

A MEDIEVAL IRISH COMMENTARY ON THE *MAGISTER*

ABSTRACT

Three medieval Irish manuscripts, two of which are almost entirely medical in content, preserve a hitherto unpublished passage of commentary in Irish on the meaning of the Latin word *magister* ('teacher' or 'master'). The text in question consists chiefly of a series of expositions on the eight letters of the term *magister* that serve to highlight various attributes associated with an individual bearing that title. Each explanation cites a different Latin word, the initial letter of which corresponds to one of the letters in the word *magister*. These Latin terms are then translated into Irish, and followed in turn by succinct interpretations of how each concept relates to the function and duties of a *magister*. The present contribution offers an annotated edition and translation of this passage, and attempts to situate its contents within the wider context of medieval Irish intellectual culture.

The purpose of this contribution is to bring to light a previously unpublished passage of medieval Irish commentary concerned with the meaning of the Latin term *magister* ('teacher' or 'master'). The text in question consists of a short preface beginning with the phrase *do cēimindaib[h] in maighisdir ann sō* ('concerning the grades of a master here'), in which a figure referred to variously as *Tomás Alisanus*, *Tomás Alifanus* or *Tomás Elesanus* is cited as an authority. This brief introduction is followed by a series of expositions on the eight letters in the Latin word *magister* that serve to outline various attributes of an individual who might achieve the distinction of that title.¹ Each explanation cites a different Latin word, the initial letter of which corresponds to one of the letters in the headword *magister*. Although the headword is said to consist of 'Greek letters' (*litreacha Grēgacha*), no Greek terminological equivalents are posited for any of the Latin terms. The latter are also translated into Irish in the commentary, and these renderings are followed in turn by brief interpretations of how each concept relates to the function and duties of a *magister*. In the first three of these, it is asserted that the individual who achieves the title of *magister* is in some way superior to a *dochtúir*, while

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¹For the form of the Irish borrowing, see *DIL*, s.v. *maigister* (*maigistir*), and also Damian McManus, 'On final syllables in the Latin loan-words in Early Irish', *Ériu* 35 (1984), 137–62, at 161 n. 49. The three manuscript witnesses of the text variously preserve both the *o*-stem form *maig(h)isdir* for the nominative and genitive singular, and the Middle Irish guttural-stem genitive singular form *maig(h)istrech*. However, the subsequent commentary clearly follows the eight-letter nominative singular spelling of the Latin form, i.e. *magister*.

the subsequent five interpretations cite different duties or qualities that are associated with his role.

MANUSCRIPTS AND CONTEXT

I have identified three copies of this text, one of which comprises only the introduction and the commentary proper, and two of which contain varying amounts of additional explanatory commentary at the end of the text. The longest version (henceforth E) is found on p. 364a14–b8 of TCD MS E 4. 1 (1436), a composite volume made up of two paper sections and many vellum gatherings that were collectively dated by Abbott and Gwynn to the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries.² Nearly all of the fairly miscellaneous content of this manuscript pertains to medicine. However, the compilation also includes some of the material identified by Francis Shaw as being ‘medico-philosophical’ in nature, including an imperfect copy of a physiologico-philosophical treatise on the powers of the soul, an incomplete translation of a commentary on the last six of the Aristotelian *prædicamenta*, and a number of propositions, most of which are written in both Latin and Irish, culled from various philosophic works.³ The commentary on the word *magister* occurs near the end of the manuscript, where it is immediately preceded by the series of propositions (pp. 362–3) and followed by several paragraphs on medical and physical topics.

A second copy of the text (henceforth G) is found in National Library of Ireland MS G8, the contents of which also relate mainly to medicine. This is a sixteenth-century volume made up of paper and vellum sections, the main scribe of which was Éumann Ó Bolgaoi, though several other scribes can also be identified.⁴ Ní Shéaghda has described G8 as ‘a pocket-size medical encyclopaedia, containing texts, in a digested form, on almost every branch of medicine and medico-philosophy’, and suggested that ‘it was perhaps intended as a teacher’s note-book written with the collaboration of a whole medical school.’⁵ As in E, the commentary on the word *magister* occurs near the end of this manuscript; it occupies most of p. 200, and is followed by only a further six pages of material. The first four of these contain medical definitions in Latin followed by Irish translations that were ‘presumably extracted from a text dealing with purging and purgatives’, while the final two pages contain the misplaced opening to a text on contusion that precedes the commentary on pp. 185–98.⁶ The insertion of the text on the *magister* at this point may not be entirely accidental, as it is immediately preceded by a list of names, in first-letter order, of 46 philosophers and medical men alluded to within

²T. K. Abbott and E. J. Gwynn, *Catalogue of the Irish Manuscripts in the Library of Trinity College Dublin* (Dublin, 1921), 312.

³Francis Shaw, ‘Medieval medico-philosophical treatises in the Irish language’, in John Ryan (ed.), *Féil-sgríbhinn Éoin Mhic Néil: Essays and Studies Presented to Professor Eoin Mac Neill, D. Litt., on the Occasion of his Seventieth Birthday* (Dublin, 1940), 144–57, at 147–8 and 155.

⁴Nessa Ní Shéaghda, *Catalogue of Irish Manuscripts in the National Library of Ireland, Fasciculus I* (Dublin, 1967), 41.

⁵*Ibid.* 42.

⁶*Ibid.* 56–7.

the tract on contusion. This catalogue includes authorities such as Avicenna, Galen and Averroes, who are variously described as *ughdair*, ‘authorities’ or *dochtúirí* ‘doctors’. Although no explicit connection is made between the two texts, it is possible that the commentary on the word *magister*, in which the meaning of this term is repeatedly contrasted with that of the *dochtúir*, may have been included in the manuscript here by association with the titles cited for various medical authorities immediately before it.

The third witness of the commentary (henceforth H) is found on two separate vellum fragments included in the fourth volume of TCD MS H 4. 22 (1363). Most of this volume consists of a copy of the grammatical treatise *Auraicept na nÉces* that was probably written in the mid-sixteenth century by scribes associated with the Mac Aodhagáin law school; it contains a dedication to a certain Tomás mac Fhlannchadha, who may himself have been one of the scribes.⁷ The fragments containing our text are found in two separate locations within this volume. The brief introduction and explications of the first seven letters of the word *magister* (§§1–8 of the text, following the division in the transcription and translation given below) are written in a neat hand on the verso of a narrow, roughly rectangular slip of vellum inserted between pp. 192–3 of the manuscript, and thus in the middle of the *Auraicept* witness. The contents of this slip were recorded in the TCD manuscript catalogue with only the heading provided by the first four words on the fragment, i.e. *do ceimmenuibh in maigistrech*.⁸ The conclusion of the commentary (§9), which here consists only of a short comment on the eighth letter of the headword, is found on a separate, smaller slip inserted between pp. 204–5. This was partially transcribed in the catalogue as ‘*An .S. litir .i r. is inann .ur. a gaedheilg ⁊ signum a laitín ⁊ is inann signum a laitín ⁊ foillsiugud a gaedheilg etc*’; however the sentence was not identified as a continuation of the text found on the first slip.⁹

In addition to the *Auraicept*, the fourth section of H 4. 22 contains other material of a didactic nature, suggesting that the inclusion of the commentary on the word *magister* may have suited the pedagogical interests of that volume’s compiler.¹⁰ The separation of the two fragments on which it is written, as well as the higher number of copying errors in this witness, point to a degree of haphazardness in this strand of the text’s transmission. It may

⁷For discussion, see William O’Sullivan, ‘The manuscript collection of Dubhaltach Mac Fhirbhisigh’, in Alfred P. Smyth (ed.), *Seanchas: Studies in Early and Medieval Irish Archaeology, History and Literature in Honour of Francis J. Byrne* (Dublin, 2000), 439–47, at 444; and also Deborah Hayden, ‘Some notes on the transmission of *Auraicept na nÉces*’, *Proceedings of the Harvard Celtic Colloquium* 32 (Cambridge, MA, 2013), 134–77, at 139–53.

⁸Abbott and Gwynn, *Catalogue*, 211.

⁹The second word in this sentence should be an Arabic numeral ‘8’, here standing for the ordinal (i.e. ‘the eighth letter’). Since the numeric symbol is not fully joined up in the manuscript, it is easy to see how the cataloguers might have misread it as the letter *S*, particularly given that they had evidently not noted the connection between this sentence and the text on the preceding slip.

¹⁰This includes another grammatical fragment inserted after p. 158, several elementary notes on grammar and orthography on pp. 159–60, and an only partially legible poem on accentual rules on p. 200.

be noteworthy, however, that both vellum fragments are located in a section of the *Auraicept* consisting mainly of commentary relating to the Hebrew, Greek, Latin and Ogam alphabets, and one might therefore speculate as to whether the alphabetic basis of the commentary on the word *magister*, and its concern for Greek, Latin and Irish vocabulary, may have been what prompted its inclusion in the manuscript at this point.¹¹ As I have shown elsewhere, moreover, some of the glossing and commentary in the *Auraicept* suggests a familiarity on the part of one or more of its scholiasts with elementary medical doctrine.¹² Given the manuscript context of the other two copies of this text (E and G), which survive in compilations that are almost entirely medical in content, it is thus possible that the H 4. 22 copy of the commentary on the word *magister* may provide a further piece of evidence for the confluence of grammatical and medical teaching in early Ireland.

SOURCES AND CONTENT

In addition to the evidence of its manuscript context, there are other indications that the commentary on the word ‘magister’ may have its origins in a medical milieu. The first point in this regard concerns the structure of the commentary itself. This comprises a series of Latin words, for each of which the first letter corresponds to one of the letters in the Latin term *magister*, followed by an Irish equivalent of that Latin word and then a short explanatory gloss that serves to relate the concept in question to the meaning of the headword (*magister*). In the interpretation of the first three letters (§§1–3), it is asserted that the individual who achieves the title of *magister* ‘master’ is in some way superior to a *dochtúir* ‘doctor’. Thus the Latin word associated with the letter *m* is *maior* ‘more’, and the explanation given for this is that a master is understood to be learned in more arts than a doctor, who possesses only one. Similarly, the letter *a* is said to stand for Latin *auctoritas* because the master is seen as more of an ‘authority’ than a doctor, and the letter *g* is said to stand for *gradus* ‘grade, step, degree’ – probably understood here with the transferred sense of ‘attainment’ – because a *magister* is also thought to possess more of these than a doctor. The content of the commentary changes slightly for the remaining five letters, which, rather than comparing the respective attributes of the master and the doctor, instead identify various duties or virtues associated with the former. Thus the letter *i* is equated with Lat. *instructio* ‘instruction’; the letter *s* with Lat. *scientia* ‘knowledge’ or ‘understanding’; and the letter *t* with Lat. *tenens* ‘holding, retaining’ (the explanation being that a *magister* is supposed to ‘retain’ every word that he hears). The letter *e* is equated with Lat. *excellencia* ‘excellence, superiority, merit’, and the final letter *r* is associated in two of the three manuscript witnesses with Lat. *regimen* ‘guidance, direction’. The eight letters of the Latin word *magister* are repeatedly described as being

¹¹George Calder, *Auraicept na nÉces: The Scholars’ Primer* (Dublin, 1917), 88ff.

¹²Deborah Hayden ‘Anatomical metaphor in *Auraicept na nÉces*’, in Elizabeth Boyle and Deborah Hayden (eds), *Authorities and Adaptations: the Reworking and Transmission of Textual Sources in Medieval Ireland* (Dublin, 2014), 23–61.

‘Greek’, but no words from this language are given in the commentary proper, and consequently one has the impression that Greek is being cited in the text as something of a formality.

In most cases, the Irish translations of Latin words in the commentary are quite accurate: for example, Lat. *maior* is rendered in Irish by *ní is mó*; Lat. *gradus* by Ir. *céim*; and Lat. *scientia* by Ir. *tuigsin*. In two instances, however, we can see evidence of errors or innovations in the transmission of the text. Thus in §8 the Latin word *excellentia*, which is given to illustrate the seventh letter of the headword, is translated in Irish by *tocht* ‘silence’, which no doubt results from the author’s interpretation of the Latin term as *ex silentio* ‘from silence’ – prompting one to speculate as to whether dictation was involved at some stage in the transmission of the commentary. The meaning of Lat. *excellentia* would, of course, have suited the overarching theme of the commentary quite well, since ‘excellence’, ‘superiority’ or ‘merit’ are all attributes that might be readily associated with the figure of a *magister*. It is therefore noteworthy that the accompanying explanatory gloss on this letter seeks to fit the ‘erroneous’ Irish translation into the thematic pattern established in the preceding examples: for it is stated that *dlighidh an maighister b[h]eth na t[h]ocht nō co cluin anī ara tabuir fregra* (‘the master must be silent so that he might hear the thing to which he will give an answer’). A similar instance of re-analysis has occurred in the case of the letter *r*, which is discussed below.

At first glance, we might compare this structure of translation + explanatory gloss to many of the entries in the corpus of early Irish glossaries, compiled in Ireland from as early as the eighth century. In those sources, the etymology of a given (Irish) headword was frequently explained through derivation from a word in another language, such as Latin, Greek or Hebrew, using the medieval analytical methodology popularised by Isidore’s *Etymologiae*.¹³ Paul Russell has noted that of the early Irish glossary entries containing Greek, ‘a large number of them have a particular format [headword, A *Graece* .i. B *Latine*] where the Latin term is usually some rendering of the Greek (though not always to be honoured with the title of translation)’; he also observed that this format is strikingly similar to that of continental Graeco-Latin glossaries of the eighth and ninth centuries.¹⁴ In a subsequent study of the 192 Greek entries in O’Mulconry’s Glossary, moreover, Pádraic Moran has shown that ‘very few identify any real linguistic relationships’, noting that words in that text are

¹³For a survey of the early Irish glossary material see Paul Russell, ‘The sounds of a silence: the growth of Cormac’s glossary’, *CMCS* 15 (1988), 1–30. On medieval etymological method, see Mark Amsler, *Etymology and Grammatical Discourse in Late Antiquity and the Early Middle Ages*, Studies in the History of the Language Sciences 44 (Amsterdam/Philadelphia, 1989); for the influence of this tradition and of Isidore’s work on Irish scholars, see for example Rolf Baumgarten, ‘Creative medieval etymology and Irish hagiography (Lasair, Columba, Senán)’, *Ériu* 54 (2004), 49–78, at 55–65, and Liam Breatnach, ‘The glossing of the early Irish law tracts’, in Deborah Hayden and Paul Russell (eds), *Grammatica, Gramadach and Gramadeg: Vernacular Grammar and Grammarians in Medieval Ireland and Wales* (Amsterdam/Philadelphia, 2016), 113–32.

¹⁴See Paul Russell, ‘*Graece ... Latine*: Graeco-Latin glossaries in early medieval Ireland’, *Peritia* 14 (2000), 406–20, at 411, and examples therein.

more often paired instead on the basis of formal similarity.¹⁵ Such etymological explorations of Irish vis-à-vis the three sacred languages are also an integral feature of the commentary to *Auraicept na nÉces*, alongside which one copy of our text has been transmitted, and there is considerable thematic correspondence between the scholia to the *Auraicept* and entries in the collection of early Irish glossaries, which clearly formed part of the same learned tradition.

However, a search of the *Early Irish Glossaries* database suggests that none of the Latin or Irish terms used in our commentary on the word *magister* appears in the glossaries, although a definition of the word *magister* itself is given in the glossary known as *Irsan*.¹⁶ The translations and accompanying explanations in our text also stand in contrast with the early Irish glossary entries in that they do not demonstrate the kind of lexical analysis that is a typical product of medieval etymological method, i.e. one in which the meanings of words are explained using various verbal or extra-verbal criteria such as onomatopoeia, sound symbolism, or association with one or more similar-sounding words that were felt to shed light on the meaning of the term in question. Instead, the commentary in our text merely aims to establish direct semantic equivalents in Latin and Irish, paying no heed to the additional constraint of identifying formal similarities between the various terms cited. All eight glosses in the commentary employ the formula *is inann X isin Gréig* γ *Y isin Laidin* γ *is inann Y isin Laitin* γ *Z isin Gaoidheilg*, followed immediately by an explanatory gloss beginning with the conjunction *óir* ‘because’. This particular way of presenting Greek, Latin and Irish terminological equivalents is rather more ponderous than the typical corresponding construction found in the early Irish glossaries. It is, however, widely attested in medieval and early modern Irish medical texts, many of which are translations or adaptations of Latin works that are themselves based on Greek doctrine. For example, one might consider the opening to an Irish translation of a tract on melancholy, adapted from the section on diseases of the head in Bernard of Gordon’s *Lilium Medicinae*, which offers the following explanation of the Greek word *hereos*:

DE AMORE HEREOS Adon don gradh re nabar hereos γ is inann hereos asin Greig γ generosus asin Laidin γ is inann generosus asin Laidin γ uasal isin Gaedilg, oir is gnathach tiaghaid na baruin γ na daine uaisli annsa neaslainti so tri acfuind γ a ninnmasa [...]

‘De Amore Hereos i.e. concerning the love that is called hereos; for *hereos* in Greek is the same as *generosus* in Latin and *generosus* in Latin is the same as *noble* in Gaelic, for the barons and the nobility are wont to fall into this disease through their wealth and their riches [...].’¹⁷

¹⁵Pádraic Moran, ‘Greek in early medieval Ireland’, in Alex Mullen and Patrick James (eds), *Multilingualism in the Graeco-Roman Worlds* (Cambridge 2012), 172–92, at 179.

¹⁶*Irsan* 213: **Maigister**. *i. magister .i. maior statior magister oc grece statio dicitur*. For the database, see www.asnc.cam.ac.uk/irishglossaries.

¹⁷Winifred Wulff (ed. and trans.), ‘De Amore Hereos’, *Ériu* 11 (1932), 174–181, at 177 and 179.

Similarly, the Early Modern Irish translation of Guy de Chauliac's anatomical treatise, *Anathomia Gydo*, explains the titular word *anathomia* as follows:

Anatho[m]ia est recta divitio et determinatio membrorum corporis .i. is ead is anathomia ann dealugad ⁊ crīochnugad díreach ball gach uile chuirp. Agus is uime adeirar anathomia ria oír is inann anna isan nGrēig ⁊ rectum sa Laidin ⁊ díreach sa nGaoidhilg ⁊ is inann thomia isin nGrēig ⁊ divitio san Laidin .i. dealugad sa nGaoidhilg oír dealuigid sin na boill go (go) díreach o chēile.

‘Anatomy is the division and correct determination of the members of every single body. And it is called anatomy since *ana* in Greek is the same as *rectum* in Latin and *díreach* in Irish, since it separates the members correctly from each other.’¹⁸

The Irish translation of John of Gaddesden's *Rosa Anglica* also displays this particular pattern of translation + explanatory gloss, as is evidenced, for example, in the observation *is ime aderur antrax, oir is inann antrum tri Laidin ⁊ umha no clais a Gaedilg, oir donít clais san inadh a mbí* (‘and for this it is called anthrax; *antrum* in Latin is the same as *umha* or *clais* in Gaelic, for they make a furrow in the place wherein they are.’).¹⁹ It is worth noting, however, that the actual knowledge of Greek reflected in some medical sources is often not much more convincing than it is for many entries from the early medieval glossaries. Winifred Wulff has drawn attention, for example, to the ‘sorry attempts at explaining the derivation of words which had Greek roots’ displayed by the author of the *Rosa Anglica*, such as his erroneous etymology of the word *epilepsia* as *epi* ‘above’ and *ledo*, ‘as it is a lesion of the upper parts’.²⁰ As noted above, the translations in our commentary-text consistently refer to the Roman letters of the headword *magister* as being ‘Greek’ at the beginning of each explanation, in such a way that one might have expected to find the citation of a terminological equivalent in that language for the Latin and Irish words subsequently given. However, Greek forms are never actually provided in the text, suggesting that either they had been lost in transmission or that the glossator was simply adhering as closely as possible to a familiar translation formula. The fact that the pattern of the commentary in the text as a whole is entirely dependent upon the correspondence between the letters of the headword *magister* and the initial letters of the Latin terms, however, suggests that the latter circumstance is more probable.

Another indication that the commentary may have its origins in a medical milieu is the explanation given for the last letter of the word *magister* (§9).

¹⁸Eithne Ní Ghallchobhair (ed. and trans.), *Anathomia Gydo*, ITS 66 (Dublin, 2014) 34–5.

¹⁹Winifred Wulff (ed. and trans.), *Rosa Anglica sev Rosa Medicinae Johannis Anglici: an Early Modern Irish Translation of a Section of the Mediaeval Medical Text-Book of John of Gaddesden*, ITS 25 (London, 1929), 210–11.

²⁰Wulff, *Rosa Anglica*, xvi.

In E and G (the two copies of the text found in medical manuscripts), the letter *r* is associated with the Latin word *regimen*, meaning ‘directing’ or ‘guiding’, and the accompanying explanatory gloss states that this is because the master ought to ‘show’ or ‘reveal’ every single word (*dlighidh an maighister gach aēnf[h]ocal d’f[h]oillsigud*). As in the case of the preceding letters, therefore, the commentator has here succeeded in drawing some kind of connection between the meaning of the Latin word and the functions or attributes of a *magister*, although one might argue that the concept of ‘showing’ or ‘revealing’ (*foillsigud*) does not reflect the meaning of *regimen* (‘direction’ or ‘guidance’) in a very precise way. In that regard, it is noteworthy that the copyist of H has changed Lat. *regimen* to *signum* ‘sign’. There are two possible reasons for this: one is that the scribe mistook the letter *r* in his exemplar for the often similar-looking manuscript symbol for *s*, while the other is that he may have understood the word *signum* to have a closer association with the meaning of *foillsigud* than Latin *regimen*, since a ‘sign’ is something that ‘shows’ or ‘reveals’ something else. The problem, of course, is that the word *signum* does not fit the pattern of the text as a whole as well as *regimen*, which begins with the correct letter of the headword *magister*, namely *r*. This suggests that the reading given in the two medical manuscripts (E and G) is superior to that found in H.

This series of copying errors and innovations in the final section of the commentary may also have something to do with the fact that the word *foillsiughadh* has been abbreviated in all three witnesses to the first five letters *foill-* followed by a suspension stroke. In light of this, one wonders whether the explanation for this gloss may have originally invoked the verbal noun *follumnugad*, which, like Latin *regimen*, means ‘guiding’ or ‘directing’, but could have been written with the very similar abbreviation *foill-* + suspension stroke. Indeed, it may be noteworthy that *follumnugad* is the term used to render Lat. *regimen* in a sixteenth-century Irish translation of Magnus of Milan’s *Regimen Sanitatis*, a widely known medical text concerned with the regulation of non-naturals in the body and the varying courses of treatment prescribed for health, which opens with the statement *regimen sanitatis est triplex, éd ón atáid tri gnéithi ar follamhnugud na sláinte* (‘there are three aspects of the Regulation of Health’).²¹ Thus here again, we have a possible indication that this text may have had its origin in a medical milieu, where the Latin term *regimen* would no doubt have been well known to Irish translators. The inferior reading *signum* given in H indicates that the commentary had undergone a further level of corruption in its textual transmission by the time that it came to be associated with the *Auraicept*.

One final point that might be made regarding the probable medical associations of the commentary on the word *magister* concerns the supposed source of this teaching. The brief introduction to the text attributes its contents to a figure who is variously referred to as *Tomás Elesanus* (E), *Tomás Alifanus* (G)

²¹H. Cameron Gillies, *Regimen Sanitatis: The Rule of Health* (Glasgow, 1911), 17 (text) and 31 (trans.).

and *Tomás Alisanus* (H), of whose identity I am uncertain. The name certainly looks Latinate in form, and it is probable that the distinction in the spelling of the surname in G and H simply arose from confusion regarding the similar form of the letters *f* and *s* in many scribal hands. If the arguments advanced thus far in relation to the possible medical associations of the text prove persuasive, one might hazard a guess that the figure referred to is one of the many medical authorities so commonly cited by name in Irish translations of Latin scientific works. However, I can find no examples elsewhere of the surname in question, and no convincingly similar names occur in O'Grady's list of authorities cited in medieval Irish medical manuscripts from the British Library, or indeed in other catalogue sources known to me. It is possible that the form is a corruption of *Thomas Aquinas*, but this level of textual confusion seems rather extreme for such a well-known figure, who in any case is typically cited as 'Saint Thomas' in Irish medical manuscripts.²²

Another possibility, although a very speculative one, is that the authority in question might be identified with Archbishop Alfanus of Salerno, a figure who played a central role in the theoretical renaissance that characterised the development of medical science in southern Italy from the eleventh century onwards. During this period, medical practice in Salerno increasingly came to be based on the principles of natural philosophy as expounded in the works of Aristotle.²³ Alfanus was a noted translator, writer, theologian and medical practitioner from the region, whose extant works include several poems, a tract on pulse, and a Latin translation of Nemesius' anthropological tract 'On the Nature of Man'. After being appointed Archbishop of Salerno in 1058, Alfanus also gained renown as one of the principal patrons of Constantinus Africanus, the individual responsible for producing translations and adaptations of Arabic medical writings that formed the foundation of the new medical curriculum, and underlay the expansion of medical learning throughout Europe during the twelfth century.²⁴ I can find no attestations of this figure with the forename given in our text, and it may be, of course, that an individual other than Archbishop Alfanus I is being referred to; indeed, as Acocella has noted, the name *Alfanus* is well attested in onomastic and toponymical sources for the Lombardy region of northern Italy.²⁵

²²S. H. O'Grady, *Catalogue of Irish Manuscripts in the British Library [Formerly British Museum], Volume 1* (London 1926), 173–4.

²³Luis García-Ballester, 'Introduction: practical medicine from Salerno to the Black Death', in Luis García-Ballester, Roger French, Jon Arrizabalaga and Andrew Cunningham (eds), *Practical Medicine from Salerno to the Black Death* (Cambridge, 1994), 1–29, at 1.

²⁴Faith Wallis (ed.), *Medieval Medicine: A Reader*, Readings in Medieval Civilizations and Cultures 15 (Toronto, 2010), 135–40. On the life and works of Alfanus, see Nicola Acocella, 'La figura e l'opera di Alfano I di Salerno (Sec. XI) – profile biografico', *Rassegna Storica Salernitana* 19 (1958), 1–74, and Nicola Acocella, 'La figura e l'opera di Alfano I di Salerno (sec. XI) – Alfano nella critica moderna', *Rassegna Storica Salernitana* 20 (1959), 17–90. On Alfanus as a scholar of medicine, see Rudolf Creutz, 'Erzbischof Alfanus I, ein frühsalernitanischer Arzt', *Studien und Mitteilungen zur Geschichte des Benediktinerordens und seiner Zweige* 47 (1929), 413–32, and Rudolf Creutz, 'Nachtrag zu "Erzbischof Alfanus I, ein frühsalernitanischer Arzt"', *Studien und Mitteilungen zur Geschichte des Benediktinerordens und seiner Zweige* 48 (1930), 205–8.

²⁵Acocella, 'La figura', 3.

The evidence for the association of Archbishop Albanus I with the present text is thus decidedly uncertain, but one further attribution in the commentary may nonetheless lend support to the supposition that it may have originated as a product of the nascent ‘academic revolution’ in medical theory that characterised his patronage in Salerno. It is claimed in the introduction to the commentary that the question of ‘what a *magister* is’ (*crēd is maighisidir ann*) was originally posed by ‘The Philosopher’ (*An Feallsamh*), which is a common designation for Aristotle in medieval Irish medical texts.²⁶ In this regard, we might consider the very last part of the commentary (§9), which is slightly longer in E than it is in G or H. The additional material in this section explains that if a master is lacking in any of the attributes outlined in the commentary on the seven preceding letters, he should not be called a master, since according to *an Feallsamh*, ‘things that are complete in themselves should not be divided apart from the divine primordial matter from which everything was derived’ (*na neithi atā co huilidhi inntu fēin nī cōir a mbeth randuighi a n-ēgmuis na maisi diagha asar boined gach aennī*). Accordingly, a master ought not to be divided (*is mar sin dlighus an maighistir...gan a b[h]jeth co randi*), since if he were he could be missing one of the *céimeanna* (‘attainments’ or ‘attributes’) that are outlined in the preceding commentary, and therefore would not be deserving of his title.

The concept of a ‘complete entity’ made up of multiple parts is strongly reminiscent of Aristotelian metaphysical doctrine, which held a prominent place in learned exegetical commentary of the late medieval period. It is noteworthy, for example, that the longest tract immediately preceding the copy of our text in E is a commentary on the *Liber sex principiorum*, an anonymous treatise on the last six of Aristotle’s categories that was written in the twelfth century and often attributed to Gilbert de la Porrée.²⁷ One of the chief concerns of this text is the problem of universal concepts and their accidental properties, which are categorised as being either ‘intrinsic’ or ‘extrinsic’.²⁸ As we have seen, moreover, the two medical manuscripts that contain copies of the commentary on the word *magister* also contain a number of propositions culled from philosophical and logical texts, such as the short excerpt on the definition of ‘genus’ and ‘species’ that immediately precedes the commentary in E.

²⁶Donald Mackinnon, *A Descriptive Catalogue of Gaelic Manuscripts in the Advocates’ Library Edinburgh, and Elsewhere in Scotland* (Edinburgh, 1912), 30–1; for examples from the manuscripts in this collection, see also pp. 13, 33, 40, 44 and 48.

²⁷TCD MS E 4. 1 (1436), pp. 356–9. Abbott and Gwynn, *Catalogue*, 316, describe this work as ‘a treatise ... on the Aristotelian concepts of Form, Cause, Individuum, Compositum, etc.’ Shaw, ‘Medieval Medico-philosophical treatises’, 147, identifies it as ‘a commentary on the logico-metaphysical treatise of Gilbert de la Porrée’, and states that ‘the original of the present commentary has not been established’. For a discussion of the authorship, editions and structure of the *Liber sex principiorum*, see Lorenzo Minio-Paoluello, ‘Magister sex principiorum’, *Studi Medievali*, third ser., 6:2.123–51.

²⁸William E. McMahon, ‘The Liber Sex Principiorum, a twelfth-century treatise in descriptive metaphysics’, in E. F. K. Koerner (ed.), *Progress in Linguistic Historiography: Papers from the International Conference on the History of the Language Sciences (Ottawa, 28–31 August 1978)*, *Studies in the History of the Language Sciences* 20 (Amsterdam, 1980), 3–12, at 5.

The reference in §9 to the *maisi diagma asar boined gach aennī* ('primordial matter from which everything was derived') is no doubt an allusion to the four elements of earth, air, water and fire, which Aristotle, following the doctrine of Empedocles, argued to be the fundamental constituents of all bodies. Aristotelian philosophy likewise conceived of individual things as 'substances' (e.g. a man or a horse) consisting of essential and non-essential properties. It may be, therefore, that the author of the commentary in §9 of our text understood the concept of a *magister* in Aristotelian metaphysical terms as a single substance possessed of certain essential properties (e.g. authority, excellence, knowledge, etc.), without which it could not exist under that title.

In this, we can see one obvious point of similarity between our commentary on the Latin word *magister* and the contents of the *Auraicept* with which it has been transmitted in H: for both reflect the kind of ontological analysis typical of elementary school-texts that reveal an acquaintance with Aristotelian doctrine on the *praedicamenta*. Erich Poppe has shown how the glossators of the *Auraicept* employed basic logical terminology, probably drawn from a rudimentary work on logic like Boethius' Latin translation of Porphyry's *Isagoge* (or introduction to Aristotle's *Categories*), to analyse various linguistic concepts.²⁹ This is clearly reflected, for example, in a gloss on the word *etargaire* from the longest extant recension of the *Auraicept*, in which the term in question seems to have been understood as a reference to the identification of Aristotelian categories such as quantity and quality in a given substance. Here the act of differentiation in linguistic analysis is compared to separating parts from a whole, as branches from a tree:

Caiti eisi etargaire. Ni ansa. Ant athfeugad meidi inde no inchoisg
no eiterdethbere no etarderrsgaigti rodealph Die iter na duilib.
Eisi .i. go mbeith esse *d'ecensia* .i. mar roinnius ran 7 uilidhecht
.i. mar ta crand 7 a geuga 7 a cousmailius.³⁰

'What is the essence of *etargaire* "distinction"? Not difficult. The consideration of size, quality or denotation or difference or distinction which God has fashioned among the elements. *Eisi* "essence", i.e. that it be *esse* "essence" from *ecensia* (leg. *essentia*), i.e. as it separates *rann* 'part' and *uilidhecht* "totality", i.e. as is a tree and its branches and such like.'

The coalescence of medicine and philosophy in the later medieval period was, of course, a natural consequence of the fact that the basic concepts

²⁹Erich Poppe, 'Die mittelalterliche irische Abhandlung *Auraicept na nÉces* und ihr geistesgeschichtlicher Standort', in Klaus D. Dutz and Hans-J. Niederehe (eds), *Theorie und Rekonstruktion: Trierer Studien zur Geschichte der Linguistik* (Münster, 1996), 55–74.

³⁰Calder, *Auraicept na nÉces*, 218–19, lines 3795–99 [cf. pp. 68–9, lines 913–16] (my translation). On the term *etargaire*, see also Pierre-Yves Lambert, 'Les *differentiae* dans la littérature irlandaise ancienne', in Pierre Lardet (ed.), *La tradition vive: mélanges d'histoire des textes en l'honneur de Louis Holtz* (= *Bibliologia* 20) (Turnhout, 2003), 107–18.

and intellectual methods of medicine were also those of natural philosophy. Medicine was perceived as a branch of knowledge concerned with ‘the essential nature of things, the materials they are made of, and their inherent qualities’, and one that explored ‘fundamental questions about what causes things to be as they are and to become other than what they are.’³¹ The principles of Aristotelian logic and ontology provided the mechanism through which a single entity could be analysed in relation to its parts, whether it be the body and its members – as in anatomy – or the individual and his attributes, as we would seem to have here in relation to the concept of a ‘master’. Indeed, one wonders whether the notion conveyed in our text that a master must be possessed of several attributes – including multiple arts, as indicated in §2 – has any basis in the long-standing conception of medicine as being, like philosophy, not a discipline in itself but a culmination of many disciplines. Isidore stated, for example, that the medical doctor, like the philosopher, must be trained in both the *trivium* and the *quadrivium*, and therefore be a master of all the Liberal Arts; indeed he argued further that ‘medicine is called the Second Philosophy, for each discipline claims for itself the entire human: by philosophy the soul is cured; by medicine, the body’.³²

The influx of Greek and Arabic medical texts to western Europe during the twelfth century through the availability of new Latin translations coincided with a fresh approach to studying medicine through formal, systematic reading and analysis of texts under the leadership of a teacher (a *magister* or a *doctor*), and therefore the establishment of universities on the Continent that accommodated these disciplines. As active participants in this intellectual renaissance, Irish medical scholars of the later medieval period can be seen to have enthusiastically carried out the two central functions of translating texts from Latin and providing manuscripts for educational and reference purposes.³³ I submit that, when we examine the manuscript transmission and context of this brief commentary on the Latin word *magister* alongside certain aspects of its structure and content, it is possible to situate the text within this wider tradition of medical scholarship, which concerned itself increasingly not only with the qualifications and training of a good doctor, but also with the mechanics of translation and the philosophical underpinnings of ontological analysis.

TEXT AND TRANSLATION

I have provided below the text from the longest copy of the tract in E, with variants from the copies in G and H. In addition to the fact that it preserves more of the commentary in §9, there are several grounds on which to present

³¹Wallis, *Medieval Medicine*, xxii.

³²*Hinc est quod Medicina secunda Philosophia dicitur. Vtraque enim disciplina totum hominem sibi vindicat. Nam sicut per illam anima, ita per hanc corpus curatur*: Isidore, *Etymologiae* IV.xiii.1–5, ed. W. M. Lindsay, *Isidori Hispalensis Episcopi Etymologiarum sive Originum Libri XX*, 2 vols. (Oxford, 1911); trans. Stephen A. Barney, W. J. Lewis, J. A. Beach and Oliver Berghof, *The Etymologies of Isidore of Seville* (Cambridge, 2006), 115.

³³Aoibheann Nic Dhonnchadha, ‘The medical school of Aghmacart, Queen’s County’, *Ossory, Laois and Leinster* 2 (2006), 11–43.

E as a superior witness over G and H. First is the point that some letters on the right-hand edge of the manuscript page are obscured in the latter two copies, in G because of damage to the manuscript and in H because of the tightness of the manuscript binding. In both instances it is a fairly straightforward process to reconstruct the missing letters, however, since the commentary follows quite a repetitive pattern, and in any case the contents of the text are fully visible in E, where the scribe has also employed fewer abbreviations. This is a particularly useful feature of that witness, given that in both G and H a single letter enclosed by a *punctus* on either side can signify either a letter of the Roman alphabet or an entire word. For example, in §4 the graph *.g.* is used to represent the letter *g* as well as the word *Gaoidheilg*, while *.l.* is elsewhere used for both *litir* and *Laidin* (e.g. §5 of G or §6 of H).

E is the only witness in which both the words *Gréig* and *Laidin* have been written out in full (e.g. *isin Gréig ... isin Laidin* in §2), and I have followed this spelling in my expansions of these words elsewhere in the text. The word that I expand as *Gaoidheilg* is never written out completely in any of the witnesses: it is abbreviated to a single *g* in all instances save §8 of E, where the usual symbol for *Gréig* (*.gg.* with a suspension stroke over the top) is used for *Gaoidheilg* instead, as well as §§5–7 of H, where the word is written *gaod-* with a suspension stroke. On the whole, however, the meaning of these abbreviations is rendered quite clear by a comparison of all three witnesses of the text, as well as from the overall pattern of the commentary. For example, in nearly all cases the word *Gréig* is abbreviated to *.gg.* with a suspension stroke over it, as distinct from the single *.g.* for *Gaoidheilg*, the latter of which in any case is always illustrated by an Irish word in the translation. In one case a letter-name is given, i.e. *im* for *m* in G.³⁴ It is noteworthy that G abbreviates the word *céad* in §2 to *k* (compare *c* in E and *c* with a suprascript length mark in H), since the letter *k* was typically used by Irish scribes to represent the sound *kā*.³⁵ Otherwise bare Arabic numerals are almost always used as abbreviations of the ordinals, with only a few exceptions.³⁶ For the sake of clarity, I have silently edited out points around letter names and ordinal numbers.

The language of the text is Early Modern Irish, and its meaning is on the whole quite clear. However, the syntax of the final clause in §§2–4 is rather peculiar, making it somewhat awkward to provide very literal translations.

³⁴On the use of letter-names as evidence for the pronunciation of letters in medieval Irish, see further my comments in Deborah Hayden, ‘Cryptography and the alphabet in the “Book of Ádhamh Ó Cianáin”’, in Hayden and Russell, *Grammatica, Gramadach and Gramadeg*, 35–64, at 59–64.

³⁵O’Grady, *Catalogue*, 267, notes that the letter *k* served to abbreviate Lat. *kālena* in some medical manuscripts, while James Carney gives several examples of its use for this sound in the Irish translation of the *Regimen Sanitatis* of Magninus of Milan, noting further that it is employed in other manuscripts to abbreviate the words *cath* and *cathrach*: S. Ó Ceithearnaigh (ed.), *Regimen na Sláinte: Regimen Sanitatis Magnini Mediolanensis, Imleabhar a I (Pars I – II)* (Dublin, 1942), lvii.

³⁶These are §5 of H, where the Irish word *cethramad* is abbreviated to *cr* with a dot to indicate lenition over the *c* and a suspension stroke over the *r*; §6 of H and E, where the Roman numeral *.u.* is used for ‘fifth’; and §8 of H, where the Roman numeral *.uii.* is used for ‘seventh’.

It would appear that the verb *dlighidh*, which is written out in full by the scribe of E, is being used here with the meaning of ‘ought to’.³⁷ In all cases save §2 of E, however, the subject of this verb is followed by what I expand as the verbal noun of the copula, *b[h]eth*,³⁸ and then the object preceded by what I take to be the preposition *de* (written as *do* in §4) used in a partitive sense after the comparative forms *ní is mó* ‘more’ or *nísa lia* ‘more numerous’. Nevertheless, it is clear that in each case a comparison is being made between the respective achievements of a *magister* and a *doctor*, those of the former being the greater of the two.

A number of more significant variants suggest that H is an inferior witness to E and G, and it would be difficult to reconstruct the text on the basis of this copy alone. For example, although all three copies contain Latin words that clearly illustrate standard medieval orthographical features (e.g. the spelling of *scientia* as *siencia* in §6 of G and H, or of *excellētia* as *esilencia* in §8 of G),³⁹ the word *instructio* in §5 (given as *instruxio* in E and *instrucio* in G) has been thoroughly corrupted in H, where it is written as *sduritcia*. This suggests that the scribe of H has not understood the basic structural principle of the text, i.e. that the first letter of the Latin word in a given section of commentary is meant to correspond to the relevant letter of the word *magister* (in this case *i*). The same process of corruption has again occurred in §9 of H, where the scribe has changed the Latin word *regimen*, which correctly illustrates the final letter *r* of the word *magister*, to *signum* ‘sign’. As discussed above, this may have resulted from confusion between the very similar graphs for *r* and *s*, or from the scribe’s attempt to illustrate what he understood to be the word *foillsigud* ‘showing, revealing’.⁴⁰ Regardless, the error demonstrates that the scribe has not understood his source-text very well.

In §6, moreover, the clause *ōir dlighidh an maighister dilis gach ānf[h] ocail do tabuirt amach* (as in E and G) appears in H as *ōir dlighidh in maighister gach aonf[h]ocul do thuicsin*. Given that the genitive singular form of the word *focul* is written out in full in E (it is abbreviated to the first three letters *foc-* with a suspension stroke in G), I take the word *dilis* here to be a substantival form rather than the adjective meaning ‘faithful’ or ‘loyal’. This usage is attested in grammatical exegesis with reference

³⁷See *DIL*, s.v. *dligid* (III), which cites the examples *dligid óg eladha* ‘it is part of a young man (to acquire) learning’ and *dá réir sin dlighid bheth meta* ‘consequently they are necessarily timid’ (I am grateful to David Stifter for pointing out the latter sentence to me). On the various constructions involving this term, see Thomas Charles-Edwards, ‘*Dliged*: its native and Latinate uses’, *Celtica* 24 (2003), 65–78.

³⁸In all cases this word is written as the letter *b* followed by the Tironian note γ with either a suprascript dot or a spiritus asper to indicate lenition; only in §2 of G is lenition marked on the initial letter *b* by way of a suprascript dot.

³⁹For discussion, see Pádraig A. Breatnach, ‘The pronunciation of Latin in medieval Ireland’, in Sigrid Krämer and Michael Bernhard (eds), *Scire litteras: Forschungen zum mittelalterlichen Geistesleben*, Bayerische Akademie der Wissenschaften, Phil.-Hist. Kl., Abhandl. NF, Heft 99 (Munich, 1988), 59–72. Breatnach notes (p. 69) that the substitution of *ci* for *ti* ‘is endemic in Medieval Latin’, and that its origins date from about the third century.

⁴⁰See above, 96–7.

to the ‘property’ or ‘characteristic function’ associated with a given word, and I would argue on that basis that the original meaning intended in §6 of our text is that a *magister* is possessed of *scientia* ‘knowledge’ because he knows how to explain (*tabuirt amach*, lit. ‘give out’) the property or attribute (*diles*) associated with every word.⁴¹ In H, however, the scribe has clearly not understood this meaning, and has instead simply explained the association between the words *magister* and *scientia* by way of the Irish equivalent given for the latter, i.e. *tuigsin* – namely that the *magister* has knowledge because he ‘understands’ every word.

In the following transcription, I have noted all variant readings from G and H except for those of a minor orthographical nature (e.g. *an* vs. *in*; *nn* vs. *nd*; *curub* vs. *cuob* or *gurub*) or the use of the Tironian note γ versus the digraph *et* for ‘and’, the latter of which is generally the preferred form in G. Italics are used to expand contractions and suspension strokes in the manuscript; all attestations of suprascript *c* have been expanded as *ch*. As lenition is marked rather irregularly by the scribe, I have supplied this in several places in order to clarify the sense; however I have not supplied initial nasalization, which is never marked orthographically in the manuscript. I have also regularised the position of length marks, and where these have been omitted in the text I have indicated length with a macron. Missing letters are supplied in square brackets; word separation and punctuation are editorial.

§1 Do c[h]ēimindaib[h] an m[h]aighisdir⁴² ann sō, oīr atā in Feallsamh
ica fhiarfaighe⁴³ crēd⁴⁴ is maighisdir ann, nō c[ré]ad fā⁴⁵ n-abur⁴⁶
maig[h]isdir ris. γ adeir Tomás Elesanus⁴⁷ curub ōn focul⁴⁸ Laidne⁴⁹
darub ainm magistir,⁵⁰ γ is ed⁵¹ do litreachaib[h]⁵² atā isin⁵³ ainm so,⁵⁴
.i. ⁵⁵litreacha Grēgacha⁵⁶ γ is ē⁵⁷ sō mīniugh[adh]⁵⁸ na litreach so.⁵⁹

⁴¹See *DIL*, s.v. 2 *diles*.

⁴²na maigistrecha G in maigistrech H

⁴³aga fiarfi G agá fhiarfaighi H

⁴⁴The edge of the manuscript page has obscured the reading of this and the following word in G.

⁴⁵cred for H

⁴⁶n-aburter G n-aburtur H

⁴⁷Alifanus G Alisanus H

⁴⁸fhocul G H

⁴⁹word abbreviated to letter ‘l’ in G; Laitine H

⁵⁰maighister aderar é H

⁵¹letter ‘i’ followed by the Arabic numeral ‘6’ in G (= *isé*); is é H

⁵²mét do letreacha G lín leitrech H

⁵³san H

⁵⁴sin H

⁵⁵ocht G

⁵⁶om. G H

⁵⁷it G

⁵⁸mīniughthi G minugad H

⁵⁹sin H

- §2 .i. an *chéidlitir*⁶⁰ *dībh* .i. m⁶¹ 7 is inann m⁶² isin Gréig 7 maiór⁶³ isin Laidin⁶⁴ 7 is inann maiór⁶⁵ isin *Laidin*⁶⁶ 7 anī is mō⁶⁷ isin *Gaoidheilg*,⁶⁸ òir dlig[h]idh an maig[h]istir nī is mō⁶⁹ d'ealadhain nā⁷⁰ in dochtūir, òir nī haburter dochtūir⁷¹ *acht* a n-ēnealadhain⁷² 7 adearur⁷³ an⁷⁴ *maighistir* a n-ealadhain⁷⁵ imdha.
- §3 An 2⁷⁶ litir .i. a 7 is inand a re *rād[h]a*⁷⁷ isin Gréig 7 autoritas isin *Laidin* 7 is inann sin⁷⁸ isin *Laidin* 7 ughdurās isin *Gaoidheilg*, òir dlig[h]idh an maig[h]istir b[h]eth nīs mō⁷⁹ d'ug[h]durās⁸⁰ nā in dochtūir.
- §4 An 3⁸¹ litir .i. g 7 is inand sin⁸² isin Gréig 7 gradus isin *Laidin* 7 is inann sin⁸³ 7 cēim isin *Gaoidheilg*,⁸⁴ òir dlig[h]idh in *maighistir* b[h]eth nīsa lia⁸⁵ do *chéiminnaihbh* nā⁸⁶ in dochtūir.
- §5 An 4⁸⁷ litir .i. i 7 is inann sin⁸⁸ isin Gréig⁸⁹ 7 instruxio⁹⁰ isin *Laidin* 7 is inann sin⁹¹ 7 cum[h]dach isin⁹² *Gaoidheilg*, òir dlig[h]idh an *maighistir gach* ænf[h]ocul do c[h]jum[h]dach.

⁶⁰The first element of this compound has been abbreviated to *k* in G.

⁶¹im G

⁶²im G

⁶³magior G H

⁶⁴Abbreviated to .i. in G H

⁶⁵magior G sin H

⁶⁶om. H

⁶⁷nīsa mhō G

⁶⁸Abbreviated to .g. in all witnesses.

⁶⁹bheth nīs mō G beth ní is mó H

⁷⁰ina G

⁷¹in dochtūir H; the suspension mark is missing in E.

⁷²a n-aon ealadhain G ó aon eladhain H

⁷³This word is obscured by the edge of the page in G.

⁷⁴om. G in H

⁷⁵a n-ealadhaibh G a n-eladnuibh H

⁷⁶Given as the Arabic numeral '2' (for *dá*) in all three copies, with the spiritus asper only in G.

⁷⁷re rād[h] G om. H

⁷⁸autoritas G

⁷⁹nīsa mhō G ní is mó H

⁸⁰ūdurās G d'ūdurūs H

⁸¹3s G

⁸²g G; obscured by binding in H.

⁸³gradus isin *Laidin* G gra isin *Laidin* H

⁸⁴n*Gaoidheilg* G

⁸⁵nīs mhó G ní is mó H

⁸⁶iná G

⁸⁷cethramad H

⁸⁸i G H.

⁸⁹n*Gréig* G

⁹⁰instrucio G sdurictia H

⁹¹om. G

⁹²a H

- §6 In u⁹³ litir .i. s ḡ is inann sin⁹⁴ isin Gréig ḡ scienncia⁹⁵ isin⁹⁶ Laidin ḡ is inann sin⁹⁷ isin Laidin⁹⁸ ḡ tuicsin isin⁹⁹ Gaoidheilg, òir dlighidh an maighistir dīlis¹⁰⁰ gach ænf[h]ocail do t[h]ab[h]uirt amach.¹⁰¹
- §7 An 6 litir .i. t ḡ¹⁰² is inann t isin Gréig¹⁰³ ḡ tenens¹⁰⁴ isin¹⁰⁵ Laidin ḡ is inand sin¹⁰⁶ isin¹⁰⁷ Laidin ḡ cong[m][h]āil¹⁰⁸ isin¹⁰⁹ Gaoidheilg, òir dlighidh an maighistir gach ænfhocul do-c[h]luin¹¹⁰ do c[h]ongm[h]āil.¹¹¹
- §8 An 7¹¹² litir .i. e ḡ is inand e isin Gréig¹¹³ ḡ exilenncia¹¹⁴ isin¹¹⁵ Laidin ḡ is inand sin¹¹⁶ ḡ tocht¹¹⁷ isin¹¹⁸ Gaoidheilg,¹¹⁹ òir dlighidh an maighistir b[h]eth na t[h]ocht¹²⁰ nō co cluin¹²¹ anī¹²² ara tab[h]uir¹²³ fregra.¹²⁴
- §9 An 8 litir .i. r ḡ is inand r isin¹²⁵ Gréig ḡ reghimen¹²⁶ isin¹²⁷ Laidin ḡ is inand sin¹²⁸ ḡ foillsigudh isin¹²⁹ Gaoidheilg, òir dlighidh an maighistir

⁹³Suprascript in E; Arabic numeral 5 in G

⁹⁴s G; obscured by binding of manuscript in H

⁹⁵siencia G H

⁹⁶a H

⁹⁷sciencia G

⁹⁸om. H

⁹⁹a H

¹⁰⁰om. H

¹⁰¹do thuicsin H

¹⁰²om. G

¹⁰³Obscured by binding of MS in H.

¹⁰⁴tinens H

¹⁰⁵a H

¹⁰⁶tenens G

¹⁰⁷a H

¹⁰⁸cong[b]ail H

¹⁰⁹a H

¹¹⁰da-cluin H

¹¹¹cong[b]ail H

¹¹²uii H

¹¹³Written suprascript and abbreviated to a single ‘g’.

¹¹⁴esilencia G exilincia H

¹¹⁵a H

¹¹⁶esilencia isin Laidin G sin a Laitin H

¹¹⁷Written as tos + the –us symbol in G

¹¹⁸a H

¹¹⁹Abbreviated to two ‘g’s here with suspension and lenition marks above.

¹²⁰thocht G H

¹²¹go cluine G gu cluin H

¹²²an ní G in nī H

¹²³dtiubhradh G

¹²⁴fregradh G freagrudh H

¹²⁵a H

¹²⁶regimíní G signum H

¹²⁷a H

¹²⁸regimíní isin Laidin G signum a Laidin

¹²⁹a H

gach ænf[h]ocul¹³⁰ d'f[h]oillsighudh¹³¹ do réir méti¹³² ⁊ ughduráis ⁊ cēime ⁊ cum[h]daigh ⁊ tuicsina ⁊ congm[h]āla ⁊ toscaignthi¹³³ ⁊ foillsigthia ōna b[h]unadus ⁊ gebē bīs andsna hocht cēiminduib[h]-sin fētur maig[h]isdir foirfi do ghairm dhē, ⁊ dā testaigi ēnchéim dīb[h] sō uadhā nī maig[h]isdir ē do réir an F[h]eallsaimh, ōir adeir an Feallsamh na neithi atā co huilidhi inntu fēin nī cōir a mbeth randuighi a n-ēgmuis na maisi diagha asar boined[h] *gach* ænnī ⁊ is mar sin dlighus an maighistir b[h]eth and fēin: co huilidhi ⁊ gan a b[h]eth co randi. Ōir dā mbeth co randuidhi tuicter rann de sō do b[h]eth d'uireasbaigh air; mas ed, ní maig[h]isdir ē acht muna roib[h] co huilidhi andsna cēimindaib[h] sin ⁊rl.

- §1 On the attainments of the master here, for the Philosopher is asking what a master is, or why he is called a master. And Tomás Elesanus says that it is from the Latin word *magister* ('master, teacher'), and this is the number of letters in that noun, i.e. eight Greek letters, and this is the explanation of these letters:
- §2 The first of those letters is *m*, and *m* in Greek is the equivalent of *maior* ('more') in Latin, and *maior* in Latin is equivalent to *aní is mó* ('more') in Irish, for the master ought to have more art[s] than the doctor, for one is said to be a doctor in only one art, and one is said to be a master in many arts.
- §3 The second letter is *a*, and *a* in Greek is the equivalent of *auctoritas* ('authority') in Latin, and that is equivalent in Latin to *ughdarás* ('authority') in Irish, for the master ought to be of more authority than the doctor.
- §4 The third letter is *g*, and that in Greek is the equivalent of *gradus* ('grade, step, degree') in Latin, and that is equivalent to *céim* ('step, grade, attainment') in Irish, for the master ought to have more attainments than the doctor.
- §5 The fourth letter is *i*, and that is equivalent in Greek to *instructio* ('constructing, building, instruction') in Latin, and that is equivalent to *cumhdach* ('constructing, composing') in Irish, for the master ought to construct every single word.

¹³⁰*fhocul* G

¹³¹*d'fhoillsigid* G *d'foillsig* ⁊rl. H (remainder of the text omitted in H). In E, the letters *⁊ is inand sin ⁊ fo* have been deleted immediately before this word.

¹³²*mēidi* G

¹³³*tosgaidhe* G. I am uncertain of the expansion intended in E here, where the suspension mark occurs over both the *s* and *c*. It could have been intended as a participial form of *toscaigid* 'moves, sets in motion', or alternatively as *tosaicthi*, as a participial form of the verb *toscaigid* 'begins'. However, neither of these solutions accords particularly well with the noun *tocht* 'silence' in the gloss on the letter *e*, which was presumably the basis for the noun.

- §6 The fifth letter is *s*, and that in Greek is equivalent to *scientia* ('knowledge') in Latin, and that in Latin is equivalent to *tuigsin* ('wisdom, understanding') in Irish, for the master must provide (lit. 'give out') the property of every single word.
- §7 The sixth letter is *t*, and *t* in Greek is the same as *tenens* ('holding, retaining') in Latin, and that in Latin is the equivalent of *congmháil* ('keeping, retaining') in Irish, for the master must retain every single word that he hears.
- §8 The seventh letter is *e*, and *e* in Greek is the equivalent of *excellencia* ('excellence') [or *ex silentio* 'from silence'?] in Latin, and that is equivalent to *tocht* ('silence') in Irish, for the master must be silent until he hears the thing to which he gives an answer.
- §9 The eighth letter is *r*, and *r* in Greek is the equivalent of *regimen* ('guidance, direction') in Latin, and that is the equivalent of *foillsigudh* ('showing, revealing') in Irish, for the master ought to reveal every single word according to size and authority and degree and construction and understanding and retaining and silence (?) and demonstration of its origin, and whoever should possess those eight attainments can be called a complete master, and if he is lacking any of these attainments he is not a master according to the Philosopher, for the Philosopher says that things that are complete in themselves should not be divided apart from the divine primordial mass from which every single thing was derived, and that is how the master should be: complete in himself and not divided. For if he is divided, one of these parts is understood to be missing from him; if it is so, he is not a master, save if he be entirely possessed of those attainments, etc.

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