sg. co rruc 22, etc.
- ben** ā, f ‘woman’. voc. a ben 86, 110 etc. See also **dag-**, dagben 21 and 171.
- bethu** t, m later f. ‘life, existence’. i mbethu 135. 1316/1 preserves the old dental stem i mbethaid 135n118.
- bith-** u, m ‘world’ but in compounds with the meaning ‘perpetual, eternally’. bith-tarngire5.
- blíadain** ī, f ‘year’. nom.pl. blíadnai 82. gen. sg. blíadnae 145.
- bratt** o, m ‘cloak, mantle’. in mbrat 17, ina bratt 17. dim. brattán 156.
- brígach** adj. o, ā ‘powerful, mighty, forceful, strong’. brígach 56.
- bruth** u, m ‘valour, fury’. nom. pl. brotha 61.
- cáera** k, f ‘sheep’. dat.pl. oca chaīrib 9. I have taken the lenited variant from BF, because it would make more sense for the sheep to be Fíngen’s in stead of Mór’s. acc. pl. lasna caīrcha 16.
- caí** f. vn. of cīid ‘act of weeping, wailing, lamentation’. a choí 84. oc coē (: amne). According to DIL *caí* is indeclinable but it seems to also occur with *-oe*, so that rhyme with *amne* would be possible).
- caile** ‘serving girl, maid’. Cale 10.
- caíned** vbn caínid ‘act of keening, weeping, lamenting’. oc caíniud 48, oca chaíniud-som 96.
- can + do** +follg. noun ‘whence...’, with prep. **do** ‘who is/are.....’. can duit 14. can dóib 121. Although DIL under **do** gives ‘whence is/are...’. In either case, it is a question over someone’s identity, homeland and name being equally functional in this respect.
- canad (mair)** 68.Nolan takes this to be cé+negative, but this would be céni. It could be the conjunction *cía* + infixed *-d* or *-id* Thurn. §426: ‘Where the conjunctions **cía** ‘although’ or **ma** ‘if’ (neg. **ce**ni, mani) are used with an indicative verbal form without infixed pronoun, leniting **d (id)** is infixed, supported where necessary by **no** (...)’. It then consists of *ce +no + d mair* ‘although it lives/lasts’. It could also be a doubtful instance of céin-máir + inixed pronoun. Céin máir is a

petrified expression used to say ‘long may +dat. live’, and could be used with a dat.inf.prn., see Thurn. §384 on adjectives used as prepositions. See also DIL under ‘canad’ for another doubtful instance from LL: dober dóib muic for muin c.✠ mair no dlig, LL. Cf. céin mair. See also the Féilire Óengusso *cenasmairson* ‘Long may they live (?)’.⁵¹⁷

caraid	‘to love’. imp. sg. car 88.
cath	u, m ‘battle fight’. cath 112, etc.
1. cía	conj. ‘although’, sometimes replaced as simple conj. for cid, originally cía + pres. subj. conj. 3sg. Thurn. §793 ‘cid is apparently sometimes used as indicative also’. cid 81.
2. cía	interr. ‘where’. cía no-saigid 121.
cech	unstressed form of cích ‘each, every, all’. cech degben 21.
céin	‘-self’. 2sg. céin 39.
ceirt	f. rag. certib 7, na ceirte 14.
cen	prep. + acc ‘without’. In phrase cen + co ‘without that, though..not’. with cop. pres. sj. 3sg. cen cop 78. cen tech 125. cen dēine 128. ria cind 145.
cenél	o, n ‘kindred, race, tribe’. cenēl 19.
cenn	o, n ‘head’. In phrase <i>ar cinn</i> ‘towards, moving to’. ar cind 118. In phrase: <i>fo chenn do</i> ‘greetings to...’. fo chenn dúib 144. a chend de 151.
cerd	ā, f ‘craft, skill’. áesa cerda 120.
ceta	adv. prefix with verbs ‘first, in the first place’. ceta-buī 94.
cindas	+gen. ‘what kind of’, + rel. clause ‘in what way’. cindas 114.
cloistecht	vn of con-túaisi (with fri) ‘listening to’. oc cloistecht frie-si 75.
co (prep)	+ acc ‘until, to’. chuce 14, etc. co + dat. ‘with’. co ngair 30.
comla	‘valve of door, window’.
comthrom	‘equality, fair treatment, equal weight’. comthrom 15.
comúall	‘equal pride’. com- + úal (ā, f). comúaill 115.
con-gair	‘calls, cries out, shouts’. pres. 3sg. con-gair 38.
con-oí	‘preserves, protects, guards, keeps’. pres. rel. con-oí 83.
con-ric	‘meets, encounters, joins (in comat/cohabitation)’, prot. –comraic tends to spread as general stem. fut. 2sg. ní comraicfe 19.

⁵¹⁷ Whitley Stokes (ed), *Féilire Óengusso Céili Dé: The Martyrology of Oengus the Culdee* (London 1905) 19n20. Translation of dr. Jürgen Uhlich during classes Old Irish Poetry at Trinity College Dublin, November 2009.

cos	ā, f ‘foot’. nom. pl. cossa 134. ar cossa 165.
cosindiu	‘until today’. cosindiu 132.
crích	ā, f ‘boundary, limit’. i crích 26.
cuilenn	o, m ‘(wood of the) holly tree’. nom. sg. cuilend 149. voc. a chuilind 164.
cuingid	vn. of con-d̄feig ‘act of asking, requesting, seeking’. oca cuingidsi 5.
cuire	o, m ‘troop, host, company. fri cuire (for cuiriu (: grithu)) 106.
cuit	i, f ‘share, portion, part’. cuit 113.
dag-	cmpd. ptc ‘good, noble’. degben 21. dagdóinacht 83. dagben 171.
dáig	adj. ‘certain, doubtless, likely’, probably same as DIL doich ‘likely, proper, right’. dáig 39. In phrase fo dáig + gen ‘because of’. fo dāig 157.
dánae	‘bold, stout’. comp. dānu 105.
de	prep. + dat ‘of’. with prn. 3sg. f. and emph. prn. dī-si 25.
déc	also deec, deac ‘ten, -teen’, serves as a gen. of deich .
degben	dag + ben, ‘good woman, lady’. degben 21.
déine	iā, f ‘swiftness, speed’. See grammatical notes.
deired	o, n ‘remainder, conclusion’
deithbir	adj. i ‘lit. blemless, fitting, proper’. deithber 78.
delg	s, n later o, m ‘broach, pin’. delg 10.
díbad	o, m ‘destruction’. díbad 52.
didiu	‘therefore, hence’ 4.
díglach	adj. o, ā ‘that avenges or punishes, vengeful’. díglach 55.
dil	adj, i ‘dear, beloved’. comp. diliu 79.
dingaire	vn. of do-ingar ‘guarding, keeping’. ĩarsin dingairiu 10. LL has isin dingairiu, so it is either ‘while she was herding’, or ‘after the herding’, I have taken the BF ‘after the herding’ because it more logical to go into the house after a long day of herding, but the other option is just as legitimate.
díthrub	u, m (early decline) ‘uninhabited, solitary place, wilderness’. díthrub 132.
ditiu	n, f ‘shelter’. with confusion of dental (LL: nibathiu 1316/1: niba dithu dīthiu 106.)
doé, dú(a)e	disyll., io, m(?). Rampart, circumvallation (poet.). dūa, 6.
1. do	prep. + dat ‘to, towards’, with 2sg infix. prn. duit 14, dam: damnatan 62. with article dond 45, etc. Freq. used after vbs. in impersonal construction, especially compds. with imm- denoting reciprocal action, see do-tuit.

2. do	poss. prn. 2sg. ‘your’. Also th’ before vowels. th’etáil 88.
do-airret	‘overtakes’. pret. 3sg. with 3pl. infix. prn. dos-n-arraid 110.
do-alla	Used in Old Irish to supply perfective tenses of gataid ‘takes away, steals, strips away, cuts off’. pf. 3sg. co tall 151.
do-beir	‘gives, places, brings, brings about (for example a battle)’. do-bertha impf pass. 5. imp. pass. ind. pres. tugthar 13. pf. pass. (contr. deut.) tucad 25. cona tuc 47, etc.
do-ben	‘beats, strikes’. pret. 3sg. with infix. prn. class A 2sg. dot-bí 166.
do-cing	‘steps strides, advances, comes’. pres. 3pl. do-cengat 50.
do-cuirethar	‘puts, places’, do-ralad pass. pf. 6. Cona tarlai 8. churfithar fut. pass. of the new verb cuirid. pres. 3sg. do-cuireadar 149 for do-cuirethar. pf. 3sg. cona tarla 150.
do-éccai	‘to look, behold, see’. imp. sg. dēccaid 161.
doéndacht	Also doénacht ā,f ‘humanity, nature’. dagdoīnacht 83.
do-érig	‘leave, abandons, forsakes’. pf. 3sg. ro-deraig 13.
do-fairget	‘offers’. pret. or pf. tarcaid 15, the deuterotonic form might be a backformation, see chapter 3.
do-fed	‘brings, leads, with fri in fig. sense besides compares to’. pass. pres. do-fedar 21. There is only one example of this verb in the meaning of ‘to compare’, but the context seems to require a meaning like this in this case.
do-gní	‘to do, make’. sec. cond. 3sg. fut. 3sg. dingned 88.
do-icc	with direct object ‘comes to, approaches’. with 3sg. f. Class C infix (see sluindid) after a nas. rel. clause of time, ‘her sense came to her’. pret. 3sg. tānic 99.
doíre	iā, f ‘captivity, bondage, slavery’. i ndóiri 26.
do-léci	‘to let go, release’ also intrans. ‘betakes oneself, goes’. pres. rel. 3sg. do-léicce 108.
don	‘place, ground, earth’. do don 87.
dorus	o, n later m ‘gate, doorway, opening entrance’, dorus 2, etc.
do-tét	‘to come’. impf. 3pl. do-theigtis 47. pf. 3sg. ní thuidchid 151.
do-tuit	‘to fall’. fut. 3sg. with imm- denoting reciprocal action, strengthened by prep. do. immo-taéth dóib 115.
dreisid	verb of doubtful meaning ‘breaks, bursts, rises up’. fut. 3sg. dresfid 153.
droch	o, n ‘wheel. Rare word explained in the Glossaries too, see chapter 1 and 4. droch 73.

dubaid	‘grows dark, turns black’, <i>coro dubai</i> 7.
dún	u, m ‘keeping, fort’. <i>dún</i> 142. Also in placename: <i>Dún Chairedo</i> 25, etc.
éc	m. ‘death’ frequently used in plural, see DIL éc for the dat.pl. used for individual deaths. <i>do écaib</i> 89.
écen	ā, f ‘necessity, compulsion’. <i>it ēcen</i> ‘in your necessity’, see i , 12, <i>ēicin</i> 13.
ech	o, m ‘horse’. gen. pl. <i>ech</i> 134.
écht	u, n (?) ‘a slaughter, slaying’. <i>ēcht</i> 160.
echtar-	prep. + acc, but in compds. ‘foreign, alien’. <i>echtartúath</i> 116.
éirge	io, n later f., vn of <i>at-reig</i> and <i>éirgid</i> ‘rising, standing up, springing up’. <i>do ēirgi</i> 16.
enech	o, n ‘face, honour’. In phrase <i>d(i)/de inchaib</i> ‘by the guarantee of; by means of, under the protection of’. <i>dia n-inchaib</i> 113.
Ériu	Ireland, n, n later f. <i>Ērenn</i> , 4 etc.
etóil	‘displeasure’, neg. of <i>tol</i> .
eter	prep. + acc ‘between’. <i>eter</i> 71.
etercían	‘far, distant’, also as subst. ‘great distance’. acc.sg. <i>immon etercéin</i> 39.
fadéin	‘self’ see Thurn. §485. <i>coro-gonad fadéin</i> 111.
fáen	adj. o, ā ‘prostrate, on his back’. <i>fāen</i> 150.
fail	k, f ‘besides, along with’. <i>i fail fíngin</i> 21. <i>i fail Chathail</i> 98.
fáith (Dé)	i, m ‘seer, prophet (of God)’. <i>fáith Dé</i> 33.
farrad	in phrase i farrad + gen., ‘beside, in the company of, along with close to’. <i>ina farrad</i> 47.
fé (amae)	‘woe, calamity’, see also amae ‘indeed, verily’. <i>fē amai</i> 144.
fecht	ā, f ‘journey, time, occasion’.
fechtas	u/o, m ‘journal, expedition, turn, time occasion’. <i>fechtas</i> 99.
fer	o, m ‘man’. voc. <i>a fhir</i> 91.
feraid	‘grants, affords, supplies, pours forth/out (of emotion, lamentations)’. pres. rel. sg. <i>feras</i> 73. imp. sg. <i>fer</i> 86.
fern	ā, f ‘alder tree, shield’. See M.A. O’Brien, ‘Varia II’, <i>Ériu</i> 12 (1938) 240n1. See also uinnius
fín	u, n ‘wine’. Also in a man’s name <i>Fingen</i> .
fír	adj. o, ā ‘true just’. <i>fír</i> 19. <i>fhír</i> 126.

fo	‘under, about’, Mid.Ir. form with 3sg. fem. prn. fothe 6.
fo-ácaib	‘to leave’, Mi Ir pf. 3sg. for(f)acaib 1, facbais 13 (Mi.Ir. new simple verb and s-pret).
foaid	‘to spend the night, cohabit with’. imp. sg. foí lee 11, fut. 3sg. nocho n-ifamni 12, the future is –fhifamni but the lenited fh- has disappeared in LL and Old Irish níco has been replaced by nocho n-. BF has -faifemni. sj. pres. 2sg. coro fhoasu lési 12. fut. pass. sg. fibthair 127.
fo-ceird	‘to throw, put, overthrow’. imp. pl. curid 10. pf. 2sg. ro-lais 165
fodb	o, n later m ‘spoils, generally of clothing or equipment taken from the dead but sometimes booty in general’. gen. sg. fuidb 156.
fogal	ā, f ‘attack, damage armed attack’. for fogail 98.
for	prep. + acc/dat. With suffixed prn 3sg f. fui(r)ri 2, with suff. prn 3sg. m. fair 42, etc.
forfaílid	adj. i also forb(f)aelid ‘very glad, joyous’. forbaelid 58.
forgab	u or o, m ‘blow, thrust’. forgab 149.
fo-ricc	‘to find, come across’. pf. 3sg. with infix. prn. 1sg. fom-āirnecc-sa 92.
fri	+acc, ‘against, by, beside’. frisin tenid 10, frie-si 15, etc.
fúacair	new simple verb from fo-úacair ‘challenges, proclaims (a battle’. pf. pass. ro fūacrad 112.
fúalang	o, m ‘frenzy, distraction, derangement’, 6.
fūasma	later fūasmad ‘blow or trust’. fūasma 150.
gabul	o, m and ā, f ‘fork, forked branch’. i ngabol 150.
gae	‘spear, javelin’. do gai mór 150.
1. gáeth	ā, f wind. acc.sg. gaíth, 7.
2. gáeth	adj. o, ā ‘wise, intelligent. gáeth 56.
gaibid	‘II. puts, lays hold of, IV sings, chants, recites’. imp. pl. gaibid 17. imp. sg. gaib 33.
gainem	ā, f and o, m ‘sand, gravel’. ganem 140.
gáir	f. ‘shout, cry’. co ngair 30.
gáire	io,m ‘laughing, laughter’. gārib 17 there are more examples where the plural of laughter’ is used.
gait	ā, f vn of gataid ‘taking away, theft, robbery’. i ngait 25.

gar	adj. ‘short time, space, near’. variant BF ngar dó 29. LL has a palatal ending which does not fit the context, it might be confused with the subst. gair.
garg	adj. o, ā ‘rough, blunt, fierce’. garg 55.
glúasaid	‘moves, stirs’. nā glūais 1-2.
gonaid	‘wounds’. pf. pass with weak inflection corogonad 111.
grían	ā, f ‘sun’. acc.sg. greín, 7.
grith	u, m ‘quivering, shudder, shout’. fri grithu 105.
guide	ā, f ‘prayer’, ‘praying’. gen. sg. guide 57.
guth	u, m ‘voice, sound, word’, 3 etc.
i	prep. with acc. or dat. ‘in, into etc’. it ēcen 12, with the meaning ‘being in the state or condition of (DIL <i>i</i> 2.), it is necessary for you’. with infix. prn. 3sg. m. and emph. prn. indseom 151. with suffix. 3sg. neut. and, often used <i>is and</i> ‘there, therein’.
í	art. + deictic element í. fem. int-í 38. neut. a n-í 19. gen.sg. masc. int-í 94.
íar	prep. + dat ‘after’. also: íar sin, íar suidiu ‘thereafter’.
íccaid	fut.1pl. with infix.prn 2sg. class A nīt-ricfam possibly from íccaid ‘we cannot heal you’ and a <i>ro</i> of possibility. Or from ro-icc ‘we shall not come to you’.
il-	with noun ‘many, numerous, manifold’. ilmon-sa 157.
imdae	f. ‘compartment, apartment, bed, couch’. issin n-imdai 14.
imm-	prep. ‘about, also concerning, on account of, for the sake of’, with 3pl.prn. impu 17, etc.
imma n-	reflexive and reciprocal preverb. ptc. used before compound vbs. to form new compounds. The a n- may be a petrified poss. prn. 3 or an infix. prn. s. 3m. It is used impersonally, (i) with the prep. <i>do</i> (ii) with the first noun (or pronoun introduced by the prep <i>do</i> , the second with <i>fri</i> .
immach	‘out, outwards’, later ammach. immach 10.
imma-tarraidimma –n + do-airret.	See also dó . imma-tarraid dóib 148.
imm-beir	lit. ‘carries around, moves, set in action’. pres. 2sg. íarr (ar) imbir 103.
imm-reith	imm- + reithid , ‘to run around, revolve, run about’. impf. 3pl. with infix. 3sg. f. Class A immus-retís 134.
imrádud	u, m of ‘act of thinking, deliberating, thought’. imrádud 79.
imrimm	n, n vn. of imm-réid ‘act of journeying, riding, driving around’. dat. sg. íar n-imrim 70.

indiu	‘today’. indiu 155.
indossa	adv. ‘now, just now’.
indsaigid	d’indsaigid comes to be used as a prep. phrase ‘to towards, against’. BF, 76n65.
ingaire	io, m vn. of in-gair ‘herding, tending, guarding’, see also dingaire. oc ingairiu 26.
ingen	ā, f ‘daughter, girl’. ingen 1, etc.
inis	ā, f ‘island’. issind insi 62.
innocht	‘tonight’. innocht 169.
la	prep. + acc. With suffixed pronoun 3sg. masc. lais 1, 3pl. leó 1.
lāa	neut. disyllabic ‘day’, lāa n-and 3, the earlier form laithe is also attested: nom. pl. lathi 81, laithe 138.
lāech	o, m ‘warrior’. in lāech 107. lāech 108.
lám	ā, f ‘hand’. for láim 99.
lánaman	ī, f ‘married couple’. nom. sg. ind lānamain 113.
lecht	‘grave, tomb, burial’. lecht Fhīngin 61. lecht Cūanach 162.
lénae	io ‘meadowland’. gs. sg. ind lēnai 161.
les	o,m the area around a dwelling-house or houses enclosed by a rampart, gs. lis, 6.
lingid	‘jump, leap’, pf.3sg. ro-ling 6.
locht	u, also o, m ‘fault, shortcoming, vice, offence, blemish’. locht 28 etc.
lóthar	‘fleece, fur cloak’. lōthraib 8.
má	conj. ‘if’. with copula mād 114. In the phrase acht mād (DIL IIIb) ‘except, only’, acht mād óen 42. with cop. 3sg. mása 126.
mac	o, m ‘son’. dual dā mac 1, acc.pl. maccu 2 etc.
maccán	o, m ‘little son, child, boy, youth’, freq. in verse. possible voc. sg. maccáin 30, etc. oín-maccán for ‘only son’ 172.
mag	s, n ‘plain’. im maig 127.
maidid	‘to break’ maidid ri A for B ‘it breakst before A on B = A defeats B’. pf. 3sg ro-memaid trā rīa maccaib Cathail 146. Ro-memaid dano re maccaib Āeda 147.
mairg	‘woe’ occasionally preceded by ro + infix prn as if it was a verb: rot mairg 2.
mairid	‘to live, last’. imp. 3sg. nad mair 94.

maith	i ‘good’. maith 15, etc. ferr spv of ‘maith’ good, in phrase with <i>la</i> ‘to prefer’ 5. comp. is ferr 19.
marb	adj. o, ā and subst. o, m ‘dead (man)’. frisin mairb 87. as adj. marb 145.
marbaid	‘to die. pret. 3sg. marb 22. ro-marbad 122
marbán	o, m ‘dead man’. gen. sg. marbāin 79. nom. sg. marbán 81. Also a man’s name Marbán 52.
matan	ā, f ‘morning’. matan 16.
messe	emph. form of the personal prn. 1sg. mé. messe 144.
mol	o, m ‘praise, but also used for a reiterated refrain or noise for example a continuous lamentation’, Possibly a fig. use of mol ‘millshaft’, in allusion to the continuous rotation or splashing of a mill-shaft;. mol 86.
mon	f. ‘feat, trick’. with demonstrative (and no article, because of the following genitive Cūanach) ilmon-sa 157. Of the variant from BF rison-sa I cannot make out the meaning.
mór	adj. o, ā ‘great’. mór 78. Also woman’s name Mór ā, f.
muine	io, m ‘brake, thicket, of a thicket as affording shelter or secrecy’. gen. sg. in muini 75.
ná	neg. adv. used with imperative. nā fer 86. nā glūais 102 Also rel. neg. ptc nā dingned 88
nád (ná)	neg. rel. particle, 43, 94.
nathó	adv. used to reply questions in the negative ‘no way, by no means’. nathó 16.
nech	indef. prn ‘anyone, someone, a person’. nech 88. do neoch 125. im nech 156.
ní	indef. pron., neut. of nech a thing, anything, something; also: something that is of some consequence, matter. ní 93. ní 141.
noc(h)o n-	late form of nícon adv, of negation used before verbs. nocho n-ifamni 12. nocho n-accas 96. ar nocho ro-acht 113.
1. ó	prep. + dat. ‘from’. ó Loch Léin 38.
2. ó	conj. ‘since, as long as, when’. ó ro-bí [the proverb ro retains its accent after ó] 81.
oc	prep. 3 etc.
óen	adj. or noun ‘one’. óen 42. oín-maccán 172.
óinmit	f. loanword through Cymric ‘a fool’. óinmit 33.

olc	adj. o, ā ‘bad, evil’. olc 166.
oldaas	‘than + copula’, see Thurn.§779.1, 5. <i>innou-sa</i> , 78.
or	defective vb. Mid.Ir. variant form of <i>ol</i> ‘says’, used indifferently with the latter and with <i>for</i> , <i>ar</i> , 6 etc. The third plural is formed with a verbal ending olseat-som , this is also found in line 144 with updated ol to or : orseat.
réill	adj. i ‘clear, manifest, intelligible, lustrous’. réill 61.
renaid	‘to give up’. pf. ro-renais 19 with a new s-pret conjugation in stead of the old reduplicated pret. ro-rir.
rí	g, m. ‘king’. rī 1, etc.
ría	prep. + dat. ‘before’. with art. rīasin rí 100, etc.
rígan	ī, later ā, f ‘queen’. ind rígan 13 etc.
rígrad	ā, f kings, line of princes, chiefs. nom. sg. rígrad 3.
rígthech	s, n and m. rí 10.
ro-cluinethar	3sg pret co cuala 4.
ro-finnadar	‘finds out, discovers’, pret. with active force of presence ‘knows’. cona fess, pf. pass. 6.
ro-icc	‘comes to, reaches’. pret. 3sg. co rrānic 112. See also íccaid , fut.1pl. with infix.prn 2sg. class A nít-ricfam we shall not come to you, also possibly from íccaid we cannot heal you.
ro-saig	‘arrive’. pret. ro acht 113.
saigid	‘goes towards, reaches, attains, approaches’. cía no-saigid 121. pres. 1pl. with suffixed prn. 3sg. neut. saigmít 122.
sair	‘forwards, eastwards’. sair 147.
sarugud	u, m vn. of sáraigid act of violating, outraging, dishonouring’. ocont sharugud 113.
scíthid	ro scichis deit féin. Of the verb scíthid ‘becomes weary’. The confusion of –th- and –ch- does not appear to be uncommon and might be connected to the similar confusion between its voiced counterparts –dh- and –gh-. The other option would be the verb scuchaid/scuichid , usually ‘moves, proceeds, is finished/exhausted, ends’, with do/de departs from. Here translated as ‘you have wearied yourself’, it is the only example of this meaning but seems to

confirm to a more literally ‘you have departed from yourself’. ro-schichis deit féin 144.

sén	o ‘sign’. nom. sg. sén 166. DIL: b) an incantation, charm. sén uaire ‘charm for good luck, a lucky time’.
senfhocul	sen+focal , ‘old saying, proverb’, <i>senfhocul</i> 1.
serc	ā, f ‘love’. do sherc-su 93.
siar	adv. ‘back, westward’. siar 110, etc.
síd	s, n later o, m and ā, f ‘fairy hill’ or ‘peace, goodwill’. a síd 103.
sirid	‘ranges, traverses’. coro shir, 7.
siur	r, f ‘sister’. siur 25. acc. sg. siáir 99. nom. pl. sethar 48.
slabrae	iā, f ‘stock, cattle, dowry’. dia shlabrai 167.
slemon	adj. o, ā ‘smooth, calm, gentle, temperate’. slemun 57. (Apparently <i>slemun</i> is already an Old Irish form, Thurneysen §190b.)
slige	iā, f vn. sligid ‘slayer, smiting, felling, roadway, path’. int shlige 133.
slóg, slúag	o, m ‘host, army’. nom.pl. int sluaig 50.
sluindid	‘expresses, signifies, declares, mentions, names’. with class C infix. prn f. after a nas. rel. clause of time noda-sloinne 15 ‘she named/revealed herself’.
sommata	adj. io, iā ‘rich’. As subst. too. Perhaps with poetic loss of second syllable som’tha 58.
soud	u, m later o, m vn. soïd ‘act of turning, changing’. oc soud ass 149. With preposition a(ss) ‘to leave ...’.
suide	io, n ‘act of sitting down, sitting’. a shuide 108.
taeb	o, m and ā, f. nom. sg. also toíb. ima thoeb 43, etc.
taffann	o, n vn of do-senn. Old Irish tofond, ‘hunting’. oc taffond 121.
?tailcibe	fut. 1sg. perhaps of *to-ad-léici, see also tailciud ‘releasing, letting go’. The form would then be tailcib é. But more probable second singular tailcibe without syncope. The do with it, might carry similar meaning to do-léici do ‘concede to’. dia tailcibe 107.
tan	in phrase in tain/tan ‘when’. in tán 50.
tarngire	io, n verbal noun of do-airngir ‘act of promising, promise’. bith-tarngire 3.
tech	s, n ‘house’, gs tigi 2. do taig 155.

teglach	o, n ‘household, family’. <i>teglach</i> 170. LL has a variant <i>aithgelach</i> ‘new moon’?, <i>teglach</i> seems to make more sense in the context of a mourning family.
téit	‘to go’, subj. 3sg cj. <i>nī thē(i)ssed</i> 2. I have translated this with ‘could’, as it is found in a principle clause and might imply a ‘willed or commanded’ action, see Thurneysen §516. pret. co <i>ndechaid-si</i> 22. 3sg. <i>luid</i> 24. <i>do-chuaid</i> side 47. subj. pres. 3sg. co <i>ndig</i> 89.
teora	f. of trí ‘three’, also teoir/teuir followed by the plural Thurn. §39.2. r1.
tímhell	vn. <i>do-imchella</i> ‘act of coing around, III dat.sg. as prep+gen. around’. <i>tímhíull</i> 51.
tóe	<i>ā</i> , f ‘silence’, also <i>túa. mo thūa-sa</i> 78.
tomad	u, m vn of <i>do-maithi</i> ‘act of threatening, claiming, striking’. nom. pl. <i>tomtha</i> 57.
tosach	o, n later m ‘beginning’, but dat. sg often <i>tosaig. i tosaig</i> 5, etc.
trá	adv. corresponding to <i>didiu</i> ‘then, etc’. <i>trá</i> 21.
tráth	u, n later m. A period of time, hour, day. <i>tráth</i> 10.
tre	prep. + acc ‘through’. with infix. pers. prn. 3sg. m. <i>tríit</i> .
1. tress	adj. o, <i>ā</i> ‘third’. in <i>tres fecht</i> 23.
2. tress	u, m ‘contention, fight’. <i>hi tress</i> 122.
tríar	‘three persons’. <i>tríar āesa cerdda</i> 120. <i>tríar</i> 174.
túath	<i>ā</i> , f ‘tribe, people’. <i>echtartúath</i> 116. gen. sg. <i>túathi</i> 167.
úaignid	‘to join, stitch, sew’. pf. pass. sg. with nas. of rel. clause of time <i>ro-n-ūagad</i> 139. The sand is here joined around Cúanu’s sides, I take this to be a euphemism for a burial. O’Nolan points to the Old and Modern Irish word <i>úaign</i> ‘grave’ (Dinneen, <i>Dictionary</i>).
úair	I <i>ā</i> , f ‘hour, time, occasion’. <i>ōnd ūair-sin</i> 96. See DIL under sén , b) an incantation, charm. sén uaire ‘charm for good luck, a lucky time’. <i>ūare</i> 166. II <i>úair</i> also <i>óir, úaire, óre</i> as subord. conj. introducing a causal clause ‘for, because, since’. <i>úair</i> 92.
úarach	adj. o, <i>ā</i> ‘cold’. <i>úarach</i> 169.
ucut	‘yonder, yon’, also <i>út. ucut</i> , 10. <i>ucut</i> 86. <i>dim. ucután</i> 91.
ucután	see ucut .

uinnius f. ‘ashtree, spear, shaft of an ash-tree’. huinnius 154. O’Brien, M. A. ‘Varia II’, *Ériu* 12 (1938) 240n1. I have taken the pair ‘huinnius 7 fern’, as meaning ‘spear and shield’ like O’Brien, because they point more to an act of violence than trees. Though they might also be seen in the light of the elder-tree who lend a helping ‘branch’, so to speak in killing Cúanu. See gramm. notes.

úir, úr m. and f. ‘earth, ground, clay also grave’. i n-úir 82.

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Plate 1: Genealogy Éoganachta

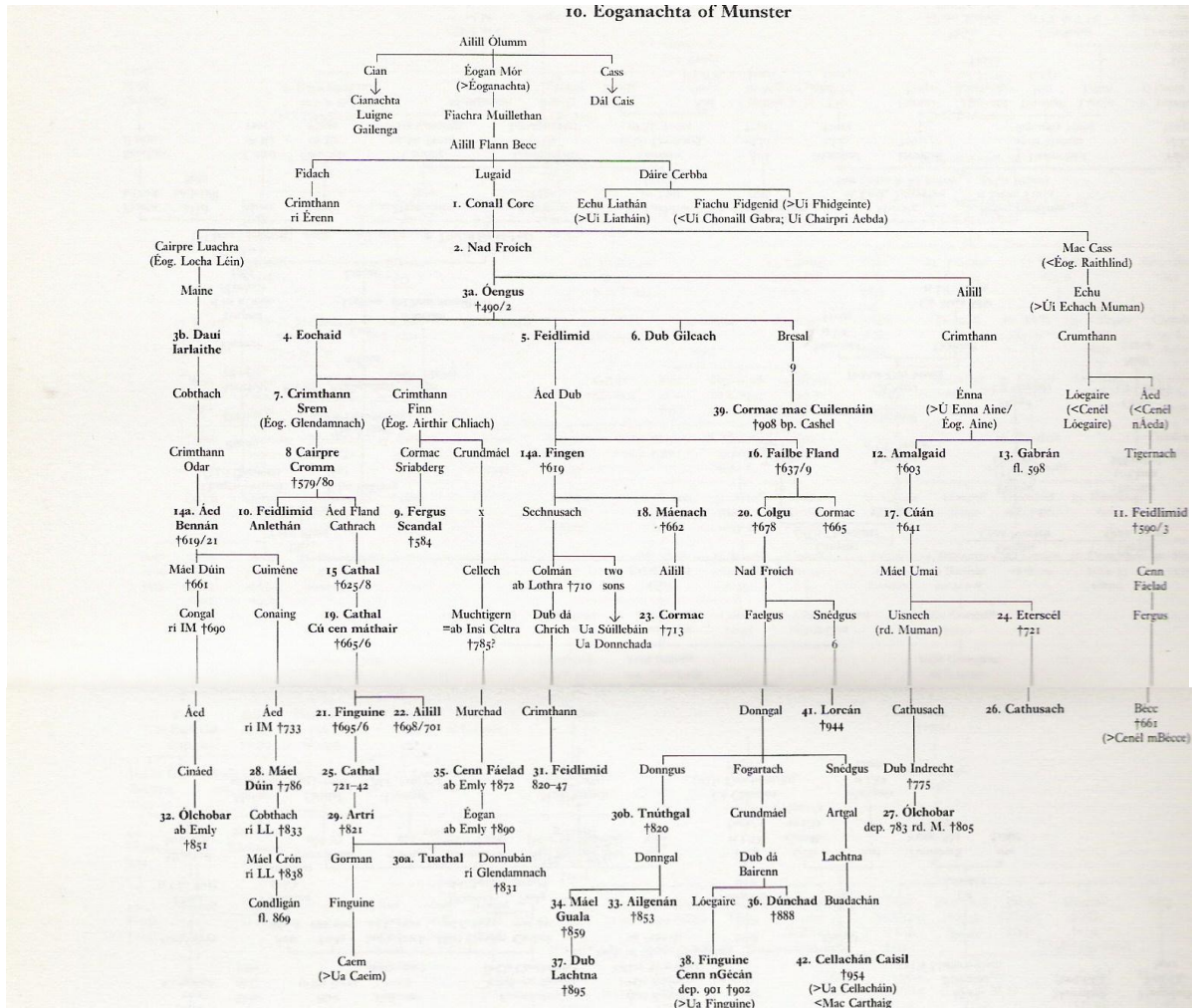
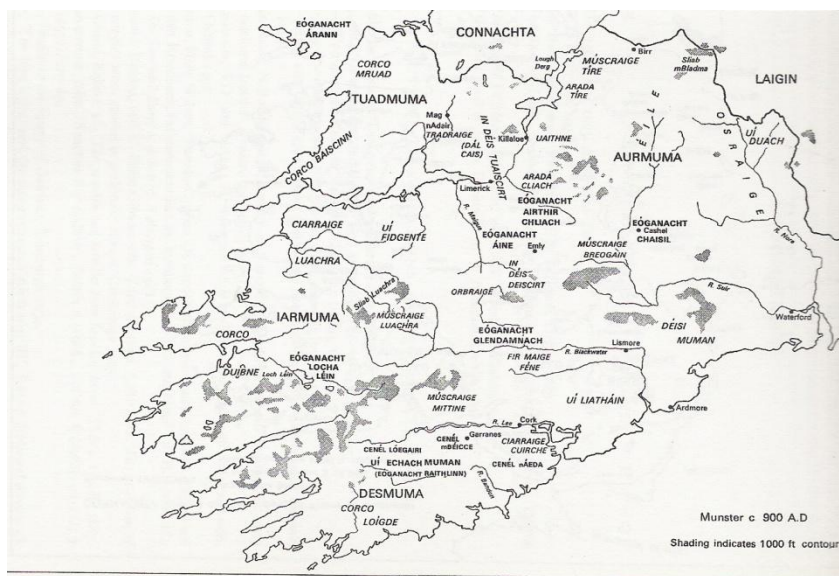
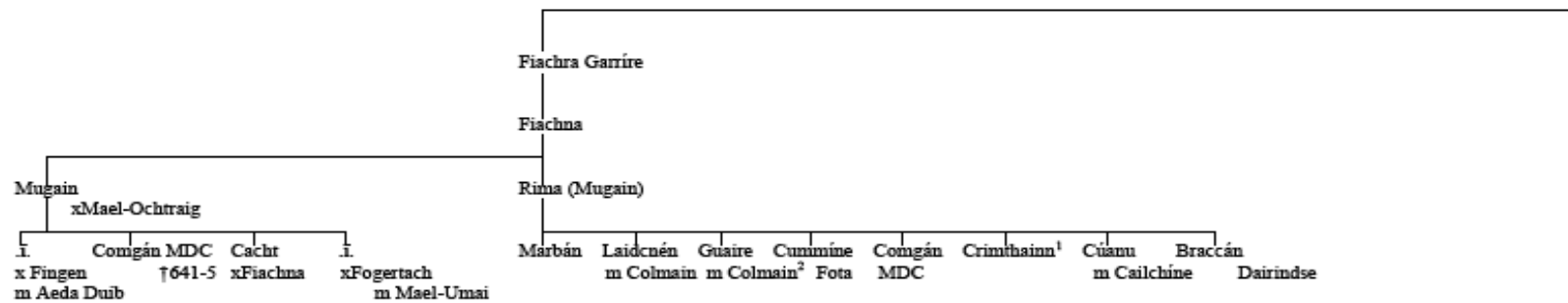


Plate 2: Munster⁵¹⁸



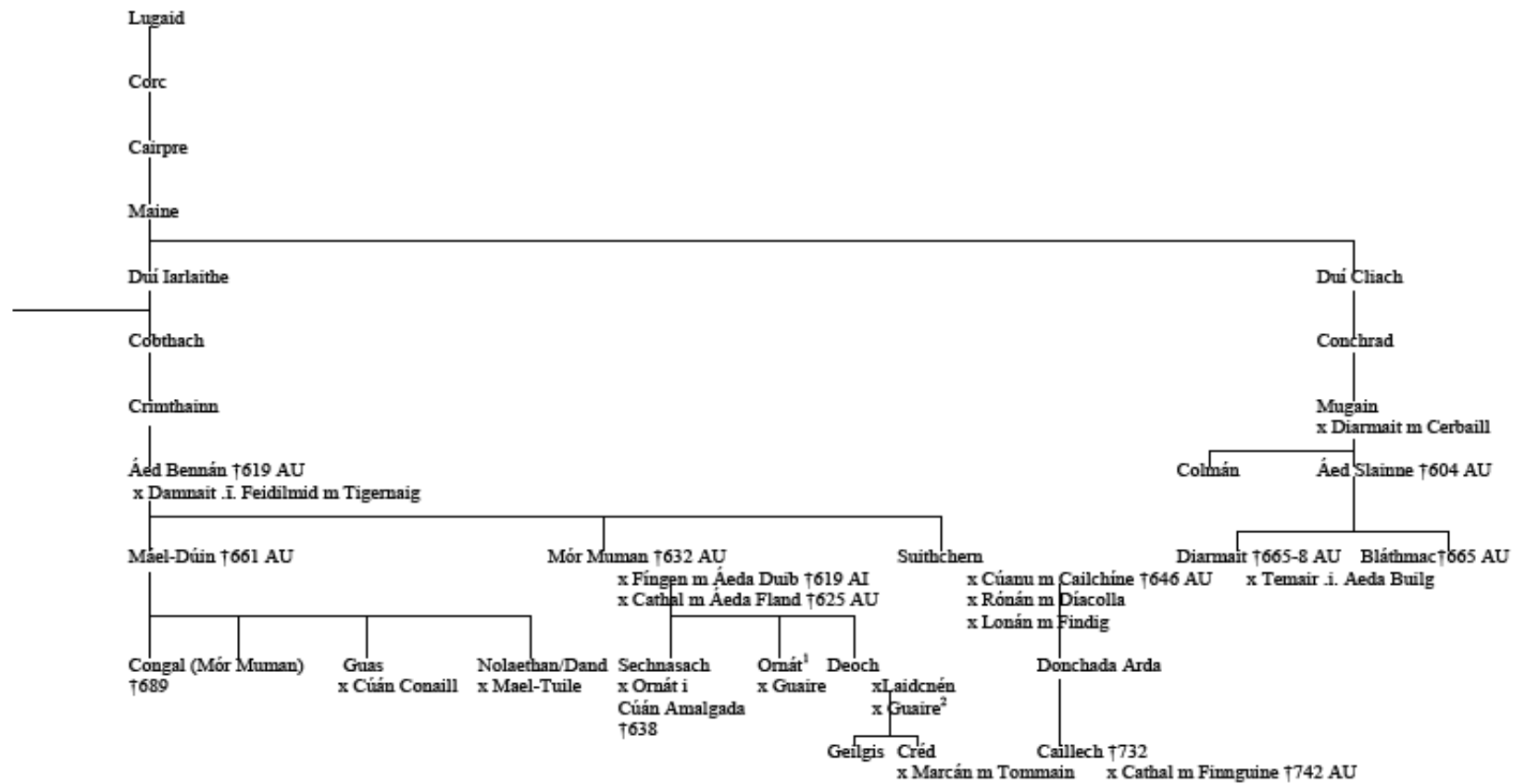
⁵¹⁸ Both plates are taken from Bart Jaski, *Early Irish Kingship and Succession*.

Appendix 1: Genealogy Munster Cycle



¹ Cael m Aeda Cirr/ m Aeda Sloenig

² See the marriage of Ornát/Deoch.

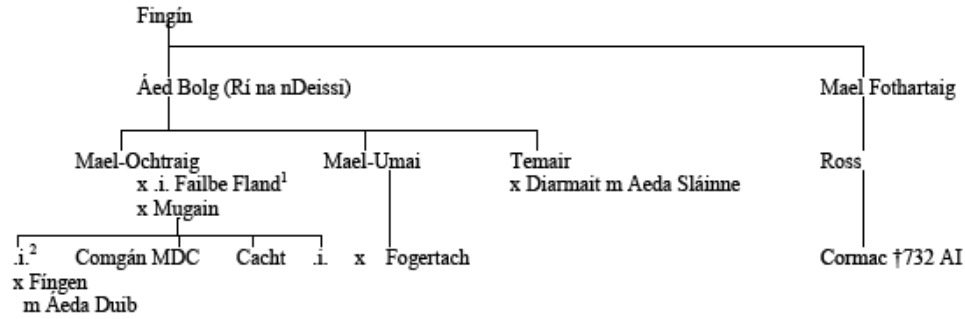


¹ For the confusion on Ornát and Deoch, see chapter 7.3

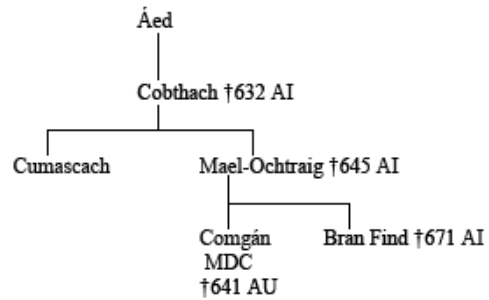
² †663 AU

Appendix 2: Genealogies Munster Cycle

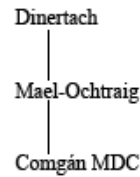
Ui Rossa Deissi



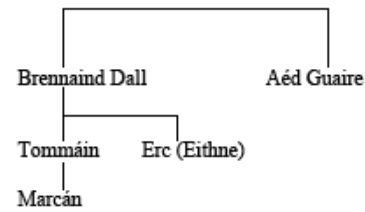
Main Line



Alternative



Conmaicne Cuile/Ui Maine



¹ Brother of Fingen m Aeda Duib

² Probably the one ousted by Mór Muman

Appendix 3. Poetry

Rhyme

Rhyme 2

Alliteration [I have left out possible unstressed alliteration]

Internal rhyme

Consonance

Parallelism [Or constructions alike]

φ “Locht mór do⁵¹⁹ Dún Chairedo
Innach Lúachair bo ngair **dó**⁵²⁰
Maccain co ngair in *airdcheóil*
sech nim-athgén nim-*athgeoin*⁵²¹”

“Maccain⁵²² co ngair in **ardchéoil**
sech nim-aithgen nim-**athgéoin**”

“Intí con-gair o Loch *Léin*” ar Mac Dá Cherda⁵²³
“Is dáig immon etar*cein*.”

φ “Locht mor do Dún Chairedo⁵²⁴
innach Luachair bongair **dó**⁵²⁵
ni fil locht fair acht mad*óen*
nad fil Lúachair ima *thoeb*”

φ “**IN**tán do-cengat⁵²⁶ int **sluaig**
timchiull Glendomain **atuáid**⁵²⁷
dibad Marbain Locha *Cend*

⁵¹⁹ 1316/1: ó

⁵²⁰ BF: bongar dó 1316/1: bungarg da

⁵²¹ LL: *sechninathgen nimaitheoin* BF: *sech nimaithegen nimaitheoin* 1316/1: *seachnimaithegen nimaitheob*

⁵²² LL: *maccan* 1316/1: *macan*

⁵²³ BF, 1316/1: *Mac da Cherda*

⁵²⁴ BF, 1216/1: *caireda*

⁵²⁵ BF: bongar dó 1316/1 om. bongair dó – ar *mac mocherda*

⁵²⁶ 1316/1: *concengat*

⁵²⁷ BF: *atuaithe*

ciammatáí, a Ruith**chernd**⁵²⁸

Fingin ba garg ba **díglach**⁵²⁹

ba géth ba *báeth* ba **brigach**

slemun guide gargg **tomtha**

bá forbælid a **shom'tha**

Fil mo dáil Illaind **Lothra**

lecht Fingin, reill a **brotha**

issin dinsin ata **dam**

lecht Aeda 7 Damnatán⁵³⁰

Maccan congair i n-Uilind

i n-Uilind maccan congair

at-che femen(275a)im Loch **Cend**

at-chi Loch Cend, canad **mair**⁵³¹

IS annam iar n-imrim **ech**

eter Chassel 7 **Loch**

Iniáite Én Finnabrach⁵³²

feras amran imma droch"

φ “**IS** deithber, cencop mór, mo **thuasa**

inid diliu⁵³³ imradud in marbain **innou-sa**?

cid in marbán o ro **bí**

i n-úir bliadnai no **lathi**

is a dagdoinacht **conói**

⁵²⁸ 1316/1: ar ruithchern

⁵²⁹ From this point onwards, the poetry of 1316/1 takes an entirely independent course. See chapter.

⁵³⁰ LL: fil modáil illaind lothra lecht fingin issin dinsin ata dam lecht aeda damnatán.

BF: ___ilaind lothra lecht fingin reil_____sin ata dam lecht aeda _____

1316/1: Fil modá ail a lotra leacht fingin reillabrotha isinninad sin ata lecht naeda 7 damnadtha

⁵³¹ BF: cenadmair

⁵³² BF: findabarach

⁵³³ BF: imid.dili

cona dermatar a *chói*

A ben ucut, na fer **mol**
frisín mairb⁵³⁴ do-chuaid do **don**⁵³⁵
car nech na dingned th' *etáil*⁵³⁶
con-dig fessin do *ecaib*”

“A fhir *ucután amne*
uair fom-airnec-sa oc **coe**.
bid sí⁵³⁷ do shercsu bas *ní*
nad mair inti cetabui⁵³⁸”

φ “Na gluais Lonán mac **Findig**” or Mór
“aníar a síd iárr *imbir*⁵³⁹ .

Niba danu fri **grithu**
niba dithu⁵⁴⁰ fri **cure**
in læch hé dia *tailcibe*⁵⁴¹
læch do-lleice⁵⁴² a *shuide*.

“Anim do neoch bith cen **tech**
masa fhír athguin Cuánach
fibthair immaig⁵⁴³ di *shuidiu*
cen deine⁵⁴⁴ do Liathmuiniu”

As-bert araile:

⁵³⁴ BF: forsin marb

⁵³⁵ BF: o docoid don

⁵³⁶ BF: na dingne tetail

⁵³⁷ BF: oc//.aib.idsi

⁵³⁸ BF: tiadobui

⁵³⁹ BF: arimbir 1316/1: x

⁵⁴⁰ LL: nibathiu 1316/1: niba dithu

⁵⁴¹ BF: diatailcepe 1316/1: diatail.cepe

⁵⁴² 1316/1: doleict*hi*

⁵⁴³ 1316/1: filta ra muig

⁵⁴⁴ BF: cedené 1316/1:cendeamne

“Nirbo dithrub cosindiu
int shlige do Líathmuniu
immus-retís cossa *ech*
Muman im bethu⁵⁴⁵ Chuanach”

As-bert intres⁵⁴⁶ fer:

φ “Cossin⁵⁴⁷ laithe ro nuagad
ganem⁵⁴⁸ im thóibu Cúanach⁵⁴⁹
ba aicde na dairthech *ní*⁵⁵⁰
comla ri Dún *Liathmúni*”

φ “Dresfid huinnius 7 fern⁵⁵¹
do taig indiu a Ruithchern⁵⁵²
*biaid brattan fuidb im nech*⁵⁵³
fo daig ilmonsa⁵⁵⁴ Cuanach

Sescand Cluana maccú Birnd.
do-bert Bodb *echt n-amra n-ind*⁵⁵⁵
deccaid i tóeb ind *lenai*.
lecht Cuanach mac Cailchenai.

A chuilind ind athforbai⁵⁵⁶
ro lais ar cossa *amrai*
*olc sén uare*⁵⁵⁷ ar dot-*bí*
aithech thuathi dia *shlabrai*

⁵⁴⁵ BF: *im bethu/aid* 1316/1: ambethaid

⁵⁴⁶ 1316/1: araile

⁵⁴⁷ 1316/1: cosa

⁵⁴⁸ BF: *gainium*

⁵⁴⁹ 1316/1: nochan *imtaeba cuana*

⁵⁵⁰ BF: *ba aicde natairedh ní* 1316/1: bahaige natartandin

⁵⁵¹ BF: *ferd*

⁵⁵² BF: *a ruithcerd*

⁵⁵³ BF: *darnech*

⁵⁵⁴ BF: *risonsa*

⁵⁵⁵ BF: *naamraind*

⁵⁵⁶ BF: *athorbai*

⁵⁵⁷ BF: *om.*

IS *úarach innocht*

i te⁵⁵⁸glach **Cúanach**

a dagben⁵⁵⁹, in *banna bán*

a *ingen*, a *oín-maccán*⁵⁶⁰”

⁵⁵⁸ LL: aithgelach

⁵⁵⁹ BF: cenachben

⁵⁶⁰ BF: aenmaccán

Appendix 4: Poetry 1316/1

Locht mor o dun *chaireada*
inach luachair bungargda.
maccan congair anardceoil
seachnimaith *gein nimaithgeob*

Macan *congair* anardcheoil
seach nimaithgein *nimaithgeím*.

anti congair o loch lein *mac dacerda*
aneidirchein.

Locht mor andun *chaireada*.
inach luachair bu^{o561}ngarrda.
ní fil *lochtair acht* madæn.
nád fil luachair inatæb

_Ntan concengaid ansluaig.
timcheall glendamnach atuid.
dibad⁵⁶² marban locha *cenn*
cid imata iar ruithchern

fingin fágarg bagnimach.
bábæth bágæth ba *brigach*.
fá minfamich[ar] lé mnaib
façaiga cath ca congbail

Fil modá ail *alotrá*.
leacht fingin reillabrotha
isin *ninadsin* ata.
lechnæda 7 damnadtha

Macraid chaisil fá maith moir.
deis *fhingin* fatren *trom sloigh*
feimean mag loch cend fabla.
is loch *cenn* can cimeada //

Fa haibinn do bimis *trell*.
eterchaisil isloch cend.
fa mór__ cantal.
an tan tigmis co *caisil*. **IN**

IS bronach an chai *achumad*.
donither lé moir muman.
a cainead *fhingin infhuilt*.
inbain lé luad dá labairt

Cid *innabadh inmain* leam.
luad *fingin narachtuin* einfeail.
noch arerfilid *facrad*.
is nochar feall ar tuarastal

INmain leamtecht tara marb.
a *chathail* on buideach badb.
tre *canafhaigsin* faseach.

⁵⁶¹ The o appears in superscript above the o and might be a correction of the u.

⁵⁶² -ad appears in superscript with infixmarkings.

adbar dam beith cobronach .IS.

airgsi alonaín résinrig
Na gluais lonan mac bindig or mór.

Nibadana fri gritha.
nibaditha *fria cure*.
an læch hé diatail.
cepe læch doleict*hi* asuidi

ISand adbert antres fer
Ainimdo neoch bith canteach.
masa *fhir* acan cuanach.
fil ta ra muig diasuigi.
cend eamna do liathmuine

R.

ISandadbert araili
Nirbó dithrub cosiniu.
antsligi doliathmuiniu.
immos roith dis cosa each.
niman⁵⁶³ dis cosa each. niman⁵⁶⁴

R.

ISand adbert araile
Cosa laithe ronuahadh.
nochan *imtæba* cuana.
ba haige n tar *thandní*
comlaria dun liathmaine//

R.

⁵⁶³ leg. muman.

⁵⁶⁴ leg. muman.

Appendix 5: Diplomatic Synoptic Edition

Aéd bennain ri irlochtráda mac déclais &teora ingena. Senfhocul leó. Niamail foracaib aed bennain amaccu. Mór muman ingen aeda bennain. Robúi admilliud fuiri itossaig. Nitheissed acht codorus tige. Rotmairg amór! [//aringuth]assindáer úastu. Robatar immurgu rigrad herenn ocacungidsi. Laa and didiu cocuala in inguth. [...]mairg amór. Ba ferr lim do bértha oldaas Abith tarrgire. inba itossaig nó fainderind itossaig immurgu or sisi. Doradad iarsin fualang fóthe coroling dardua indliss. conafess ciadeochaid coroshir herinn dablíadain. Corodubai frigréin 7 gáith (b)hiceritib 7 lothraib. conatarlaí dochassuil. Fingen mac aeda isé bari andachte. Ingen rignandesí leis. Bói ocacairibside trí thráth. Laa nand huid issa righchech isindingairiu. condatarlaic frisintened. Curid or fingen incale ucut immach. Rotbia mo delg olind rigan. 7fóí lee inocht. Nimaith or fingen. Cencopmaith bid itecen. Nochon ifamni coro fhoasu lési. Bideicen orfingen. Tucthar dam indelg Sisi roderaig doib .i. indrigan. Fábais ind ingen na ceirte allá this 7 téit chuce issinimdaí. Can duit aingen orfingen. Is and nodasloinne?don nanic acial. Maith or fingen. Tarcáidsi de comthrom diargut friesi hitossaig. Amal ropo matan atraigsi doeirgi lasnacaircha. Nathó or fingen. Natainisiuar in rigain. Atraig in rigan combái ocarib impu. Gaibid orfingen in mbrat corcra ucut impe. 7delghinmarigna ina bratt. Niba icomairich as frimsa orindrigan. bidfir orfingen. Ani rorenais nichomraicfebris. Anfaidsi orisferr a cenel orfingen. Is fria tra dofedar cechdegben in herinn .i. fri móir muman. buisi ifail fingin corruc mac dó .i. sechnasach mac fingin. Marb fingin iarsudiu. condechaidisi cocathal mac fingine .i. corrig glenmain .i. rige muman acasiul intresfecht. Aglennamain infechtaile ahaine infechtaile .i. eogonacht sin uile. Luid didiu co cathal inglendomuin. Tucad dano siur disí

ed bennain ri irlochtra damac declais 7teora in gena. senfhocul leo ni amail foracaib aed bennain amaccu. Mor muman ingen aeda bennain. roboi aidmilliud fuiri hi tossaig nithessed acht cudorus tichi. Rot mairc amor aringuth assindair uas bi.Robath immurgu rigrad erenn¹ oca cunchidsi.laa nand didiu cocuala inguth. rot mairc amor ba ferr lim dobertha oltas a bith tarrngiri inbatossaigh. nofridared itossaic immurgu orsi. Doratad iarsin fualungfothi coro ling dar tua indlis. conna fes cia du dodechaid curo [sir] eirind dablíadain curo dubui fri grein 7 gæth hicerdchaib lothrai. conatarla do caissuil. fingen mac aeda isé bari and ingen rig nandéissi leis. boi oca chair-side tre thrath. laa nand didiu luid issa [rig]tech iarsin dinghaire condatharlaic frissin d Cuirid ol fingen incail² ucut³ ach Rot bia modelc arinrigan.7foi _____. Ni maith sin or fingen. Cen cop maith bidithécan nochon fai fem ni cu _o_ fhoasu leissi. Bid eicen arfingen. Tuc _dam_ _indealg. Amaghar dho. sisi ro der _g doib_ ⁴ ind righan. Facbais annsain _ce_te_ allathis 7teit chuici isin nimdhai. Can duit aingen arfingen. IS ann nodos _oind_ 7do fairnic aciall. Maith or fingen _idside comthrom friesi diargat hitoss aig_ ropo matan atraig doeirghí las _ca_ Nato ar figen. notannubsa ar in _rigan_ co boi ac _impu_ _brat corcra_ impe oc _brot_ Ni (b)cas fri or inrig_____

¹ Abbreviation used here is 7-, occurs multiple times in this manuscript.

² Looks like: incaildirc.

³ uc in superscript.

⁴ possibly -de since d't are very close in this manuscript.

ded chuana macailchin anseo

Aed beandan ri irluacra damac deglais 7teoraingena se _oc al leo ni hamail forfagaib aed bendanamaccu. Mor muman bend_urobai aidmillead fuiri atosaig niteigea ____ co _taige Rodmairg amor aranguth.isin nær uas ____ _batair. immurgu. rigrad erenn. oga cuinnidisi arbamor acaime La and damo. co cualaid anguth rod mairg amor Ba fearr lim dobertha oldas abeith atairngiri duid friatosaig Doradad iarsin fualang fuithi coraling dardua anlis cona feas cia do deachaid cor⁵shireirinn. dablíadain cora duba frigréin 7 gæth hicerdcaib lothrai conatarla dochaisil Fingen mac aeda ise farigan INgen rig naudeisi leis. Bai aga cairibsideiri trath. Laaand huidsidi isin rightheg iarsin ningaire Coda tarraig friasin teinid cuirig or fingingin an cailin ud amach Rotbia mo dealg aramingin 7 fai lé anocht. Nimaithsin or fingen cencob maith orsi bid eigin nocon faith eamne cora faidisi leisi bid eigin or fingen tugthar dam an delg adiarag dó. sisi rodeirig doib.i. anrigan Fagbais arsin aceirti alla this 7teid chuici isinimdaid Canduid a ingin orfingin ISand moda sloinne 7dofainig acialldi Maith orfingin Targa comtrom friesi dargad hitosaig amal robo mad ain artraig do eirgi lasnacaircha NATó arfingin natan abso arinrigain Artraig an rigan combai agairi impo Gabar fingin an brat corcra 7 dealg nargaid and Ni bia com arbus rimsa aran rigan bid fir on ar fingen anni ro renais nicoinricí ris. An fhaigsi ar is fearr acinell or fingen IS friatrá cach deigbean anerin .i. fria mor muman Baisi afaill fingin corug mac dó.i.sechnasach mac fingin. Marb fingin iarsin.condechaidisi co cathal mac findgaidi.i. cori gleandaman .i. rigi muman acasil an darna fecht⁶ iglenn amain anfeacht aili A haine an treas feacht .i. eogonacht sin uile Luid damo. co cathal an glendmain Tucad damo siur disí a ngait aniar .i. ruitchern. ingen. aeda beandain combai ag dun chaireada acrích .h. liathain og⁷ingairi andairi Babé dano. a hanacail .i. Locht mor odum chaireada inach luach airbungargda. maccan congair anardceoil seachnimaith gein nimaithgeob Cotucad mac dacerda chuicu onmíside

⁵ -r- in superscript

⁶ Here as well, s- can stand for -cht and -acht, see "locht"

⁷ -g- in superscript

ingaitanár .i. ruithearn ingen æda bennain
 combái ocđm chaireda icrich .h.liathán
 oc ingairiu indóiri. báhé didiu a hannacol .i.
 ☉ Lochtmór dođm chaireda imachluachair bongair
 dó; maccain congair inaird cheoil. sechninathgén
 nimathgeoin. Cotmad mac mocherdda cuce.
 óimnitside 7faith de gaibsin aingen orse.
 Maccan congair inard cheoil sechnimaitngen
 nimathgeoin
 inti congair olochleín armacmocherda isdáig
 immonetarcein.
 ☉ Lochtmor do dún chairedo imachluachair bongair dó.-
 nifil locht fair acht madóen. nadfil luachair imathoeb
 deegonachtlocha léin donđingín armac mocherda.
 Atchuas domóir. Dochuaiside conatuc
 cuicce combúí inafarrad. Dotheigtis immurgu
 andis sethar combitis occáinuid ftingin
 ☉ isand asbertsi. INtán doceingát intsluag
 timchiull glendomain atúaid: díbad mar
 bain locha cend ciammatáí aruithearn.
 Fingin bagarg badiglach bagéth babéth
 babrigach.slemun guide gargg tomtha bá
 forbælid ashomtha. // dinsi ata dam
 Fil modáil illaind lothra lecht fingin issin
 lecht æda 7damnatan. // atche femén
 Maccan congair imulind imulind maccan congair
 (275a)Imloch cend atchi loch cend canadmair. // én
 ISannam iarnimimech eterchassel 7loch iniáite?
 fimabrach feras amran immadroch. Bói immurgu
 cathal occlioistecht friesi itóib immuini. IS and
 ataratchside 7afbert. // radud imarabain imousa.
 ☉ IS deithber cencpmór mothuasa. iniddiliu im
 cidimarbám orobí inúir bliadnai nolathi. isadagdo
 inacht conói conadermatar achói. //carnech nadingned
 Aben ucut na fer mol frisín maib dochuaid do don
 thetáil condig fessin doecaib. // doshercsu basní
 A fñir ucután amne uair fomairmeasa occeo. bidsi
 nadmair inti cetabui. Nochonaccasi trá oca
 cháinuidson onduairisín. Dorat didiu mór imruthchern
 dononán mac indig. Robái síde forfogail ifail
 chathail. Cotarat mór asiáir dó. Fechtas

or fingen indirore _____
 fea fris. Anfhaisi ar _____
 orfingen. IS frie tra do _____
 ben inderinn .i. fri moir muman. B _____
 . fingin corruc mac dó .i. sech _____
 . gin . Marb fingen iarsuidiu cond _____
 co cathal mac findguine .i. corig _____
 omuin .i. rige muman accaisiul _____
 fecht. aglendumuin infecht¹ aile _____
 fechteile .i. Eoghonacht simúile _____
 Luid didiu co cathal inglenda _____
 siur dissi ingait aniar .i. ruithe _____
 ingen æda bendain comboi oc _____
 eda hicrich uliathain oc g _____
 indæiri. báhé didiu ahanoccul .i. locht
 mor do dún chaireda imachluachair bong
 ar do maccain congair inaird cheoilsech
 nimaitngen ni maith geoin. Cotuc
 ad mac dacherda cuici. onmhtside 7 _____
 de. Gaibsin aingen. orse. Mccain g _____
 indard cheoil.sech ni maith gen ni _____
 geoin. inti congair oloc léin ar macdacerda
 daigh imonetarchein. Lochtmor do dún _____
 eda imachluachair bongar dó. ni fil locht _____
 acht madæn. nat fil luachair ina tæb. At _____ as
 do moir do cuasdsidhe conda tuc cuici com
 boi ina farrad. do teigtis _____
 sechtair combitis occaimd _____
 atbert si .i. indi muman .i. mor _____
 INtan do cengat int s _____ ig _____
 amain atúait.dib _____
 cend cidimaitai _____
 fingin bagarg _____
 _____ h _____ ba briga _____
 _____ ba _____
 (18a)F _____ ilaind lotra lecht fingin reil _____
 _____ sin ata damlecht æda _____
 _____ gair. atce femén im _____
 _____ imulind imulind maccán con _____

¹ The abbreviation \bar{s} in this manuscript probably stands for either- \bar{c} t or - \bar{a} cht as *acht* itself is also written *af*.

² The abbreviation \bar{h} - is mentioned in *Irishleabhar na Goedhige* as representing 'chuaigh', but it is clear that *luachair* is meant here.

7faidh dé Gabsin aingen arse. Maccan congair anardcheoil
 seach nimaithegin nimaithegin. anti congair o loch lein
 mac dacerda aneidirchein. Lochtmor andun chaireada. inach
 luachair bu³ngarra. ni fil lochtair acht madæn. nád fil lu
 achair instæb Adcuas do moir dochuaid sein codo
 tug chruici combai na farrad. Do teig dis damo. andis amach
 seactair co mbidis acainead fingin is and adbertsi inti
 mor muman na rumasa // díbad⁴ marban locha cenn cid ima
 Ntan concengaid ansluag. timcheall glendamnach atúaid.
 ta iar ruithearn/minfamich[ar] lé mnaib façaiga
 fingin fágarg bagnimach. bábæth bágæth ba brigach. fá
 cath ca congabail //lechtsæda 7 dammadtha //feimean
 Fil modá ail alotrá. leacht fingin reillabrotha isin ninadsin ata.
 Macraid chaisil fá maith moir. deis fthingin fatren trom sloigh.
 mag loch cend fabla. is loch cenn can cimeada // cantal.
 Fa haibinn do bimis trell. eterchaisil isloch cend. fa mór _____
 an tan tigmis co caisil. IN.//Bai.immurgu. cathal ageist
 eacht friu atæb na fidbaidi 7tainig da ninnsaigi 7is am adbert
 IS bronach an chai achumad. donither lé moir muman.a
 cainead fthingin inthuit. inbain lé luad dá labairt // ar
 Cid imnabadh immain leam. luad fingin narachtuin
 einfeail noch
 erfilid facrad. is nochar feall ar tuarastal // tre cana
 INmain leamtecht tara marb. a chathail on buideach badb.
 fhaigsin faseach. adbar dam beith cobronach .IS. //for
 Daraid in mhór ruithearn do lonán mac binuid robai sein
 fogail afail cathail dorad mor asiáir doib Feachtus
 and tainig ri na ndeisi forlaím cathail no bith lon
 an airgsi alonain résinrig Na ghuais lonan mac
 bin dig or mór. Nibadana fri gritha. mibaditha fria
 cure.an læch hé diatail. cepe læch doleicti asuidi
 Luig damo. lonan 7 abean co maccaib æda beannain. Dos
 narraid cuana mac ailchine o liathmaine coruc am
 nai o lonan 7corgonadh fadeisin 7conerlaid iarnaguin
 corainigsiar
 (69b) IS iarsin ro fuagrad cath o⁵maccaib æda bennain for
 maccaib _____
 .i. arnach racht an lanam ainsiar. dianinchaib. 7do bai
 cuid do maccaib cathail isin sarubad Cindus cu _____
 an cathsa ar firu muman mad iad mac cathail tisad _____

³ The o appears in superscript above the o and might be a correction of the u.

⁴ -ad appears in superscript with infixmarkings.

⁵ o- in superscript.

and tanic ri na ndése. Forlaim chatail no-
bid lonán. Érigsiu aloonáin riásirrig.
☐ Naghnais lonán mac findrig or mór aniar asid
idárimbir. Nibadana frigrithu nibathiu fri
cure inlæch hé diatailcibe læch dolléice
ashuide. Luidsiar didiu in lonán 7aben comac-
caib æda bennáin. Dosnarrac cuano mac
cailchíni oliathmuiniu coruc amnáí olonán.
7corogonad fadein. 7conerlai iarnaguin corra-
nic siar. IS iarsin rofuacrad cath omaccaib æda
bennáin formaccu cathail .i. arnochoroacht indla
namain siar dianinchaib. 7dano robói cuit domac-
caib cathail ocontsharugud. Cindas churfithe in
cathsa orfir muman. mad meic cathail tiast
inagid mac næda. immotæth dóib archomuáill. Tia
gait¹ didiu meic æda inagid nanecharthuáth sair .i.
nandése 7hele 7múscraige bregoin 7airthir themin
7fer maige. Cuano bahé ri fer maige fene.
Meicc cathail dano arcind chorco loigde 7 chorco duib-
ne 7ciarraige 7chorcobascind 7chorcomruad.
Dntres laa didiu resinacath. isand tanic triar æsa
cerdda cocuanaig. bui cuano octafond.
Teit chuccu. Can dúib orcuano. 7cia nosaigid
æs cerdda atanconnaic. Cocuanaig saigmit
Romarbad cuanu hitress indossa orse.
ISand asbert intres fer. Anim doneoch bith
centech. masa fhir athguin cuánach: fibthair
immaig dishuidiu cendeime doliathmuiniu.
asbert araile. Nírbo dithrubcosindiu. intshlige
doliathmuiniu. immus retis cossa ech muman
imbethu chuanach. Asbert intres fer. // nach:
☐ Cossinlathie romagad. ganem imthóibu cúa-
basicde nadairthech ní. comla ridiún liathmuini²
Fochén dúib orse. messe cuano. fe amai or
seat. nitricfam. Roscicthís deitféin. Bia
marb riacind bliadhnae. Doratad iarum incath.
(b)Lonan immorro aniar inagid chuanach. Romemaid
tra riamaccaib cathail asindiu mór colluachair údedad
Romemaid dano remaccaib æda sair cocend
currig. Adogrind immorro lonan imi chuanag.

¹ -i- in superscript.

² -i in superscript.

_____ celoch cení cenadmair
_____ iarnim rimch eter caissel is loch
_____ ate enfind abarach amran im
_____ oc. // muine. isann atraacht sidhe
_____ catal accoistecht friasi itoeb in
condixit. // díli imradud in marbán in oossa
IS dethbhir cen cop mor mo thuasa. ivid.
Cid immarban oroboi induirbliadain no laithi
isadag do inacht conói comá dermatar acóí
Aben ucát nafer mol. forsin marb
odocoid don. carnech na dingne tet
sil. condig fessin do écaib // sib. idsi
Afir ucatan amne. uairfomairnaesa occ
do sercus basni. nád mair inti tiado boi.
Dorat didiu mor imruith cherd dolonán
macbhíinig roboi aside for foghail ifailcath
sil co tarat mor asiar dó. // laim
Fechtus and tainic ri náidessi for
nabid lonan. aircsi aloonáin resinrig
naghnais lonan mac findrig or mór aniar
_id arimbir. Nibadana frigrithu ní
badithu fricuire inlæch é diatail cepe
_ech dolece ashude. Luid didiu lonán 7
_ben samlaid. co maccaib æda bendain. Doss
narruid cuano macailchine oliathmuine
comuc amnai olonán 7corogonad fadein
_unerlai iarnaguin curainic siar.,
IS iarsin ro fuacrad cath omaccaib æda
benn³an for maccu cathail. amaroacht in
_anamainsiar dianinchnuib 7robuí cuit do
maccuib cathail issin tsharugud. Cindus cuirfider
_catsa orfir muman. mád mic cathail
tiassat indagid macnaeda immotet doib
comuail. Tiagat didiu mac æda inagid na
_tech sair .i. osraigi 7nandessi 7hele
_uscraigi bregoin 7 airtir femin 7fer maigi
_Cuano macailchinédidiu bahe ba ri fer
_fene. Miccathail dano arcind corcola
_rco dubne 7 ciaraigi 7corco bais
_ad _____ la didiure_res
(b) cathisand tancatar triar æssacerda co
cuanag. boi cuano ictafond. Téit cucco
canduib arcuano 7 cianósáingid. æs cærda

³ abbreviation is 7-.

nagaid mac æda immotaed doib arc/hom uail Tiagaid
dano. mac anagaid na naithech sair .i. osraidi 7na
deisi 7eili 7muscraidi bregoin 7airtirfeimin 7fir
muigi feine Cuana ba he barig fer muigi feine Mic
cathail arcind chorco laidi 7chorco lai⁴duibne 7
ciarraidí 7 corco baicind 7chorco mruad IN
treas la dano. risin cath isand tangadar thar æsada
na co cuanaig bai cuana ag tafand. Teit chru
cu canduib ar cuana 7cianas ragthai æs cærda inne
oriadsan co cusna said mit Romarbad orse itres cuana
ISand adbert antres fer // ra muig diasuigi. cend eamna do
Ainimdo neoch bith canteach. masa fhir acan cuanach. fil ta R
liathmuine ISandadbert araili//dis cosa each niman⁵
Nírbo dithrub cosiniu. antshlige doliathmuiniu. immos roith R
ambeathaid cuanach ISand adbert araili// tar thandni.
Cosa laithe romadhadh. nochan imtæba cuana. ba haige n R
comlaria dun liathmaie// mai arsiad nitricfam Rosgis
Daradad anfhailti doibh fo chen duib arse misi cuana fe
dais. fein Bid marb re cindbliadhnae. Daradad ancath
iarum. 7lonan anagaid cuanach Romaid tra ria maccaib cath
ail asin coluachair ndeadaid Romeabaid dano. re maccaib
æda sair forsna athachaib co cend curraig Atrogrin. immorro.
lonan andiaid chuana imatarraid doib dobert cuana
forgom forlonan. combai trit Ocsoad do chuana ass do cu
irithar athorbo cuilind ingabal chuanu co tarla forlar annsin
Dobert lonan fuasmad do gai mór indsiun trit colár 7nir
leig éirgi dó cotall achend de 7isand adbert mac mocærda
ni roan siccesium inaidchesin acht triar .i. abean Tamac
7a.ingen.
aigead chuanu macailcin comuigisin finit amen

⁴ There are dots underneath 'lai' to indicate that it was a copying-mistake.

⁵ leg. muman.

indubid immatarraid dóib. **Dobert** cuam forgab forlonan combú trít. **Ocsoud** dochuanaig ass docuirethar cuilend athorbai ingabol chuana-nach conatarla faen. Dober danolonas fuasma dogai mór indseom. 7nithudchid de cotall achend de. ISand asbert mac mocherda. **φ Dresfid** huinnus 7fern. dotaig indiu aruithchem. biaid brattan fuidb immech. fodaig ilmonsa cuanach. **Sescand** cluana maccú bimd. dobert bodbecht namra mind. deccaid itóeb indlenai. lecht cuanach mac cailchenai. // olc sún uare ar Achuilind indath forbai rolais arcossa amrai dotbí aithechtuathi diaslabrai. // inbanna **ISúarach** imocht aithgelach cuanach. adagben bán. singen soimaccán. **Bafirson** niro an aice imaidchisin acht inriarsin. Aided cuanach macailchini insin.

atan comnaic. cocuanaig saigmít. Ro marbad cuano itress indossa orsé. is ann asbert intres fer. Anim do nech bith cen tech massa fhir athguin cuanach fibthair immuig disuidiu ce dené doliatmmuinu. Asbert arailiu ./ in. immocreitis Nirbó dithrub cosindiu. intshligi doliatmmuin Cossaech muman imbethaid cuanach. isand asbert antres fer Cossin laithi ronagad ganium imtoebhu cuan ach baicde nát airthed ní. comla ri dún liath muini./ orsiat nitricfam. Roscithis deit Focen duib or sé messi cuana. Fé amai fein. biamarbriacind bliadnae. Doratad incath iaron 7lonán inagid cuanach. Romaid tra ria macaib cathail asin diumor coluachair ndedad. Romebaid dano re maccaib aetha sairfor ¹sna athechaib cucenn² curraig. Ad rogrind. Is(?) lonán in di cuanaig indubibh immatarraid doib. Dober cuano forcam forlonán comboi trít. ocsoud docuanaig ass. docuirethar cuilem³ athorba ina gabol conotarla faen. Doberlonán fuasmad dogai morinseom trít co tabn⁴ 7 nithudchid de cotall acenn⁵ de. Asan asbert mac mocherda ./ biaid bratan fuidb Dresfid uinnus 7ferd do taig indiu aruithcerd darnech fodaigh risonsa cuanach ./ rauid. dechaid Sescand cluana maccubhimd. dobert bodbecht naam itaib indlenai. lecht cuanach macailchenai./ uaire Achuilind innathorba rolais arcossa amrai. olcsén ar dotbí. atech tuaithe diaslabrai ./ bannabán ISuairach. indocht iteglach cuanach. cenachbenin singenaenmaccán./ singen. Aided cuanach mac ailchine Bá firsón niro anaiciseom acht mad inriarsin i. amac aben comicisin genelach cuana⁶ sund i./ deiche macconfile maccus

¹ There is a t-shaped mark before this line in a different colour.

² Abbreviation is 7-

³ Abbreviation is 7-

⁴ It is unclear what this abbreviation stands for.

⁵ Abbreviation is 7-

⁶ -a in subscript.

Cuama mac cailchín mac diwai macfinnbair mac
findloga mac
craid macfhir cuile mac buair mac mo garuith mac
fergusa
mac rossaruid macrudri 7r

