

A CRITICAL EDITION OF THE POEMS AND THE *ROSC IN AIREC MENMAN URAIRD MAIC
COISSE*

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Abstract

This thesis is a critical edition of the poems and the *rosc* found in the Middle Irish tale *Airec Menman Uraird maic Coisse* ‘The Strategem of Urard mac Coisse’. The tale tells of how the poet Urard mac Coisse seeks compensation from Domnall mac Muirchertaig, the tenth-century king of Tara, after the ransacking of his home by Domnall’s kinsmen. Since the poet does not want to directly accuse the king’s relatives of the crime, he invents an allegorical in-tale titled *Orcaín Cathrach Máil Milscothaigh* ‘The Plundering of Máel Milscothach’s Fort’. After the recounting of the tale which includes the reciting of four poems and a *rosc*, the king comes to understand, via an angel, that Máel Milscothach is actually Urard mac Coisse. The poet is then given full restitution. The tale is found in three manuscripts: Oxford, Bodleian Library MS Rawlinson B 512; Dublin, Royal Irish Academy MS 23 N 10; and London, British Library MS Harleian 5280. The tale has yet to be edited and translated in its entirety; consequently, this thesis partially fills this gap in knowledge via a critical edition of the poems and the *rosc*.

Chapter 1 provides a literary background to the tale and discusses the following themes: the identity of Urard mac Coisse, the Tale-Lists, the role and skills of a *fili* ‘poet’, hospitality, allegory and etymology. Chapter 2 presents the critical edition of the poems and the *rosc*, completed with textual notes and translation. A discussion of the manuscripts, the language and dating of the text as well as editorial policies is included. This thesis provides a critically restored and normalised text based on the three extant manuscripts and discusses issues faced when editing a Middle Irish text.

Abbreviated Titles

AFM	Annals of Four Masters (O'Donovan 1856)
AI	Annals of Inisfallen (Mac Airt 1951)
ALC	Annals of Loch Cé (Hennessy 1871)
AT	Annals of Tigernach (Stokes 1896)
AU	Annals of Ulster (Mac Airt & Mac Niocaill 1983)
CIH	<i>Corpus iuris Hibernici</i> (Binchy 1978)
CS	<i>Chronicum Scotorum</i> (Hennessy 1866)
eDIL	Electronic Dictionary of the Irish Language
Etym	<i>Etymologies</i> of Isidore of Seville (Lindsay 1911)
Fél.	<i>Féilire Óengusso Céili Dé</i> (Stokes 1905)
GOI	A Grammar of Old Irish (Thurneysen 1946)
Laws	Ancient Laws of Ireland (Atkinson 1901)
Luc. Fid.	<i>Lucerna fidelium</i> (O'Molloy 1676)
Met. Dinds.	The Metrical <i>Dindshenchas</i> (Gwynn 1903–1935)
MI.	Milan Glosses (Stokes & Strachan 1901: 7–483)
OM	O'Mulconry's Glossary (Moran 2019)
SC	<i>Sanas Cormaic</i> (Meyer 1912a)
Sg.	Glosses on Priscian (St Gall) (Stokes 1903: 49–224)
SR	<i>Saltair na Rann</i> (Greene 2007)
Thes.	<i>Thesaurus Palaeohibernicus</i> (Stokes & Strachan 1901; 1903)
Trip ²	<i>Bethu Phátraic: The Tripartite Life of Patrick</i> (Mulchrone 1939)
Wb.	Würzburg Glosses (Stokes & Strachan 1901: 499–712)
ZCP	<i>Zeitschrift für celtische Philologie</i>

Manuscript Abbreviations

H	Harleian 5280
LH	<i>Liber Hymnorum</i>
LL	Book of Leinster
LU	<i>Lebor na hUidre</i>
N	23 N10 (Book of Ballycummin)
R	Rawlinson B. 512

Grammatical Abbreviations

abs.	absolute	aug.	augment
acc.	accusative	cond. fut.	conditional future
adj.	adjective	conj.	conjunct

dat.	dative	pass.	passive
(def.) art.	(definite) article	past subj.	past subjunctive
f.	fem	perf.	perfect
fut.	future	pl.	plural
gen.	genitive	poss. pron.	possessive pronoun
indep. prot.	independent prototonic	prep.	preposition
inf. pron.	infixd pronoun	pres. ind.	present indicative
imperf.	imperfect	pres. subj.	present subjunctive
impers.	impersonal	pret.	preterite
ipv.	imperative	redup. pret.	reduplicated preterite
m.	masculine	sg.	singular
n.	neuter	vn.	verbal noun
nas. rel.	nasalising relative	voc.	vocative
nom.	nominative		

Other

EModIr.	Early Modern Irish
MidIr.	Middle Irish
OIr.	Old Irish

Chapter One: Introduction

The aim of this thesis is to produce a critical edition of the poems and the *rosc* of the Middle Irish (900–1200 AD) tale, *Airec Menman Uraid maic Coisse* ‘The Stratagem of Urard mac Coisse’. The tale recounts the *fili* Urard maic Coisse’s attempts to seek compensation from the tenth-century king of Tara, Domnall mac Muirchertaig, after the ransacking of Urard’s home by the king’s relatives. Since Urard does not want to directly accuse the king’s relatives of the crime, he creates an allegorical in-tale titled *Orcaín Cathrach Maíl Milscothaigh* ‘The Plundering of Máel Milscothach’s Fort’ under the alias of Máel Milscothach. The king comes to understand, via an angel, that Máel Milscothach is actually Urard mac Coisse and it is the poet who has been ransacked.

Airec Menman is also known for containing what modern scholars call the ‘Tale-List’. This is a catalogue of tales that a poet is supposed to know as part of his repertoire, and it is one of our primary sources for the extent of medieval Irish narrative tradition. Another important aspect of *Airec Menman* is the legal judgement at the end of the tale that determines the honour-price that is to be paid to Urard mac Coisse. Despite the importance of *Airec Menman* for our understanding of medieval Irish culture, a critical edition of the text is still a *desideratum*. This thesis aims to partially address this issue. The first part of this thesis will be concerned with situating the tale in the wider scope of medieval Irish literature by examining the background and analogues of the text. Firstly, a discussion on the main characters of the tale is given and, secondly, the themes of the Tale-List, the role and skills of a *fili* ‘poet’, hospitality, and then allegory and etymology are discussed. The second part of this thesis is the critical edition of the four poems and the *rosc* of *Airec Menman*.

Poem One is recited by Máel Milscothach who encourages the three plunderers Níall mac Áeda, Máel Cainnich úa Brádacáin and Ócán úa hUrthaile to make amends with the poet. Poem Two is recited by the king’s messenger Robad mac Rofúacra who apprehends the plunderers around the spoils. The messenger encourages the plunderers to return the spoils and warns them that a failure to do so would result in their satirisation. He recounts past literary examples of satirisation, and it is argued here that this serves to pressure the plunderers into admitting to and atoning for their crime. Poem Three is recited by Aurchoimted mac Sodeithbir, who is presumably one of the plunderers, and is a response to Robad mac Rofúacra. The poem is an attempt to downplay the severity of the plunderers’ crime as well as to praise Domnall with the aim of defusing the situation and perhaps having the plunderers save their honour. Aurchoimted concludes the poem by stating that Máel would have his cows and property returned. Poem Four is Máel’s answer to Aurchoimted, in which he states that despite his close relationship with the king and his relatives, he, nevertheless, has had his fort raided. Máel highlights his mistreatment and instead of threatening the plunderers, he directs his anger toward Domnall. Lastly, the *rosc* is spoken by the king and his counsel and is a legal judgement on the situation. The tale concludes that Urard mac Coisse is to be paid compensation and have all his

properties returned. The critical edition includes a discussion of the manuscripts, editions, dating and language of the text, and a linguistic commentary on the text.

Who was Urard mac Coisse?

Bergin (1970: 175) made no attempt to determine whether the protagonist of the tale, Urard mac Coisse, actually existed and wrote 'I leave the matter undecided', but an attempt to establish the historical existence of Urard will aid in the dating of *Airec Menman*. Modern scholars (O'Reilly 1820: lxxx-lxxiii; Ó Lochlainn 1943: 216; Carney 1969/70: 310; Mac Cana 1980: 36; O'Leary 1999: 61; Toner 2000: 96) have noted the difficulty of ascertaining the poet's existence because two individuals by the name of Urard mac Coisse are mentioned in the Annals. This section will attempt to resolve the issue on how many Urard mac Coisse existed. The obit of the first Urard mac Coisse is given as part of a narrative under the year 983 in the Annals of Clonmacnoise (Murphy 1896: 161–2). This narrative recounts how Urard was living in Clonmacnoise when he received the revenues of Ireland for a year on account of being a great poet from the then High-King, Máel Sechnaill. The text states:

'Before McCossye fell to these devotions king Moyleseaghlyn of his great bounty and favour to learning and learned men bestowed the revenewes of the Crown of Ireland for one yeare upon mcCossye, who enjoyed it accordingly, and at the yeares end when the king would have the said revenewes to himselfe mcCossye said that hee would never suffer the king from thenceforth to have any part of the royaltyes or profits, but would keep all to himselfe whether the king would or noe or lose his life in Defence thereof' (Murphy 1896: 161).

Urard's refusal to return the revenues resulted in a battle between him and the king. It is said in the text:

'Notwithstanding all which mcCossye was of such hope that the king of his favour of poetry and learning would never draw his blood, which did imbolden and incourage him to combat with the king, and being a horseback mcCossye well provided with horse and armour and the king only with a good horse & a staffe without a head, fell eagerly to the encounter, mcCossye desireous to kill the king, to the end he might enjoy the Revenewes without contradiction; the king coningly defended himself with nimble avoydings and turnings of his horse, feared to hurte mcCossye untill at last with his skillfulness and good horsemanship hee vanquished mcCossye and enjoyed his kingdom and revenewes thereof ever after untill Bryan Borowe & his Mounstermen tooke the same from him' (Murphy 1896: 162).

In this entry, Urard is portrayed as a greedy poet who ultimately loses the battle, and this depiction is in stark contrast to his image in *Airec Menman* of a poet being wronged.

Further information on Urard can be found in the other Annals, for example, his obit is also given as short entries under the year 990 in the following Annals:

AT

Kl. Urard mac Coisse, priméces Góidhel, in penitentia mortuus est a Cluain maic Noise.

‘Urard mac Coise, chief poet of the Gaels, died in penitence at Clonmacnoise’ (Stokes 1896: 347).

AU

Airard m. Coissi, prim-ecēs Erenn, Aedh H. Mael Doraid, i. ri Ceniuil Conaill, mortui sunt.

‘Urard son of Coise, chief poet of Ireland, Aed ua Mail Doraid, i.e. king of Cenél Conaill, died’ (Mac Airt & Mac Niocaill 1983: 422).

CS

Erard mac Coisi prímhéges Gaoidel in penitentia a g-Cluain M Nois moritur.

‘Urard mac Coise, chief poet of the Gaedils, died in penitence in Clonmacnoise’ (Hennessy 1866: 203).

However, there is an obit for a second Urard mac Coisse that is given thirty-three years later in the Annals of Four Masters under the year 1023:

Erard mac Coisse, árd-chroinicide na n-Gaoidheal, d’écc h-i Cluain Mic Nóis, iar n-deigh-bhethaidh.

‘Urard mac Coise, chief-chronicler of the Gaels, died in Clonmacnoise, after the best life’ (O’Donovan 1856: 807).

These entries inform us that Urard mac Coisse was the *priméces* ‘chief-poet’ of Ireland when he died in penitence in Clonmacnoise in modern County Offaly. If he died in 983/990, he would have been chief-poet to the High-King Domnall ua Néill who was from the northern Uí Néill. The king’s reign, according to the AFM and AU, began in 955 or 956, respectively, and lasted until his death, which is given in the AT, AU and CS as 980 and in AFM as 978 (Stokes 1896: 341; Mac Airt & Mac Niocaill 1983: 400, 415; Hennessy 1866: 197; O’Donovan 1856: 674, 709). It is this Domnall ua Néill who is mentioned in *Airec Menman*.

Before Domnall’s reign, Congalach was the overking of the southern Uí Néill, while Ruaidrí ua Conannáin was the overking of the northern Uí Néill (Mac Shamhráin 2009a; 2009b). In 950, Congalach and Ruaidrí fought against the Viking king of Dublin, Guðrøðr, and it resulted in Congalach being victorious, Ruaidrí dying in battle and Guðrøðr fleeing the scene. In the following year, the Vikings attacked Congalach whereby they plundered major churches in Meath (Downham:

2007: 47). Guðrøðr died soon afterwards and was replaced by Óláfr who was the king of Dublin until 980. In 956, Congalach attacked the Leinster overking Tuathal son of Ugaire, which led to Tuathal and Óláfr forming an alliance to defeat Congalach. Congalach died in battle and his death is referenced in *Airec Menman* in §27.13, which states: *Nocon-esérrach amach, / in gall ro-marb Congalach*, ‘He has not risen yet, / the foreigner who killed Congalach’¹. After Congalach’s death, Domnall then obtained the kingship of Ireland. In the 960s, Óláfr’s relationship with Leinster wavered from allies to enemies as Óláfr would attack Leinster in 964, but then he would enter into an alliance with Leinster in order to fight Domnall. In the same period, Domnall fought with Munster while trying to assert his authority in Meath and in 968, Domnall attacked the Vikings and Leinster for two months while Óláfr continued his attack on the southern Uí Néill. In 969, Óláfr and the overking of Leinster, Murchad son of Finn attacked the church of Kells in the territory of the southern Uí Néill, and in the following year they would win a battle against the Uí Néill at Ardmulchan, County Meath (Downham 2007: 50). Domnall was driven from Meath in 971 but returned the following year to successfully plunder the area and reassert his authority. Domnall continued to reign as King of Tara until Máel Sechnaill took the kingship in 980 (Byrne 2001: 256-7, 267). This brief overview of the politics at the time shows that Urard lived during a period of political unrest, with Domnall regularly in battle against the Vikings and Leinster, an area over which Domnall tried to obtain authority.

After the king’s death, Urard would then also have been chief-poet to the king’s successor, Máel Sechnaill, who reigned between 980 to 1002, after which Brian Boru forced him into submission. If Urard died in 1023, he would have continued being chief-poet to Mael Sechnaill, who regained the kingship when Brian Boru, his son and his grandson died in the Battle of Clontarf in 1014. Mael Sechnaill then reigned until his death in 1022. If *Airec Menman* was indeed written by Urard, the tale may have also reflected the politics of the time.

Scholars have examined works attributed to ‘mac Coisse’ to deduce whether there were one or two figures known as Urard mac Coisse (O’Reilly 1820: lxx–lxxiii; O’Curry 1873: 116–35; Hull 1906: 20, 211–12; O’Donovan 1857: 341–56; Ó Lochlainn 1943: 208–18; O’Leary 1999: 53–72). The following works are ascribed to Urard mac Coisse: *Airec Menman*, the poem beginning *Freccair meisi, a meic Coisi*, ‘Answer me, mac Coisse’ (Bergin 1921–1923: 175–80), and another poem beginning *Marthain duit, a Ioraird fhéil*, ‘Long life to you, generous Urard’ (Meyer 1912a: 218–22). These works associate a ‘mac Coisse’ with either Domnall ua Néill, Máel Sechnaill or Brian Boru. For example, *Airec Menman* and *Maccan opas orm aniu* have Domnall ua Néill as the subject and in *Marthain duit, a Ioraird fhéil*, mac Coisse and Mag Liag, Mael Sechanill’s and Brian Boru’s poets respectively, debate the different rewards and gifts that their patrons have given them. In *Freccair*

¹ All references from *Airec Menman* are taken from Byrne’s (1908) edition of the tale, except from the poems and the *rosca*, where these quotations are taken from the normalised text of this thesis. Translations are my own unless otherwise specified.

meisi, a meic Coisi, Urard is associated with Máel Sechnaill and the tale recounts to Donnchad mac Briain how Máel gave him the entire revenues of Ireland for a year as a reward. This narrative is also incorporated into the earlier-cited entry under the year 983 in the Annals of Clonmacnoise (Murphy 1896: 161–2). In *Freccair meisi, a meic Coisi*, Máel Schlainn states: *Éiricch co Temhraigh na ttréd, / mar a tā mo s[h]elbadh sét: / caith blīadhain ón oidhc[h]e anocht / i ccennus Ērenn na n-ardp[h]ort. / Tair chuccam i ccend blīadhna / co hÁth Cliath, do réir rīaghla, / co n-órdaigher, nī lesc lem, / duit th’ollamhnacht is t’ferann*, ‘Go to Tara of the flocks, where my possession of treasures is: spend a year from to-night in the government of Ireland of the high strongholds. / Come to me at the end of a year, to Áth Cliath according to rule, that I may ordain for thee (a pleasant duty) thy ollavship and thy land’ (Bergin 1921–1923: 177, 179). Mac Coisse admits he did not return the revenue and instead went to battle with the king although *gēr c[h]lāon cēille* ‘it was a perversity of judgement’ (Bergin 1921–1923: 177, 179). Later the text states: *Do impō an āithc[h]eis nār mīn, / is tumais a herluinn rem t[h]āoibh / rob é sin, gan c[h]lor ’na c[h]end; / féicce heinicch na hĒrenn*, ‘He turned the sharp ungentle spear, and plunged its shaft against my side. That, without contradiction, was the pinnacle of Ireland’s generosity’ (Bergin 1921–1923: 178–9). While mac Coisse may have been an esteemed poet, his greediness, which he himself admits is a bad quality, nearly led him to his death if it was not for the king’s generosity.

Three other works, by contrast, are attributed to a ‘mac Coisi’: the poem beginning *An oir tainic tuitim Bhriain* ‘From the east came Brian’s fall’; *Maccan opas orm aniu* ‘The lad who today refuses me’ (Mac Airt & Mac Niocaill 1983: 414–15), and the poem *Brónach ollamh d’éis a righ* ‘Sad is a poet after death of his king’ (O’Donovan 1857–1858: 341–56). The poem *An oir tainic tuitim Bhriain* informs Mag Liag about those who died in the Battle of Clontarf² and *Maccan opas orm aniu* is a poem written in honour of Domnall’s death. The poem *Brónach ollamh d’éis a righ* is an elegy for Fergal Ó Rúairc, King of Connacht and has a passing reference to Brian Boru. While these texts only mention a ‘mac Coisse’, modern scholars have assumed that the texts refer to Urard mac Coisse³.

While we cannot be certain that an Urard mac Coisse actually wrote any of these texts, they do suggest the possibility that at least one Urard mac Coisse may have been alive around the tenth–eleventh centuries. O’Reilly (1820: lxxii–lxxiii) argues that the first Urard mac Coisse wrote the poem *Brónach ollamh d’éis a righ* shortly after Fergal Ó Ruairc’s death in 966 and infers that the second Urard mac Coisse could not have written the poem as he would have been ‘near one hundred years old, if he had lived to the year 1023’. Due to the extant works that associate a ‘mac Coisse’ with Brian

² This text has not yet been published but the first stanza of the poem is provided by O’Reilly (1820: lxxi) and O’Grady (1926: 349–50).

³ For a discussion of the phenomena of poetry being written in someone’s ‘voice’, that is pseudonymous poems, in Early Irish poetry see Tymoczko (1996) and Herbert (2005). In personal communication with Prof David Stifter, he has commented that a scribe was likely to make references to another person when the latter has relevance to the scribe’s own life. The implication of this for *Airec Menman* is that if Urard mac Coisse did not write the text, then the unknown author may have had some sort of connection with Urard mac Coisse himself.

Boru, such as the aforementioned *Freccair meisi, a meic Coisi* and *An oir tainic tuitim*, O'Reilly concludes that two figures known as Urard mac Coisse existed. However, O'Reilly's conclusions did not win acceptance from other early modern scholars. O'Curry (1873: 116–35), Hull (1907: 20, 211–12) and O'Donovan (1857–1858: 341–56) all separately disagree with O'Reilly and contend that only the second Urard mac Coisse was a historical figure. O'Curry (1873: 130) disputes these calculations and theorises that the second Urard mac Coisse would have been either eighty-two or eighty-three years old when he died, which was 'a span of life no way extraordinary in that age any more than in this'. Neither Hull nor O'Donovan were concerned with calculations. The former merely states that only the second Urard mac Coisse existed. O'Donovan (1857–1858: 348, 351) points out, moreover, that in *Brónach ollamh d'éis a righ*, references to the Battle of Clontarf in 1014 are made in stanza fifteen, supporting the idea that only the second Urard mac Coisse existed: *Subhach ríol gCuinn tar éis Bhriain / Do thuitim a n-gliadh Cluana tarbh*, 'Joyful are the Race of Conn, after Brian's Fall in the Battle of Cluain-tarbh'.

If Urard mac Coisse and Brian Boru were contemporaries, then the first Urard mac Coisse could not have written *Brónach ollamh d'éis a righ* because he would have been dead when the Battle of Clontarf happened. Why then was there an entry for a Urard mac Coisse in 990? O'Donovan (1857–1858: 342) solves this problem by arguing that the entry 1023 in AFM is correct and that the earlier entry in AT should be amended to:

Urard Mac Coisse, príméces Gaedhil in penitentia moratus est a g-Cluain mic Nois.

'Urard Mac Coisse, chief poet of Erin, lived in penitence at Clonmacnoise'.

O'Donovan amends *mortuus est* 'died' to *moratus est* 'stayed', thereby bringing a dead Urard mac Coisse back to life. Another problem arises from the poem, namely the identification of Fergal Ó Rúairc. O'Donovan identifies two Fergal Ó Rúaircs: the obit of the first is given as 966 in AU and that of the second is given as 1157 in AC, the genealogies in the Book of Lecan and in the Book of Ballymote. Neither Fergal could be the one referenced in the elegy due to the already mentioned reference to the Battle of Clontarf. In order to reconcile this problem, O'Donovan postulates that the second Urard mac Coisse wrote the poem for Máel Sechnaill. Another Irish poet then imitated the poem and substituted Máel Sechnaill with the earlier Fergal Ó Rúairc in order to give the impression that Fergal was still alive after the Battle of Clontarf. O'Donovan's willingness to accept that two Fergals may have existed, but not two figures with the name 'mac Coisi', makes his argument unconvincing, and his emendation of the entry in AT is unnecessary. Conversely, Bergin (1970: 175) provides a much simpler solution. He suggests that we should take Urard mac Coisse's obit of 990 as the correct date and dismiss all textual references to the Battle of Clontarf as spurious; however, he was non-committal about this idea.

The problem of the two figures named Urard mac Coisse would not be addressed again until Ó Lochlainn (1943) and O’Leary (1999). These scholars examined a wider range of texts that were attributed to ‘mac Cosse’ than their predecessors did and introduced the figure Airbertach mac Coisse into the equation. Airbertach mac Coisse is mentioned in the Annals as being the *airchinnech* ‘superior, abbot’ of Ros Ailithir, present day Roscarberry, Co. Cork. The entries are as follows:

AU – s.a. 1016.8

Airbertach m. Coisi Dobran, airchinnech Rois Ailithir, do ec.

‘Airbertach m. Coise Dobráin, leader of Ros Ailithir, died’ (Mac Airt and Mac Niocaill 1983: 452).

AFM – s.a 1015.6

Airbhertach, mac Coisi Dobhroin, airchinnech Ruis Ailithir, ocus Maol Patraicc ua Sluaghadghaigh, saoi Ereann, d’ecc.

‘Airbeartach, son of Cosi Dobráin, leader of Ros Ailithir and Máel Pátraic ua Sluaghadhaigh, sage of Ireland, died’ (O’Donovan 1856: 784–5).

ALC – s.a. 1016

Airbertac mac Coisi Dóbrán, airchinnech Rois Ailitreach, do eg.

‘Airbhertach, son of Cosdobhran, airchinnech of Ros-ailitreach, died’ (Hennessy 1871: 16).

There is another entry in the Annals of Inisfallen which only mentions a ‘mac Coisse’ under the year 990:

...indreth Ruis Ailithir do Gallaib ocus in fer legind do gabail dóib .i. mc. Cosse Dobráin ocus a chennach do Brian oc Inis Cathaich.

‘Ros Ailithir was invaded by foreigners, and the lector, namely, Mac Coise Dobráin, was taken prisoner by them, and he was ransomed by Brian at Inis Cathaig’ (Mac Airt 1951: 168).

Since Airbertach mac Coisse’s obits associate him with Ros Ailithir, both Ó Lochlainn and O’Leary have reasonably assumed that AI’s entry about mac Coisse’s ransoming by Brian after his capture by the Vikings at Scatterry Island refers to Airbertach mac Coisse. This assumption is further strengthened by the fact that the Annals record Airbertach mac Coisse’s progression from *fer léiginn*, a master of a school at a monastic centre, to *airchinnech*, a leader or head of an ecclesiastical community. Evidently, Airbertach mac Coisse was a learned man with a high reputation.

In comparison with Urard mac Coisse’s secular works, Airbertach mac Coisse is credited with religious material such as his four poems that deal with geography and biblical history. The first poem begins *Rofessa hi curp domuin dúir* ‘It is known in the body of the firm world’ (Best, Bergin & et al 1954–1983: 524–32; Olden 1879–1888: 219–52) and describes the geography of the world within a

Christian framework. The work is based on late-classical sources such as Pomponius, Orosius and Isidore of Seville (Kenney 1929: 683; MacShamhráin 2005: 13). The second poem beginning *A Dé dúilig, ada-teoch* ‘God, Creator, I implore you’ is on the Psalter and uses the Old Irish prose treatise on the Psalter⁴ as its source; it opens with an invocation to God. The third poem beginning *Rochúala crecha is tír thair* ‘I have heard of plunders in the land in the east’ (Meyer 1901a: 23–4) recounts the defeat of the Midianites by the people of Israel. The thirty-first chapter of the Book of Numbers of the Hebrew Bible was used as a source (Kenney 1929: 683). Lastly, the poem beginning *Fiche ríg cía rím as ferr* ‘Twenty kings according to the best reckoning’ (Mac Eoin 1966: 112–39) deals with the twenty kings of Israel and Judah from the time of Saul to the destruction of Jerusalem. More contentiously, Gerard Mac Eoin (1960–1961: 51–67) has credited the Middle Irish biblical opus *Saltair na Rann* (Stokes 1883; Greene 2007) to Airbertach mac Coisse, although James Carney (1982–1983: 177–216) disagrees with his assessment. Despite the religious and classical nature of Airbertach mac Coisse’s works, he is viewed as the key to the problem of how many figures known as Urard mac Coisse existed.

After re-examining the works attributed to ‘mac Coisse’, Ó Lochlainn (1943: 218) argues that the first Urard mac Coisse and Airbertach mac Coisse were two historical figures who were conflated to produce a third figure, that is the second Urard mac Coisse. This literary Urard mac Coisse was then attached to works concerning the Battle of Clontarf, Brian Boru, and Mag Liag, and was the product of the pseudohistory of the fourteenth century that saw the second Urard mac Coisse being written into the Annals under the year 1023. This theory led Ó Lochlainn (1943: 216) to dismiss all ascriptions to mac Coisse as being ingenuine. For example, he states that *Brónach ollamh d’éis a rígh* ‘is the most transparent forgery of all’ and that O’Donovan’s theory ‘is quite absurd’. On *Airec Menman*, he writes that the ‘ascription to Mac Coisse seems just a schoolman’s mention of a known author’s name to give learned authority to what is really a standard list of hero-tales’. The implication of Ó Lochlainn’s argument is that *Airec Menman* was written by an unknown author and thus the text cannot be dated based on the historical records.

While O’Leary (1999: 60, 65, 68) agrees with Ó Lochlainn on how the second Urard mac Coisse came into existence, she argues that the first Urard mac Coisse also did not exist. She postulates that the AI 990 entry for Airbertach mac Coisse influenced the creation of Urard mac Coisse and therefore ascriptions to ‘mac Coisse’ are likely to be fictional. For example, she suggests that the colophon *mac Coissi cecinit* found in *Maccan opas orm aniu* was an attempt to associate the poem ‘with influential figures’. Further, the reference to Brian Boru in the AI’s entry allowed Urard mac Coisse to be affiliated with Brian Boru, thus resulting in the flourishing of works on Urard mac Coisse and Brian Boru. From her argument, it follows that the character of Urard mac Coisse could not have been created until at least 990, when Airbertach mac Coisse’s name first appears in the

⁴ See Meyer (1894) and Ó Néill (1979) for further information on the Old Irish treatise on the Psalter.

Annals. If O’Leary is correct, then her argument provides us with the *terminus post quem* of 990 for *Airec Menman*, a text she argues is unlikely to be historical.

Both Ó Lochlainn’s and O’Leary’s suggestion that Urard mac Coisse was the product of pseudohistory is further explored by Fischer (2009). The latter scholar refocuses the debate on Urard mac Coisse only and compares his works with those of his supposed contemporary, Mag Liag. Their works are examined according to their first attestation in order to trace the growth of the legend between Urard mac Coisse, Mag Liag and their respective patron. Fischer divides texts attributed to Urard mac Coisse into two groups: the first group is labelled ‘From the Anglo-Norman Invasion to the Cromwellian Wars’ and the second group is ‘Post Keating/Annals of the Four Masters’. The first group contains works produced during the fourteenth- and fifteenth-century Gaelic resurgence ‘when the Irish princes were re-establishing themselves prior to the Tudor Reconquest’ and attempted to associate Urard mac Coisse with the king of Ireland (Fischer 2009: 104). As pointed out earlier, both *Maccan opas orm aniu* and *Airec Menman* identify Urard mac Coisse with the High-King, Domnall ua Néill; and *Freccair meisi, a meic Coisi* and *Marthain duit* with Domnall’s successor, Máel Sechnaill. On the other hand, the works in Fischer’s sixteenth- to seventeenth century ‘Post Keating/Annals of the Four Masters’ group no longer recorded the then current events but romanticised past events. The poems *An oir tainic tuitim Bhriain* and *Brónach ollamh d’éis* are included in this category. Therefore, these poems were not genuine and were the result of a group of scribes imagining bygone times.

Like Ó Lochlainn, Fischer believes that the earlier Urard mac Coisse was a historical figure, however, unlike both Ó Lochlainn and O’Leary, Fischer did not dismiss all works attributed to Urard mac Coisse. She suggests that Urard mac Coisse may have been the author of both *Maccan opas orm aniu* and *Airec Menman* and that his remaining works were to be dismissed and further theorises that when Urard mac Coisse had written *Airec Menman* he had already obtained the rank of *príméces*. His reputation then saw his name attached to a body of works that reflected the contest between Máel Sechnaill and Brian Boru for the kingship of Ireland. Thus, her argument lends support to Ó Lochlainn’s and O’Leary’s theory that a literary Urard mac Coisse was created in order to connect him with Máel Sechnaill and Brian Boru.

Despite the uncertainty expressed by some modern scholars with regard to how many figures named Urard mac Coissi may have existed, it seems likely that Ó Lochlainn and Fischer are correct in arguing that only the first Urard mac Coisse with the obit of 990 existed. Fischer’s argument that the second Urard mac Coisse was a literary creation in the fourteenth century that served to build a legend surrounding Máel Sechnaill and Brian Boru is a convincing theory which then led to the second Urard mac Coisse with the obit of 1023 being inserted into AFM. At the same time, there was also the historical figure Airbertach mac Coisse whose obit was 1016 with some scholars arguing he influenced the creation of Urard mac Coisse. Consequently, these two figures were often conflated with one another. It is probable that Urard mac Coisse was the author of *Airec Menman*, as not only

is his name mentioned in the text, but the language of the text is dated to the early Middle Irish period in which Urard mac Coisse would still have been alive. Whether or not the text retells an actual historical event is uncertain, but it would be exceptional for a poet to write about his own life like that of *Airec Menman*.

The ‘Tale-List’

One of the important aspects of *Airec Menman* is the tale-list that Urard mac Coisse recites to king Domnall mac Muirchertaig. When Urard visits the king to seek compensation, the text states in §2: *Iarmifocht in righ scéla do-sum iar tairisiem*, ‘After a while, the king inquired about ‘news/stories for him’. The word *scél* can mean either ‘news, tidings’ or ‘story, narration, tales’ with Ó Fiannachta (1964: 77) suggesting the two definitions may reflect two separate nouns. Urard takes advantage of the different meanings of the word to purposefully interpret the word as ‘story, narration, tales’ and informs the king that he has many stories to recite to the king. The poet says to the king, *Dogó-a-si ... do togha do primscealuiph Erenn ocus cidh be scel dibh dogó-a adfiassar-sa duit*, ‘You may choose ... your choice of your chief stories of Ireland and whichever story from it you may choose, I will relate to you’. The king then replies: *Dober em ... acht tuirim-si dun anmanna na sceul sin at mebra lat, co feasamar iar siuidhiu cid scel dibh dogoafam do faisneis duin*, ‘Indeed, I will bring about ... provided that you relate to us the names of those stories you remember so that we know, hereafter, which story we choose from them for telling to us’. Urard then recites to the king his repertoire and at the end of the list, Urard inserts the title of his in-tale, *Orcaín Cathrach Máil Milscothaig*, ‘The Plundering of the Fort of Máel Milscothach’. Since the king has never heard of this title before, he chooses it for narration. *Airec Menman* contains only one of the tale-lists as there are three in total and they are labelled as List A, List B, and List C.

List A is found independently in two manuscripts: the twelfth-century Book of Leinster (LL) at pp. 189b–190b and the sixteenth-century Dublin, Trinity College Dublin, MS 1336 (H 3. 17) at cols 797–99. The number and type of tales a poet was expected to know are found in a preface attached to this list. This list states that a poet’s repertoire consisted of 350 tales, which are divided into 250 *prímscéla* ‘primary tales’ and 100 *foscéla* ‘minor tales’. The preface lists twelve types of *prímscéla*, namely *togla* ‘destructions’, *tána* ‘cattle-raids’, *tochmarca* ‘wooings’, *catha* ‘battles’, *úatha* ‘terrors’, *immrama* ‘sea-voyages’, *aideda* ‘violent deaths’, *fessa* ‘feasts’, *forbessa* ‘sieges’, *echtrada* ‘adventures’, *aitheda* ‘elopements’ and *oirgne* ‘plunderings’. An appendix at the end of the list further states five more *prímscéla*, namely *tomadma* ‘bursting forth’, *serc* ‘love’, *físi* ‘visions’, *slúagid* ‘hostings, expeditions’ and *tochomlada* ‘origin-legends’.

List B is found embedded in *Airec Menman* and is preserved in the same three manuscripts that the text is found in, that is, Dublin, Royal Irish Academy 23 N 10 (pp. 29–32), Oxford, Bodleian Library MS Rawlinson B. 512 (Rawl. B) (ff.109r–110r) and London, British Library Harley (Harl.

5280) (ff. 58r–58v). While List B shares many tale groups with List A, it omits the following groups: *uatha*, *immrama*, *aideda* and *forbassa*, but includes the following extra groups: *coimperta* ‘conceptions’, *buili* ‘visions’ and *gnáthscéla* ‘usual tales’. Although a poet was required to know 350 tales, neither List A nor B contain the stated number of titles. List A records 187 titles in LL and 182 in TCD MS 1336, while List B records 154 in 23 N 10, 151 in Rawl. B. 512 and 156 in Harl. 5280. The figure of 350 tales is also supported in *Uraicecht na Ríar* ‘The Primer of Stipulations’ (Breatnach 1987: 102–3) in §2: *Ní hansae: dán ollaman cétomus: secht cócait drécht lais*, ‘Not difficult; the competence of an *ollam* first: he has three hundred and fifty compositions’.

List C is a minor tale-list that is found in two legal manuscripts: at the end of a law tract on the functions and qualifications of a poet in the fifteenth-century Edinburgh, National Library of Scotland, Adv. MS 72.1.7, and as the introduction to the legal compilation known as the *Senchas Már* ‘Great Tradition’ in London, British Library, MS Harl. 432. Like List A, the introduction to List C details the requirements of a poet and states that he should know the twelve types of *prímscéla*. Unlike Lists A and B, List C only enumerates titles for four of the *prímscéla*, that is the *togla*, *tána*, *tochmarca* and *catha*, with Adv. MS 72.1.7 naming only twenty-one titles and Harl. 432, only nineteen titles in total. Therefore, List C contains a significantly smaller number of titles than Lists A and B. The variations between the different tale-lists not only reflect the evolving nature of the Tale List but may also indicate their susceptibility to change based on a scribe’s purpose, and this can potentially be seen in Lists B in *Airec Menman*. On the other hand, Breatnach (2016a: 114) argues that catalogues or lists in law texts such as those found in *Cáin Aicillne* ‘The Law of Base Clientship’ (CIH 2233.1–2238.15) are ‘exemplary rather than exhaustive’ and that similar lists found in other law texts do not exactly correspond with one another. Therefore, the differences between the Tale Lists A, B, and C may represent independent changes that are unrelated to a scribe’s purpose. Furthermore, their appearance amongst legal materials such as List C as well as *Airec Menman* suggests there is a link between law and poetry, an idea that will be explored later in the thesis.

While the original content of the tale-list cannot be reconstructed with certainty, the development of the tale-list can be traced. Both Thurneysen (1921: 22) and Mac Cana (1980: 81–4) argue that the common core of Lists A and B derive from an early-tenth-century parent-list (X) that is best preserved in the concluding groups of List B. Both scholars base their dating of X on the shared title *Serc Gormlaithe do Níall (Glindub)* ‘The Love of Gormlaithe to Níall’. Thurneysen argues for a dating of X based on the obits of the two protagonists mentioned in the title. Gormflaith (d. 948) was the daughter of Flann Sinna mac Maíl Šechnaill (d. 916) of the Clann Cholmáin branch of the Southern Uí Néill (Ni Mhaonaigh 2002: 6–18). She was married to the king of Munster Cormac mac Cuilennáin (d. 908) and upon his death in the battle of Belach Mugna, she married his foster-brother and the victor of the battle, the king of Leinster Cerball mac Muireccáin (d. 909). After Cerball’s death a year later, Gormflaith went on to marry the king of Tara Níall Glúndub (d. 919) and it is this

last relationship that may be the subject of *Serc Gormlaidhe do Níall (Glúndub)*. Based on this information, the *terminus post quem* for X would be the early tenth century.

Some scholars such as Trindade (1986: 146–7) have raised the idea that a cycle of Early Modern Irish poems that are attributed to Gormfláith and a fragmentary text in the Book of Leinster may be linked to *Serc Gormlaidhe do Níall (Glúndub)*. However, Mac Cana (1980: 82) argues that without the definitive extant text, the title *Serc Gormlaidhe do Níall (Glúndub)* simply indicates that it was added to a list after ‘the period during which the events of the story were supposed to take place’. Similarly, Ní Dhonnchadha (2001: 230–1) states that without the survival of the tale, conclusions cannot be made on the dating of the tale and its protagonists. Further, she points out that the epithet *Glúndub* appears only in List A, which raises the question of whether List A had another source and if one was a later addition than the other. Instead, Mac Cana argues that *Airec Menman* was a more appropriate text for the dating of X because both its contents and context are known. In conjunction with the previously discussed obit of Urard mac Coisse, a dating of the latter half of the tenth century can be made for X.

While Thurneysen acknowledges that there was a common core to Lists A and B, both Mac Cana (1980: 82) and Toner (2000: 91–5) argue that Thurneysen did not entertain the possibility that X may have been a composite list that consisted of a main body and an appendix. The appendix correlates with the common core of Lists A and B and the groups found in the common core are the *aitheda*, *togla*, *físi*, *serc*, *slúagid*, *tochmarca* and *oirgne*. All the titles in List B’s *aitheda* appear in the same order as List A’s *aitheda*, however, List A adds an extra five titles. The titles of the *togla* in List B are also all found in List A, except for *Togail Bruidne Uí Dergga* and *Togail Bruidne Dá Choca*, which are found in an earlier section of List B where another *togla* group exists. This other *togla* group of List B is not part of the main core of X. Thurneysen (1921: 22–3) believes that they may have been separated in the source of List B and that the scribe of List B then proceeded to add further tales to form another *togla* group. The *tomadma*, *físi*, *serc*, *slúagid* and *tochomlada* in both Lists are the same except that List B has the following extra two titles: *Tomaidm Brí* and *Serc Créde do Chanainn mac Gartnáin*. Lastly, the *oirgne* of List A coincides with List B, with the former listing an extra two titles and the latter an extra seven titles. These similarities suggests that X was used as a source for the common core of Lists A and B.

At the same time, there is a lack of overlap in the remaining sections of Lists A and B, which casts doubt as to whether the Lists originated from X. Some of these differences were mentioned earlier and involve the addition or omission of groups, for example, the *buili*, *coimperta* and *gnáthscéla* groups in List B that do not exist in List A. The first two groups contain five titles and the third contains twenty-eight titles, which amounts to thirty-eight titles missing in List A. Conversely, List A contains the *uatha*, *immrama*, *aideda* and *forbassa* groups, which are missing in List B. These groups total to forty titles missing in List B. The lack of correspondence between the two Lists are also seen in the common groups. In the *tochmarca* group, the three titles of List B are found in List A,

with the latter containing an additional ten titles. Similarly, In the *echtrada*, both Lists only share three titles, with List A adding an extra eleven titles and List B a further seven titles. In the *tána* group, Lists A and B only share four titles, with the former containing an additional seven titles and the latter an extra two. In the *catha*, both Lists share two titles, with List A containing a further seven titles and B a further five titles. In the *fessa*, there are no overlapping titles, with List A containing seventeen titles and List B containing eight titles. Consequently, these differences may represent independent changes based on another source and as such have implications for the dating of the Tale-Lists and thus the dating for *Airec Menman*.

Although both Mac Cana and Toner agree that the common core of Lists A and B derives from X, their outline of the progression of X to A and B differ. According to Mac Cana (1980: 84), in the early tenth century, titles were added to an already existing list, which he labels as O, to create X. Titles continued to be added to X until its insertion into *Airec Menman* in the later tenth century, where it underwent structural changes to suit the purposes of the tale, thus resulting in List B. At the same time, another X continued to receive titles right into the twelfth century to form List A. Mac Cana argues that the doublets of titles found in both Lists are evidence of their continuously growing nature. For example, *Táin Bó Rois* and *Aided Chonchobair*; *Argain Rátha Blai* and *Aided Blai Briugad*; and *Uath Dercce Ferna* and *Echtra Fhinn i nDerc Ferna* may have represented the same or at least similar stories. However, the doublets do not always reflect the development of A and B, and as Toner (2000: 98) points out, the doublets only suggest that one title was added at a later date than the other and without the extant tales it cannot be said that two similar-sounding titles represent the same story.

Furthermore, Toner argues that List B is a composite of two independent lists which he labels as B1 and B^X. The two different formulas used to introduce the titles, the two separate *togla* groups and the *airgne* group, are evidence of the merging of the two lists. In B1, the scribe uses the formula *Mad ferr lat atfiasarsa duit ...* ‘If you prefer, I will tell you ...’ from his source for B1 and then he switches to the shorter formula *Mad ferr lat* ‘If you prefer’ when he copies X to form B^X. Toner’s argument is further corroborated by the occurrence of two separate *togla* groups, one in B1 and B^X. The *togla* group in B^X is almost identical to A’s, but B1’s *togla* has little correlation with A. Therefore, Toner concludes that sometime during the tenth and even eleventh century, B1 was inserted into *Airec Menman* and was then followed by B^X. The scribe then combined any twice-occurring groups in B1 and B^X but forgot to consolidate the *togla*. He also rearranged the groupings so that the *airgne* would occur at the end of List B in order to provide the narrative framework to allow Urard to introduce his tale *Orgain Cathrach Maíl Milscothaig*.

The study of the evolution of Lists A and B have focused on the dating and structure of the Tale-Lists. The titles in the extant Tale-Lists give little diagnostic dating and without the survival of many of the tales, it is difficult to ascertain a more precise date for the Tale-List as a whole. Similarly,

the dating of a text does not necessarily assist in the dating of the original Tale-Lists. For example, Toner comments that his dating of the earliest core of B1 to approximately 1000 is supported by the dating of *Airec Menman*, which has been dated to 1000 as well, but he fails to explain how he reached his dating of the Tale-List independently of *Airec Menman*. However, their studies do show that the Tale-Lists were in a constant state of flux with newer titles being added - for example, the addition of *Airec Menman's* in-tale *Orgain Cathrach Mail Milscothaig* - or re-organised to suit the purposes of the scribes, such as the re-organisation of the *airgne* and *togla* in B. Moreover, the Tale-Lists importantly show that the categorisation of titles into headings based on a common theme was not a modern concept but began as far back as early medieval Ireland. This growth of List B also has implications for the development of *Airec Menman*, which suggests that the tale would have been interpolated at least once after the Tale-List was inserted.

The Role and Skills of the *Fili* 'Poet'

The *filid* 'poets' belonged to a distinguished group in medieval Irish society that was known as the *áes dána* 'people of art', which also included other professions such as physicians, lawyers, and blacksmiths. Boyle (2016: 19) points out that the earliest attestations of the term *áes dána* refer to various types of craftspeople, for example, in the Old Irish *Bretha Nemed Toisech* 'The First *Bretha Nemed*' (Breatnach 1989: 8–9) and *Uraicecht Becc* 'The Small Primer' (CIH 1612.4), the term refers to a 'craftsman'. However, during the Middle Irish period, the term comes to refer to poets only, for example, in the Book of Leinster version of *Táin Bó Cúailnge* 'The Cattle Raid of Cooley' (O'Rahilly 1967: 27, ll. 998–1003) and in the Book of Leinster Middle Irish glosses to the Old Irish *Immacallam in dá Thuarad* 'The Colloquy of the Two Sages' (Stokes 1905b: 34–5). The fact that the *filid* were still considered as members of the *áes dána* could be said to reflect their continuing importance in medieval Irish society. The *filid's* role did not involve only the reciting of texts but also the writing or copying of these texts into manuscripts in a *scriptorium* and many, if not all, would have worked in an ecclesiastical setting. Therefore, they were preservers of medieval Irish culture through their production of literary works (Kelly, 1988: 43–51; Johnston 2013; McLaughlin 2008). Each *túath* 'kingdom' would have had a *fili* for both entertainment and juridical purposes and they were usually appointed by a king. The relationship between the *filid* and *nemed* 'privileged people', including nobility, clerical and secular professionals, throughout the medieval period is reflected in the previously discussed annal entries for Urard mac Coisse. In these entries, it was seen that he was a layman who died in either 983 or 990 in penitence in the monastery of Clonmacnoise, and he was the *prim-éces* 'scholar, learned man, sage, poet', which is equivalent to a *fili*. He not only had connections with the monastery, but he also enjoyed the patronage of the then king of Tara, Domnall ua Néill and/or Máel Sechnaill in the second half of the tenth century. The aim of this section is to obtain further insights into the role and training of the *fili*, such as Urard mac Coisse, in medieval Ireland.

Much information concerning the social status, legal privileges and social responsibilities of the poets can be obtained from early Irish law tracts. The first section of the eighth-century text *Uraicecht na Ríar* ‘The Primer of Stipulations’ (Breatnach 1987) lists the *ollam* as the highest grade of poet, and the *fochloc* as the lowest grade. In §2, it states that one of the differences between the grades is the number of compositions a poet knows. For example, concerning the *ollam*, it is noted that *secht cócait drécht lais, .i. cóeca cach grád; is éola i cach coimgniu, 7 is éola i mbrithemnacht fénechais*, ‘he has three hundred and fifty compositions and is knowledgeable in historical science and the jurisprudence of Irish law’; on the other hand, §17 of the text states the *fochloc* has only thirty compositions (*trícha drécht lais*). That an *ollam* should know three hundred and fifty compositions is also supported in the previously discussed introduction to the Tale-List A, which states: *Do nemthigud filed i scelaib 7 i comgnimaib inso síis da nasníis do rigaib 7 flathib .i. uii. cócait scél .i. coic cócait de primscélaib 7 dá cócait do foscélaib ...* ‘What follows here below concerns the qualification of poets in regard to stories and *coimcne* to be narrated to kings and chieftains, viz. three hundred and fifty tales, viz. two hundred and fifty major tales and one hundred sub-tales ...’ (Mac Cana 1980: 41). Whether or not an *ollam* was expected to actually know three hundred and fifty compositions is uncertain, but as previously discussed, the Tale List itself does not contain the stated number of titles. This introduction is missing in the Tale-List B, which is found in *Airec Menman*, but it would not be unreasonable to assume that this qualification was also applicable to Urard.

Uraicecht na Ríar also details the compensation to be paid to the poet. In §2, it states that an *ollam*’s honour-price is forty *séts* and, in §3, that his compensation is seven *cumals*. The accompanying gloss further adds that a poet who is appointed by the king of a *tuáth* may have compensation greater than seven *cumals*. In *Airec Menman* §33, the text states that compensation is given to Urard but it does not give details on what this may be. Also, *Uraicecht na Ríar* §3 lists the violations that would entitle a poet to his compensation, one of which is *ar thothlu a set i téol 7 táidiu*, ‘for the stealing of his chattels openly or secretly’. This is the situation found in *Airec Menman*, where in §1 it is said: *co nairnecht a inndlíged friss, co rucsat a bau ocus a eocha ocus a seota ocus gur airgsed a dun feisin .i. Clártha*, ‘so that his injustice was devised against him so that they had carried his cows, his horses, his treasures, so that they plundered his own fort, namely, Clártha’. The plundering then occurs in §16 of *Airec Menman*. However, *Uraicecht na Ríar* also makes it clear that compensation can only be given to a qualified poet when *tria nath, tria laíd tria éicsi, tria idnaai for úailsli -osnai, os é mac filed 7 aue araili*, ‘through his *nath*, through his *laíd*, through his poetic faculty, through his purity he illuminates nobility, and he is the son of a poet, and the grandson of another’ (Breatnach 1987: 102–3). From the quote it is clear that it is not enough for a poet to compose texts to earn the aforementioned compensation, but he also has to come from a family of at least three generations of poets, therefore his father and grandfather must also be poets. However, §4 states that if this requirement is not fulfilled, one is still able to climb from *fochloc* to *ollam*, but one is only entitled to half the honour-price of his grade. In §7, it states that if there are more than three

generations of non-poets, then the person is considered a bard, a profession that has a lower status than that of a poet. Furthermore, §8 and §9 make it clear that a poet's education is also important. In §8 it is stated that if a poet does not study the art but has the ability, then he can either have half the honour-price of his grade or half the honour-price of his father. If he comes from a family of poets but does not have the skills then he is entitled to half the honour-price of his father, so long as his father is still alive, and if he, along with his grandfather, is not alive, then he is no longer considered a poet. In §9, it states that if a poet does attend a course of study, but it is his great-grandfather that is a poet and not his father or grandfather, then he is still entitled to the honour-price of his grade. The tract also provides information on the process involved when a poet seeks compensation similar to Urard's own attempts to obtain recourse from king Domnall. In §5 it states that an *ollam* has twenty-four people in his retinue when on public business. This stipulation is glossed with an example of a poet being on public business to exact compensation for his home plundered or property stolen. Further, a visiting poet also expects generous hospitality, a theme discussed at p. 30. While *Airec Menman* gives little information on Urard's family background, from *Uraicecht na Ríar*, it can be inferred that he was highly educated and came from a family of poets. Consequently, it can be seen that the profession was tightly regulated, and strict requirements had to be followed.

One of the main functions of the poets was to maintain social order through their production of *áer* 'satire' or *molad* 'praise'. This thesis will only examine *áer* as it is one of the main themes of *Airec Menman*.⁵ D. A. Binchy (1941: 69) writes that *áer* 'satire' was 'the formidable weapon with which members of the poetic orders enforced claims either on their own behalf or on the behalf of the other persons who employed them'. The poet's ability to satirise any member of society made them feared by the community. Satire was also believed to be able to physically harm a person and usually this is portrayed as manifesting itself on the offender's cheeks; this would commonly appear as three blisters (Kelly 1988: 43–4, 137–8). The relationship between satire, honour and physical harm can be seen in the meaning of the words *áer* and *enech*. The meaning of *áer* could be either 'cutting, incising' or 'satire, lampoon' (eDIL s.v. *áer*, www.dil.ie/633), and the meaning of *enech* is 'face' but it could also be 'honour, repute' (eDIL s.v. 1 *enech*, *ainech*, www.dil.ie/20066). These ideas are expressed in Old Irish law texts, for example, in *Bretha Nemed Dédenach* 'The Last *Bretha Nemed*', the connection between satire and honour is illustrated in the following quote: *Ní roich colainn coimdílsi n-einech. Óenchairde fon Eilg n-áragae tor. It é ind fílid do-bongat cáin n-enech, dáig na crích n-imderg inná bí gíall náte comurradas, coro fuíglea cách díá gíall grúaide frisna fíleda ar omun a n-aíre* (CIH 1111.19-22), 'The body is not as vulnerable as the face/honour. A single treaty is enforced throughout Ireland. It is the poets who enforce the regulation of honour, because of [the existence of] the hostile territories without exchange of hostages and joint citizenship (lit. 'around which there is neither hostage nor joint citizenship'), so that everyone submits to the poets for fear of

⁵ For a comprehensive treatment of Early Irish satire see McLaughlin (2008).

their satire, having their cheeks/honour as hostage (lit. ‘by means of the hostage of his cheek’) (Breatnach 2004, 26–7). Both meanings of *enech* would semantically fit in the context of the quote and the use of *enech* emphasises the link between honour and its physical manifestation. This link is further highlighted by the use of the word *grúad*, which can have the meaning of ‘cheeks’ or ‘honour’ (eDIL s.v. *gruad*, www.dil.ie/26709). The quote explicitly describes the anxiety surrounding a poet’s ability to satirise a person due to their *grúad* or *enech*, i.e., ‘honour’, being taken as *gíall* ‘hostage’. The passage also informs us that a poet’s satire is effective throughout the whole of Ireland, that is, his power to satirise is not restricted to within his *túath*. This idea is further borne out in *Uraicecht Becc*, where it is noted that *is e taidbeas a seodu eigní doib amuig i fail i tincaidter renda aer 7 na tincaidter renda airm* (CIH 1592.22 ff), ‘it is he who levies the penalty for their forcibly removed chattels for them outside where barbs of satires are responded to and where barbs of weapons are not’ (Breatnach 1984a: 190). Satire here is metaphorically represented as weapons via the phrases *renda aer* ‘barbs of satires’ and *renda airm* ‘barbs of weapons’. Similar depictions of satire are also seen in *Bretha Nemed Toísech*, where it is said: *Ro fóebra fúamann / fó thuinn tethnatar, / ro dúisced fuil / for a grúaide gnúis, / conid fodirc inna rus / ro mbríathraib bíth* (CIH 2218.10), ‘Verbal blades have cut beneath his skin, blood has been aroused onto his cheeks [and] face, so that it is evident in his countenance that he has been wounded by words’ (Breatnach 2006: 63). The same tract also notes that *Ní gonae grúaide gaib ansóis*, ‘You are not to wound cheeks with the spears of “unpoetry”’ (cited in Breatnach 2006: 64). In this statement, satire is metaphorically referred to as a *fóebra fúamann* ‘verbal blade’ that can cut a person’s cheeks or cause the blushing of the cheeks and this physical depiction of satire represents the harm done to a person’s honour. Furthermore, the words *inna rus* from this quote are translated as ‘in his countenance’. The word *rus*, like the previously discussed *enech* and *grúad*, can also be translated as either ‘face, cheeks’ or ‘shame’ (eDIL s.v. *rus*, www.dil.ie/35801). Stifter (1998: 210) has shown that the original meaning of *rus* was ‘reddening’ and the meaning of ‘shame, blushing’, i.e., ‘cheeks’, was a secondary development. Thus, the meaning of *rus* reinforces the notion that a person’s face or cheeks were connected to their honour.

The link between satire and its physical manifestation is also conveyed in *Airec Menman*. In §11 of the text, it states: *Beitit ... gruidhe derga de a ndalaibh ocus dunadhaib ... Piad imruidhedh ocus imaorad n-ailte ocus n-anradh ara himradhugh na hoirgne*, ‘There will be red cheeks from it in assemblies and encampments ... There will be mutual-reddening and satirising of heroes and *anrada* at the thought of the raid’. In Poem Two of *Airec Menman*, which is recited by Robad mac Rofúacra (‘Warning son of Proclamation’), the imagery of satire as a weapon is frequently found; examples include §26.4: *Atá lais gaí gona ríg*, ‘He has a spear that wounds kings’; §26.6: *Int aël tend dlomad gail*, ‘The firm prong that used to announce conflict’; §26.8: *Saiget réime rigtis rainn*, ‘An arrow of thickness that quatrains used to direct’; §26.9: *Bir chrúaid bétra – búan a glé – , /.../ .../ Ba birchrúaid fír imamnais* ‘(It was) a harsh spear of speech ... / ... / ... / It was a harsh spear of very fierce truth’; and §26.11: *béras in bir-sin tre chlúais*, ‘who will take this spear through an ear’. The

physical effect of satire is also referred to in the poem, in §26.4: *grúad Breisi maic Elathan* ‘the cheeks of Bres mac Elathan’; in §26.8: *Batis dé tolltai enech, / Áeda móir maic Ainmirech*, ‘From it would be pierced the face, / of Great Áed son of Ainmire’; in §26.10: *Ro-toll chúasa - ..., - / ... / At-bélad tria rinde rus / ...* ‘It pierced the ears ... / ... / He would have died through shame of piercings’; and in §26.11: *co-n-erbara ‘Uchán! Ach! / rom-geguin Máel Milscothach*’, ‘And he says ‘Woe, ah! Alas!’ / Máel Milscothach has pierced me’.

While the meanings of *áer*, *enech*, *grúad* and *rus* are commonly referred to in discussions of satire and honour, *Airec Meman* also refers to another important word in §27.3, where it is stated *A fír thall dar ferba fis*, ‘Oh man, yonder, by words of knowledge’. There is wordplay in this sentence with the term *ferb*, which can have the following three meanings: ‘a cow (poetic word)’, ‘a blister (raised on the face by satire or moral blemish)’, and ‘a word (poet.)’ (eDIL s.vv. 1 *ferb(b)*, www.dil.ie/21691; 2 *ferb*, www.dil.ie/21692; and 3 *ferb*, www.dil.ie/21693). The connection between these meanings is borne out in the commentaries to a text known as *Amra Choluim Chille* ‘Poem for Colum Cille’ (Bisagni 2019: 270–1). Russell (2014) has examined the growth of the commentaries in the earliest three manuscripts that contain this text, namely the *Liber Hymnorum* (LH), *Lebor na hUidre* (LU), and Rawlinson B. 502 (Rawl. B. 502). LH contains the simplest form of the commentaries, and in Rawl. B. 502 the most complex form is found. Thus, Rawl. B. 502 contains the most detailed information. One of the sections Russell analyses concerns the meaning of the word *ferb*. The reading in LU is as follows: *Faig ferb fithir .i. no fuaiged breithir in forcetail in feth-athair*, ‘The teacher wove the word: i.e. “the knowledge-father” would stitch the word of the teaching’. This is elaborated on in LU and significantly more so in Rawl. B. 502. The most relevant sections in Rawl. B. 502 for this thesis are the following:

Ferbb dano trede fordingair .i. fordingthir cial treda hi ferb .i. tri dédai .i. tri anmann 7 tri hinne thaithmigi, 7 tri erchailti, conid treda i ndingarar 7 séda hi fostuder 7 noidi fodureith samlaid. Na tri anmann cetumus: ferb bo, fer[b] bolcg, ferb briathar. Na tri hinne thathmige .i. fér-beo, fi-fér[b], fó-férb. [...] Ferb bolcg dano .i. fi-férb .i. fí fo builc .i. accais fo thuind in sain, ut dicitur: ‘Teora ferbba foluchta turcbat fort gruaidib iar cilbrethaib’ .i. tri bolca, dianid comainm on 7 anim 7 esbaid, ro thocbat fort gruaidib iar cilbrethaib .i. iar claen-brethaib. unde dicitur cil .i. cloen 7 lethchil .i. lethcloen no lethcach.

‘*Ferbb*, moreover, has three meanings, i.e. a three-fold sense is meant in *ferb*, i.e. three two-fold things, namely three nouns and three essences of analysis, and three definitions so that three things are meant, and six things on which it is based and nine things which aid it in this way. First the three nouns: *ferb* ‘cow’, *ferb* ‘blister’, *ferb* ‘word’. The three essences of analysis, i.e. *fér-beo* ‘grass-alive’, *fi-férb* ‘poison-blister’, *fó-férb* ‘good-word’ [...] *Ferb* “blister”, furthermore, i.e. *fí-férb*, i.e. poison under a blister, i.e. this is a festering under the

skin, *as is said*, “Hidden blisters rise upon your cheeks after false judgements”, i.e. three blisters known as blemish, defect and deficiency, can rise on your cheeks after false judgements, i.e. after crooked judgements, *whence it is said, cil*, i.e. crooked, and *lethchíl*, i.e. half-crooked or half-blind” (Russell 2014: 80–1).

Russell (2014: 88) points out that this section ‘is topped, and tailed, almost like a *dúnad*’, that is, the entry ends and begins with *ferb(b)* and it could be argued that this serves to emphasise the importance of the meaning of *ferb*. The growth of the entry from LU to the complex form found in Rawl. B. 502 illustrates how texts are reworked in order to meet the needs of the scribes at the time, just like the Tale-List B in *Airec Menman*. Evidently, the later scribes saw the need to highlight the relationship between the three meanings of the word. The quotation also makes reference to *on 7 anim 7 esbaid* ‘blemish, defect and deficiency’, which refers to the previously mentioned three blisters occurring on one’s face as an indication of dishonour. A similar entry is found in the glossary *Sanas Cormaic* ‘Cormac’s Glossary’:

SC Y584: *Ferb dano, trēide fordingair. Ferb .i. bó cētamus; ut est isint Senchus Mār: ‘Teóra ferbba fira’. Ferb .i. bolg doc[h]uirethar in duine for a grūadaibh iar n-áir nō iar ngúbreith: ‘gel fir ferba nad forbrethar for a inchaib’. Fearb dano brīathar; ut est: ‘rofes is fáss fēinechus i coinnilg ferb nDē’.*

‘*Ferb* then, it means three things: firstly, *ferb* means ‘a cow’; as in the *Senchas Mār*: ‘Three milch cows’. *Ferb*, i.e. a blister that the person produces on his cheeks after a satire or after a false judgement: ‘the whiteness of a man across whose face there is no increase in blisters’. *Ferb* also means ‘a word’; thus: it is known that *fēnechas* (the common law) is void compared to the words of God’ (Russell 2014: 83).

Russell (2014: 84) argues that the commentaries to *Amra Coluimb Cille*, specifically that preserved in LU, cannot be derived from *Sanas Cormaic* due to the different wording of the two entries as well as the fact that the entry in LU is shorter than that in *Sanas Cormaic*. However, the fact that a similar entry is found in another source does suggest that the poetic use of *ferb* and its associated three meanings seems to be well established in Early Irish literature. Its use in *Airec Menman* is perhaps then no surprise as *ferb*’s many meanings helps illustrate Urard’s skills as a poet. A poet, through his words, had the ability to cause a blister on one’s face, and compensation would then be expected from the poet. This compensation could be in the form of cows and, according to Kelly (1988: 113), ‘the basic unit is the milch cow (*lulgach* or *bó mlicht*), and it is normally accompanied by her calf’. In §2 of *Uraicecht na Ríar*, a gloss on the statement that forty *séts* is the honour-price of an *ollam* notes that *.i. xix. ba fa dho 7 da deicait ceathracha mbo ...* ‘thirty-eight cows and two horses to the value of four

cows...’ Therefore, the use of the word *ferb* in *Airec Menman* could be Urard’s attempt at demonstrating his cleverness with the language and may have been understood so by the audience.

It was seen in the previous discussion that there were restrictions on who could become a poet; likewise, there were restrictions on who could perform a satire, and this was limited to poets and satirists. For example, the Old Irish glossing on the *Senchas Már* states that the ability to satirise is reserved for poets:

Óru súidigestar Pátraic 7 maithi fer nĒirenn a ndliger-so, is íarum con-aimdetar cía tucht do-mbibsat a ndliger do chách fo-fích friu .i. cloc 7 salm do eclais, géill do fíledaib, aithgabáil do féinib.

‘After Patrick and the nobles of the men of Ireland had established this law, it is then that they decided how they will levy their due from those who commit offences against them, i.e., bell, psalm for the church, hostages for lords, “three utterances” for poets, distraint for commoners’ (Breatnach 2009: 121).

Similar ideas are also expressed in the Prologue to the *Senchas Már* (Carey 1994), which describes the dark speech that was obscured to everyone but the poets, now being transformed into the ‘white language’ i.e., the law of Scripture (Stacey 2007). This idea is further supported in the Triads of Ireland, a text that is titled in some manuscripts as *Trecheng Breth Féne* ‘A Triad of Judgements of the Irish’, with Meyer (1906: x) dating the text to the first half of the ninth century. Triad 248 states: *Cetheora miscne flatha: ... ar ní tabair labrai acht do chethrur: .i. fer cerda fri háir 7 molad, fer coimgni cuimnech fri haisnéis 7 scélugud, brethem fri bretha, sencha fri senchas*, ‘Four hatreds of a chief: ... For a chief does not grant speech save to four: a poet for satire and praise, a chronicler of good memory for narration and storytelling, a judge for giving judgements, an historian for ancient lore’ (Meyer 1906: 32–3). Furthermore, there were restrictions within the profession of the poets on who could perform satire, for example, in *Bretha Nemed Toísech* it is stated that a student was not entitled to satirise: *Do-glean gil tengai / ní atmach ní airegmech / ní áera óen cách / ní áera óen cách / ní áera acht nemed*, ‘A leech adheres to a tongue, he does not give pledges / he does not complain / he shall satirize no one at all / only a dignity shall satirize’ (Breatnach 1987: 22; 2019: 123). This idea can also be seen in the Middle Irish tale beginning *Araile felmac féig don Mumain* ‘A certain sharp student poet from Munster’ (Breatnach 2009), where the student poet Máel falls in love with a woman and in order to find a suitable bridal gift, he sends two of his servants to Limerick. His servants end up assaulting a citizen of Limerick and are arrested. Máel fails to obtain their release and as a result threatens the ruler of the city with satire; however, his satire fails as he is only a student. Breatnach (1987: 122) argues that another reason that Máel’s satire failed is because he did not observe the

formalities involved in evoking a satire. The procedure for conducting a satire will be examined at p. 22.

Illegal satire could also be performed by a *cáinte* ‘a satirist’ and, unlike poets, the satirists were negatively perceived by society. Stacey (2007: 159–60) argues that the poets were keen to distinguish themselves from the satirists by promoting their connection with the ecclesiastical order, emphasising the fact that they received patronage from kings and distancing themselves from paganism. This is in contrast to the satirists, who were regularly portrayed as self-serving and were usually grouped together with other lower-class figures such as *drúith* ‘jesters’ and/or outcasts such as the company of wild bands of young warriors known as *díberga*, and they were also associated with paganism. As a result, McCone (1989: 127) writes that they were ‘an object of clerical odium’ and this can be seen in the ninth-century wisdom text *Tescosca Cormaic* ‘The Instructions of Cormac’ (Meyer 1909), where a satirist is said to be *Fer co n-ainbli cáinti*, ‘A man with the impudence of a satirist’. In *Fís Adomnán* ‘The Vision of Adamnán’, moreover, the satirist is said to be destined ‘to spend all eternity up to his waist in the black mires of Hell’ (Kelly 1988: 50). In *Bretha Crólige* ‘Judgements on Blood-Lyings’ §51 emphasises the satirist’s low status, stating that *Ata .iii. [ar] hi tuaith folongaiter folug mboairec. Ni tormaig ni for a notrus a mmiad nach a nemthes nach a ndligned nach a cendgelt: drui dibergad cainte. Ar is techtta la dia a ndinsed oldas a cumdac*, ‘There are three persons in the *túath* who are maintained at the maintenance of a *bóaire* – neither their dignity nor their *nemed*-status nor their rights nor their tonsure increases their sick-maintenance: druid, *fian*-brigand and satirist. For it is more fitting in the sight of God to repudiate them than to protect them’ (Binchy 1938: 40–1). In another law tract, it is stated that a defining characteristic of the satirist was his use of satire for extortion: *Aile bruth narmach, ailges do ceanduibh co nimderctar gruaide, combruth for bla nemtiger cainte*, ‘I demand the metal of armed men – an instant demand so that cheeks are reddened, with a red glow [of shame] succeeding (i.e. replacing) renown – is what distinguishes a satirist’ (CIH vi 2219.32–3, cited in McLaughlin 2008: 29). In this quote, the phrase ‘the metal of armed men’ refers to a satirist’s demand for weapons such as shields and knives, and the failure to hand over the weapon to the satirist will result in one’s instant satirisation. Kelly (1998: 49–50) writes that ‘The authors of the law-texts seek to punish his misuse of the magic power of satire by reducing or even cancelling his status’. However, it should be pointed out that it was not only the satirist who could abuse satire for extortion, but poets could also be guilty of the same crime.

Since poets were so feared, there were regulations on the use of satire and for the proper procedure in enacting satire. For example, one legal tract states: *arná rod aorad dlighedh sgeo indlighedh* ‘lest they satirise you legally or illegally’ (CIH 1122.11–12). Unlike a just satire, in which the person who committed the crime pays compensation to the victim, in an unjust satire, the poet himself pays compensation to the victim for the damage that he has done to the victim’s honour. This idea is further borne out in *Bretha Nemed Dédenach*, where it is stated: *Ní áerae, ní áerthar, manip tar taircsin ngill día grúaide grís. Ní onae, ní ainme i foichlige sét*, ‘You are not to satirise, one is not

to be satirised, unless it be in the absence of an offer of a pledge against the reddening of his cheek. You are not to disfigure, you are not to blemish, for the purpose of snatching chattels away’ (Breatnach 2006: 67–8). In this quote, instead of satire resulting in the cutting of cheeks, dishonour is referred to as *grúade grís* ‘the reddening of cheeks’. The quote also states that if the offender does give a pledge or a guarantee to save his honour, a poet is not to satirise him; conversely, if the offender does not provide a guarantee, then a poet can legally satirise him. On the issue of pledges, Kelly (1988: 139) writes: ‘This pledge indicates his willingness to discharge his liabilities or to submit the case to arbitration’; the same scholar also notes (ibid.: 138) that the law tracts state that ‘a person who unjustifiably satirizes a king is liable to be put to death. If not, he must pay the very heavy fine of fourteen *cumals*’. The fine of fourteen *cumals* is equated to the value of forty-two milch cows with one *cumal* corresponding to three milch cows. The aforementioned quote also reveals that there are guidelines on when a poet could satirise: for example, a poet could not use satire as a form of coercion to illegally obtain properties, an act usually associated with the satirist. However, if the victim fails to offer a pledge, then satire could be used as a form of legal sanction.

When satire was used as a legal sanction, a poet was required to conduct a *trefócal* before he could recite a satire. The *trefócal* is a legal procedure that formally warns the offender of an upcoming satire and provides him with the time to redress the situation. Breatnach (2017: 2) states that the term *trefócal* can be translated as ‘three utterances’ or ‘three words’ and refers to the requirement that the *trefócal* must include: specifying the offence, naming the offender and praise of the person to whom the warning is directed. The *Trefócal* Tract (Calder 1917) states that the *trefócal* must be metrically perfect with the implication that it was restricted to the higher grades of the poets such as the *ollam* (Breatnach 2017: 2). In the tract, a *trefócal* is described as a mixture of praise and satire and their mixed nature is commonly referred to as the ‘three colours of poetry’. For example, in the *Trefócal* Tract it states: *Att ē trī datha na hēc[se] sin .i. find 7 dub 7 brecc. Find ūa moltar, dub ūa n-āerthar, brecc ūa fōcarar*, ‘Those are the three colours of poetry, i.e. white and black and speckled. White by which one praises, black by which one satirises, speckled by which one gives notice’ (Calder 1917: 264). The Tract lists examples of extant poetic texts for the different colours of poetry, for example, §27.9 of *Airec Menman* is listed as an instance of *find* ‘white’: *Ciaptis ganna fir betha, / óthá Lifi co lethá, / ros-fiuirfad ól níptis gainn, / dige do dernainn Domnaill*, ‘Though the men of the world from the Liffey plain to Latium were needy, a draught of a drink from the hand of Domnall would satisfy them; they would not be needy [any more]’ (Breatnach 2017: 14). The tract lists an example of *dub* ‘black’ as: *Māel Rūanaid rūad imma rind / archiñg dorair ndūalaig is caill. / tón bō can būaraig for aill. / srón cherr Māel Rūanaid. meic F̄laid* (Breatnach 2017: 40). Breatnach (2017: 14) is unable to offer a working translation of the stanza but points out that ‘It is clearly derogatory (cf. *tón bō* ‘a cow’s rear end’ in line *c*, and *srón cherr* ‘crooked nose’ in *d*)’. An example of *brecc* ‘speckled’ is given as: *Da-rōnusa dóib droñg bind bairdne brēthir glēisi / gnūm can tlási. nís tartsat-sum dūas dar ēsi. / Nís len ēcnach ōnd āes chētlach cruth ron cūala / ar ar ndála acht nā tucsat-sum dūas for dūana*

(Breatnach 2017: 40), ‘I made for them a melodious poem of praise, with gleaming utterance; a deed without [corresponding] gentleness; they gave no reward in return for it. / No reviling attaches to them from the poetic class, as I have so heard, with regard to our concerns, except that they gave no reward for praise-poems’ (Breatnach 2017: 14). In §28.6 of *Airec Menman*, the stanza could perhaps be viewed as an example of *brecc* with it stating *Roda-molus cena lúag, / méraid cén bes Ériu úag. / Conid óg Gaidel 7 gall, / a ndo-rónus do Domnall*, ‘I have praised them without payment from him, / it will remain as long as Ireland will be untouched / So that it is perfect for Gaels and foreigners, / that which I have done for Domnall’. Since *Airec Menman* does not end in the satirisation of the king as Urard is given his compensation, the poems in their entirety could be interpreted as a *trefócal* warning to the king, plunderers, and even the then contemporary audience of the impending danger.

A *trefócal* did not always have to be aimed at the offender but it could be directed towards a kinsman. For example, a passage of Middle Irish legal commentary states: *Is airi do-níther trefocul do fine in cintaig ar dáig gur dilsiget a ærad nō cor timairget hē re dliged dīa cinn; 7 mani derna in fili treocil icad .u.s., 7 athchur blīadna fair; 7 is ēicen apad for fine rīa trefocul amail do berar for cintach*, ‘The reason why a *trefócal* is employed against the kin of the offender is so that they may consent to his being satirised or force him to [submit to] justice instead. And if the poet does not make a *trefócal*, let him pay five *séts* and it is to be postponed for a year; and a warning must be given to the kin before a *trefócal* as it is given to an offender’ (CIH 2119.30, cited in Breatnach 2004: 27). The *rosc* passages in *Bretha Nemed Toísech* state, moreover, that *Indged for aithech n-inraicc / trefocul fócraí. / Indged for a thigernae / a trí aili. / Tein a thengad toibged, / tócbad fora fīni, / feochair scéo ainbli for flaithemain; / feidm flaitheman fine / for fīni, for flaith. / Falscuitheo sindad / sloindter íarmothá suidiu, / donach géill grúaide gaba*, ‘Let him impose on a worthy commoner a *trefócal* of warning. Let him impose on his lord another three (viz., the *trefócal*). With the fire of his tongue let him enforce, let him raise [it] upon his kin, together with fierce viciousness upon the lord; the burden of the lord [and] of the kin upon the kin, upon the lord. Let scorching reviling be expressed after that if he does not get hold of cheeks of a hostage’ (Breatnach 2004: 28). Another *rosc* from the same text states that *Ro airlestar Senchae / suidigud filed / fri cinta foglaide / forsa cuindchiter féich / for fīni fria n-élúd, / for art fine, for flaith: / tairgille airib, / inna treba tíagait, / tabarr doib / dliged a lepho / íar n-áirilliud ard*, ‘Senchae has set out the arrangements for poets with regard to offences of wrongdoers from whom penalties are sought, [or] from the kin when they abscond, from the head of the kin, from the lord: forepledges [are given] for them, they go into their (viz. the lords) dwellings, let there be given to them the entitlements of their shelter according to noble merit’ (Breatnach 2004: 29). Thus, the quote advises that the *trefócal* not only be directed against the offender but also his kinsmen and lord, presumably with the assumption that it would more likely result in the issue being resolved due to the threat that the kinsmen’s honour could also be injured. Indeed, in the in-tale of *Airec Menman*, Máel does not only threaten to satirise the plunderers, but also directs the threat to Domnall himself. In Poem Two, the threat of satire is mentioned; for example, §26.11 states: *Biaid*

nech úaib diamba gúais, / béras in bir-sin tre chluais, ‘There will be one among you for whom there will be danger / who will take this spear through an ear’ and §26.12 states: *Eól dam-sa int í nod-béra, / 7 int í nod-géna*, ‘I know him who will receive, / and he whom it will wound’. In §26.13, it is then revealed that it will be Domnall who will be the victim of the satire. The stanza states: *Fo bíthin Domnaill uí Néill, / anais cach Domnall fo gréin. / Nos-molfat tar maigri mall. / Nis-áerfat acht óen Domnall*, ‘On account of Domnall úa Néill / he will protect each Domnall under the sun, / He would praise them over a slow salmon. / He would not satirise them, save only Domnall’. In the following §26.14, it states that Domnall lacks honour due to his mistreatment of Máel and there will be *cen síd fri Máel Milscothach*, ‘without peace for Máel Milscothach’. However, in Poem Three, which is recited by Aurchointed mac Sodeithbir (‘Warning son of Proclamation’), who is assumed to be one of the plunderers, it is acknowledged that Máel could satirise the plunderers. This is found in §27.4: *Guin maic bráthar ind ríge dó, / ar abae ailbíne bó*, ‘He could wound the son of the brother of the king / on account of a small flock of cows’.

An aspect of the *trefocal* that is not described in *Airec Menman* is the process involved in conducting one which would involve other performative elements beyond simple recitation. Yet again, it is the law texts that inform us on the procedure of carrying out a *trefocal*. Breatnach (1988: 17–18) summarises the *trefocal* in three steps: firstly, giving notice; secondly, the *trefocal* itself; and lastly, giving the offender time to address the *trefocal*. If the offender fails to respond, then a satire is recited. In one legal tract, it states:

Benair aibghitir oghaim. blf. 7 aibgitir ua .i. tiasca ai i nainm de; 7 is e a greim-so .i. cros, 7 a cur isin .c. drumaind ar son apaid; doberar ainm cinadh isin drumain eile 7 ainm cintaigh isin tres drumainn, 7 moladh isin cethramad drumand; 7 in fleisc do sadhudh i forba .x. maide don fhilidh trefhocail, no conadh a forba .x. maide apaid.

‘The ogham alphabet is cut, b l f, and the alphabet of poetry i.e. “I begin poetry in the name of God,” and this is how it takes effect, i.e. a cross, and it is put on the first arm a notice, and the name of the offence on the second arm, and the name of the guilty party on the third arm, and praise on the fourth arm, and the rod is to be set in the ground by the poet at the end of the ten-day period of *trefhocal*, or rather at the end of the ten-day period of notice’ (Breatnach 1987: 139).

The invocation of God and use of the cross lends further power for the *trefocal* to pressure the offender to respond to it, as the poet’s action has the approval of the Church. The cross and the words written on it visually represent the *trefocal* and result in the community acknowledging that a *trefocal* is in progress. Consequently, the offender would be coerced into addressing the *trefocal* for fear of not only being satirised but also being alienated by society.

Furthermore, Breatnach (1987: 138–9) has argued that the process of *trefoical* was comparable to the procedure of *athgábal* ‘distrain’. The latter is described by Stacey (2007: 21) as the ‘formal seizure of livestock or other property in order to satisfy a claim or force a defendant to come to law’. Breatnach (2004: 26) outlines the steps as: 1) *aurfócræ/apad* ‘notice’, 2) *anad* ‘delay, stay of execution’, 3) *tóchsal/tobach* ‘removal’, 4) *díthim* ‘delay in pound’, and 5) *lobud* ‘progressive forfeiture’. Stacey (2007: 22–3) provides further information on these steps, stating that it begins with giving notice of an upcoming distrain to the offender who is then given time to redress the situation. If the distrain is directed towards the actual defendant, this period lasts five days, but if it is directed towards a kinsman acting on behalf of the defendant then the period lasts ten days. If the offender fails to respond to the notice, the *athgábal* then proceeds to the second stage in which the object remains in the defendant’s possession. The period for this stage varies as many different factors come into play. If there is still no response, then actual seizure of the property takes place, for example, animals are driven to a pound that serves as a neutral space and this is done in the presence of witnesses. Another delaying period then occurs and if there is still an unwillingness from the defendant ‘to meet his obligation or offer a gage’, then the object is forfeited. Stacey (2007: 43–4) argues that the steps involved reinterpret the space and time of the environment. Initially, ample time is given for the defendant to respond but as one progresses through the different stages of distrain, the time in between the stages shortens and thus the feeling of urgency is conveyed. Similarly, the object initially is at the defendant’s property, but then gets moved to a neutral space that belongs neither to the offender or claimant, before finally being moved to the claimant’s space. This performance needed the recognition of the community to act as witnesses for distrain to be effective as it is through them that the offender could be shamed into addressing the situation. Indeed, the method of distrain shares similarities with the different steps of a *trefoical* as both serve to warn the offender of a more serious impending situation.⁶

An example of a poet’s failure to follow formal procedures can be seen in the previously discussed text *Araile felmac féig don Mumain*. It has already been noted that Máel’s attempt at satirising the ruler of Limerick failed because satire could not be conducted by a student. Breatnach (2009: 124) argues that the text also depicts Máel and his fellow students participating in illegal distrain when they steal two horses. Thus §5 states: *Tiagait lais cin athcomharc día fithidhir. Níba sindadh nō aoradh fo-gnise, acht gatprat fō comang .i. gabsat dí marc hi n-athgabháil. Éighthar. Ní breth forrai*, ‘They go off with him without seeking permission from their teacher. It was not reviling or satirising which they performed, but thieving and plundering as much as they could, i.e. they took two mares in distrain. A cry is raised. They were not apprehended’ (Breatnach 2009: 124–5).

⁶ The ecclesiastical equivalent of satire and distrain can be seen in the procedure for the maledictory psalms which Boyle (2020: 108) describes as ‘a series of psalms that could be uttered, one per day, over the course of twenty days, while a saint was invoked alongside the psalm, finally resulting in the damnation of the person against whom the maledictory psalms were being recited’. For further discussion see Boyle (2020), O’Neill (1981) and Wiley (2001).

Breatnach (2009: 123) argues that *gatprat* ‘can only mean that none of the formalities proper to distraint were observed’. The narrative then ends in the poet teacher reciting a poem concerning his situation as he comments on the illegal distraint: ... *nīrb indlomhthai / im dhí gabor cin peillge; / fáth fot-rúair – gan m’iomraissi – / beith ina ócc íar sríngcne*. ‘... it should not have been done, with regard to two unbridled (?) horses; the reason which brought it about – without any great boldness on my part – is that he is an infant attached to the umbilical cord’ (Breatnach 2009: 126–7). The poet then concludes with *taobh ré dalta forcetail / co dāagh mbrāthai ní tibher*, ‘until the day of judgement I will not trust in a pupil under instruction’ (Breatnach 2009: 126–7). This example illustrates that while poets held much power in society, it was not absolute as poets themselves could be victims if they did not follow socially enforced formalities.

So far, the poet’s ability to cause injury to one’s honour via satire and *tréfocal* has been examined, and in the discussion on Hospitality in this thesis (below, p 30) it will also be seen that another skill a poet had was his ability to perform a *glám díccenn*. However, *Airec Menman* also mentions other skills a poet was required to possess, in particular if he was to become an *ollam*. These are enumerated in the following triad: *imbas forosnai, díchetal do chennaib and teinm laedo/anamain*. In the legal ruling in *Airec Menman*, an *ollam* could not claim compensation unless he had these three skills. The requirement for an *ollam* to know these three skills can also be seen in the *Mittelirische Verslehren II*, which states: *Is hí dano foglaim na hochtmaide bliadna ... 7 laíde .i. tenm laída 7 immas forosnai 7 dichetal do chennaib na tuaithe 7 dínshenchus 7 primscéla Hérend olchena fria n-aisnéis do ríghaib 7 flaithib 7 dagdhoínib*, ‘These are the studies of the eighth year ... the lays (*laíde*), that is, *teinm laedo* and *imbas forosnai* and *díchetal do chennaib a tuaithe*; and *dindshenchas* and the chief tales of Ireland besides, to recite them to kings and princes and nobles’ (Carey 1997: 52). Similarly, the commentary to *Uraicecht Becc* states: *Tredi dlegar dun ollamain filed .i. tenm laeghdha 7 imus forosnadh 7 dicedal do cennaib, amail adberat bretha nemeth: a tri nemtigter nemthusa fileth, tenm laeda 7 imu forosnad [7] dicedul du cennaib*, ‘Three things are required of a master *fili*: *teinm laedo* and *imbas forosnai* and *díchetal do chennaib*, as *Bretha Nemed* states: Three things qualify the entitlements of a *fili*: *teinm laedo* and *imbas forosnai* and *díchetal do chennaib*’ (Carey 1997: 42). §123 of the Triads also notes the *Tréde neimthigedar filid: immass forosna, teinm laeda, dichetal di chennaib*, ‘Three things that constitute a poet: ‘knowledge that illumines’. ‘*teinm laeda*’, improvisation’ (Meyer 1906: 16–17). Despite the commentary to *Uraicecht Becc* stating that the *Bretha Nemed* specifies that a poet is required to know the ‘three things’, this triad is found differently in the actual *Bretha Nemed*, which instead states: *A Moraind a maine a mochta, abuir frium co miter nert cach naosad nemedh, ar is a nemtesaib do-eclamar cach direch dana dligid. Imus for-osnam, dicedual do cenduib, cedul n-anomuin cethirriach cato cach suad*. ‘O wealthy mighty Morand, tell me how the power of every lawfully established *nemed* is estimated, for it is on the basis of privileges that every upright lawful skilled person is chosen (?). Great knowledge which illuminates, extempore chanting, the singing of *anamain* of four varieties are what confer dignity on a sage’ (Breatnach 1987:

36–7). Similarly, a later section of *Bretha Nemed* observes that: *Áirdemh uaislemh anamhain, / imba ceithre ree rigther. / Ad-sloinn airdnemhidh iomhais, / aroslaicthe dligheadh / dicheadal docanar / do cholla cennaibh. / Gach úadh, ní dligheadh deirméin, / déach sgeo feadha; / slan sáoi rodasuidhesttar*, ‘Loftiest, noblest, is *anamain*, / when four varieties are composed. / A chant which is recited / from heads of bodies (?) / characterizes the exalted privilege of *imbas*, / which opens up entitlements. / He should not forget the requirement of every metre, / of syllable and letter: / sound is the sage who has set them in place’ (Carey 1997: 44–5). In both quotations, *teinm laedo* has been replaced with *anamain* which is a type of verse form that is associated with the *ollam* (Carey 1997: 44; Breatnach 1987: 59, 177). Carey (1997: 44) argues that this change may be due to the triad found in *Uraicecht Becc* and the Triads of Ireland originating not from the extant copy of *Bretha Nemed*, but from a modified text that no longer exists and contained *teinm laedo* instead of *anamain*. Further, in the second quotation, *díchetal di chennaib*, which has the literal meaning of ‘chanting from heads’, has been expanded to *dicheadal ... do cholla cennaibh*.

While *Airec Menman* mentions the triads as a requirement for an *ollam*, it does not provide any insight on the performative aspects of it, which may however be gleaned from other sources. Carey (1997: 45) argues that *díchetal di chennaib* originally did not have any ritual aspects associated with it and is best translated as ‘extempore’ to mean an incantation that is composed in the moment. For example, §828 in O’Davoren’s Glossary, which is also cited in CIH 1119.38, states: *Fedhair .i. dorenar, ut est dliged dofedhar sóer, dóer dochennaib .i. continuo*, ‘*Fedair*, i.e. is paid, *ut est* “the freeman is paid according to law, the unfree at once”’ (Stokes 1904: 335). This line glosses *do chennaib* with *continuo*, thus the meaning ‘at once’. Also, eDIL s.v. *díchetal* (www.dil.ie/16103) lists the following: *Dubthach doroine dicetal do cennaib for ēn-anāil do cuingidh feraind for C*, ‘Dubthach composed a *díchetal di chennaib* in one breath for seeking land upon C’. This meaning is in contrast to the expanded form in *dicheadal ... do cholla cennaibh*; Carey (1997: 45) interprets *cholla* as the genitive plural of *colainn* ‘body, corpse’. He argues that the phrase ‘might be taken to point to some kind of necromantic ritual’. Cleary (2018: 251) has suggested an alternative analysis for *dichetal di chollaib cenn* whereby she takes *chollaib* as the dative plural of *coll* ‘neck, jaw’ and thus the translation ‘chanting from the jaw of the heads’ or ‘chanting from jowls’. She, however, acknowledges that both analyses are possible. Similarly, Carey (1997: 46) does not dismiss the idea that *díchetal di chennaib* could have both magical and non-magical meanings; he further suggests that *do cholla cennaibh* ‘may originally have been intended as no more than an alliterating embellishment of *di chennaib* – ‘heads of bodies’ being simply another way of saying ‘head’.

The translation of *imbas forosnai* is commonly found as ‘knowledge which illuminates’. In *Sanas Cormaic*, *imbas forosnai* is described as a ceremonial procedure whereby after chewing a piece of flesh from a red pig or that of a cat or dog and placing it behind the flag of a door, the poet is to recite an incantation to the idols. The procedure then ends with the poet placing his two palms on his two cheeks as he falls asleep and eventually the knowledge will come to him (Meyer 1912a: 64).

However, in Early Irish sagas, the practice of *imbas forosnai* is described differently, such as in a story concerning Finn mac Cumail who has his food stolen by Cúldub, son of Ua Birgge of the fairy mound. On the third night that this happened, Finn follows the man back into the fairy mound and on the way, he is greeted by a woman who is leaving the fairy mound. She has a drinking vessel in her hand with which she has just distributed drink to her people. Upon seeing him, she is on the verge of closing the door to the mound when Finn jams his finger in between the door and the post. He then sucks on his finger and the text states: *A donic as afrithisi foopairt dicetal. Fortnosmen an imbas condebert*: ... ‘When he took it out again, he began to chant, the *imbas* illumines him and he said ...’ (Meyer 1904b: 344–7). Later in the story, his new abilities allow him to identify the unknown man in the tree. The scene is described as: *Is de dobert Finn a hordain ina béolo. Addonich as eisib afrithisi fortnosna a imbus & dichan dicetal co neipert*: ‘...“*Dercc Corra mac húi Daigre*”, *ol sé, “fil isan crund,*” ‘Then Finn put his thumb into his mouth. When he took it out again his *imbas* illumines him and he chanted an incantation and said: “Tis Derg Corra son of Ua Daigre” he said, “that is in the tree” (Meyer 1904b: 348–9). Therefore, *imbas forosnai* involved some sort of performative aspects to it and, in the case of Finn, it is the sucking of his thumb.

Similarly, *teinm láedo* ‘breaking of marrow’ involved not only the reciting of verse but other physical actions for it to be effective. For example, *Sanas Cormaic* recounts a story concerning the poet Móen who takes a staff and places it on a dog’s skull. He then performs a *teinm láedo* which allows him to identify the dog (Meyer 1912a: 77). Similarly, in another story, the poet Lugaid Dalléices uses his staff for the same purpose, although this time it is to identify a skull that is found on the seashore; in this instance, there is no explicit reference that what he is doing is a *teinm láedo*. However, his actions are the same as Móen’s, thus implying Lugaid had performed a *teinm láedo* (Meyer 1912a: 27–8). There is also a story of Finn mac Cumail, yet again, placing his thumb into his mouth and reciting a *teinm láedo* in order to identify who the headless body belonged to (O’Donovan & Stokes 1868: 129–30; Stokes 1862: 34–5). Thus, it can be seen that both *imbas forosnai* and *teinm láedo* have magical aspects to them.

As previously stated, in some sources *teinm láedo* is replaced by *anamain*. Johnston (2013: 148) agrees with Carey’s argument on the magical properties of *imbas forosnai* and *teinm láedo* to argue that the original triad with *anamain* ‘creates a neat symmetry between spontaneous composition (*díchetal de chennaib*), inspiration (*imbas forosnai*) and learned formal metrics (*anamain*); however, this symmetry is lost with the new triad containing *teinm láedo* as ‘there is a heavy weighting towards the supernatural’. This emphasis on the supernatural aspects can also be seen in *Sanas Cormaic*, in Patrick’s condemnation of both *imbas forosnai* and *teinm láedo*. Thus the text states: *Atrorbe Patraic anisin, 7 an teinm laoda, 7 fotroirgell a briathar na bad nimhe na talman nach aon dogenai, ar is diultad bathis. Dic[h]etal do c[h]ennaib imorro, fodrachbad son i corus c[h]erdae, ar is soas fodera son: ni ecen audbairt do demnaib oca, acht aisneis do c[h]ennaib a chnamae fochedoir* (Meyer 1912a: 64), ‘Patrick rejected that (*imbas forosnai*), and also *teinm laedo*, and pledged his word that

whoever performed it would belong neither to heaven nor earth, for it is a rejection of baptism. *Díchetal do chennaib*, however, was left in the canon of art. For inspiration is the cause of that; no offering to demons is necessary at it, but an instantaneous recital from the ends of his bones' (Carey 1997: 48).

Carey (1997: 48) argues that Patrick's rejection of *imbasc forosnai* and *teinm láedo* as 'fundamentally pagan and involving offerings to demons' is unlike those of earlier sources which state that it was an essential part of an *ollam*'s skill set. For example, it is noted in the introduction to the *Senchas Már* that *Is i Senchas Már ro airled comdíre do rí 7 epscop 7 águ rechto litre 7 suid fíled di-chain di c[h]ennaib, for-osnai imbasc, 7 briuguid di-renar cétaib*, 'It is in *Senchas Már* that the same compensation has been determined for a king and to a bishop and a pillar of the law of Scripture and a master poet who chants extempore, whom inspiration illuminates, and a hospitaller who is paid compensation on the basis of [possessions amassed in] hundreds' (Breatnach 2011: 4–5). This quote does not mention *teinm láedo* or *anamain*, but it evidently demonstrates that *imbasc forosnai* was originally accepted by the church. Similar ideas are seen in the Caldron of Poesy (Breatnach 1981: 45–93), an eighth-century text that discusses the three cauldrons that represent different aspects of knowledge. In the text, *imbasc forosnai* is considered a legitimate source of knowledge, which, Carey (1997: 48) argues, represents 'both secular and supernatural: subordinated to the gifts of God'. Similarly, Breatnach (1981: 50) states that the obtainment of *imbasc* indicates the final stage of a poet's career. There are a couple of literary examples of this triad being accepted in society, for example, in the Middle Irish tale *Macgnímartha Find* 'The Boyhood Deeds of Finn' (Meyer 1882: 195–204, 508). When Finn, who is studying under the sage named Finn Éices, is tasked with cooking salmon, he is forbidden from eating it as it is has been prophesied to Finn Éices that whoever eats the salmon will obtain knowledge from it in which *ni 'n-a ainfis itir iarum*, 'nothing would remain unknown to him' (Meyer 1882: 201; Meyer 1904a: 186). Finn, however, inadvertently consumes some of the salmon when he burns his finger while cooking it and, in order to soothe the burn, he places his thumb into his mouth. It is then said: *Is ed sin tra dorat in fis do Finn .i. an tan do bered a ordain i n-a beolu oculus nocha na tria teinm laega, oculus no failisitheas do iarum in ni no bid 'n-a ainfis. Ro fogluim-sium in treide nemtigiús filid .i. teinm laega oculus imus forosna oculus divedul dicennaib* (Meyer 1882: 201), 'It is that which gave the knowledge to Finn, to wit, whenever he put his thumb into his mouth and sang through *teinm láida*, then whatever he had been ignorant of would be revealed to him. He learnt the three things that constitute a poet: *teinm láida*, *imbasc forosna*, and *díchetual díchennaib*' (Meyer 1904a: 186). Therefore, the requirement that an *ollam* should know this triad is not only stated in the law texts but also in the sagas.

Likewise, in *Airec Menman*, this triad is mentioned in the *rosc* section concerning the compensation that is to be paid to Urard in §32.8: *Fo theinm láeda lánfocail lántuinseim soillsiges sruthlinn mbairr búais búadchu dó díchetal do chollaib cenn*, 'Good divinatory incantation of full speech [and] of full impact which illuminates streaming liquid of supremacy of inspiration, most

preeminent for him [is] *díchetal do chollaib chenn*'. The triad is mentioned again at the end of the text in §33.2 when the counsel states: *Et is amlaid-sin ro-ordaisget do thabairt da cach ollamain ina enech 7 ina sárugud co brath acht co-tíssat dé imbas for-osnai 7 díchetal do chollaib cenn 7 teinm láeda .i. com-eneclann fri rí Temra dó acht co-tí dé in tréide-sin. Finit*, 'And it is on account of this that they ordained to give [the following] until Doomsday to each *ollam* in compensation for his honour-price and for his violation, provided that he may deliver *imbas for-osnai 7 díchetal do chollaib cenn 7 teinm láeda* .i. equal honour-price to the king of Tara for him provided that he may know these three things. *Finit*'. The ending of *Airec Menman* thus not only reaffirms the status of the poet in medieval Ireland but also serves to emphasise Urard's exceptional skills as a poet who possesses all these three qualities.

An overview of the training and career of the *fili*, in particular that of an *ollam*, has been given in this section. It has been seen that the *filid* were feared by the community due to their ability to damage one's honour via satire and this could manifest itself physically, whether through the blushing or cutting of the victim's cheeks. However, there were strict regulations on how a satire could be performed. This begins with the *fili* conducting a *trefochal*, which provides the offender time to redress the situation. It was also seen that the qualities that distinguish an *ollam* from the lower grades of the *fili* are their skills in *imbas for-osnai 7 díchetal do chollaib cenn 7 teinm láeda / anamain*. There are conflicting opinions on the interpretation of this triad, as in some sources these skills were viewed as magical incantations that were deemed as pagan and thus rejected by the Church. On the other hand, other sources, such as *Airec Menman*, cite the triads as a requirement to be an *ollam*. This overview gives a better picture of who Urard mac Coisse may have been and it is no surprise then that the poet was able to devise an allegorical story on the spot concerning his situation.

Hospitality

In medieval Ireland, hospitality was seen as an important quality to display, and the way this was done could affect one's honour. This theme features heavily in the poems of *Airec Menman*. An overview of the importance of hospitality in Early Irish texts will first be given, and then examples from *Airec Menman* will be analysed to illustrate how Urard mac Coisse utilises past examples of inhospitality or ungenerosity in order to threaten king Domnall by reminding him of the possible repercussions he could face if the poet is not shown proper hospitality.

A person who provides hospitality to members of society was known as a *briugu* 'hospitaller' and numerous references to them can be found in Early Irish law and secular texts. For example, one text states the *briugu* was required to keep his *bruiden* 'hostel' in an accessible location, usually at an intersection of well-travelled roads, and to dispense unlimited hospitality to the community (Kelly 1988: 36–8). While *Bretha Nemed Toísech* states: *caire ainsic, arus for tuathset, fo cen fria cach*

nguis, ‘A never-dry cauldron, a dwelling on a public road, and a welcome for every face’ (CIH 2220.8–9), and in another tract it is said that *cach briuga ramatach* ‘every hospitaller must have roads to his house’ (CIH 255.7). A Middle Irish gloss states, moreover, that a hospitaller was required to have a man stationed at every single road to ensure that a traveller would not pass his hostel without being offered food, drink, and accommodation. In this way, the hospitaller would not be at risk of satirisation for inhospitality (CIH 1608.36–7). *Uraicecht Becc* states that a hospitaller is to not refuse any company regardless of how often the guests visits (CIH 1608.20–1). The same section of this text states that a *briugu leitech*, ‘superior hospitaller’ has twice the property of a regular hospitaller, an immovable cauldron, that is a cauldron that was perpetually on fire and cooking food, and three roads leading to the hostel. It also states that a hospitaller has the same honour price as a king of a *túath*, an *ollam* and bishop. The grouping of the hospitaller alongside other high-status members of society indicates the importance of the hospitaller in society.

Hospitallers are also represented in many Early Irish literary texts, such as the late-Middle-Irish second recension of *Cath Maige Rath* ‘The Battle of Mag Rath’ (O’Donovan 1842). This story recounts the battle between Domnall mac Áeda, king of the Uí Néill, and his foster-son Congal Cáech, king of the Ulaid. The latter is killed at Mag Rath in a battle that was supposedly fought in 637 AD. The author refers to hospitality in the tale as follows:

Uchan! Ro b’urusa d’á h-aithnidh ocus d’á h-anaithnidh Ere d’imluadh ocus d’aithghid is in aimsir sin ... re feile ocus re failtighe a fír-bhrughadh; uair robsat boga, biadhmará, bocéadacha a brughadha; robsat fiala fairsinge a foirghneamha, for slaicthe ar chinn cliar ocus coinneamh, greas ocus glamh ocus gruam aidheadh.

‘Ah me! It were easy for one acquainted or unacquainted with Erin to travel and frequent her at this period ... the generosity and hospitality of her good *Brughaidhs* [victuallers]; for her *Brughaidhs* were generous and had abundance of food and kine; her habitations were hospitable, spacious, and open for company and entertainment to remove the hunger and gloom for guests ...’ (O’Donovan 1842: 104–5).

Similarly, in the Middle Irish tale *Esnada Tige Buchet* ‘The Songs of Buchet’s House’ (Stokes 1904b: 18–38), the opening paragraph states: *Bói coire feile la Laigniu, Buchat a ainm. Tech n-oeget fer n-Herenn a thech in Buchet. Ni ro díbdad teni fo a choiriu o ro gab threbad*, ‘The Leinsterman had a “cauldron of hospitality”, named Buchet. A guesthouse of the men of Erin was the dwelling of that Buchet. From the time he began householding the fire under his caldron was never quenched’ (Stokes 1904b: 20–1). However, as Buchet could not refuse hospitality, he is taken advantage of by the sons of Cathaír Mór, the king of Ireland, who make excessive demands. As a result, *fargabsat leis acht .uii. mbai 7 tarb, bale ir-rabatar na .uii. n-árge 7 secht tige la cach n-airge*, ‘[they] left him nought save seven cows and a bull in the steading where there had been seven herds of cattle, and seven houses

with each herd' (Stokes 1904b: 20–1). Similarly, the importance of providing food and drink can be seen in *Scéla Mucce Meic Dathó* 'The Story of Mac Dathó's Pig' (Thurneysen 1935: 1–2). Mac Dathó's hostel is described as *Secht ndoruis isin bruidin ocus secht sligeda trethe ocus secht tellaige indi ocus secht cori. Dam ocus tinne in cach coiri. In fer no-t,h.ēged iarsint sligi do-bered in n-aēl isin coiri...* 'Seven doors had Macc Da Thó's hostel, and seven entrances and seven hearths and seven cauldrons. Each cauldron contained beef and salted pork, and as each man passed by, he thrust the flesh-fork into the cauldron ...' (Gantz 1981: 180). Likewise, the second recension of *Togail Bruidne Da Derga* 'The Destruction of Da Derga's Hostel' (Knott 1936: 39) describes how *ó gabais trebud ní ro dúnit a doirse riam ó da-rignead in Bruiden, acht leth dia mbi in gaeth is fris bis in chomla 7 ó gabais trebad ní tudchaid a chairi di theni acht no bid oc bruith bíd di feraib Hérenn...* 'Since he [Da Derga] became a hospitaller, the entrances to the hostel have never been closed, save in the direction from which the wind blows; since he became a hospitaller, his cauldron has never gone from the fire, and it boils food for the men of Ireland' (Gantz 1981: 99). While these stories were not based on historical events, they do give an insight on what one might expect when receiving good hospitality. It was envisioned that adequate accommodation, entertainment, food and drink were given to guests, whose demands were always met.

Likewise, a king was not only expected to possess martial prowess, but he was also expected to be generous and hospitable. It was believed that, if he failed to do so, he would risk being satirised and could potentially lose his kingship as he would be deemed unsuitable to rule. These ideas are borne out in Early Irish wisdom tracts, for example, the seventh-century text *Audacht Morainn* 'The Testament of Morann' (Kelly 1976) concerns the judge Morann mac Móin advising the young king Feradach Find Fechnach on what qualities a good king should possess for a successful reign. His success is based on the concept of *fír flathemon* 'ruler's truth' which states that through the justice of a ruler, peace, prosperity, and stability are achieved. For instance, §54 states: *To-léci dochell do clothaib, / To-léci néoit do gart*, 'Inhospitability yields to hospitality. / Niggardliness yields to generosity' (Kelly 1976: 16–17). These ideas are repeated in §55: *Apair fris, ... bad eslabar, bad garte ...* 'Tell him: let him be ... generous, hospitable...' (Kelly 1976: 16–17). O'Sullivan (2004: 68) argues that in §54, the author purposefully chose *cloth*, which can have the meaning of 'fame', 'reputation' or 'hospitality', instead of using the more common term *gart* when referring to 'hospitality' in order to highlight the link between hospitality affecting one's honour or status in society. This type of wordplay has already been seen in the previous discussion concerning *enech* 'honour, repute; face', *grúad* 'cheeks; honour' and *rus* 'face, cheeks; shame' (see pp. 16–18).

Similar ideas are seen in the ninth-century gnomic text *Tecosca Cormaic* 'The Instructions of Cormac' (Meyer 1909), which is a dialogue between king Cormac mac Airt and his son Cairpre Lifechair on the proper conduct of a king in order to achieve a prosperous reign. Cormac advises Cairpre in §11: *nír tharta th'enech ar choirm ná ar biad, ar is ferr dín cloth oldás dín mbiid*, 'do not give your honour for ale nor for food, for it is better to save one's fair fame than to save one's food'

(Meyer 1909, 18–19). Like in *Audacht Morainn*, the word *cloth* is used here, with the line warning Cairpre that a lack of hospitality will result in a loss of honour and any potential fame he could have gained. Furthermore, the text also advises Cairpre that: *Dech dó ... Mórad nemed / Airmitiu filed*, ‘Best for him ... Exalting privileged persons, / Honouring poets...’ (Meyer 1909: 2–3). A link is then drawn between the necessity to provide hospitality to poets and a king’s honour. Furthermore, according to Heptad 13, a king is required to provide hospitality to a law-abiding person but not to his retinue (Kelly 1988: 140). Kelly (1988: 139) comments that the offence of refusing hospitality when food and shelter are due is known as *esáin* ‘lit. driving away’; alternatively, it could also be termed *etech* ‘refusal’, and results in compensation appropriate to the person’s rank being paid to him. Therefore, a king not only risks the loss of his honour, but he must also pay restitution to the victim if he fails to provide hospitality.

The issue of inhospitality is also illustrated by stanzas included in the Early Irish metrical tracts. For example, *Mittelirische Verslehren* II §89 states: *Nīrb ingnad / i tig Chrundmāil cāilfīnnach / salann for arān cen imm: / is menand / rosecc feōil a muintire / amal seccas rūscc imm chrann*, ‘It would be no wonder in Crundmāel’s house of shaggy wattle-work [to get] salt on bread without butter: it is clear the flesh of his household has dried up as bark dries up around a tree’ (McLaughlin 2008: 12). Similarly, the tract on satire known as *Fodlai Aíre* states in §2 that: *Nírbo lour lais a chuit: ‘In scerdfider salann duit for do chuit?’ ar in timthirhid. ‘Níthó,’ ar sesom, ‘ar ním thá ní for a scerter acht ma scerter for mo thengaid irecc. Nícon écen: is oirt cenae*, ‘He did not deem his food sufficient: ‘Will salt be sprinkled on your food?’ said the servant. ‘No’, said he, ‘for I have not anything on which it may be sprinkled, unless it is sprinkled directly on my tongue. It is not necessary: it’s bark already’ (McLaughlin 2008: 52–3). In §8 of the same tract, it states *Dallbach beccthuinidi indoso: Ránac-sa a les / secha tét in glass / indid imdae grus / cenip imdae as*, ‘Lightly established innuendo here: I reached his farmyard / past which the stream flows, / in which cheese is plentiful / although it does not come plentifully out of it’ (McLaughlin 2008: 54–5). In all these examples, the guests complain about the minute rations given to them: Crundmāel’s guest complains of the lack of butter, while in the second example, a *cáinte* snarkily replies that he does not require salt as there is so little food to use it on. In the last example, the guest mocks the host’s failure to provide food despite having rich and fertile land. The utterance of these complaints ultimately serves to shame and injure the host’s honour.

The theme of hospitality also features in Early Irish saga texts such as in the stories concerning Athirne, the poet of King Conchobar, who is known for being greedy and inhospitable. For example, one story begins with the line *Aithirni Algessach mac Ferchertni is e is dibiq^u ro-uuí i nEri*, ‘Aithirne Ailgesach son of Ferchertne was the stingiest man in Ireland’ (Thurneysen 1918: 398; Carey 2003: 64). Due to his niggardliness, cranes are stationed at his house to warn any potential guests of his inhospitality. In the story, Athirne is on the verge of consuming an entire pig and bottle of mead for himself when a man approaches him and takes the pig and bottle from him to prevent him

from greedily eating the entire meal. Athirne then questions the man for his name, with the latter stating his name is ‘Sethor Ethor Othor Sele Dele Dreg Gerce Mec Gerce Gér Gér Dír Dír’, but due to the complexity of the name, Athirne is unable to make a satire against him. The story ends with a statement that the man is sent by God to teach Athirne a lesson, and from then on, he is no longer inhospitable.

In another story concerning Athirne’s birth, when his mother is pregnant with him, she and the unborn Athirne smell ale that is being prepared for the king’s feast. She requests the ale three times, but she is refused thrice. Afterwards, Athirne is heard uttering: *Do laith lochrann talmhan tethraigh mara mos-tire-timchealla tethraigh tráighes láthrach loichett la bledh-mhaidm ba tenedh tethnatar a ciorcuill cnó-mhaidm*, ‘Thine ale is an inundation of earth that has ... seas, that quickly encircles the lands, that has ..., that ebbs suddenly, breaking forth with a crash as of lightning, the fire-woman; its hoops have burst like the breaking of a nut’ (Gwynn 1928: 155). Consequently, the vessel’s hoops burst and ale spills throughout the house which allows the woman to take three draughts of it. It is then said: *Nach file nodgébha annso ina áth téchta iarna eitech im dhigh chorma, rodmeabhaidh an cuirm-sin tresna lestraibh 7 rogáod uime no oga, ar ní coir a fágbháil dia éis gan digh dhó dhe*, ‘If any poet shall recite this [spell] on a fitting occasion, after being refused a drink of ale, that ale will straightway burst through the vessels; and they have been pierced on account of him (or, by him); for it is not right that he should leave it behind him without getting a drink thereof’ (Gwynn 1928: 154–5). Thus, unlike the first story where the poet is unable to utter a satire and is the source of inhospitality, in the second story, his incantation results in the punishment of the ale-master as a consequence of the poet being refused hospitality.

While the last two stories involve inhospitality as a result of denial of food, in the tale *Tochmarc Lúaine 7 Aided Athairne* ‘The Wooing of Lúan and Death of Athirne’ (Stokes 1903), Athirne utters a satire that causes three blotches to appear on Lúan’s cheeks when she refuses to sleep with him; these blotches were named *On 7 Ainim 7 Aithis .i. dub 7 derg 7 ban*, ‘Shame and Blemish and Disgrace .i. black and red and white’ (Stokes 1903: 278–9). Lúan then dies of shame. Therefore, the refusal to submit to a poet’s sexual demand could also result in an individual being satirised.

On the other hand, the *Metrical Dindsenchas* concerning Loch Dergderc is an example of providing hospitality in excess. In this text, the king of Munster, Eochaid mac Luchta, is known for his generosity and for never refusing a person’s request. One day, the Ulster poet Ferchertne mac Athló demands from the king to give his only eye to the poet. The poet utters: *Tuc dam do rosc roglas réil’ / ar in drúí dognas doréir: / ‘is tu rodelig d’fheraib / clú enig do Gáedelaib*, ‘Give me thine eye grey and bright,’/ said the surly malignant druid: / ‘thou among all men art specially distinguished / by fame for generosity among the Gaels’ (Gwynn 1913: 340–1). The king complies and in order to staunch the bleeding, he places his head under a fountain of water to wash his bloody eye. The text then states: *Fúair Eochaid na fert féile, / tria nert rí g na rogréine, / fó rúin, raga cech roimse, / da shúil glana glé-shoillse*, ‘Eochaid, marvellous in hospitality, received / through the might of the king

of the high sun / (a happy mystery – best of all abundance) – / two bright clear-shining eyes’ (Gwynn 1913: 344–5). A version of the story also appears in *Talland Étair* ‘The Siege of Howth’ (Ó Dónaill 2005) and *Betha Rúadain* ‘The Life of Rúadan’ (Plummer 1922). Unlike in the story of *Tochmarc Lúaine 7 Aided Athairne*, Eochaid’s compliance with the poet’s demand, even if it is an unfair demand, results in the king being rewarded and obtaining two new eyes. However, it will be seen later that providing excess hospitality does not always result in the victim being rewarded. So far, the discussion on the requirement to provide hospitality can be seen in a wide range of Early Irish texts and *Airec Menman* is no exception to this.

The importance of hospitality can, in fact, already be seen in the opening of *Airec Menman*. §2 states: *Pai-sen iarom ina tigh lighi for a chionn-sium matan moch ria n-eirghi 7 ferais failti friss. Frissgart iarom Mac Coissi in failti flaitemhda hi-sin* (Byrne 1908: 42), ‘Thereafter, he (i.e. King Domnall) was in their dormitory early one morning before day break and he welcomed them. Mac Coisse then answered that generous welcome’ (my trans.). Despite Urard arriving before sunrise, the king, who seems to be asleep, awakens to greet the poet, indicating that he was aware of the need to provide hospitality to a poet of high status such as Urard. The king’s generosity is also discussed in Poem Three, which describes the plunderer Aurchoimted mac Sodeithbir’s (‘Excusing One son of Good Reason’) attempts to appease the king by praising him. This is after the plunderers have been chastised by the king’s messenger Robad mac Rofúacra (‘Warning son of Proclamation’) for their crime. For example, in §27.9, Domnall’s generosity and liberality are referred to, as the stanza states that a single draught *do dernainn Domnaill* ‘by the hand of Domnall’ would be enough to placate his people, with the implication being that he is a king who readily provides for his people. In §27.10, Domnall’s wife Derbáil is praised for her generosity and, interestingly, she is said to be the one who chose Domnall as her husband and that they made *cucang comadas*, ‘a fitting match’. Derbáil (d. 1010) is mentioned in AU as the daughter of Tadg mac Cathail (d. 956), King of Connacht (Mac Airt & Mac Niocaill 1983: 440–1). She is also mentioned in another poem beginning *Abair dam-sa re Derbail* ‘On My Behalf Tell Der Fáil’ (Meyer 1908; Cannon 2002), which is ascribed to a Mac Coisse. In that poem, the poet consoles Derbáil for the loss of her son Áed. Not much else is known about her, but her ability to choose who her husband will be is not unusual, and a similar situation can be seen in the relationship between Medb and Ailill in the Book of Leinster version of *Táin Bo Cúailnge* ‘The Cattle Raid of Cooley’ (O’Rahilly 1967).⁷ In the opening of the tale, commonly known as the ‘pillow-talk scene’, Ailill tells Medb that she is now in a stronger position by virtue of her marriage to him; however, Medb corrects him by stating that she chose him, and not the other way around:

⁷ For a discussion on female agency in medieval Ireland see Boyle (2022) and Ó Hoireabhárd (2022).

... dáig is mé ra chunnig in coibchi n-ingnaid nára chunnig ben ríam remon ar feri. fer cen neóit, cen ét, cen omon ... Diambad neóit in fer ‘gá mbeind, níbad chomadas dún beith maróen fo bíth am maith-se | im rath 7 tidnacul, 7 bad cháined dom fír combadim ferr-sa im rath secha, 7 níbad cháined immorro combar commaithe acht combadar maithe díb línaib (O’Rahilly 1967: 1-2).

‘I demanded a strange bride-gift, such as no woman before me had asked ... to wit, a husband without meanness ... If my husband should be mean it would not be fitting for us to be together, for I am generous in largesse and the bestowal of gifts and it would be a reproach for my husband that I should be better than he in generosity, but it would be no reproach if we were equally generous provided that both of us were generous’ (O’Rahilly 1967: 138).

O’Sullivan (2004: 71) argues that this scene is an example of the symbolic relationship between the king and his territory, which is usually ‘personified as a local woman of sovereignty with the most famous figure being Medb of Crúchain’⁸. This connection was known as *banais rígi* ‘wedding feast of the kingship’. Thus, §27.10 may be another example of *banais rígi* and it emphasises Domnall’s appropriateness to be king. The king’s and queen’s liberality are reinforced in §27.11, as the stanza states that both Derbáil and Domnall are *comrar garta* ‘a chest of generosity’. The medieval audience may have connected the two stories on Derbáil and Medb through the shared ideas concerning female autonomy in which both characters are portrayed as having the same status their husbands as well as possessing generosity towards their people. Therefore, these two stories illustrate the intertextuality of medieval Irish literature and other examples concerning poets and satire will later be discussed at pp. 36–9.

Aurchoimted mac Sodeithbir’s praising of the couple prepares the audience for the scene in §29, where Domnall organises a meeting with the chief princes of the Cenél nÉogain in order to question them for the crimes of their kinsmen. Máel Milsothach responds to Aurchoimted in Poem Four, in which he discusses the inhospitality that is being shown to him despite his close relationship with the king and the king’s family and his loyalty towards them. In §28.3, Máel Milsothach makes the point that even though he is self-sufficient, that is, he provides his own food, drink and accommodation, he has, nevertheless, been plundered. He emphasises the unfairness of the situation in §28.5 by stating: *Do-cuitchetar frim fo secht / do-cuitches-sa a coimaitecht* ‘They swore at me seven times. / I have sworn at their company’. The poet could be referring to the seven members of the king’s family who participated in the plundering and are identified in §19 as: Aéd, Muiredach, Níall, Domnall, Máelcainne, Ocán and Dalach. Despite their crimes, the poem states that the king readily provides them with hospitality even though *Níro-áil-sium a mbíathad* ‘He was not entitled to

⁸ For discussions against the idea of a ‘sovereignty figure’ see: Toner (2018), Ní Dhonnchadha (2000) and Kelly (1992).

feed them'. Máel continues detailing the lack of generosity in the rest of the poem, which ends with an expression of his displeasure at his treatment. Domnall, evidently, understands the severity of the situation and as previously mentioned, in §29 he calls a counsel with his advisors to discuss the situation.

So far, the discussion of hospitality has been concerned with Poems Three and Four of *Airec Menman*, which deal with Domnall and his treatment of his poet Máel Milscothach. However, in the lead-up to these scenes, the preceding Poem Two establishes the context of inhospitality. Poem Two occurs after the then-present Domnall has been informed, via an angel, that Máel Milscothach is an alias for Urard mac Coisse, who is the true victim of the plunder. The narrative then returns to the in-tale, which tells of how, after hearing Máel Milscothach's plight, the king sends his messenger, Robad mac Rofúacra to apprehend the plunderers. The messenger finds them gathered around the spoils and dividing them amongst themselves. Robad then recites thirteen stanzas that mention past literary examples of poets being shown inhospitality. The literary examples the poem makes reference to are the following three Early Irish stories: *Cath Maige Tuired* 'The Battle of Mag Tuired' (Gray 1982), the story of Caíer and Néide found in *Sanas Cormaic* (Russell 2008a: 34), and a story concerning Dallán Forgall and King Áed mac Ainmuirech from *Amra Choluimb Chille* (Stokes 1900). In each story, the denial of the poet's request results in the king's downfall.

The first reference in Poem Two is to the story of *Cath Maige Tuired* in §26.4, ll. 3–4, which states: *Is dé ro-góet – grádaib gal - / grúad Breisi maic Elathan*. 'It is from it that had been wounded – by feats of valour - / the cheeks of Bres mac Elathan'. Murphy (1953–1955: 195) has dated the text to the twelfth-century, although he states the text is likely to be based on ninth-century materials. The text survives only in the sixteenth-century manuscript British Library, Harley 5280, begins by recounting how the Túatha Dé Danann, who are in alliance with the Fomorians, arrive in Ireland in order to take the country by force from the indigenous inhabitants, the Fir Bolg. The Túatha Dé are victorious but the battle results in their king, Núada Argatlám, losing his hand by Sreng mac Sengainn. Their physician Dían Cécht and their brazier Crédne fashion him a new silver hand; however, as a king with a physical blemish cannot rule, Núada is deemed no longer suitable for the kingship. After much debate, the Túatha Dé and their wives give the kingship to Bres mac Elathan, the son of Elath mac Delbaíth, who is the king of the Fomorians, and the son of Ériu, daughter of Delbáeth, who is of the Túatha Dé Danann. Since he is from both races, the Túatha Dé hope that Bres would strengthen the alliance between the two groups; however, as implied in §26.4–5, his kingship does not go well as it results in a spear wounding the *grúad Breisi maic Elathan*, 'cheeks of Bres mac Elathan'.

Bres' first unjust act is to allow the three Fomorian kings, Indech mac Dé Domnann, Elatha mac Delbaíth, and Tethra, to force their tribute upon the Túatha Dé. He also forces the latter's warriors to serve him: for example, Ogma, an Irish god who is known as a *trénfer*, literally

‘strongman’, is reduced to carrying firewood, and his brother, the Dagda, another deity known for his wisdom, magic and music, is reduced to building ramparts for Bres’ fort; this situation is referred to in §26.9, 1.3 (*oc claidi dúin Breis brais* ‘at the digging of boastful Bres’ fort’). Breatnach (2013) has argued that the characterisation of Bres as an oppressive ruler is supported by his unlawful accumulation of clientship dues. His demands of *fognum* ‘[rendering] service’ and *éraig* ‘[rendering] penalty-payment’ result in the humiliation of the Túatha Dé, as they are forced into servitude. This servitude is further made worse by subjecting them to his *cáin*, that is, a relationship where one group or person is superior to the other. These events foreshadow his troubled regime, which is later described as follows:

Gapuis trá Bres an flaith feib do-n-indnacht dó. Buí fodhord móar imbe lie máthruí la Túaith Déi, ar níhtar béoluide a scénaí úatha. Cid menic notístais, níptar cormaide a n-anáulai. Ní fhacutar dano a filidh iná a mbardai nó a cáinte nó I cruitire nó i cuslendaib nó a cornairie nó i clesomhnaig nó a n-ónmide oga n-airfide aru cinn isin techlig. Níco lotar dano a comramai a ségonn. Ní facutar a trénfiorai do fromadh fri eggnamh liesin rígh acht óenfar nammá .i. Oghmai mac Étnae.

‘At that time, Bres held the sovereignty as it had been granted to him. There was great murmuring against him among his maternal kinsmen the Túatha Dé, for their knives were not greased by him. However frequently they might come, their breaths did not smell of ale; and they did not see their poets nor their bards nor their satirists nor their harpers nor their pipers nor their horn-blowers nor their jugglers nor their fools entertaining them in the household. They did not go to contests of those pre-eminent in the arts, nor did they see their warriors proving their skill at arms before the king, except for one man, Ogma the son of Étain’ (Gray 1982: 32–3).

As discussed in the beginning, a king was required to be hospitable and generous, and, evidently, Bres’ failure to possess those traits results in the Túatha Dé becoming increasingly unhappy with their treatment; they then seek to dispose him.

In Poem Two of *Airec Menman*, an example of Bres’ inhospitality is vaguely alluded to in the reference to *mac Etnai 7 mac Adnai*, ‘son of Etnai 7 son of Adnai’ (§26.7, 1. 2). The first name refers to the Túatha Dé’s poet Cairpre mac Etnai, who one day visits Bres to seek accommodation from him. Instead of providing Cairpre with lodgings that befits his status as a poet, he is given a small, dark and narrow room, with no fire, furniture or bedding, and he is served three small dry cakes. When he awakes the next morning, he is displeased about his treatment, so utters the following satire against Bres:

Cen cholt for crib cernene;
Cin gert ferbu foro-n-assad aithrine;
Cen adhbaí fhir ara drúbai disoirchi;
Cin díl daime reisse, (m)ropsen Breisse!

‘Without food quickly on a dish,
Without cow’s milk on which a calf grows,
Without a man’s habitation after darkness remains,
Without paying a company of storytellers – let that be Bres’s condition’.

(Gray 1982: 34–5).

Cairpre concludes: *Ní fil a main trá Bresí* ‘Bres’s prosperity no longer exists’ and it is then said: *Ní boí acht meth foair-sim ónd úair-sin* ‘There was only blight on him from that hour’ (Gray 1982: 34–5). This came to be true, and it is said that this was the first satire to be uttered in Ireland. Like in the previously discussed scenarios in *Mittelirische Verslehren* II §89 and in *Foldai Aíre* §2 and §8, Bres’ stinginess at the meagre rations and inadequate accommodation given to the poet results in the loss of his honour. This satirisation of Bres is also found as an anecdote in TCD H 3.17 and in the Yellow Book of Lecan that was edited by Hull (1930), who suggests the anecdote itself may have originated in the ninth century. While §26.7, l. 2 of *Airec Menman* only alludes to this narrative simply through the name *mac Etnai*, the retelling of this story in other sources suggests that the satirisation was a well-known tale and thus the contemporary audience as well as Domnall would have understood the reference to the poet’s name.

Poem Two (§26.9–10) makes another reference to inhospitality in *Cath Maige Tuired*, but this time it is the Dagda who becomes victim of the satirist Cridenbél’s greed. One day, the Dagda (who, as stated earlier, has been reduced to manual labour), meets the gluttonous Cridenbél. The satirist says to the Dagda: *A Dagdae, dot inchaib na trí mírionn bes dech dotchuid tapraither dom-sae!* ‘Dagda, for the sake of your honour let the three best bits of your serving be given to me!’ (Gray 1982: 28–9). Since the Dagda wants to avoid being satirised, he complies, and each night gives Crithinbél the three best bits of his meal. These bits amount to a third of his meal and this is despite Cridenbél’s own meals being described as the size of a good pig. Over time, the Dagda’s appearance worsens, which causes his son, Mac ind Óc, to enquire about his ill state. The Dagda replies: *Cridenbél cáinte gaphas álgas dim gacae nónae imna trí mírion as dech dim cuibrind*, ‘Every night Cridenbél the satirist demands from me the three best bits of my serving’ (Gray 1982: 30–1). Mac ind Óc then gives him three gold coins for the Dagda to hide in his meal and when Cridenbél requests his bits, Cridenbél would be given the bits with the hidden gold coins. Cridenbél would then die upon swallowing it. Afterwards, Bres accuses the Dagda of using a deadly herb to kill Cridenbél, but instead the Dagda informs Bres about Cridenbél’s extortion and the three gold coins. Bres then orders Cridenbél’s

stomach to be cut open and when the three gold coins are found, the Dagda is cleared of any wrongdoing, and Bres has been tricked into making an unjust judgement.

McCone (1989: 124) has pointed out that the episodes of Crídenbél and the Dagda, and Cairpre and Bres, contrast the positive and negative use of satire. Crídenbél is portrayed as an unfair, gluttonous guest who threatens the Dagda, a fair generous host; on the other hand, Cairpre is a fair guest who expects hospitality that is befitting of his status as a poet, but Bres is an unfair host who is niggardly. In the former, the satirist is represented negatively as someone who uses satire for extortion, but in the latter the poet is portrayed positively as a person who uses satire justly in order to maintain social order. The negative portrayal of the satirist in the tale is due to the Church viewing them as ‘a source of clerical odium’; whilst the poets, with their close relationship with ecclesiastical learning, and thus close relationship with the clerics and church, had the approval of the Church (McCone (1989: 128)). The purpose of the two figures is to illustrate to the audience what professions and qualities are acceptable. Furthermore, in Boyle’s (2023) review of this thesis, she suggests that these exemplary tales are not necessarily about the church/demonic divide as McCone argues, but that these tales serve to remind those with social status, such as churchmen, that power can corrupt; consequently, they should not exploit their power. Therefore, these narratives highlight that the abuse of power is not restricted to poets, satirists and kings, but can occur with other people of social status.

These two episodes are not unlike the aforementioned stories concerning Athirne, whose greediness in consuming an entire pig by himself is similar to Crídenbél’s greed, while in the story concerning Athirne’s mother, the refusal to give his mother ale led to the unborn child uttering a satire that is akin to Cairpre’s satire for Bres. So far, all these stories have illustrated the dangers of not only denying a poet’s or satirist’s hospitality, but also what happens when one complies with an unreasonable request which then brings the downfall of the victim.

Due to Bres’ unfitness to be king, the Túatha Dé demand that he forfeits the crown, which is given back to Núadu. The king originally had a metal arm crafted by the brazier Crédne and Dían Cécht, but has now had his arm restored by Míach, the son of Dían Cécht. The restoration of the arm foreshadows Núadu’s agricultural prosperity and is thus an indication of his fitness to rule. The text states the following concerning the restoration of the arm:

Atréacht-sim don láim & atbert, ault fri halt di & féith fri féth; & ícuis fri téorai nómaidhe. In cétna nómaid immus-curid comair a táeib, & rotonigestar. An dómaid tanisde immascuirid aro brundib. An tres nómaid dobidced gelsgothai di bocsibnibh dubhoib ó rodubtis a ten.

‘He went to the hand and said ‘joint to joint of it, and sinew to sinew’; and he healed it in nine days and nights. The first three days he carried it against his side, and it became covered with skin. The second three days he carried it against his chest. The third three days he would cast white wisps of black bulrushes after they had been blackened in a fire’ (Gray 1982: 32–3).

The healing of Núadu’s arm also results in Dían Cécht’s jealousy of Míach’s abilities, which causes the former to hurl a sword towards Míach to kill him. On the fourth try, Dían Cécht is successful, and the sword severs Míach’s brain. Pettit (2013) points out that the episode of Míach’s healing can be found in different variations, for example, in the first redaction of *Lebor Gabála Éirenn* (‘The Book of Invasions of Ireland’). In the Book of Leinster version of this text, only the episode of Dían Cécht and Crédne is found, but the version in the Book of Fermoy also includes the scene involving Míach’s healing of Núadu’s arm (Macalister 1941: 114–5). Similarly, in AFM, only Núadu’s healing by Dían Cécht and Crédne is found (O’Donovan 1856: 16–17). This has led Pettit to conclude that Míach’s healing of Núadu’s arm was added to *Cath Maige Tuired* at a later date. Williams (2016: 111) agrees with Pettit’s conclusion and suggests ‘that the story of Míach’s murder at his father’s hands was the invention of the author of the saga’. Furthermore, Pettit convincingly argues that ‘white hairs/bundles’ refer to root-fibres and ‘dark bulrushes’ refer to a plant known as *Typha latifolia*. Consequently, he suggests that it was Núadu, and not Míach, who extracts the fibres of *Typha latifolia* to use to form his new arm. Pettit (2013: 171) then concludes: ‘the material result of Núadu’s recuperative food-production may tie in with the wider theme of CMT at this point, namely the requirement for a legitimate sovereign to provide generously for his people’. Unlike Bres, Núadu then holds a feast when he becomes king again, thus illustrating his generosity and serving as a paradigm of what a good king should be.

As a result of losing the kingship, Bres seeks his Fomorian father to ask for an army to fight against the Túatha Dé. Bres himself recognises his unfitness for the kingship, as he comments to his father: *m’anfhir 7 m’anúabhar fesin*, ‘my own injustice and arrogance’ are the reasons for him being forced out of Ireland (Gray 1982: 36–7). A battle between the Túatha Dé and the Fomorians ensues, and the Fomorians lose the battle. The battle ends with Bres on the verge of being killed by Lug, who is now king of the Túatha Dé, and his downfall is referenced in Poem Two of *Airec Menman* (§26.5). Bres pleads for his life by stating that he can guarantee that the cows of Ireland will perpetually give milk, but the judge Máeltne Mórbrethach rejects this bargain, stating that he has no control of the cows. Bres then informs them that they could reap a harvest of grain every quarter, but this is also rejected. Finally, Lug comments: *Cocon ebrad, co silfad, co chobibsad fir Éirenn? Is iar fis an tréde-siu manad-anustar*, ‘How shall the men of Ireland plow? How shall they sow? How shall they reap? If you make known these things, you will be saved’ (Grey 1982: 68–9). Bres replies: *Abair friu, Mairt a n-ar; Mairt hi corad síl a ngurt; Mairt a n-imbochdt*, ‘Say to them, on Tuesday their ploughing; on Tuesday their sowing seed in the field; on Tuesday their reaping’. The episode then ends: *Roléccad*

ass didiu Bres triasan celg-sin, ‘So through that device Bres was released’ (Gray 1982: 68–9). The interpretation of Bres’ final advice has caused some debate, with Gray arguing that it was the result of a later writer who believed Bres’ advice was worthless. Ó Cathasaigh (1983: 8) views the episode as an indication that the Túatha Dé lacked agricultural knowledge, but Sayers (1987: 26) disagrees with this assessment, pointing out the Túatha Dé’s rejection of Bres’ first two offers as a sign that they did possess some agricultural knowledge. He also argues that the line should be translated as ‘Death their defeat; death the bedding of their progeny on the field of battle; death their impoverishment’ based on wordplay with the words *mairt* ‘Tuesday’ or ‘dead body, slaughter cows’; *ar* ‘ploughing’ or *ár* ‘slaughter, carnage; death, destruction’; *síl* ‘human offspring’; and *gort* ‘a field of martial activity’.

Sayers also suggests that this line reflects Bres’ deceitful and fraudulent behaviour throughout the tale and that the lines could be interpreted as a curse which would have caused agricultural blight. He then concludes that ‘the entire structuring of the incident may be due to a Christian reshaper of the Irish myth who speeded the euhemerization of the Tuatha Dé Danann by demonstrating that, just as they could be supplanted, they could be gulled’. If Sayers’ interpretation is correct, then yet again, the importance of the relationship between agriculture and the king is illustrated. His curse would be in contrast to Míach’s charm to regrow Níadu’s arm, which, as previously discussed, was associated with agricultural plentifulness.

Further, Sayers (1987: 38) argues that there are parallels with Bres’ efforts to bargain for his life and the satire recited by Cairpre. For example, Bres’ initial bargain was that he could ensure perpetual milking of cows, which is an inversion of Cairpre’s satire that there will be no milk. Similarly, in his second bargaining, Bres states that he could give information on the harvesting of grains, but it is told that Cairpre’s satire results in blight on the kingdom. Finally, in the last bargain, Bres utters a curse while Cairpre recites a satire. Similar to the paradigms of good and bad behaviour illustrated by the figures of Cairpre/Bres and the Dagda/Cridenbél, Sayers’ analogy suggests a conscious attempt to portray the positive and negative use of agriculture as a method of providing hospitality. Poem Two’s allusion to Bres’ demise would have been understood by *Airec Menman*’s audience, including Domnall himself, and served to remind them of the importance of agricultural prosperity.

The next literary example of inhospitality in Poem Two is found in §26.6, but this time it concerns the story of the king of Connacht, Caíar mac Gutháir, and the poet Néide mac Adnai. This tale is found in *Sanas Cormaic*, ‘Cormac’s Glossary’, a ninth- or tenth-century Early Irish encyclopaedic glossary containing explanations of the meaning of words. The story is found under the entry for *gaire*, ‘short life’, and tells how Caíar’s wife falls in love with Néide, only for the latter to not reciprocate her love; however, he changes his mind when she promises him the kingship. She devises a plan whereby Néide would ask Caíar for his knife, which he obtained from Alba and which is a *geis* for him to give away. Néide would then compose a satire against Caíar for the inhospitality shown to the poet. The plan proceeds as intended, with Caíar commenting: *Fē amai! ... is geis dam-sa*

a brith ūaim (Meyer, 1912a: 59) ‘Alas! It is a prohibition for me that it be taken from me!’ (Russell 2008b: 35). Néide utters a *glám dícend* against him which then causes three blisters to appear on his cheeks. The satire he utters is:

*‘Mali bare, gare Caie[u]r,
cotmbeotur cealtru cathae Cáer!
Cāier diba, Cāier dira, Caier fu rō,
fu mara, fo chara Cáer!’*

(Meyer 1912a: 59)

‘Evil, death, short life for Caier,
The spears of battle will wound him, Caier.
May Caier die! May Caier perish! Caier
under earth, under ramparts under stones’

(Russell 2008b: 35).

When Caíar sees the three blisters on his face, he flees in shame to Dún Cermnae with Cacher mac Etarscéil. The text describes the three blisters as: *on oculus anim oculus easbaidh .i. dearg oculus glas oculus bān* (Meyer 1912a: 59), ‘Blemish and defect and deficiency i.e. red and blue and white’ (Russell 2008b: 35).⁹ The three different colours of the blisters are unlike those of the king of Ulster, Cernodon. Another tale concerning this figure recounts how his niggardliness towards poets causes the latter to satirise him. The text states: *Ranærsat co tarla teora bolga corcra for a grūaid: on 7 anim 7 esbaid a n-ainm-side* (Meyer 1910c: 300), ‘They satirized him so that there came three purple blisters on his cheek. ‘Stain and blemish and injury’ were their names’ (Dillon 1932: 53). The poet Foachtach the Keen declares that compensation is to be paid to Cernodon as it was an unjust satire. In an Old Irish tract on satire beginning with *Cis lir fodlai aíre?* ‘How many divisions of satire are there?’, *glám dícenn* was described as a type of satire, with §4 stating: *Airchetal n-aíre danó: a-taait deich fodlai fair-side .i. mac bronn 7 dallbach 7 focal I frithsuidiu 7 tár n-aíre 7 tár molta 7 tamall aíre 7 tamall molta 7 lánáer 7 ainmed 7 glám dícenn*, ‘Versified satire, then: there are ten divisions of it, i.e. son of womb and innuendo and word in opposition and outrage of satire and outrage of praise and touch of satire and touch of praise and full satire and lampooning and *glám dícenn*’ (McLaughlin 2008: 52–3). However, the meaning of *glám dícenn* is not expanded on in the tract, other than to say (§18) that *Glám dícenn danó: iar sin, ut in alio legitur ‘Glám dícenn, then after that, as may be read in another place’* (McLaughlin 2008: 58–9). In the Egerton version of the introduction to the *Amra*

⁹ While Russell has translated *glas* as ‘blue’, it could also be translated as ‘green’ (eDIL s.v. 2 *glas*, www.dil.ie/25996). The description of ‘red, green/blue and white’ can be seen in other Early Irish sources for the three degrees of martyrdom as ‘red, green/blue and white’, for example, see Stancliffe (1982) for further discussion.

Choluim Chille, a *glám dícenn* is described as a type of satire that would result in three blisters appearing on the victim's face, and like the story of Caíar and Néide, these blisters are described as *on*, *anim* and *esbaid*, 'Shame, Blemish and Defect' (Stokes 1899: 421–2). These three blisters have already been seen in *Tochmarc Lúaine 7 Aided Athairne*, where it is said that Athirne uttered a *glám dícenn* against Lúan that forms three blisters (Breatnach 1980: 13). Meroney (1950: 218) argues that these three terms 'refer to a nip or bite that takes something away', in other words, the three blisters metaphorically represent one's loss of honour.

In *Cath Maige Tuired*, a *glám dícenn* is also mentioned when Lug questions Cairpre regarding what useful skills he possesses that may be used in battle. He replies: '*Degén-sai gláim ndícind dóuib, & nus-óerub & nus-anfialub cona gébat frie hócu trie bricht mo dána-sa*, 'I will make a *glám dícenn* against them, and I will satirize them and shame them so that through the spell of my art they will offer no resistance to warriors' (Gray 1982: 52–3). In his edition of *Cath Maige Tuired*, Stokes (1891a: 119) writes that a *glám dícenn* is 'an extempore curse' and is 'a kind of metrical malediction', referencing Caíar's *glám dícenn* against Néide. Meroney (1950: 217) defines *glám dícenn* as a 'permanent' attack, which is also borne out in Breatnach's (1988: 14) description of the power of *glám dícenn* to cause death to a person via sorcery. This idea is also found in Early Irish law texts: for example, *Mittelirische Verslehren* III, §155 describes *glám dícenn* as a ritual involving stones and thornbushes being placed underneath a bush and if it is the poet who is guilty, the ground would swallow him up but if it was the king, then the king and his family as well as their property would be swallowed up (Thurneysen 1891: 96–7). Breatnach (1988: 13–4) points out that this same passage is found in *CIH* 1564.37 ff., which also has a sentence relating to a clay figure of the man to be satirised and a thorn being in the poets' hand as they satirise the victim. Further information is found in *Uraicecht na Ríar*, §24, which notes that *Atáat a secht con-láat cach n-aír: i scáth aide caislechtaí scoth, is treairiut i cuairt éscáí – aidbsiu in sin; aidech n-aicetail, congain comail, corrguinecht*, 'There are seven things which compose any satire: in the shade of a smooth flowery *ad*, in three periods in the circuit of the moon – that is how it is announced; harmonious (?) reciting, magical wounding, sorcery' (Breatnach 1987: 114–15). In the gloss to §24, *glám dícenn* is associated with a figure of a person in clay being pierced with thorns while the *glám dícenn* is chanted. *Mittelirische Verslehren* III §155 in fact references Caíar's satirisation by Néide, thus associating Néide's *glám dícenn* with a type of sorcery that causes death. Néide, now king, eventually grows remorseful at his actions and seeks Caíar at Dún Cermnae. When Caíar sees Néide approaching, he flees in shame and hides under a stone behind a fortress, as the satire predicted. Caíar then dies of shame as: *Rofich 7 rolassai inn ail la ěc Cāier 7 rosescaind blog dind ailig fo sūil Nēde co rōimid ina c[h]end* (Meyer 1912a: 60), 'The rock boiled and blazed at the death of Caíar and a splinter flew from the rock into the eye of Néide and shattered in his head' (Russell 2008b: 35). It is assumed that Néide also dies due to the breaking of his head. The death of Néide also implies that poets themselves were not immune to

the negative effects of satire, particularly when they have pronounced an illegal or unjust satire themselves.

Similarly, Poem Two of Airec Menman (§26.8) references a satire spoken by the saint and poet Dallán Forgaill, otherwise known as Eochaid Éices, which, like that uttered by Néide against Caíar, was one based on extortion due to inhospitality. Dallán is commonly associated with the abuse of poetic privilege and satire and in this example, the poet satirises King Áed mac Ainmuirech because the latter would not give him a gold brooch. The king was thus viewed as ungenerous. The story is found in the Bodleian version of *Amra Choluim Chille*:

*Tri coecait fer feochair féig. D'eicsib Herenn fo oenchleir,
im Senchan, im Dallan dess. Is im Eochaid rigeceas
Batar bliadain hic Clochar. do Daimín nir'bo dochur,
is ann sain ro aersat Aed. immun ndelg n-óir n-ilarchaem.*

‘Thrice fifty men, severe, acute, of Erin’s poets in one retinue,
including Senchán, comely Dallán, and Eochaid the king-poet.
A year they were at Clochar: to Daimín it was no detriment:
'tis there they satirised Aed about the variously-handsome brooch of gold’
(Stokes 1899: 138–9).

The Egerton version of the text provides further information, and states that if a poet justly satirised a person the victim would either die immediately or have poisonous ulcers growing on their face. However, if the satire was unjust, then the poet himself would grow the ulcers. Thus, whatever the poets demanded they were given, as their victims were fearful that a *glám díceann* would be composed against them and three blisters would appear on the victim’s face. The story recounted in *Amra Choluim Cille* then proceeds to say that the poets demanded a brooch from Áed; whether or not it was given to the poets is uncertain, but it did result in Áed banishing the poets from Ireland. This event supposedly happened in the year 575, when Áed held a convention at Druim Cett with the ‘petty princes, heads of tribes and principal clergy’ to discuss the banishment of the poets due to their constant satirising, which was then making life difficult. St Columba was present in order to defend the poets and persuade Áed to make peace with them (Stokes 1899: 35).

There is a variant of this story in *Tromdámh Guaire*, ‘Guaire’s Greedy Guests’ (Joynt 1931), a potentially late-Middle Irish text, that replaces the brooch with a shield called Duibgilla. The shield was used by Áed Dub, king of the Airgíalla, who replaces Áed mac Ainmuirech from the previously discussed *Amra Choluim Cille* story, to maintain his power and protect his people. The tale also introduces Áed Finn, king of Breifne, who asks Dallán Forgaill to request the shield. Dallán himself acknowledges that his satire against Áed is unjust: *is doigh lim-sa nach dernad riamh aeir bhudh*

ecora 7 budh ainndligtighi inait na haera dorinnus fein (Joynt 1931: 7), ‘I think that no satire was ever composed which was more unjust or unlawful than the satires that I composed’ (McLaughlin 2005: 41). Ó Coileáin (1977) argues that the author of *Tromdámh Guaire* used *Amra Choluim Cille* and the Life of Berach as his sources to create the tale. Evidently, the tale was written as a satire against the poetic profession and their abuse of power, as seen in Dallán’s comments. Dallán ultimately dies for his unjust satire. Just as the satirisation of Bres can be found in other sources, the rewriting of Dallán’s extortion implies that the text was a well-known story of inhospitality that the contemporary audience of *Airec Menman* would have understood. Furthermore, the story is also another example of how an unjust satire could lead to a poet’s death.

The function of Poem Two in *Airec Menman* is to warn Domnall and the plunderers of their requirement to provide hospitality to Máel and Urard and this was done by recalling past literary examples of ungenerosity, niggardliness and inhospitality. For Domnall, it demonstrates how a good king should act by recalling events of when a king denied or gave inappropriate hospitality to a guest, such as Bres’ ill-treatment of Cairpre, Caíar’s refusal of Néide’s demand for a knife and Áed’s denial of Dallán’s request for a brooch or shield. These examples also illustrate what is considered proper behaviour for a poet, as is seen in the tales relating to Néide’s death and Dállan’s exile or death; however, it is only Cairpre who utters a just satire. The story of the Dadga and Crídenbél also demonstrates that it is not only kings who could be the victim of the unjust requests of a poet or, in this case, a satirist. The power of satire to cause harm, in particularly the *glám dícenn* and its magical properties, whether justified or not, could also be seen to cause permanent damage and even the death of the victim. These tales serve as a model of proper conduct for not only the king and poets but also the contemporary audience.

Allegory and Etymology

Allegory and etymology are both literary techniques commonly employed by medieval Irish poets, such as Urard mac Coisse, in order to uncover deeper meanings behind a text. It has already been seen that one of the roles of a poet was to maintain social harmony through the production of satire, but their works also served to educate the medieval audience on how one should properly live in society. This section will explore how the aforementioned literary techniques are used by poets to express these ideas. Initially, an overview of allegory and then etymology will be given and then its applicability to medieval Irish literature, in particular in *Airec Menman*, will be discussed.

The concept of allegory is defined by Rund (2006: 18) as ‘a descriptive or narrative literary text wherein the actions, the objects, and the characters signify ideas or concepts that lie outside the text itself. In allegory, the writer’s main interest is the abstract level of meaning, and the most common technique is the personification of those abstractions’. In other words, allegory is a literary

device that allows for the exegesis of a text which may or may not be used to teach a lesson to the audience. The study of allegory was an integral element in medieval education throughout Europe and Ireland was no exception. Boyle (2016: 12) states that allegory was the product of the *áes dána*'s educational training in ecclesiastical centres. This resulted in 'a small intellectual elite, a learned caste of men ... who drew from the same pool of fundamental knowledge' which influenced their literary creations. Poppe (1999a: 49) comments: 'That the past may provide a model for the present is an interpretative approach not unknown to medieval Irish literati, at least as an exegetical method applied to biblical texts'.

This exegetical application to medieval Irish literature can clearly be seen, for example, in one of the earliest extant eighth-century tales, *Echtrae Chonnlai* 'The Adventure of Connlae' (McCone 2000). The tale relates how Connlae, the son of king Conn Cétchathach, is seduced into the Otherworld by an immortal woman. When the woman arrives in the real world, only Connlae can see her but everyone else can only hear her. When she eventually returns to the Otherworld, she gives him an apple that remains whole no matter how many bites he takes. Connlae then develops a longing for the woman, who eventually returns into the real world to predict the end of druidry and the coming of Christianity. In the end, Connlae leaves for the Otherworld with the woman. McCone (1991: 80) and Carney (1969) argue that the tale is an allegorical story of Christianity's triumph over paganism. Carney (1969: 165) argues that the tale presents two diverging points of views; firstly, a native world based on druidism that is soon to be obliterated; and secondly, an Otherworld 'where there is neither strife nor sin nor transgression, where youth and bloom are eternal'. He further goes on to argue that, based on the study of *Immram Brain* 'The Voyage of Bran' (Mac Mathúna 1985) and other similar stories, the existence of the Otherworld can be viewed as a world similar to that of Adam and Eve before The Fall of Humanity. Similarly, McCone (1991: 81–2) argues that the Otherworld woman represents the Church and that the story is an allegory 'of the global and individual conflict between pagan iniquity and Christian virtue (druid vs. woman), the claims of this world and those of the life everlasting (Conn vs. woman)'. Consequently, McCone (1991: 82) states 'this narrative can be regarded as biblical through and through by virtue of constituting a deliberate inversion of the narrative of the fall in Genesis'. Instead of the apple bringing about the damnation of the human race, the 'apple of immortality' represents everlasting life, and Connlae obtains his redemption through the apple and his eventual travel to the Otherworld.

However, Carey (1995: 64–5) disagrees with McCone's argument and states 'I am uneasy with the premise that early medieval exegetes (in Ireland or anywhere else) would have felt comfortable in applying the same hermeneutic methods to pagan imagery or tradition as to the Christian scriptures. It seems simpler to see the woman as a pre-Christian harbinger of Christian revelation, unfallen and divinely inspired: other Irish sources cast the immortals in just this role'. While Hollo agrees with Carney's and McCone's allegorical interpretations, she disagrees with Carey's assessment that medieval biblical exegesis cannot be applied to pagan literature. She argues

that the cultural context that *Echtrae Chonnlai* was written in a period when Christian allegoresis of pagan literature was commonly done, for example the Irish commentaries to Vergil's *Eclogues* and *Georgics* in the late seventh or eighth century. Consequently, it would be reasonable that the Irish medieval audience would carry out a Christian allegorical analysis of a pagan text; thus, Hollo states that 'If, then the pagan literary monuments of the classical world could be read allegorically by early medieval Irish commentators, why not, too, motifs and narratives drawn from or representing Ireland's own pagan past?' (Hollo 2011: 127). Therefore, the biblical exegesis of allegory could be applied to a range of texts that did not necessarily have an outright Christian message.¹⁰

Similarly, in the eighth-century tale *Scéla Muicce Meic Dathó* 'The Tale of Mac Dathó's Pig' (Thurneysen 1935), the king of Leinster, Mac Dathó owns a famed and renowned hound. One day, messengers of Medb and Ailill of Connacht, as well as those of Conchobor of Ulster, come with a request for the hound. Mac Dathó is uncertain regarding the appropriate course of action, so he ponders for three days and nights without consuming any food until his wife suggests that he promise the hound to both Connacht and the Ulaid. Despite Mac Dathó's unhappiness with this advice, he nevertheless goes ahead with her plan. Eventually, both sides discover they have been tricked and a battle ensues which results in heavy losses on both sides as well as a loss of honour. In the end, the hound is given the choice to choose which side he would serve, and she chooses the Ulaid. Ailill's charioteer Fer Loga is unhappy about this decision and proceeds to kill the hound. Ultimately, the hound is killed because of Mac Dathó's reliance on a woman. McCone (1991: 77–9) views the narrative as an allegory of Adam and Eve, as when Mac Dathó takes his wife's advice, sin, death, and loss of honour ensue which 'all stem ultimately from Mac Dathó's craven abdication of proper male responsibility to follow his wife's Machiavellian advice'. Thus, the tale quotes the legendary Crimthann Nia Náir who advises: *ni-tardda do rúin do mnāib. / rūn mnā ní maith con-celar, / maīn ar mug ni-aithenar* (Thurneysen 1935: 3), 'Tell no secret to a woman. / A woman's secret is not kept; / jewels are not given to slaves' (Gantz 1981: 181). McCone (1991: 77–9) further comments that the book of Genesis contains examples of 'the disastrous consequences of following female counsel'. Similarly, Poppe argues (1999a: 49) that the tale 'can be read as an exemplum of the dangers of men's forgoing proper social responsibilities and activities and thereby allowing women to usurp them'. He (1999b: 171) compares this incident to that of the biblical story about Ahab and Jezebel in 1 Kings 21. Ahab desires a section of Naboth's land for himself. However, Ahab becomes confused on the course of action to take, and this results in foregoing food. Therefore, his wife approaches him and asks 'Why is thy spirit so sad, that thou eatest no bread? (1 Kings 21:4–5; cited in Poppe 1999b: 170). Like in *Scéla Muicce Meic Dathó*, Ahab's wife gives him advice on the action he should take, and this results in his downfall.

¹⁰ See Watson (2018) for further information on the use of allegory in Christianity.

Unlike both McCone's and Poppe's negative interpretation of the wife's advice, Buttimer (1982) has a more positive analysis of the incident. He (1982: 64) states that Mac Dathó 'emerge[s] from the constraints of this situation unscathed, with an unsullied reputation for generosity and hospitality'. He argues that Mac Dathó's honour is upheld as he promises the hound to both the Ulaid and Connacht in private, thus avoiding public humiliation for all parties involved. While McCone and Poppe view the behaviour of Mac Dathó as deceitful, Buttimer views it as a 'successful defence of honour, and a consequent enhancement of the prestige of Leinster'. However, Charles-Edwards (2005: 13) disagrees with Buttimer's analysis and argues that it was not whether the contract was made in public or private sphere that determined if a formal contract had been made, but it was based on whether the correct procedure was followed when making the contract. This procedure was known as *naidm* 'binding-surety' and involved the parties linking hands and offering sureties in front of witnesses. He further argues that while the text may have stated Mac Dathó made the promises privately, it cannot be ascertained if the formalities were carried out, all that is simply known is that Mac Dathó was being deceitful in making his promises. Mac Dathó becomes the perfect intermediary between the two warring provinces with the story ultimately ending in a war between the two parties. The implication of Charles-Edwards' argument is that Mac Dathó's honour is still at risk which goes against Buttimer's belief that Mac Dathó's honour has not been sullied. Buttimer's argument is unconvincing; should the death of the hound not be viewed as a loss of honour for Mac Dathó? Consequently, the text could also serve as a warning, like the previously discussed tales concerning poets' and satirists' abuse of their power, that one should always act honourably in private and public spheres. Further, while the exegesis of a text may have biblical origins, its applicability does not necessarily always result in a religious reading of the text.

Airec Menman is another example of an allegorical text, but it is different from the previous two discussed texts as it provides an insight into how a medieval Irish audience understood a text. Instead of Urard outrightly accusing the king's relatives of the crime, he creates an allegorical in-tale that recounts his misfortune. The message of the tale is that a narrative is not just for entertainment purposes, but it also had moral lessons for the audience. The fact that *Airec Menman* is an allegorical text is also stated within the text itself. Thus §1 states that *Conidh edh airec menman arainic in scel feigh forsgaithi-si do denam tre glosnaithe fileta...* 'So that it was an invention of the mind by which he devised the story of allegorical genius through a poetic arrangement'. There is an issue as to what exactly *forscaithi* means. eDIL s.v. ? *forscáithe* (www.dil.ie/23904) states that it may be an adjective with the meaning 'allegorical, cryptic (?) lit. obscured' and it may be related to *forscáthaigthe*, another adjective with the meaning 'shadowed forth, allegorical' (Boyle 2016: 14). However, *forscaithi* is only attested twice, and both instances can be found in *Airec Menman*. The first occurrence of the word has just been discussed, and the next occurrence is in §13, in the phrase *anmanna forsgaithi*, which introduces a list of the names of the plunderers. For example, Áed is

explained as *Tene an aonbeime*, ‘Fire of the one blow’ and Muiredach as *Triath tiri Teathrach*, ‘Lord of the measure of the sea’. Poppe translates *anmanna forsgaithi* as ‘obscured/metaphorical names’, and these names are examples of Isidorian etymology which will be discussed later in this section (p. 49). Consequently, the audience then are explicitly told that there is a lesson to the story that they must learn.

Poppe (1999a: 47) argues that *Airec Menman* ‘does not teach conduct proper for a king – as its in-tale and other tales similar to it would do; rather it teaches a proper way of understanding the meaning and implication of a performance of historical narrative. The message to its audience is that a tale is not just a tale about the past but has some application for the present. It legitimates an allegorical – or at least a non-literal or non-historical – understanding of the events narrated.’ In the in-tale, the audience is taught the appropriate behaviour for a king, as well as how poets should be treated and the possible consequences of mistreating them. Through Urard’s recounting of his misfortunes, the contemporary audience is taught how to read the different layers of a narrative that are found in the in-tale. They would be able to identify shared ideas and motifs with other early Irish sagas. Despite the allegorical message of *Scéla Muicce Meic Dathó* and *Echtrae Chonnlai* being different from *Airec Menman*, their allegorical messages also have relevance for the then-contemporary medieval present.

Another allegorical message of *Airec Menman* that has not been discussed by scholars before concerns the important status and role of poets in medieval Ireland. This message is commonly found in other early medieval Irish stories: one might consider, for example, Boyle’s examination of the allegorical message of the *Dindsenchas* of Loch Garman (Gwynn 1903–1935) and Cormac’s Adventure in the Land of Promise (Stokes 1891b) and their portrayal of the *áes dána*. In the *Dindsenchas* tale, king Cathaír has a vision of a lady in a multicoloured raiment that is described as being *Cach dath cóem atchí duine, / do gurm do bricc do buide/ is do chorcair, ba súairc sin, / ina hétgud* ‘mon n-ingin, ‘Every fair hue man can see, / blue, dappled, yellow, / and purple – the sight was pleasant – / were in the raiment the lady wore’ (Boyle 2016: 17). When he awakens, a wizard interprets his dream and he comments on the woman as follows: *Is iat na datha atbere / i n-étgud na hingine, / áes cach dána núí fo nim / cen inandus* ‘na n-aistib, ‘These are the colours thou speakest of / in the young woman’s raiment – / the men of every new art under heaven, / without sameness in their metres’ (Boyle 2016: 18). A similar story is also found in the prose version of the *Dindsenchas*. Boyle (2016: 19) argues that the earliest attestations of the term *áes dána* refer to various types of craftsmen but later come to simply mean ‘poet’. Elsewhere, (Boyle 2016: 21), she points out that the representation of the poets as ‘multicoloured’ can similarly be found in the first recension of Cormac’s Adventure in the Land of Promise. Cormac has a dream in which ‘a fairy host of horsemen’ are thatching a house with the wings of white birds but each time a feather is laid down, a gust of wind blows it away. In the second recension of the tale, the white birds are replaced by ‘multicoloured birds’. In both recensions, the dream is interpreted by Manannán as ‘their futile chasing after worldly,

and therefore transient, wealth’ (Boyle 2016: 22). Both stories share the similarities of ‘multicoloured birds’ or ‘multicoloured raiment’ which can also be found in other stories such as the Old Irish *Immacallam in dá Thuarad* ‘The Colloquy of the Two Sages’ (Stokes 1905b: 12–13). There, Néide’s robe is described as *Tri datha na tugnigi .i. tugi do ittib én ñgel ar medón: frosbrechtrad findruine for ind leith ichtarach dianectair, 7 fordath fororda ind leith uachtarach*, ‘Three were the colours of the robe, to wit, a covering of bright birds’ feathers in the middle: a showery speckling of *findruine* on the lower half outside, and a golden colour on the upper half’; and similarly in *Sanas Cormaic* s.v. *tugen*, the word is described as being made up of *ar is do chroicnib én finn 7 ildathach dognūther in tuigen filed* ‘for it is of skins of birds white and many-coloured that the poets’ toga is made...’ (Meyer 1912a: 107). Boyle (2016: 22) concludes that: ‘The redeployment of the images of colourful raiment and feathers in different allegorical contexts to denote poets and their activities seems therefore to be a deliberately resonant choice of symbolism’.

Airec Menman also sends an allegorical message about the important role and status of a poet, not through the different colours of a garment or birds, but through the ‘three colours of poetry’ that has been previously discussed at page 22–3. The metaphorical representation of poetry as colours refers to praise, satire and *trefocal*, otherwise known as white, black and speckled. Similarly, the three blisters that formed on a victim’s face was described as red, blue and white. *Airec Menman* focuses on praise, satire and *trefocal* as a warning to the king before a satire is conducted. It is used in the text to not only illustrate the skills of poets but also their power in maintaining social order in medieval Irish society and the repercussions of ignoring their threats.

Another message of *Airec Menman* that has not been fully studied concerns the use of Christian ideas to lend support to Urard’s cause. This message is conveyed through the use of an angel informing King Domnall that Máel Milscothach is actually Urard mac Coisse. Thus §25 relates how an angel descends and speaks before the armies, whereby she warns the plunderers to return the spoils to Máel. The angel then reveals that Máel is actually Urard mac Coisse and describes the latter as: *Massa Maol Milscothach a ainm cose aniu is Maol gan Indile. Biadh ga teine uadha a ndire¹¹ na himirce*, ‘If his name is Máel Milscothach hitherto, now it is Máel without possessions. There will be a spear of fire from him in penalty for the carrying off of cattle’. The angel’s confirmation of Urard’s misfortunes can also be viewed as the angel sanctioning the poet’s potential satirisation of the plunderers, as the angel explicitly states that the poet will pursue them. Furthermore, the angel’s approval of Urard results in the king giving compensation to the poet without hesitation.

The use of an angel to legitimatise a message has been noted by Nagy (1997: 325) who argues that ‘from the beginning of Irish literary tradition to its watershed in the twelfth-thirteenth centuries and beyond, from the realms of hagiography and vernacular literature predicated on hagiographic themes, talk with angels and ancients has provided the texts legitimating core’. For example, in the

¹¹ R: *andiaid na himirge*, H: *andredh na himirce*.

late Middle Irish narrative *Acallam na Senórach* ‘The Dialogue of the Ancients’ (Stokes 1900), Patrick is busy listening to stories told by the *fíán*-warrior Caílte instead of performing his missionary duties. He eventually feels shame for his misconduct and is unsure of his next course of action. Two angels from heaven visit him that night to say that Caílte and his companion have forgotten more than a third of the stories that they used to know, and consequently it was Patrick’s job to write down the tales and sayings of poets, in particular of the *ollamain*, so that future generations could enjoy them for entertainment purposes. Patrick then proceeds to do so, thus solving his dilemma of whether or not he should continue listening to Caílte’s stories. However, Nagy (1997: 325) points out that the angels’ commands are conditional and that ‘The saint is not simply to listen but to have Caílte’s utterances recorded, preserved for a Christianized posterity, within the medium introduced to Ireland by the new religion: writing’. Therefore, the angels are used to indicate God’s approval of the writing down of narratives of pagan or secular origins. Similarly, in *Airec Menman*, the use of the angel could be viewed as the Church not only lending its support to the cause of Urard, but also elevating the status of poets in medieval Irish society. Therefore, different allegorical readings of *Airec Menman* can be obtained from the tale that illustrates the scribe’s command over the language and his creativity.

Another literary technique where medieval European thoughts influenced medieval Irish authors was etymology and its use can be seen in *Airec Menman*. The study of etymology in medieval Ireland was heavily influenced by Isidore of Seville, in particular his seventh-century *Etymologiae*, an etymological encyclopaedia that dealt with the methodology of finding the origin of words. Isidore describes etymology as follows:

Etymologia est origo vocabulorum, cum vis verbi vel nominis per interpretationem colligitur ... Cuius cognitio saepe usum necessarium habet in interpretatione sua. Nam dum videris unde ortum est nomen, citius vim eius intellegis. Omnis enim rei inspectio etymologia cognita planior est (Etym. I xxix) (Baumgarten 2004: 56).

‘Etymology (*etymologia*) is the origin of words, when the force of a verb or noun is inferred through interpretation ... The knowledge of a word’s etymology often has an indispensable usefulness for interpreting the word, for when you have seen whence a word originated, you understand its force more quickly. Indeed, one’s insight into anything is clearer when its etymology is known’ (Barney, Lewis & et al 2006: 54–5).

Therefore, etymology allowed one to gain a better comprehension of a particular word by understanding its different components. For example, Isidore’s entry for *merula* ‘blackbird’ is as follows: *Merula antiquitus medula vocabatur, eo quod modulet. Alii merulam aiunt vocatam quia sola volat, quasi mera volans*, ‘The blackbird (*merula*) was called *medula* in ancient times, because it “makes music” (*modulare*). Others say the blackbird is so named because it flies alone, as if the term

were *mera volans* (“flying alone”)’ (cited in Russell 2008a: 7). In this etymology, the author maintains the consonantal structure of $M + R + L$ with *merula* < *mera volans*, and $M + D + L$ with *medula* < *modulare*, thus creating the associations between the words. The fact that more than one explanation is provided is not an issue with Baumgarten (1983: 226), who states that ‘uniqueness of the etymology is not a postulate’. Similarly, Russell (2008a: 7) states that ‘each analysis [is] carrying its own germ of truth and [is] highlighting a particular feature of the sense of the word’. Breatnach (2016a: 121–124) argues that the etymologies do not demonstrate that the scribes were ignorant in the understanding the meaning of obscured words but rather that the scribes were perfectly aware of the different meanings and, in fact, the etymologies illustrate their mastery over the language. Therefore, there may be many different analyses for the one word and no one of them is more correct than the others, as they all serve the purpose of trying to illuminate the core meaning of the word.

Isidore’s work became known in medieval Ireland as the *Cuilmen* ‘Culmination of Knowledge’ at around 623 after its publication in Spain (Stifter 2020: 27). The importance of Isidore’s work to the Irish can be seen in the tale *De Fáillsigid Tána Bó Cúailnge* ‘How the *Táin* was found again’, where it is recounted how the poets had traded the only manuscript of one of their most important texts, the *Táin*, for a manuscript of *Cuilmen* (Kinsella 1969: 1–2; Murray: 2001; Stifter 2020: 27). Stifter (2020: 27) argues that ‘the production of written texts in the vernacular language of Ireland started just around that time, in the middle of the seventh century. The claim that etymological interest in the language and antiquarian and literary interest in the prehistory of Ireland went hand-in-hand, can hardly be called an exaggeration’. Thus, the study of etymology had a long history in medieval Ireland and the reception of Isidore of Seville’s etymological methodology is widely evidenced across various types of medieval Irish sources, including grammatical tracts, glossaries, place-name literature, and saga narrative. For example, in the late seventh- or early-eighth-century etymological glossary *De origine scoticae linguae* ‘On the origin of the Irish language’ (Moran 2019), Isidore’s name ‘is mentioned in the glossary’s prologue, cited by name in three entries (OM 154, 292 and 375), and quoted or paraphrased in very many others’ (Moran 2019: 6). Moran also argues that Isidore’s work provided a model for the creation of medieval Irish etymology via providing Latin and Greek examples. In Isidore’s *Etymologiae*, the entries usually have a lemma, and these tend to be arranged thematically, followed by an explanation that can be as simple as a single line that states ‘A, i.e. B’ or by a story which illustrates the meaning of the word. These different formats can also be seen in the Irish glossaries. For example, in the Old Irish grammatical tract *Auraicept na n-Éces* ‘The Scholar’s Primer’ (Calder 1917; Ahlqvist 1983), the oldest layer of which can be dated to the late seventh century with commentary added from the ninth century onwards, notes the concept *bérta etarscartha* ‘the language of separating’ within a list of the so-called five species of ‘Selected Language’ (*berla tobaidi*), which include *berla Fene 7 fasaige na filed 7 berla etarsgarta 7 berla fortide na filed triasa n-agailit cach dib a chele 7 iarmberla*, ‘Language of the Irish, Commentaries

of the Poets, Parted Language, Obscure Language of the Poets through which each of them addresses his fellow, and *iarmbérla ...*' (Calder 1917: 100–1). The text later gives the following examples:

*Ocus berla n-edarsgarta eter na fedaibh aireghdaibh .i. berla tresa fuil deliugud na fid n-
aire[gh]da isin aenfhocul triana n-inde taithmeach, ut est, amal rogabh ros .i. roi oiss quando
(.i. intan) as rois caelli 7 rass iar lind intan as ros usce .i. rofhos mad for marbusce no roidh
ass mad for sruth 7 ro as intan as ros lin .i. ar a luas 7 ar a thigi asas.*

'And Language Parted among the principal vowels, that is, language through which there is distinction of the principal vowels in the individual words through analysing their meaning, *ut est*, for example *ros*, that is, *roi oiss*, plain of deer, *quando* (when) it is *rois caelli*, copses of wood, and *rass*, duck meat, along a pool which it is *ross* of water, duck weed, *rofhos*, great rest, if it be on stagnant water, or *roidh ass*, ... out of it if it be on a stream, and *ro ás* when it is *ros lín*, flax seed, i.e., on account of the swiftness and density wherewith it grows' (Calder 1917: 102–3).

Stifter (2020: 28) points out that the study of etymology was not scientific but rather philosophical and that connections between words were made via, what would be viewed by modern standards as 'surface similarities'. To the medieval scribes, orthographical and phonological differences, as seen in the previously quoted example of *ros*, were viewed as meaningful. This methodology can be seen in the example just quoted, where the term *ros* is given three definitions: 'wood', 'flaxseed' or 'duckweed'. While the words look similar, it is the principal vowels that have changed. Similar types of etymology can also be found in *De origine scoticae linguae*, for example, OM 239–40: *Conar .i. cen fér, nó coí énfír, nó cin a úr, coniertos grece puluis*, 'Conar 'path', i.e. without grass [*< cen* 'without' + *fér* 'grass']. Or path of one man [*< cae* 'path' + *óenfír* 'one man]. Or without its fresh growth [*< cen* 'without' + *úr* 'fresh']. *Coniertos* [*κονιοπτός*] in Greek, dust' (Moran 2020: 9). Moran comments that in the above example, the initial *f*- and *s*- of the second component of the word disappears in pronunciation, and this allows for the etymology to be sustained. Therefore, from the two quoted examples we can see that words that sound phonetically similar, visually look similar, or have a semantic relationship are used to create the etymology.

Similar entries are also found in the glossary *Sanas Cormaic*, for example, *cūal .i. ōna cūailli bīs inte asberur. Uel quasi gúal .i. ōn gúaluind, ar is fuirre bīs a troma. Uel quasi caol a calon latine*¹² (Meyer 1912a: 30), '*cūal* 'bundle of sticks', i.e. it is so called from the sticks which are in it, or as if *gúal*, i.e. from the shoulder upon which its burden is, or as if *caol* from Greek *κᾶλον*' (Russell 2008a: 11). Three explanations are given: firstly, *cūal* relates to *cúaille* 'stick'; secondly, it is associated with *gúal* 'shoulder'; and thirdly, it is linked with a Greek meaning. All these different

¹² In the edition, *latine* is footnoted with '*leg. graece*'.

explanations serve to obtain a better comprehension of the word. Likewise, the Middle Irish *Cóir Anmann* ‘The Appropriateness of Names’ (Arbuthnot 2005 & 2007) is an important etymological text which Baumgarten (1986–1987: 9) describes as ‘a handbook of heterogenous personal name and epithet explanations’. However, explanations of placenames can also be found in the text. Like *De origine scoticae linguae* and *Auraicept na n-Éces*, the etymologies in *Cóir Anmann* have been influenced by Isidore’s work, but Arbuthnot has also pointed out that the scribe/s of *Cóir Anmann* has/have deliberately used a variety of other Irish literary sources dating to between the eighth or ninth and twelfth centuries to create the etymologies found in the text. The type of etymology seen in the previous quotations can also be found in *Cóir Anmann*. For example, the name Cridenbél is explained as:

Crithinbel .i. crithir-bel .i. bel na critir .i. ara neimnige ara teindteamlacht na mbriatur uadh. Air ad neimneach a briatra dana. Nó Cridinbel .i. a cridhi ina beolu. Ar ní gabadsum etir fo[r] run dia cluinedh. Nó Cirtinbel .i. bel na critir. Air is e cētcainte ro baid rigchaindell o teangaid ar tus e (Arbuthnot 2005: 88).

‘*Crithinbél* [< *crithir* ‘spark’ + *bél* ‘mouth’], i.e. spark-mouth, i.e. the mouth of the sparks, i.e. because of the virulence and fieriness of the words [that came] from him. For his words of poetry were virulent. Or *Cridinbél* [< *cride* ‘heart’ + *ina* ‘in his’ + *bél* ‘mouth’]. i.e. his heart was in his mouth. For he would never keep a secret that he heard. Or *Crithinbél* i.e. the mouth of the sparks. For he was the first satirist to extinguish a royal candle with his speech’ (Arbuthnot 2005: 127).

The character of Cridinbél has already been discussed above (pp. 37–8), but evidently all three explanations of his name are faithful to his character in the literature.

Etymologising of names could also be found embedded in narrative texts, and Baumgarten (1986–1987: 24) has termed this method ‘creative etymology’, which is ‘the use of the explanation(s) of one or more names in the creation of a tale’. For example, the late Middle Irish *Beatha Lasrach* ‘Life of Lasair’ (Gwynn & O’Duigenan 1911) contains the story of Lasair and Molaise. In the story, St Lasair is associated with the word *lasair* ‘flame, fire’ because, according to the text, when Molaise’s settlement was being plundered, Lasair stayed in her cell to chant her psalms and praise God, while Molaise himself fled. The text then states: *As ard na lasracha atá ag techt tar an mbanoigh. Asbert Molaise annsin: Biaidh an tainm sin uirre o bráth .i. Lasair conid úada sin dogoireadh Lasair don banóigh*, ‘High flames (*lasracha*, sg. *lasair*) are spreading over the virgin. Then Molaise said, “Lasair (‘Flame’) will be her name for ever.” Thence the virgin was called *Lasair*’ (Baumgarten 2004: 66). She was found in her cell unharmed by the flames. Unlike Lasair, Molaise fled the settlement in a panic, thus demonstrating his lack of belief in God. Baumgarten (2004: 67)

states that his name is a ‘hypocoristic form of *Laisrén*, which morphologically is a diminutive of *lasa(i)r*’, thereby implicitly linking the names of Molaise and Lasair.

Other examples of etymologising names in Early Irish literature can be seen in *Aislinge meic Con Glinne* ‘The Vision of Mac Con Glinne’ (Jackson 1990: 3), where it is stated:

.i. Aniér Mac Con Glinne, scolaigi amru e-sside co n-immad eólais. Is aire at-bertha Aniér friss .i. no aerad 7 no molad cách. Deithbir ón, uair ní thánic remi 7 ní t[h]icc dia éissi bu duilge aer nó molad; conid aire at-bertha Anéra friss, iarsinní ní fétta éra fair.

‘.i. Aniér MacConglinne a famous scholar he, with abundance of knowledge. The reason why he was called Aniér was because he would satirise and praise all. No wonder, indeed; for there had not come before him, and came not after him, one whose satire or praise was harder to bear, wherefore he was called Anéra [i.e. Non-refusal], for that there was no refusing him’ (Meyer 1892: 8).

Similarly, it is recounted in *Táin Bó Cúailnge* that Cú Chulainn’s original name was Setanta, but that he obtained the name Cú Chulainn ‘Hound of Culann’ after killing the smith Culann’s hound. The warrior states that he will guard the smith, his cattle and all of Mag Murthemne, until a new hound is reared for Culann. Initially Cú Chulainn did not want the new name, but he eventually agrees to it when he is told the name will be known by all the men of Ireland and Scotland. The text then states: *Fó limm didiu cid sed bess form, ar in mac bec. Conid de sódain ro lil in t-ainm aurdairc fair .i. Cú Chulaind, ó ro marb in coin boí ic Culaind cherd*, “I am willing that it shall be my name,” said the boy. Hence the famous name of Cú Chulainn clung to him since he killed the hound of Culann the smith’ (O’Rahilly 1967: 163). All these examples form part of the structure of the narrative, with the etymology either being implicit, such as in the case of Molaise, or explicit like the examples of Cridenbél, Aniér mac Con Glinne, Cú Chulainn and Lasair.

The influence of Isidore’s work evidently had a lasting impact in medieval Ireland and *Airec Menman* is no exception to this. An example of Isidore’s etymological method can be seen in the explanation of Urard’s alias, the name Máel Milscothach.

§8. *Ar ba he ainm dorat Mac Coisi do fein ar duaithniughud a tsluinnti .i. Maol Milscothach .i. milisbriathrach innsin, uair¹³ scothbriathar ocus scoth innsce isinn Gaidelg milscothach iarom .i. milisbriathrach innsin.*

‘For this was the name that Mac Coisse gave to himself, to conceal his name, that is to say, Máel (‘Servant’) Milscothach (‘Honey-Words’) .i. sweet-words because of a word of writing and a word of speech in the honey-worded¹⁴ Gaelic language, thereafter .i. honey-words’.

¹³ R omits: *milisbriathrach innsin uair*.

A similar description of Máel is also seen in Poem Three §27.5, where it states: *do Máel Milscothach milbláith* ‘by honey-smooth Máel Milscothach’. Mac Cana (1980: 34) translates Máel Milscothach as ‘Man of Sweet Words’, although Schoen (2015: 37) disagrees with this translation stating that ‘this generalises the meaning of *máel* too much’ and instead prefers the translation ‘Honey-Worded Servant’. Schoen’s translation is indeed better as it conveys not only his eloquence and persuasiveness as a poet, but also his devotion to his profession but also to the king. In the quote, there is a word-play with the adjectives *milis* ‘sweet’ or *mil* ‘honey’, *bríathrach* or *bríathar* ‘wordy’ and *scoth* or *scothach* ‘word’; the latter could also have the meaning of ‘flower, blossom’, which can also allude to ‘honey’ and thus, creating a connection with *milis* or *mil*. The word *milscothach* can then be translated as ‘sweet-worded’. Further, the word *máel* can have the meaning of ‘slave, servant; devoted to’ and, while Schoen has translated this word as ‘servant’, the meaning ‘devotee’ would be better suited, particularly as it has a more positive connotation. The repetition of these words naturally leads to alliteration. Similar alliteration can also be seen in Urard’s description of his own abilities in §25: *Aurard ilgradhach ildanach ildirech do Bhriunnhuigh mac sidhe caoinchlochach costadhaouch Coise do Chondachtapid*, ‘Very distinguished and skilled Urard of high recompense, the fine-famed (?), mannered son of Coisse’. The use of alliteration in both quotes promotes Urard’s skills as a poet. There is alliteration with *c* and the vowels. These instances of alliteration set the scene for Urard’s upcoming display of poetic artistry and skills as he improvises a tale that will persuade the king to compensate him for his misfortunes.

Another example of Isidorian etymology can be seen in aforementioned list of names in §13:

Tene an aonbeime .i. Aodh, ‘Fire of the one strike i.e. Áed’.

Triath tiri Teathrach .i. Muredhach, ‘Lord of measure of the sea i.e. Muiredach’.

*Nuald domain targada*¹⁵ .i. *Domhnall*, ‘A noble of the world of an inciter i.e. Domnall’.¹⁶

Nell mac Laoich Lasamain .i. Niall mac Aodha, ‘Cloud, son of Fierce Warrior .i. Níall mac Áeda’.¹⁷

*Aithis an Ard-apstail .i. Maolcainne ua Bradagain*¹⁸, ‘Insult of the High-Apostle i.e. Máel

¹⁴ The imagery of a ‘honey-worded’ person can be traced back to the classical Greek poet Simonides of Ceos (circa 556 to 468 BC). He was an esteemed lyrical poet who was known as ‘honey-tongue’ due to his use of figurative language in his poems. His fame and brilliance in poetry are said to have led him to demand payment for them. He is also credited for inventing the art of memory, specifically a mnemonic system that uses the tool of visual images to help one retain information (Yates [1966] 1984: 27-31; Leverage 2010:133-144). It is outside the scope of this thesis to examine the history of the art of memory, but doing so could perhaps further our understanding of how Early Irish poets were able to memorise their vast repertoire.

¹⁵ R: *targadaig*, H: *tarcaidich*.

¹⁶ Schoen (2015: 45) translate this as ‘A deep shout, that is to say Domnall’ and analyses it as *domain* ‘deep’ and *núall* ‘noise’; however, it is better analysed *nual* ‘loud, resounding or famed’ and *doman* ‘world’ which is qualified by the gen. sg. of *tárcud*, *táirciud* ‘inciter, ringleader’.

¹⁷ Schoen (2015: 45) translate this as ‘Cloud, son of Gleaming lake, that is to say, Níall’. It is uncertain where she got the translation lake from but *laoich* is taken as a form of *láech* ‘warrior’.

¹⁸ R omits this line.

Cainnich úa Brádacáin’.

*Leth-ainm fir annatha*¹⁹ .i. *Ogan ua hUrthaille*, ‘Half-name of a Bad Poem i.e. Ócán mac Urtaile’.

Aithisc fir eitchesa .i. *Dalach mac Tilchain*,²⁰ ‘Reply of a Man of Horror i.e. Dálach mac Tulchán’.

Adhailg fir urgnama .i. *Coire*, ‘A necessity of a man preparing [food] i.e. Coire’.

Fonn fulaig carpaitniadh .i. *Eochaid mac Fírbaine*,²¹ ‘A support prop of a chariot-fighter i.e. Eochaid mac Fírbáine’.

Gein soighe solicthe .i. *Cuilen ua Fallamain*, ‘Birth of a speedy bitch i.e. Cuilen mac Follaman’.

*Brethem an anchinged*²² *ainm Fruach*, ‘A judge of a great champion [was] the name of Fruach’.

Cenn dono fri cloich do tslunndadh-sa .i. *Cend Cairrgi*, ‘The head, moreover, against the stone to the lineage .i. Cenn Cairge’.

Some of the etymologies, such as those concerning Áed, Muiredach, Domnall, Níall mac Áeda and Coire, are self-explanatory. It should be pointed out that the etymology of Domnall is also found in *Sanas Cormaic: Domnall* .i. *doman-nūall* .i. *nūall domuin imbe nō ūaill (domain) uimbe* (Meyer 1912a: 33), ‘Domnall i.e. *doman-nuall* i.e. the celebrity (*nuall*) of the world (*domain*) about him. Or Domnall i.e. *doman-uaill* i.e. pride of (the) world about him’ (O’Donovan & Stokes 1868: 51). Further, Níall mac Áeda may be the son of the first Áed in the list of names. The meaning of *lasamain* is similar to *áed* ‘fire’ and the words could be viewed as synonyms to bring further meaning to the name.

Other etymologies are more complicated, for example, the meaning of Ócán is ‘young man’; the definition of Urtaile is uncertain but the entire name is etymologised as *leth-ainm* ‘half-name’ and *annatha* which could be the neg. prefix *an-* with *nath* ‘a poetical composition; a poem’. However, in R and H, *andudha* is found and this could be gen. sg. of *andud* ‘lighting; inspiring, kindling’. The translation of N’s etymology is ‘Half-Name of a Man of a Bad Poem’, whilst R and H is ‘half-name of a man of inspiring’. Later in the text, Ócán is described §22.11 as *Ócan ard ergaire ngaiill* ‘noble Ócán, the hindering of a foreigner’. The analysis of *andudha* makes the most sense as it could mean a person who inspires others to fight against enemies and consequently, is translated as ‘inciter’.

The name Dalach mac Tilchain is explained as *aithisc fir eitchesa* ‘Reply of a Man of Ugliness’ with Dálach meaning ‘holding assemblies, frequent meetings’, which connects the name to *aithisc* ‘reply’. The meaning of Tilchain is uncertain but it could be a compound of *tul*, *taul*, *tel*, *til*

¹⁹ R and H: *andudha*.

²⁰ H: *telchain*, R: *Taulchain*.

²¹ R: *Firba*

²² H adds in the margin: .i. *Uathmaran hInnfeasaigh ainm fri hathcomarc* .i. *Tigernach ua Dermadan*.

‘protuberance, projecting part, swelling’ and *caín* ‘smooth finished side; skin, membrane’ with the compound meaning ‘smooth-topped’. However, Tilchain is found in H as *telchain* and in R as *taulchain* and this could be analysed as *tulchán* ‘small hill, hillock’. Therefore, ‘meetings held on a hill’ is etymologised as a ‘Reply of a Man of Ugliness’. The etymology could be stating that Dalach mac Tilchain is not a person of repute.

Some of the names in the tale do not have an etymology, for example, the king’s messenger’s name is Robad mac Rofúacra ‘Warning, son of Proclamation’ and one of the plunderers name is Aurchointed mac Sodeithbir ‘Excusing One, son of Good Reason’. In Boyle’s (2023) review of this thesis, she suggests that most names did not have etymologies so that those that did were made more distinctive and meaningful in the narratives. This idea is certainly interesting and more research would need to be conducted, however, *Airec Menman* is an exceptional tale as most of the names in the tale are meaningful and reflect the personality traits of the characters. It is evident that the scribe was highly educated and had a strong command of the language.

From this lists of names, Áed, Muiredach, Domnall, Máel Cannich and Níall are related to the king and are generally given positive etymologies while the rest of the plunderers have negative etymologies. The contrasts between the two types of etymologies emphasises the dishonourable act of the king’s family, as they are grouped together with the other plunderers of lower status. These clever etymologies not only demonstrate that Urard was highly educated but also show his or his author’s creativity in creating his characters.

Another technique that Urard uses to highlight his extemporaneous skills as a poet is by creating a fictional genealogy for himself through epithets and references to other important figures in Early Irish literature. In a sense, this technique may be termed ‘creative etymologising’, but it is an implicit example, unlike the previously discussed explicit etymology of Máel’s name. Consider the following example in §8:

*Orgain Maíl Milscothaigh maic Anna Airmitin maic Sochoisc Sochuide maic Ollam
Airc[h]etail maic Dana Dligedaig maic Lugdach Illdanaigh maic Rua²³ Rofessai maic
Creidme in Spirdai Naiimb Aithar sceo Maic.*

‘The Plundering of the Fortress of Máel Milscothach, son of Honourable name, son of Easily-Governed Host, son of Ollam of Poetry, son of Lawful Gift, son of many-skilled Lug, son of Strong-Great Knowledge, son of Belief of the Holy-Spirit, Father and Son’.

This quote is found as the title of the in-tale in the Tale List, but the ‘genealogy’ is also found again in §9 and serves to further explain the meaning of the name Máel Milscothach. In the quote, Máel states that he is the son of Lug who is a supernatural figure from the Tuatha Dé Danann. Lug is commonly

²³ In H and R, *ruaidh* is found instead.

described as *ildánach* ‘many skilled’, and this is the same term Urard uses to describe himself earlier in §25. Lug can be found in many Early Irish literary texts, such as *Cath Maige Tuired*, where he is described as having the skills of a builder, smith, champion, harper, warrior, a poet and a historian, sorcerer, physician, cupbearer, and brazier. His many skills allow him to be admitted into King Núadu’s court; as the text states, & *síasur a suide súad, ar bo suí cacha dáno é*, ‘and he sat in the seat of the sage, because he was a sage in every art’ (Gray 1982: 40–1). Lug then replaces Núada as the king of the Tuatha Dé due to his superior skills. While Máel may not factually be a descendant of Lug, his claim serves to highlight his exceptional skills as a poet who originated from Lug. This is further emphasised by his other pseudo-ancestral links, mainly, ‘son of an *Ollam* of Poetry, son of Strong-Great Knowledge, son of Lawful Gift’.

The fictional genealogy of Urard also states that he is the ‘son of Belief of the Holy Spirit, Father and Son’. This reference recalls the story of Patrick and Dubthach in the Prologue to the *Senchas Már* (Carey 1994: 10). In that tale, the pagan Lóegaire and his men ask for mercy from Patrick for killing Patrick’s charioteer. Patrick defers the case to Dubthach, the royal poet of Ireland who is described in §4 as *lestar lán do rath in Spirta Naím*, ‘a vessel full of the Holy Spirit’. However, when Dubthach expresses concerns about potentially making an incorrect judgement that would go against God’s wishes, Patrick states §6: *Non uos estis qui loquimini, sed spiritus patris uestri qui loquitur in uobis*. ‘It is not you who speak, but the Spirit of your Father who speaks in you’. Afterwards, Patrick blesses his mouth, and it is said §6 that *Bennachais iarum Pátraic a gin-sum 7 doluid rath in Spirta Naím for a erlabra* ‘the grace of the Holy Spirit came upon his speech’. Dubthach then proceeds to make his judgement and it is said that the coming of Christianity changed the ‘dark speech’ that was obscured to everyone but the poet, into the language which was described as the ‘white language i.e., law of Scripture’. From then on, it is said that: *Ar in Spirit Naem ro labrastar 7 doaircechain tria ginu na fer firéon* ‘the Holy Spirit spoke through the mouths of righteous men’ (§7). The association of Máel with the Holy Spirit and Christianity implies to the audience that he is also a devout Christian man. In this genealogy the poet not only alludes to his exceptional skills as originating from a supernatural god, but also that he himself and his profession are sanctioned by Christianity. Therefore, the name Máel Milscothach is not etymologised as simply being ‘Servant of Honey-Word’, but further meaning is given to it through an aetiology of his lineage.

Another creative etymology that is alluded to in *Airec Menman* can be found in §22.10 of Poem One: *Diäs diüb do Leith Cuind, / fer di síl Ailella Áuluim, / trí bráthair óentad fo chres, / cen cop focus a cairdes*, ‘A pair from them from Leth Cuinn, / a man from the seed of Ailill Áulomm, / three brothers in close friendship of fellowship / though their kinship might not be close’. The identification of these three people are given in §22.11: *Níall mac Áeda – ertha* of a prince – / *Máel Cainnich úa Brádacáin / noble Ócán*, the hindering of a foreigner, / *brave foster-brothers of Domnall*. These names have already been discussed at pp. 54–5 in the lists of names of plunderers in §13. The

reference to Leth Cuinn concerns the legend of the High-King of Ireland Conn Cétchathach and King of Munster Éogan Mór, also known as Mug Núadat, who were said to be in constant battle with each other. This led to Ireland being divided in half along the line of Dublin-Galway, specifically along modern Clonard in Co. Meath, Clonmacnoise in Co. Offaly and Maree in south-east of Galway (Hull 1933: 60–1; Jaski 2000: 218). The northern half belonged to Conn and became known as Leth Cuinn, while the southern half belonged to Éogan Mór and became known as Leth Moga. Both phrases can respectively be translated as ‘Head's Half’ and ‘Slave's Half’, with the latter’s translation perhaps reflecting Conn’s eventual victory over Mug Núadat. From Conn Cétchathach come the ancestors of the Connachta, Uí Néill and Airgialla and from Éogan Mór come the ancestors of Éoganachta. The High-King of Ireland, Domnall úa Néill in *Airec Menman*, is from the seed of Conn Cétchathach.

The proper name Ailill Áulomm can be found in *Cóir Anmann*, where it is explained as a compound of *ail* ‘blemish’ and *oll* ‘great’ (Arbuthnot 2007: 13–4, 89–90). In the text, it states that Ailill was so called because he had broken his three *gesa* when he killed and raped Áine, daughter of Eogabal, son of Durgabal, the king of the *síd*-mound at Áne Chlíach (in modern day Knockainy, Co. Limerick) with his five-barbed spear. The first *geis* he broke was for the spear to strike stone, which occurred when he tried to kill Áine. The second *geis* was for the barb to be straightened by placing it under a tooth, and when he did this the barb struck his tooth and released a poison. The third *geis* was that a woman was to be killed by it, and this woman was Áine. As a result of straightening the barb, his breath became foul, his tooth turned black, and his ear was stripped bare, and these were the three blemishes that led to his epithet. Similarly, in *Cóir Anmann* (Arbuthnot 2007: 12–3, 88–9), the name Áluim is described as a compound of *ó* ‘ear’. eDIL s.v. 3 *ó* (www.dil.ie/33366) lists examples of both *ó* and *áu* forms) when combined with *lom* ‘bare’. In §22.10 of *Airec Menman*, the stanza states that one of the plunderers is from the seed of Ailill Áulomm and this may refer to Ócán mac Urtaile. It is likely that when the contemporary audience of *Airec Menman* heard the reference to Leth Cuinn and Ailill Áulomm, they would have subconsciously understood the etymology of the name. Furthermore, the references emphasise Níall mac Áeda’s, Máel Cainnich úa Brádaicín’s and Ócán úa hUrthail’s connection with Domnall úa Néill to highlight the severity of their crime in raiding the home of the king’s poet because their actions are not befitting those with royal blood.

An instance of wordplay in *Airec Menman* has already been mentioned and that is Urard’s punning of the word *scél* (see p. 9). The previous discussion was focused on Urard’s interpretation of *scél* as ‘narrative, tale’, however, it could also be argued that the meaning of *scél* ‘news, tidings’ could be implicitly conveyed in the tale via the angel delivering the news to the king that Máel Milscothach is in fact an alias for Uraird mac Coisse. Therefore, through the angel and the wordplay with the word *scél*, the contemporary audience comes to understand the meaning of the fictional tale, while also receiving the news that Urard has been plundered. This news then results in the king understanding the severity of the situation and he then offers compensation to Urard. This connection of *scél* being

both a narrative and news reinforces the earlier discussion that the allegorical message of *Airec Menman* is that it is both a narrative and a moral lesson which could be viewed as a form of news. Likewise, wordplay with the word *ferb* has already been discussed at pp.17–18. Therefore, these examples of etymologising and wordplay display his virtuosity with language that is expected for a highly trained *ollam*.

Wordplay like the one examined in *scél* is not uncommon in Early Irish literature. For example, Carey (1995: 47) has noted that in *Echtra Chonnlai*, when Connlae and the woman leave for the Otherworld of the *aes síde*, the scribe has punned on the word *síd* which could mean either ‘peace’ or ‘(supernaturally inhabited) mound’ and both meanings are brought out in the text. The woman represents the Otherworld which one enters via a mound, and upon entry one experiences peacefulness. Therefore, the story has linked the mound inhabited by the *aes síde* with peace. Hollo (2011: 118–19) has also identified another instance of wordplay in *Echtra Chonnlai* with the word *éochaire*, which she states can be ‘etymologized as “love for what is familiar” and is generally translated as a longing for one’s own place and/or family – a homesickness or nostalgia’. In the story, instead of Connlae missing his family in the real world, he longs for the immortal woman, and in this way the connection between both meanings of *éochaire* is borne out. Thus, through word-play in both narratives, one obtains a better understanding of the tales.

Airec Menman can be read literally as a tale about a poet who has his home ransacked by the king’s relatives and goes to seek compensation. It can also be read on an allegorical level in which, through etymology, wordplay and allusions to past events, the text teaches the contemporary audience how to properly read a narrative. The narrative can also be viewed as a *tréfocal* which functions as a warning to the audience of a possible satire. However, there is also a Christian allegorical message to the story that concerns the Church’s approval of the profession of poets and their important role in society, as it demonstrates the exceptional skills of Urard through the creative metaphorical names or epithets he gives to his characters and himself.

Chapter Two: The Poems and the *Rosc of Airec Menman Uraird maic Coisse*

Manuscripts:

Airec Menman Uraird maic Coisse ‘The Stratagem of Uraird mac Coisse’ is found in three manuscripts: Oxford, Bodleian Library MS Rawlinson B 512; Dublin, Royal Irish Academy MS 23 N 10; and London, British Library MS Harleian 5280.

Oxford, Bodleian Library MS Rawlinson B 512 (Rawl. B 512) is a composite vellum manuscript consisting of five parts and dated to the fifteenth-sixteenth centuries (Ó Cuív 2001: 223–254).²⁴ The manuscript is approximately 24.5–6 x 18.5–19.5cm and has 157 folios. The present foliation (ff. 1–154) was added before 1862 in addition to the already found three foliations in the manuscript. An entry on f. 47vb indicates that part one was in Meath in 1731 and the entries of the names Plunkett, Nugent and Robertus Barnewall led Ó Cuív (2001: 231) to suggest that Anglo-Irish families in Meath owned the manuscript. The Plunkett family may have bound parts one, two and three in the sixteenth century. All five parts of the Rawl. B 512 manuscript were then bound together in the nineteenth century. The manuscript contains secular and religious prose and verse in Irish and Latin such as *Bethu Brigte* ‘The Life of Brigit’ (Ó hAodha 1978), litanies of Mary, the Saviour and the Trinity (Plummer 1925), *Cáin Adamnáin* ‘The Law of Adomnán’ (Ó Néill & Dumville 2003), and *Félire Oengusso* ‘The Martyrology of Óengus’ (Stokes 1905a). *Airec Menman* is found in what was originally part one of the manuscript and its scribe is unknown. The text is found on ff. 109r–114v and is written in two columns with rubricated letters found throughout the text. F. 109r and f. 114v are badly stained when compared to the other folia. The stains are mostly around the borders of the vellum. F. 110v and f. 111r had a lacuna that was repaired. Despite the above-mentioned stains and lacunae, these folia are still legible.

London, British Library MS Harl. 5280²⁵ (Harl. 5280) is a sixteenth-century vellum manuscript, measuring roughly 24.5cm x 17cm. Gilla Riabach Ó Cléirigh, son of Tuathal, son of Tadhg Cam Ó Cléirigh, was the main scribe of the manuscript. The fact that Tuathal’s father died in 1512 led Flower (1926: 298) to conclude that the manuscript was written in the first half of the sixteenth century. Other hands that are found in the manuscript are those of Maolmhúire Ó Cléirigh (f. 11b) and Fearfessa mac Conchabhair (f. 58b). The manuscript contains both secular and religious prose and verse. For example, it opens with the tale *Immram Curaig Maíle Dúin*, ‘The Voyage of Máel Dúin’s boat’ (Stokes 1888 & 1889) on f. 12, followed by an Old Irish commentary on the Psalter (Meyer 1894) on f. 21. Religious texts are then found from ff. 26–42, with the exception of f. 27 where the

²⁴ This manuscript can be viewed online at <https://digital.bodleian.ox.ac.uk/objects/3ffc0cfc-ce63-4a6c-95c0-547f36b4333d/>.

²⁵ This manuscript can be viewed online at https://access.bl.uk/item/viewer/ark:/81055/vdc_100123802477.0x000001?&_ga=2.147955831.1727935859.1629541249-862250502.1608416160#?c=0&m=0&s=0&cv=0&xywh=-4913%2C-452%2C15746%2C8997.

Irish saga *Tochmarc Émire*, ‘The Wooing of Emer’ (Meyer 1890), is found. The rest of the manuscript, ff. 43–77, contains mostly secular texts such as *Immram Brain maic Febail*, ‘The Voyage of Bran mac Febail’ (Mac Mathúna 1985) and *Airec Menman*, which begins on f. 58. According to Flower (1926: 318), *Airec Menman* is written in two hands, but it is unknown who copied the text.

Dublin, Royal Irish Academy MS 23 N 10,²⁶ formerly Betham 145, is a sixteenth-century vellum and paper manuscript and has recently been renamed the Book of Ballycummin (Boyle & Ó hUiginn forthcoming). Mulchrone catalogued the manuscript in 1937 and Best produced a facsimile of it in 1954. It is approximately 20cm x 14cm and has 14 leaves of vellum (pp. 1–28) and 61 paper leaves. There is no original foliation, but a late pagination was added. The scribal colophons and marginalia inform us that the main scribes were Aodh (pp. 1, 48, 66, 77, 115) and Dubhthach (p. 101) with Tornae (pp. 31, 57) occasionally writing. Aodh compiled the manuscript in the house of Seán Ó Maoil Chonaire at Baile in Chuimine, County Roscommon (p. 48) in 1575. Dubhthach wrote his part at Baile Tibhaird ar Bla Maige in the company of Seán Ó Maoil Chonaire (p. 101). Previous owners of the manuscript have written their names in it and they are: Domhnall Ó Allthan in 1702 (pp. 16, 102); Ellen Fling in 1706 (pp. 1, 126); Tadhg Ó Lomeasna (pp. 27, 52); C. Clancy on 1715 (p. 6); Tomas Ó Alluraine (p. 10) and the rest of the names are illegible (pp. 8, 22, 87, 130) (Best 1954: x). Sir William Betham (1779–1853) was the last owner of the manuscript until the Royal Irish Academy purchased it from him in 1851 for £139.

The manuscript contains sagas, gnomic tracts, legal tracts, and religious poems. The majority of the texts in the manuscript are secular and are mostly found on pp. 11–78. For example, gnomic tracts are found in this manuscript on pp. 1–7, 49, such as *Tecosca Cormaic* ‘The Instructions of Cormac’ (Meyer 1909) on p. 1 and *Audacht Morainn* ‘The Testament of Morann’ (Kelly 1976) on p. 49. Irish sagas are found on pp. 55–73, for example, *Immram Brain maic Febail*, ‘The Voyage of Bran son of Febal’ (Mac Mathúna 1985) on p. 57, *Compert Con Culainn*, ‘The Conception of Cú Culainn’ (Hamel 1933) on p. 62 and *Orgain Brudne Uí Dergae* ‘The Destruction of Uí Dergae’s Hostel’ (Mac Mathúna 1985) on p. 72. Examples of law texts are *Immthchor nAilella 7 Airt*, ‘Mutual Restitution between Ailill and Art’ (Meyer 1910b: 27–9) on p. 14 and the legal ruling on stolen and injured horses on p. 54. *Airec Menman* is found in this section of secular texts on pp. 23–43 and according to Best (1954: vii), was copied on paper leaves by Aodh. *Airec Menman* is written in single columns except for a verse on p. 46, which is written in two columns. Where decorated capital letters should have been, a blank space is found instead (pp. 29, 32). While the manuscript is stained and lacunae are found throughout it, for example at p. 40, the text remains legible.

²⁶ The manuscript can be viewed online at https://www.isos.dias.ie/RIA/RIA_MS_23_N_10_orders.html.

Editions

Byrne's (1908: 42–76) edition of the full text of *Airec Menman* involves a transcription of the text as found in 23 N 10 with variant readings from Harl. 5280 and Rawl. B 512 in the footnotes. She did not provide a discussion of the language nor a translation. Later, Schoen (2015) completed a partial translation and analysis of the text as part of her Masters' dissertation. She has translated §§8–24. Her edition is based on Rawl. B 512 with variant readings from the other two manuscripts in the footnotes. However, as she did not have access to Harl. 5280, she was reliant on Byrne's edition. Since my thesis is focused on the poems and the *rosc*, this thesis will only include an analysis and translation of §§22–23 and §§26–32. Therefore, a critical edition with translation and textual notes of the entire text based on all three manuscripts is still needed. It is hoped that this edition can be of use to other academics with the aim of furthering the debate on how a Middle Irish text could be edited and contributing to the database of Middle Irish linguistic features. However, the translations of the poems and *rosc* would be of use to both academics and students and it is hoped that future suggestions or improvements on the analysis and translation can be made.

Editorial Policy

In the manuscript transcriptions, suspension strokes and *compendia* are expanded and marked by italicisation. Superscript vowels have only the omitted letter italicised. Word divisions are introduced, but hyphenation is not. Rubricated letters are given in bold font. The *Tironian* symbol 7 is left unexpanded. Capitalisation and punctuation are only used if they are found in the manuscript; for example, proper nouns are left uncapitalised. When letters or words are found above the line, the following symbol is used \.../; when they are found below the line the following is used /...\.. Length marks are only added if found in the manuscript.

In Byrne's (1908) edition of *Airec Memman*, the text has been edited into paragraphs and numbered; this formatting is followed in this thesis for the sake of consistency. For example, the edition in this thesis begins with §22 as it corresponds to Byrne's §22. This thesis has further broken the paragraphs into sentences and numbered them. However, these sentences do not correspond to Byrne's edition as there is occasional difference in opinion on how to segment them. Similarly, a stanza is taken as 'a line', for example, §22.9 means paragraph number 22 and stanza 9.

In the edition, the transcription of 23 N 10 (N) is presented first, Harl. 5280 (H) second, and Rawl. B 512 (R) lastly. Afterwards the normalised text and translation are given and, finally, the linguistic commentary. Length marks, capitalisation, and punctuation as well as lenition are introduced when required in the normalised text.

While previous editions of *Airec Menman* have followed the Bédierist method, my thesis will follow the Lachmannian method when editing the text. The Bédierist method picks the best manuscript to base the edition upon and any variant readings from other manuscripts are added in the footnotes. On the other hand, the Lachmannian method studies the variant readings with the aim to reconstruct a text that is as close as possible to the original text which is no longer extant. In McCone's (1996a: 30) discussion of the different editing methodologies, he states that regardless of the methodology one chooses, it is important for the editor to have a consistent editorial approach. Since Middle Irish texts are generally edited using the Bédierist method (cf. Arbuthnot 2006; Breatnach 1980; Herbert 1988), a method also employed for Old Irish texts, one of the difficulties this thesis faces when adopting the Lachmannian method is the lack of a model that will be of assistance in creating a restored Middle Irish text. Although the critical editions published by the Maynooth Medieval Irish Text series (cf. McCone 2000; Ó Domhnaill 2005; White 2006) follow the Lachmannian method, these editorial policies are for Old Irish texts and as such cannot be applied entirely to *Airec Menman*. Therefore, it has been difficult at times to determine how to restore the text. For example, during the Middle Irish period, all unstressed final vowels become schwa /ə/. Therefore, these endings cannot be taken at face value. The issue is further complicated when all manuscripts have a different ending from each other and none of them are the ending expected from the Old Irish point of view. In Griffith's (2023) review of this thesis, he suggests that a possible solution to this issue would be to indicate the schwa endings with the phonetic symbol /ə/ instead of orthographically using a vowel. While this solution was considered, it is concluded that it would be impractical to do, particularly as it would impact the overall readability of the text and since it goes against any established practice in the field. Stifter (pers. comm) has alternatively suggested that the Modern Irish approach of using an *-a* after a non-palatal consonant and an *-e* after a palatal consonant could be adopted. However, as *Airec Menman* is probably a text from a relatively early part of the Middle Irish period, this strategy might remove potentially 'correct' endings that might still be preserved in the manuscripts. Overall, final vowels have been restored to Old Irish standards, although there are exceptions to this, and this is usually found when all manuscripts agree on the ending.

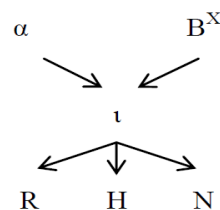
The editorial policy this thesis has followed when producing the normalised text is that if one of the three manuscripts has an OIr. form, generally, the OIr. form is used. For example, in 27.11, N: *comrair*, and H: *comrair* is MidIr. nom. sg. versus R: *comrar* OIr. nom. sg. of *comrar* 'box; chest, casket, shrine', and in 27.11, N: *saint*, and H: *saint* is MidIr. nom. sg. for R: *sant* OIr. nom. sg. of *sant* 'strong desire, eagerness'. If all three manuscripts contain a MidIr. form, then this is retained, for example, 22.1, N: *nonchoin*, H: *nonchoin*, R: *nonchoin* all have the MidIr. nom. pl. instead of OIr. acc. pl. *onchona* of *onchu* 'hound, wolf', and in 23.5, N: *forngabhail*, H: *forngabail*, R: *forngabáil* is the acc. sg. of *forngabál* 'force, capturing' used as MidIr. nom. sg.

However, there are exceptions to this policy and this is generally found when two MidIr. forms occur in the different branches of the stemma (see p. 68). In these instances it can be difficult to

know whether to retain the Old or Middle Irish form as potentially other factors can come into play, for example, in 22.7, N: *donrocht* and R: *donrócht* have MidIr. *don-rócht* for H: *deroacht* which is OIr. *do-roächt*; the OIr. form is used in the normalised text because H has a tendency to have reliable OIr. forms. While in other instances the only difference between the forms are orthographically, for example, the admission or omission of length marks which are generally not indicated in a manuscript; this can be seen in 22.8 where N's, H's and R's *triar* could either be OIr. *triär* or MidIr. *tríar*. Further, at times it has been difficult to ascertain which manuscripts were more likely to have the original form of a word because all three manuscripts contain corruptions of the form, for example, §28.5 N's *dochuitchesa*, H's *docuitsechtsai* and R's *docuitchtsa*. Any difficulties and/or exceptions are discussed in the linguistic commentary.

An issue with this editorial policy is that it results in removing many Middle Irish features and risks producing a normalised text that may look 'older' than the original text may have been, particularly as *Airec Menman* is a text written in the Middle Irish period. A contributing factor to the problems encountered in this edition is that the transition between Old Irish and early Middle Irish was a slow process, and there are still many uncertainties on the dating of Middle Irish linguistic features. Therefore, the aforementioned discussed examples demonstrate the pitfalls of any attempts to create a critical edition. Overall, much more work needs to be done on creating a Middle Irish editorial policy and it is beyond the ability of this thesis to produce a solution to the aforementioned issues.

In the Lachmannian method, a stemma is also generally produced, and the purpose of the stemma is to illustrate the genealogical relationships between the manuscripts based on the concept of shared error. This stemma would have assisted in deciding which Middle Irish features to retain and which to omit. Schoen (2015: 18) has created a stemma in which none of the manuscripts are dependent on another, with the text having been interpolated at least once. The following is her stemma:



She bases her argument on the fact that the supposed later date of N means it cannot be a source for either R or H. She further supports her argument based on the following lines:

§10 N: *o chathraig fessin sechtair. et iar teclam nasessilbi imechtraighi sin*
 H: *ocatruich fesin sechtair IArte clamad inaseselbe imectraige sin*

§13 N: *Aithis anar dapstail .i. maol cainne uabradagain*
H: *Aithis anardapstail .i. moel cainach uobradagain*
These lines are missing in R.

Similarly, she also gives the following examples:

§13 N: *inna conaire* and R: *inna conaire*; and
§25 N: *costadhaouch* and R: *costudach*
These lines are missing in H.

These omissions led Schoen to conclude that none of the manuscripts are based on one another. These differences occur in the sections that she analyses but there are many more significant differences in the rest of the texts that she does not mention. For example:

§23 N: *Batar he anmanna na sé noncon*
H: *batar e iarum anmonna na se nonchon*
These lines are missing in R.

§32 N: *glanaim de dibgud dofemat ferba fuach filid felsuí foraiçe oldaman do dligi dian*
daghnoisech di bunadh bae
H: *glanaim de dibgud defemet ferbu fuach filed felsui foracai oldomain de dligid dian*
dagnaisic do bunadh bae
These lines are also missing in R.

There are examples of different word orders too:

§22 N: *doueraum la bennachtauin 7 la failti,*
H: *doberam la bennachtain 7 la failte* vs.
R: *donberam la failti 7 bennachtain;*

§29 N: *morchlothach mend,*
H: *morclothach mend* vs.
R: *mend mórchlothach;*

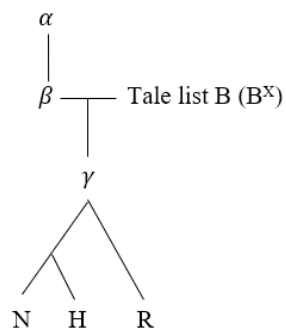
§32 N: *mbarr mbuais,*
H: *mbairr buais* vs.
R: *mbuais mbairr.*

§22 N: *bliadnai ar xxit for innarba uadh* vs.
H: *for innarbai uad bliadnai ar fichet,*
R: *for indarba n-uad bliadnai ar fichit;*

§29 N: *imamnus imullach*, vs.
 H: *immuallach imamnas*,
 R: *imullach imamnus*.

Based on the sections this thesis has analysed, overall N and H have shared a lot of common readings, and these readings suggest that N and H form a sub-branch against R. Furthermore, Toner (2000: 97) has concluded that Tale-List B, which is found in *Airec Menman*, was interpolated at least once, thus implying that *Airec Menman* itself would have been interpolated at least once too (see pp. 12–13).

Tentatively the following stemma is suggested:



Since this thesis is working with the theory that R has the same weight against N and H, any deviation in N or H has meant that R has the superior reading. This stemma has guided the editorial choices made in this thesis, however, much more future work on the relationship between the manuscripts is required.

The Dating of *Airec Menman*

Previous scholars such as Meyer (1912c: 791; 791), Marstrander (1915–1916: 383), Dillon (1946a: 115), O’Leary (1999: 68) and Ó Lochlainn (1943: 216) have dated the text to the tenth century based on linguistic evidence but do not provide a discussion of their dating and only state the text has Middle Irish forms. Mac Cana (1980: 36) believes the text was composed ‘not far removed from the year 1000, but this can be no more than a rough approximation’ and he bases this dating on the verbal system; however, like previous scholars, there is no discussion of the language. Other scholars such as Carney (1969–1970: 310) and Mac Eoin (1960: 199) have dated the text to no later than the tenth century based on historical evidence of the main characters. On the other hand, Flower (1926: 318) dates the text to the eleventh century based on the assumption that the tale was composed after Urard’s death. Recently, Breatnach (1987: 91) states that ‘I can see no objection to a date in the second half of the tenth-century’, and Toner (2000: 96) uses the generally accepted date of tenth

century to lend further support for his tenth-century dating of the Tale-List. Schoen (2015: 18) has dated the text to after 956 based on the annals, stating that Domnall reigned from 956–980 AD and then concludes that ‘the text does not show a lot of Middle Irish word forms’. While she does include a discussion of the Middle Irish features for the portion she analyses, her dating is only based on a small section of the text. Since this thesis, similarly, only analyses part of the text a more precise linguistic dating for *Airec Menman* as a whole cannot be given; however, based on the obit of Urard mac Coisse and the argument set out above that the poet himself was the author of the text, this thesis agrees with the dating of the text to no later than 990, the date of his obit.

The difficulties associated with dating Middle Irish texts have been discussed by Mac Eoin (1982) and Jackson (1990: xx–xxiii), with the dating of any text usually based on historical and/or linguistic information. If the text contains historical people or their authorship is known, then their obits or, in the case of kings, the year of their reign can assist in the dating of the text. The linguistic dating of a text is fraught with difficulties, with Russell (2005: 413–14) stating that ‘analysis of linguistic features is better at giving us a relative chronology of the texts than anything absolute; for example, studies of verbal systems or declensional forms may allow us to decide that the language of one text is more evolved in a particular direction than another but not necessarily when it was composed’. Breatnach’s (1994: 221–333) and McCone’s (1997; 1996b) comprehensive treatment of the Middle Irish language have been instrumental in furthering the understanding of the period, but when compared to OIr., much work still needs to be done on MidIr.

One method some scholars have relied on for the linguistic dating of texts is a method known as the ‘proportional method’, for example, if a text has more MidIr. features than OIr. features it would mean that the text is Middle Irish; further, if the text has a significantly larger number of MidIr. than OIr. features, the text could be dated to the middle or late MidIr. period. Mac Niocail (1968: 48–9) criticises this method since ‘one cannot safely make direct comparisons between texts of such discrepant lengths’. Jackson (1990: xxii) is not entirely against the methodology, stating that ‘it is reasonable to think that the text with an obviously markedly larger proportion of the old form is probably old’. Another method that could be used to date Middle Irish texts is comparing the linguistic features of a text with other texts whose date is known. For example, Jackson (1990: xxiii) has divided the Mid Ir. period into three stages. ‘Early Middle Irish’ corresponds to the tenth century, with *Saltair na Rann* ‘Psalter of Quatrains’ (Greene 2007) being an example of a text from that period; ‘Intermediate Middle Irish’ corresponds to roughly the eleventh century with the Middle Irish texts in *Lebor na hUidre* (Best & Bergin 1929), *Togail Troí* (Stokes 1884: 1–142) from TCD MS H 2. 17 and the earlier parts of the Passions and Homilies from the *Leabhar Breac* (Atkinson 1887); and ‘Late Middle Irish’ would be the twelfth century and the Book of Leinster version (Recension II) of *Táin Bó Cúailnge* ‘The Cattle-Raid of Cooley’ (O’Rahilly 1967), and most of the later texts in Passion and Homilies as well as the Middle Irish element in *In Cath Catharda* ‘The Civic Battle’ (Stokes 1909). Another Middle Irish text that has been dated with some certainty is *Cogad Gáedel re Gallaib*

‘The War of the Irish Against the (Scandinavian) Foreigners’ (Todd 1867) which is dated to 1050–1150 (Ní Mhaonaigh 1995: 356). These texts may assist in reaching a more precise dating of *Airec Menman*. This thesis has not compared *Airec Menman*’s language with other Middle Irish texts and future work on this is required.

Orthographical Features in the Manuscript Witnesses of *Airec Menman*

This section provides an overview of the orthographical features of the poems and *rosc* section of *Airec Menman* as they occur in the different manuscript witnesses. It should be noted that this overview is focused exclusively on the tale *Airec Menman* and does not take into account other texts contained in the manuscripts, such as the genealogies and other sagas.

23 N10

The following orthographical examples are found in *Airec Menman* in 23 N 10:

The letter *u* is often written in place of lenited *b* /β/, for example: *rouatar* [22.1], *doueraum* [22.7], *friu* [22.8], *facuail* [23.1], *anufessach* [23.2], *accouhrach* [23.2], *goirturiathar* [23.4], *diue* [23.5], *doiu* [23.7], *friu* [23.8], *tauarthasum* [23.12], *ailuine* [27.4], *deruail ureacas tarudha taoudha* [27.10], *cotagaiu* [27.11], *lionuiu ... doiu ... doiu* [27.11], *tiriu* [27.16], *uridh* [27.18], *uriathar* [28.5], *diu* [28.7].

At the same time, the letter *u* can also represent a schwa before a palatalised consonant, for example: *deghuidh* [22.3], *menmanuigh* [22.12], *briathruiph* [23.1], *conuiph* [23.8], *atacomnuic* [23.13], *tuathuib* [26.2], *toruind* [26.2], *adhuigh* [26.5], *nifarguimbh* [26.6], *charruic* [26.6], *maruit* [26.7], *imamnuis* [26.9], *lionuiu* [27.11], *buadhuiph* [27.16], *abuir* [27.18], *righamuis* [29.22], *iobhuir* [29.8], *menmuin* [30.1], *tascuibh* [30.4], *lasaruip* [30.11], *orduiph ilgraduiph* [32.5].

The vowels *ea* are sometimes written for an *e* before a broad consonant, for example: *fearr* [26.3], *neach* [26.15], *fearba* [27.3], *dearph* [27.3], *ureacas* [27.10], *leac* [29.3], *sreatha* [30.2], *dearga* [30.11], *ceart* [30.17], *breathai* [32.5], *teacht* [32.5], *mbreatha* [32.10].

The vowels *au*, *ao* or *ai* can represent an *a* before a palatalised consonant, for example, *labennachtauin* [22.7], *gleoghaoil* [27.15]. There is an instance of it occurring before a broad consonant: *doueraum* [22.7].

The digraph *ao* can be written for *ae*, for example: *aodh* [22.11], *maol* [22.11], *maol* [22.12], *aoda* [26.8], *maol* [26.14], *Maol* [26.15], *maol* [27.5], *maol* [27.14], *maol* [27.18], *aodh* [27.18], *haodh* [28.2]. Sometimes *ao* can be written for *oe*, for example: *aon* [26.12, 32.5].

There are a few instances of glide vowels not being written, for example: *ei* for *e*: *leth* [22.10], *rer* [22.12], *tene* [23.13], *anéte* [27.12], *méthe* [27.12]; *ai* for *a*: *athairic* [23.3], *athairicc* [23.8]; and *ui* for *u*: *muredhach* [29.18].

There are two instances of an *io* representing an *i*: *íoc* [27.15], *iobhuir* [29.8]; and an instance of *ou* for *o*: *bouth* [23.1].

Harl. 5280

The orthographical features in *Airec Menman* in Harl. 5280, are similar to those of 23 N 10.

There are some instances of *u* for a lenited *b* /β/: *friu* [23.8], *uhrathair* [28.3], *niruo* [29.4], *niruhó* [29.5], *niruhó* [29.6], *Niruo* [29.9].

The vowels *iu* can be found for *e*, *i* and *a* before a broad consonant, for example: *grindiul* [22.3], *condergensiut* [22.3], *iubair* [29.8], *brethiumnai* [30.1].

Glide vowels are not always written, for example: *ai* for *a*: *dorarngertsae* [22.4], *mal* [22.1], *fath* [23.2], *atariic* [23.8], *fidhnasiu* [26.1], *asec* [27.8], *athesc* [29.13], *Tasced* [32.6], *ogasic* [33.1]; *ei* for *e*: *snedriaglae* [23.2], *tene* [23.13], *esles* [26.3], *bresí* [26.4], *bresí* [26.9], *sodethphir* [27.2], *mence* [26.7], *rometius* [28.3], *creche* [29.20], *fianerghe* [30.2], *\t/ente* [30.11], *Comlethet* [32.4], *tenm* [32.8]; *iu* for *u*: *ru* [27.1], *murethach* [29.18], *dorurmestar* [30.1], *brugen* [30.9].

Sometimes *ae* can be written for an *a* before a palatalising vowel, for example: *taeicch* [22.12], *amaeil* [27.7], *daeili* [28.7], *sgaeilestar* [29.17], *maeil* [31.1], *maeil* [31.2], *rigmaeini* [32.12], *maeil* [32.12].

Similarly, *io* can be written for *i* before a broad consonant, for example: *grios* [23.4], *fior* [23.6], *Pior* [26.9], *siol* [26.14], *riog* [27.2], *bios* [32.7], *diollcetal* [32.8]. There is one instance of *u* for *a*: *mecnuib* [29.8]. Sometime vowels are doubled to represent a long vowel or hiatus, for example: *taeeil* [26.6], *clothruu* [27.17].

Rawl. B.512

The orthography of this manuscript largely adheres to expected OIr. spelling and there are only a handful of exceptions.

There is an instance of *u* for *a*: *foimthuch* [22.7], and *u* for *b*: *friu* [23.8].

There are some instances where a glide vowel is omitted, and they are: *ai* for *a*: *anmerech* [26.8], *Asec* [27.18], *comarli* [29.20], *asec* [29.20], *comarli* [29.21], *tesargne* [30.12]; *ei* for *e*: *éti* [27.12], *méti* [27.12], *rométius* [28.3], *fianergi* [30.2], *tenti* [30.11], *tenm* [32.8], *crech* [33.1], *tenm* [33.2]; *oi* for *o*: *nimorcfed* [28.7]; *hicorthi* [29.7], *cocerta* [30.3], *comgne* [31.2].

Middle Irish Features in the Manuscripts.

23 N 10 seems to have more MidIr. features than the other two manuscripts. The following are instances of where a MidIr. form occurs only in 23 N 10:

N: *rochualatar*, H: *roncolatar*, R: *roncualatar* [22.3];

N: *braithre*, H: *brathair*, R: *brathair* [22.10];

N: *anmanna*, H: *anmonn*, R: *anmand* [23.5];

N: *rindib rus*, H: *rinde rus*, R: *rinne \rus/* [26.10];

N: *bherus*, H: *berass*, R: *berus* [26.11];

N: *feine*, H: *fein*, R: *fein* [27.5];

N: *righ*, H: *r[i]*, R: *rí* [27.7];

N: *nach*, H: *nad*, R: *nad* [27.17];

N: *bhus*, H: *bus*, R: *bus* [27.17];

N: *basam*, H: *bamsu*, R: *bamsa* [28.4];

N: *cacha*, H: *gech*, R: *cach* [29.22];

N: *Foclaim*, H: *Foglam*, R: *foclum* [30.15];

N: *cacha*, H: *cech*, R: *cach* [32.5].

Some of the MidIr. features that are only found in Harl. 5280 are:

N: *ani*, H: *anni*, R: *ana* [22.4];

N: *nach*, H: *na*, R: *nách* [27.4];

N: *for*, H: *ar*, R: *for* [27.7];

N: *ine*, H: *anní*, R: *ane* [27.15];

N: *fri*, H: *re*, R: *fri* [28.2];

N: *roraidhsit*, H: *doraidhsit*, R: *roráidsit* [29.12].

Similarly, some of the MidIr. features found in Rawl. B. 512 only are:

N: *nobhiadh*, H: *nobiad*, R: *mbiad* [22.4];

N: *Rotoll*, H: *Rotoll*, R: *Dotoll* [26.10];

N: *isbert*, H: *atbert*, R: *asrubart* [27.1];

N: *buadhuiph*, H: *buadaib*, R: *buada* [27.16];

N: *fri*, H: *fri*, R: *fria* [27.18];

N: *niroail*, H: *niroail*, R: *nirail* [28.5];

N: *ropsa*, H: *ropsa*, R: *ropsam* [28.7];

N: *dorona*, H: *doronadh*, R: *doroíne* [30.1].

There are many instances where MidIr. forms are found in two of the three manuscripts, for example:

N and H vs. R:

N: *Triar fer*, H: *Triar \fer/*, R: *Triar* [22.9];

N: *Nochorucsat*, H: *nochorucsat*, R: *Niconrucsat* [23.11];
N: *adhuigh*, H: *agadh*, R: - [26.5];
N: *comrair*, H: *comrair*, R: *comrar* [27.11];
N: *saint*, H: *saint*, R: *sant* [27.11];
N: *nach*, H: *nach*, R: *na* [27.12];
N: *cethre*, H: *cetri*, R: *ceithir* [27.13];
N: *cach*, H: *cech*, R: *cache* [29.22].

H and R vs. N:

N: *ani*, H: *anní*, R: *inni* [23.6];
N: *na*, H: *nach*, R: *nach* [26.7];
N: *aní*, H: *andí*, R: *inni* [27.17];
N: *frisgart*, H: *frisrogart*, R: *Frisrogart* [28.1];
N: *Uair*, H: *uairi*, R: *Uairi* [29.14];
N: *ani*, H: *anní*, R: *inni* [31.1].

N and R vs. H:

N: *donrocht*, H: *deroacht*, R: *donrócht* [22.7];
N: *nochaba*, H: *nochba*, R: *nochaba* [27.6];
N: *rochuala*, H: *rocuala*, R: *rochuala* [29.1].

There are many instances when all three manuscripts have Middle Irish forms, for example:

N: *nonchoin*, H: *nonchoin*, R: *nonchoin* [22.1];
N: *uaman*, H: *uaman*, R: *uaman* [22.3];
N: *glana*, H: *glana*, R: *glana* [22.9];
N: *Diass diph*, H: *dias diib*, R: *Dias diib* [22.10];
N: *conacechlabhair*, H: *conacechlabair*, R: *conacechlabair* [23.3];
N: *anmanna*, H: *anmonna*, R: - [23.4];
N: *forngabhail*, H: *forngabail*, R: *forngabáil* [23.5];
N: *adrupairt*, H: *adrubairt*, R: *adubairt* [23.1];
N: *nochanerbert*, H: *nochanerbert*, R: *nochanderbairt* [27.8];
N: *riam*, H: *riam*, R: *riam* [27.8];
N: *noconesarracht*, H: *nocaneserracht*, R: *Nochaneserracht* [27.13];
N: *chorthaiscet*, H: *gortaiscet*, R: *cortaiscit* [27.13];
N: *gair*, H: *gair*, R: *gair* [27.16];
N: *eat*, H: *eat*, R: *eat* [27.17];
N: *oir*, H: *or*, R: *or* [27.18];
N: *abuir*, H: *abair*, R: *apair* [27.18];

N: *da*, H: *da*, R: *da* [28.3];
 N: *cocrustar*, H: *cocrastar*, R: *cocrastar* [29.16];
 N: *scailustar*, H: *sgaeilestar*, R: *scailistar* [29.17];
 N: *munestar*, H: *muainestar*, R: *muáinistar* [29.18];
 N: *cinnestar*, H: *cinnestar*, R: *cinnistair* [29.19];
 N: *suidhighet*, H: *suidet*, R: *suidet* [30.2];
 N: *dith*, H: *dith*, R: *dith* [30.4];
 N: *ainmnighet*, H: *ainmnighet*, R: *ainmniget* [30.8];
 N: *lasait*, H: *lasaid*, R: *lasait* [30.14];
 N: *di*, H: *dí*, R: *di* [32.4];
 N: *buadhchu*, H: *buadchu*, R: *mbuadchai* [32.8];

See the editorial policy on pp. 65–9 for a discussion on when these Middle Irish features are retained.

The Language of the Poems and *Rosc*

Middle Irish Linguistic Features

Orthographical Developments

During the MidIr. period, a number of orthographical developments can be seen (Breatnach 1994: 228–325; McCone 2005: 140–3). These are summarised here with examples drawn from the portion of *Airec Menman* that is edited in this thesis:

** for OIr. <p> = /b/**

Some examples are: N: *conerbuirt*, H: *gonepert*, R: *conepert* [27.2]; and N: *ciapdis*, H: *ciabdis*, R: *ciaptis* [27.9]. Examples of hypercorrection of *p* for *b* is seen in: N: *adrupairt*, H: *atrubairt*, R: *atrubairt* [22.4]; N: *adrupairt*, H: *adrubairt*, R: *adubairt* [23.2].

<d> for OIr. <t> = /d/

Some examples are: N: *adrupairt*, H: *atrubairt*, R: *atrubairt* [22.4]; N: *adrupairt*, H: *adrubairt*, R: *adubairt* [23.2]; N: *tar*, H: *dar*, R: *dar* [23.14]; N: *neoit*, H: *neoid*, R: *neoit* [32.1]; N: *robrethaighset*, H: *robrethaighset*, R: *dobrethaigsid* [33.1].

<g> for <c> = /g/

Some examples are: N: *Conad*, H: *Gonath*, R: *Conid* [22.1]; N: *gach*, H: *cech*, R: *cach* [22.12]; N: *begeolais*, H: *beceolais*, R: *beceolais* [23.2]; N: *gu*, H: *co*, R: *co* [26.14]; N: *conagartha*, H: *conacartha*, R: *conacartha* [29.1]; N: *scorach*, H: *sgorach*, R: *scorach* [29.17]; N: *hóglaochrad*, H: *oclaechrad*, R: *hóclaecraid* [29.20]; N: *cin*, H: *gon*, R: *can* [30.15]; N: *conepert*, H: *gonepert*, R: *conepert* [31.3]; N: *cotasein*, H: *godosein*, R: *cotasein* [32.5]; N: *cotis*, H: *gotised*, R: *co tissad* [33.2].

<óe, áe> for <ói>

N: *ui*. H: *nae*, R: *ix* [22.1]; N: *doraegha*, H: *doroegai*, R: *doraega* [27.11].

The doubling of vowels to indicate length: N: *aeil*, H: *aeil*, R: *ael* for *aël* [26.6].

Phonological Developments

Vowels

Contraction of Hiatus: These examples are confirmed by metrics. N: *Triar* and H: *Triar* for *Tríar* vs. R: *Triar* for *Triär* [22.9]; N: *diph* for *díb* vs. H: *diib*, R: *diib* for *diüb* [22.10]; N: *dias*, H: *dias*, R: *dias* is *días* for *diäs* [27.14].

ai > oi

In this feature, the *a* is rounded to *o* before a palatalised consonant and some examples are: N: *oilella*, H: *oilella*, R: *aillella* [22.10]; N: *gaild*, H: *goill*, R: *ngaill* [22.11]; N: *Decair*, H: *decoir*, R: *Decair* [27.5]; N: *rainn*, H: *roinn*, R: *rainn* [26.8]; N: *fraig*. H: *froicc*. R: *fraig* [26.10].

ai > ei

Similarly, sometimes *ai* can become *ei* after palatalised consonant and an example is: N: *leis*. H: *lais*. R: *lais* [26.4].

Unstressed final vowels become schwas: there are numerous instances found in the text, some examples being: N: *nanbhle*, H: *nanble*, R: *anbli* [21.1]; N: *gabhala*, H: *ngabalu*, R: *ngabala* [22.2]; N: *suidheiu*, H: *suide*, R: *suidiu* [22.3]; N: *triarso*, H: *triarsiu*, R: *triarsa* [22.8]; N: *do*, H: *de*, R: *di* [22.9]; N: *comalta*, H: *comaltae*, R: *com\d/alta* [22.11]; N: *creithe*, H: *creche*, R: *crichi* [23.1]; N: *indili*, H: *indili*, R: *indile* [23.2]; N: *diue*, H: *dibe*, R: *dibi* [23.5]; N: *a*, H: *a*, R: *i* [23.13]; N: *ga*, H: *gaei*, R: *gai* [26.4]; N: *muighe*, H: *muige*, R: *muigi* [26.5]; N: *i*, H: *a*, R: *i* [27.5]; N: *aire*, H: *airi*, R: *aire* [27.5]; N: *lifi ... dighi*, H: *life ... dige*, R: *lifi ... digi* [27.9]; N: *néte ... méthe*, H: *neide ... meide*, R: *néti ... méti* [27.12]; N: *eocho*, H: *eochoi*, R: *eocho* [27.17]; N: *ere*, H: *eriu*, R: *heriu* [28.6]; N: *gcartha*, H: *cairthe*, R: *corthi* [29.7]; N: *ime ... lighe*, H: *imme ... llighe*, R: *imbi ... llighi* [29.9]; N: *himpidhi*, H: *impide*, R: *himpide* [29.11]; N: *chomairli ... chreiche*, H: *comairle ... creche*, R: *comarli ... chreichi* [29.20]; N: *chomairle*, H: *comairle*, R: *comarli* [29.21]; N: *Senchaidhe ... fianeirghe*, H: *Senchaide ... fianerghe*, R: *Senchaidi ... fianergi* [30.2]; N: *córa*, H: *core*, R: *cori* [30.12]; N: *tesairgne*, H: *tesaircni*, R: *tesargne* [30.15]; N: *falmaighi*, H: *falmuighe*, R: *falmuigi* [31.1]; N: *breithemnu*, H: *brithemnu*, R: *breithemna* [31.2]; N: *ferba*, H: *ferbu*, R: - [32.3]; N: *aigthi*, H: *aighte*, R: *aighthi* [32.4]; N: *breathai*, H: *bretha*, R: *bretha* [32.5].

As discussed above, MidIr., final unstressed vowels became schwas /ə/ which meant the endings could be written with any vowels. This can result in difficulties determining the original form of a word. For example, in 22.8, N: *so* and R: *sa* has the correct demonstrative particle, but H's *-siu*

has MidIr. spelling. In 22.9, N: *do*, H: *de*, R: *di* can either be the prep. *do*^L ‘to/for’ or *de/di*^L ‘from’; similarly, in 23.13, N: *a*, H: *a*, R: *i* and in 27.5, N: *i*, H: *a*, R: *i* can be either the prep. *a* ‘out of, from’ or prep. *i*^N ‘in/on’.. In 22.11, H: *comaltae* has the nom. sg. ending, while N: *comalta* and R: *com\|d\alta*, could either be sg. or pl. In all instances one is dependent on context to determine which form the scribe may have intended.

There are instances when H has the expected OIr. ending, for example:

- N: *sneidriagla*, H: *snedriaglae*, R: *sneídríagla* for *snedriaglae* [23.2];
 N: *anblei*, H: *anble*, R: *anbli* for *anble* [23.2];
 N: *tarta*, H: *tartae*, R: *tarda* for *tartae* [26.3];
 N: *etna ... adhna*, H: *etnai ... adnai*, R: *etnai ... adnai* for *Etnai ... Adnai* [26.7];
 N: *reime ... toлта ... aoda*, H: *remhei ... toltai ... Aedai*, R: *reimhe ... tollta ... aeda* for *réime ... tolltai ... Áeda* [26.8];
 N: *aba*, H: *abae*, R: *aba* for *abae* [27.4];
 N: *fristarla*, H: *frisatarlae*, R: *fristarla* for *fris-tarlae* [27.6];
 N: *cuca*, H: *cucai*, R: *chuca* for *cucai* [27.10];
 N: *detla*, H: *detlae*, R: *détla* for *détlae* [29.14];
 N: *rechtgai*, H: *rechtagai*, R: *rechtga* for *rechtgai* [30.8];
 N: *sidhamlai*, H: *sidomlae*, R: *sídamlá* for *sídamlae* [30.17].

Alternatively, these instances may just be hypercorrections as H has a tendency to orthographically represent unstressed final vowels with two vowels, for example:

- N: *óca*, H: *ocae*, R: *óca* for *oca* [23.2];
 N: *comageba*, H: *combaegebai*, R: *conbageba* for *co'mba-géba* [23.2];
 N: *muca ... chona 7 muca*, H: *mucai ... conai 7 mucui*, R: *muca ... conu 7 muca* for *muca ... cona 7 muca* [23.7];
 N: *gaphala*, H: *ngabalui*, R: *ngabala* for *ngabala* [23.10];
 N: *feighbriathra ... echlacha ... gaphala*, H: *feighbriathrae ... echlachai ... ngabalui*, R: *fégbriatra ... echlacha ... ngabala* for *féighbriathra ... echlacha ... gabala* [26.1];
 N: *filidhachta*, H: *filidectai*, R: *filidechta* for *filidechta* [26.2];
 N: *darabha*, H: *darabai*, R: *diaraba* for *dia-raba* [26.5];
 N: *belra ... gle*, H: *berlai ... glei*, R: *belrai ... gle* for *bélra ... glé* [26.9];
 N: *cluasa ... dagdha*, H: *chusae ... dagdai*, R: *cluasa ... dagda* for *clúasa ... Dagda* [26.10];
 N: *conerbara*, H: *conerbarai*, R: *conerbara* for *co-n-erbara* [26.11];
 N: *notbera ... nodgena*, H: *notberai ... notgenai*, R: *nodbera ... notgéna* for *nod-béra ... nod-géna* [26.12];
 N: *chlartha*, H: *clóarthae*, R: *clothra* for *Clartha* [26.15];

N: *fearba*, H: *ferbae*, R: *ferba* for *ferba* [27.3];
 N: *Doraegha*, H: *Doroegai*, R: *Doraega* for *Do-róega* [27.10];
 N: *garta*, H: *gartai*, R: *garta* for *garta* [27.11];
 N: *nodusbera*, H: *nodusberae*, R: *nodusbera* for *nodus-béra* [27.15];
 N: *ngarta*, H: *ngartai*, R: *ngartai* for *ngarta* [27.16];
 N: *dalta*, H: *daltai*, R: *dalta* for *dalta* [28.2];
 N: *dalta*, H: *daltai*, R: *dalta* for *dalta* [28.4];
 N: *menma*, H: *menmai*, R: *menma* for *menma* [28.8];
 N: *ferba ... fiadha conagartha ... ardflatha ... dogeine*, H: *ferbai ... fiadoi conacarthae ... ardflathae ... dogenae*, R: *ferba ... fiada conacarthae ... dosgéna* for *ferba ... con-acartha ... ard-flaithi ... dos-génaí* [29.1];
 N: *traghna*, H: *thragnai*, R: *tradna* for *tragna* [29.4];
 N: *mhela*, H: *mela*, R: *mela* for *mela* [29.8];
 N: *srotha sidhemhla soinmecha soithcerna*, H: *srothae sidamlae soinmechai soithcernae*, R: *srotha sidamlai sóinmecha soithcherna* for *srotha sídamlai soinmecha soithcherna* [29.12];
 N: *brethemhnai*, H: *brethiumnai*, R: *brethemna* for *brethemna* [30.1];
 N: *dotindreda*, H: *dotindredae*, R: *dotinrada* for *do-tindreda* [30.4];
 N: *dearga*, H: *dergai*, R: *derga* for *derga* [30.14];
 N: *drochdala*, H: *drochdalai*, R: *drochdala* for *dorchdála* [30.16];
 N: *filidha*, H: *filedae*, R: *fileda* for *fileda* [31.3];
 N: *cose*, H: *cosei*, R: *cose* for *cose* [32.2];
 N: *dela*, H: *delai*, R: *dela* for *dela* [32.6].

Consonants:

ld > ll

While during the MidIr. period, the sound change *ld > ll* was common, the hypercorrection of *ll > ld* can also be found. Some examples of hypercorrections are: N: *grindell*, H: *grindiul*, R: *grindeld* [22.3]; N: *Niald*, H: *niall*, R: *Níall* [22.11]; N: *gaild*, H: *goill*, R: *ngaiill* [22.11]; N: *domnaill*, H: *domnaill*, R: *domnaill* [22.11]; N: *Dochald*, H: *Dochall*, R: *Dochall* [23.5]; N: *domnall*, H: *domnald*, R: *domnall* [26.12]; N: *domnall*, H: *domnald*, R: *domnall* [26.13]; N: *domnaill*, H: *domnaild*, R: *domnaill* [27.9]; N: *oldaman*, H: *oldomain*, R: - [32.3]; N: *ollamain*, R: *oldomain*, R: *ollamain* [33.2].

nd > nn

Some examples are: N: *gaind*, H: *gaind*, R: *gain* [27.9]; N: *hann*, H: *hand*, R: *hann* [31.1]; N: *annsin*, H: *annsin*, R: *andsin* [31.3].

Examples of hypercorrection *nn > nd* are: N: *dernaind*, H: *dernaind*, R: *dernainn* [27.9]; N: *band*, H: *bann*, R: *band* [27.16]; N: *gcennaighi*, H: *cendaigi*, R: *cendaigi* [29.10]; N: *uainne*, H:

uainde, R: *uaíne* [29.22]; N: *cind*, H: *cinn*, R: *cinn* [30.12]; N: *fond*, H: *fonn*, R: *fond* [30.15]; N: *fhland*, H: *floinn*, R: *flann* [31.3]; N: *leiginn*, H: *leginn*, R: *leigind* [31.3]; N: *sruthlinn*, H: *sruthlind*, R: *sruthlinn* [32.8]; N: *cend*, H: *cend*, R: *cend* [32.8].

-ghth- /yθ/ > /θ/

N: *derrscaithech*, H: *derscaithe*, R: *derscaithi* [29.14]; N: *cumscaighther*, H: *cumscaighther*, R: *cumscaider* [30.5]; N: *Muchaighther*, H: *Muchaider*, R: *Muchaighther* [30.14]; N: *baidhither*, H: *baidither*, R: *badighther* [30.17].

Prosthetic *f* before a vowel

N: *foccus*, H: *focus*, R: *focus* [22.10]; N: *dofemat*, H: *defemet*, R: - [32.3]

The Article

During the MidIr. period, there are fewer forms of the definite article attested as there is a reduction in article allomorphs (Breatnach 1994: 258–9).

The definite article *in* becomes *an* due to its unstressed nature, resulting in proclitic vowels becoming schwa /ə/. Some examples are: N: *resan*, H: *resin*, R: *resan* [22.1]; N: *in*, H: *an*, R: *an* [23.2]; N: *in*, H: *an*, R: *in* [26.11]; N: *in*, H: *an*, R: *in* [27.3]; N: *in*, H: *an*, R: *in* [27.13]; N: *in*, H: *in*, R: *an* [28.4]; N: *an*, H: *an*, R: *an* [30.5].

In OIr., articles ending in *-nd* are usually found in the gen. sg. or dat. sg. m., nom. pl. m., nom. sg. or dat. sg. f., and gen. sg. or dat. sg. of n. when the word begins with a vowel, lenited *f*, *l*, *r* or *n*. In MidIr., the previously mentioned assimilation of *nd* > *nn* also results in the definite article ending in *-nd* > *nn*, and can be found with further assimilation of *-nn* > *-n*. Some examples include: N: *ind*, H: *an*, R: *ind* [22.2]; N: *don*, H: *don*, R: *dind* [22.4]; N: *inn*, H: *an*, R: *ind* [23.1]; N: *inn*, H: *and*, R: *ind* [23.11]; N: *in*, H: *an*, R: *ind* [27.2, 4, 10, 18]; N: *in*, H: *ind*, R: *ind* [29.22].

The definite article *inna* is found with acc. and gen. pl. m., gen. sg., nom. pl., acc. pl., and gen. pl. f. and nom. pl., acc. pl. and gen. pl. of the n. Already in OIr. *na* could occur instead of *inna* and this becomes more common in MidIr. Some examples are: N: *na ... ina ... ina*, H: *na ... na ... inna*, R: *na ... ina ... inna* [22.1]; N: *na*, H: *ina*, R: *inna* [26.1]; N: *na*, H: *na*, R: *inna* [29.1]; N: *na*, H: *na*, R: *ina* [33.2].

The OIr. distinctive dat. pl. article marker *-naib* gets reduced in MidIr. to *-na*. Some examples from the text are: N: *forsna*, H: *forsna*, R: *forna* [23.1]; N: *ona conaibh*, H: *ona conaib*, R: *ona conaib* [23.3]; N: *ona conuiph*, H: *ona conaib*, R: *dona conaib* [23.8].

Middle Irish nominal morphology

There was a tendency to use the form of the acc. pl. as the nom. pl. during the MidIr. period in order to eliminate the distinction between the cases. This was influenced by the noun classes that did not have any distinction between the nom. and acc. pl. such as the *ā*-stem, *i*-stem, *iā*-stem and all neuters (McCone 2015: 144). In MidIr., this pattern spread to other noun classes, for example, in 22.10, in the *r*-stem, N's *braithre* is OIr. acc. pl. used for MidIr. nom. pl., in which the expected OIr. nom. pl. would have been *bráithir* or *bráthair* 'brother' (Breatnach 1994: 250). Further, R's and H's *brathair* is a later nom. pl. form of *bráithir*, and the later form could have obtained a broad *-th-* under the influence of the acc., gen. and dat. pl. having palatalised and non-palatalised forms (McCone 1994: 276). Since the acc. pl. could be used as the nom. pl., it would not be inconceivable that the nom. pl. could be used for the acc. pl., for example, in 22.1, N: *nonchoin*, H: *nonchoin*, R: *nonchoin* all have the MidIr. nom. pl. form instead of the expected acc. pl. *onchona* of *onchu* 'hound, wolf' (Breatnach 1994: 326).

Similarly, during the MidIr. period, the acc. sg. could also be used for the nom. sg., for example as seen in the *ā*-stems. This confusion began with the verbal nouns because of the frequency with which they were being used with prepositions (Breatnach 1994: 243; McCone 2005: 145). For example: in 23.5, N: *forngabhail*, H: *forngabail*, R: *forngabáil* is the acc. sg. of *forngabál* 'force, capturing' used as MidIr. nom. sg.; in 27.7, N: *righ* MidIr. nom. sg. versus H: *[r]i* and R: *rí* OIr. nom. sg. of *rí* 'king'; in 27.11, N: *comrair*, and H: *comrair* is MidIr. nom. sg. versus R: *comrar* OIr. nom. sg. of *comrar* 'box; chest, casket, shrine'; in 27.11, N: *saint*, and H: *saint* is MidIr. nom. sg. for R: *sant* OIr. nom. sg. of *sant* 'strong desire, eagerness'; in 30.12, R: *bruigin* is MidIr. nom. sg. for N: *buidhen* and H: *brugen* OIr. nom. sg. of *buiden* 'hostel, large banqueting-hall; house, mansion'. There are two instances of the nom. sg. being used for acc. sg. in 26.5, N: *adhuigh* is MidIr. nom. sg. of H: *agadh*, OIr. nom. sg. of *agad* 'face, front; honour'; and in 30.6, N: *breth*, H: *breth* and R: *breth* is MidIr. acc. sg. for OIr. acc. sg. *breith* of *breth* 'carrying away

During MidIr. period, the nom. pl. of consonantal stems obtained the new *-a* ending based on the *ā*-stem nouns. This new stem pattern then spread to the *n*-stem neuters (McCone 2005: 145; Breatnach 1994: 248–9), for example, in 23.4 N's *anmanna* and H's *anmonna* is MidIr. nom. pl. *anmanna* of OIr. *anmann* of *ainmm* 'name' used as the nom. pl. This form is missing in R. Similarly, in 23.5, N: *anmanna* is MidIr. acc. pl. used as the nom. pl. with H's *anmonn* and R *anmand* being the expected nom. pl. form of *ainmm* 'name'.

In MidIr., the *u*-stems had their gen. pl. remodelled on the *o*-stems to make it distinctive from the nom. and acc. pl. (McCone 2005: 145). There are two instances in the text: in 26,10, N: *rus*, H: *rus*, R: *rus*, N is MidIr. gen. pl. for OIr. *rosa* of *rus* 'shame' which is preceded by the dat. pl. *rindib* of *rind* 'spear', while H and R have the preposed gen. pl. of *rinde* of *rind* 'spear' and is followed by the

dat. sg. *rus*. Stifter (2019: 171–218) argues that this new form of *rus* can already be seen in the OIr. period in the *u*-stem neuter. There is one instance of the nom. sg. of *i*-stems being used as the gen. pl. based on the model of the *o*- and *ā*-stems (Breatnach 1994: 255) and it is in 27.16, N: *gair*, H: *gair*, R: *gair* for OIr. *gaire* of *gáir* ‘shout, a cry’ [27.16].

Similarly, the gen. sg. of the *o*-stems influenced the new gen. sg. of the *u*-stem (McCone 2005: 145–6). For example, in 27.3, N: *fis*, H: *fis*, R: *fis* for OIr. *fesa* of *fíus* ‘knowledge, information’; in 30.4, N: *dith*, H: *dith*, R: *dith* for OIr. *dítha* of *díth* ‘destruction’; in 32.5, N: *bith*, H: *bith*, R: *bith* for OIr. *bítho/a* of *bíth* with the meaning ‘act of striking; wounding’.

In the adjectives, the *o/ā*-stem adjectives obtained a new inflectional pattern in which the nom. pl. ending *-a* of the feminines spread to the masculines. The acc. pl. m. expected ending was *-u* which was probably already replaced by *-a* much earlier in the adjectives. McCone (2005: 148) states that the loss of the neuter category may have influenced this change since in the neuter, the nom. and acc. pl. had an endingless marker when used with a numeral or article; otherwise, the *-a* ending was found, for example, nom. pl. *scél* and *scéla* of *scél* ‘story, news’. This pattern would then spread to other adjectival classes. An example can be seen in 22.9, N: *glana*, H: *glana* and R: *glana* is the acc. pl. m. of *glan* ‘clean, clear, pure’ used as MidIr. nom. pl. m. in which the OIr. nom. pl. m. would have been *glain*.

In both the article and the adjectives, the dat. pl. *-aib* was lost and the acc. forms were used instead (Breatnach 1994: 252, 259). However, McCone (2005: 147) writes that this could spread to the nouns as well and there are few instances of it in the text and they are: in 23.14, N: *degbriathra*, H: *degbriathraib*, R: *degbriathraib* of *degbríathar* ‘word’; and in 27.16, N: *buadhuiph*, H: *buadaib*, R: *buada* of *búaid* ‘victory, triumph’.

Middle Irish prepositions

There are a number of examples of Middle Irish prepositional forms in the text. In 22.2, N’s *uadha* is the MidIr. form of the 3sg. m. conj. prep. *ó* ‘from’, of which H: *nuad* and R: *uadh* is the OIr. form. The new MidIr. form may have been based on the OIr. conj. prep. 3sg. m. *imbi* ‘around, about him’ when the acc. replaced the dat. forms in the conj. prep. (McCone 2005: 153–4). In 22.3, R’s *forthuib*, which is missing in N and H, is a MidIr. form for OIr. *foraib* of the conj. prep. 3pl. of *for* ‘upon’. This new form was created based on analogy with MidIr. *úathaib* for OIr. *úadib* (conj. prep. 3pl. of *ó* ‘from’) (McCone 2005: 153–4; Breatnach 1994: 327). The new forms of conj. prep. with *-th* were influenced by the acc. 3sg. f. *-(h)e* and 3pl. *-(h)u* endings replacing the dat. 3sg. f. *-i* and 3pl. *-(a)ib* endings in MidIr. These forms were analysed as containing the prep. *ó/úa* and the 3sg. f. *-the* and the 3pl. *-thib* endings, respectively (McCone 2005: 48, 153–4). This process then spread to other prepositions.

In 26.10, N: *tria*, H: *tria*, R: -; in 26.11, N: *tria*, R: *tria*, H: *tre*; and in 27.12, N: *tre*, H: *tre*, R: *tria* are MidIr. *tria* for OIr. *tre* ‘through’. Similarly, it is found in 27.4, N: *fri*, H: *fria*, R: *fria*; in 27.5; N: *fria*, H: *fria*, R: *fria*; and in 27.18, N: *fri*, H: *fri* and R: *fria*, the MidIr. *fria* for OIr. *fri*^H ‘against’. These new forms were created under the influence of MidIr. *ré/ría* ‘before’ which itself was remodelled on OIr. conj. prep. 3sg. m./n. *ríam* to MidIr. *remi/e* (McCone 2005: 153). Alternatively, these new forms could have been influenced by the forms of the preposition combined with the possessive, for example, prep. *tre*^L ‘through’ with the poss. 3sg. m./n./f. *-a* > *tria* and this was reinterpreted as a based form.

In 23.2, N: *aca* and H: *oca* is MidIr. for the conj. prep. 3pl. *ocaib* of *oc* ‘with, among’ (Breatnach 1994: 329). McCone (2005: 151) suggests this was the result of the acc. 3pl. *-(i)u* and dat. 3pl. *-(a)ib* endings becoming interchangeable.

In 22.12, N: *dia*, H: *da*, R: *da*; and in 28.3, N: *da*, H: *da*, R: *da* has MidIr. *da* for OIr. prep. *do*^L ‘to/for’ with the poss. pron. 3sg. m. *a*^L. The OIr. prep. *do*^L ‘to/for’ can also be found as *da* or *dá* (eDIL s.v. 1 *do*, www.dil.ie/17096). A similar change is found in 26.5, namely N: *dia*, H: *da*, R: *da*, which can be analysed as the prep. *di*^L ‘from’ with the relative particle *-(s)a*^N is *dia* but in MidIr., this form becomes *dá* (eDIL s.v. 1 *de*, *di*, www.dil.ie/14787).

There was also a tendency to lenite the initial consonant of conjugated prepositions (Breatnach 1994: 325–6) as seen in 22.1, N: *chuca*, H: *cucai*, R: *cuigi*, and in 27.10, N: *cuca*, H: *cucai*, R: *chuca* both of which are the conj. prep. 3sg. m. *co*^N ‘with’; in 22.4, H: *riu*, N: *friu*, R: *friu* and in 27.1 N: *friu*, H: *ru*, and R: *friu*, both of which are the conj. prep. 3pl. of *fri*^H ‘against’. Since only a single manuscript shows the lenition, this feature cannot have originated from the archetype but must have been introduced by a later copyist.

There was also confusion between prepositions due to their unstressed nature, for example, in 22.10, N: *do*, H: *do*, R: *di*, and likewise in 26.2, N: *do*, H: *a*, R: *di*, both being for the prep. *di*^L ‘from’; and in 22.2, N: *umna*, H: *imna*, R: *imna* for prep. *imm*^L ‘about, around’ with the article.

Middle Irish verbal forms

In OIr., the aug. *t*-pret. 3sg. had a broad ending but in MidIr., it obtained a slender ending. This new slender ending was influenced by the suffixless pret. 1sg. *-urt* and 3sg. *art* becoming /ərt/ and in order to create a new distinctive ending, the 3sg. was palatalised based on the model of the suffixless pret. 3sg. (McCone 2005: 165; Breatnach 1994: 302). For example, in 22.4, N: *adrupairt*, H: *atrubairt*, R: *atrubairt*, and in 23.2, N: *adrupairt*, H: *adrubairt*, R: *adubairt* is MidIr. aug. *t*-pret. for OIr. *as-rubart* ‘he had said’; in 27.2, N: *conerbuirt* is MidIr. *t*-pret. 3sg. which has its OIr. form in H: *gonepert* and R: *conepert* ‘and he said’; in 27.8, R: *nochanerbairt* is MidIr. *t*-pret. 3sg. which has its OIr. form in N:

nochanerbert, H: *nochanerbert*; similarly, in 28.2, N: *anerbuirt* is MidIr. *t*-pret. 3sg. and it is found in its OIr. form in H: *anerbert* and R: *inerbert*.

In MidIr., a new fut. 2pl. conj. ending *-abair* was created for OIr. *-(a)id*. This new MidIr. fut. conj. ending was created under the influence of the suffixless pret. 1pl. *-mar* and 3pl. *-tar*, which had the distinctive *r* ending combined with the poss. pron. 2pl. *for/far*, or *bor/bar* and with intervocalic voicing of *f/fʰ* to *b/β* (Murphy 1940: 73–4). This new ending began in the early MidIr. period when the copula was no longer inflected and instead was suffixed with either an independent or infixed pron. to the 3sg. or 3pl. form of the copula to form the 1sg./pl. and 2sg./pl., for example, *isam aithrech* ‘I repent’ (SR7789) and *atib trōig* ‘you are miserable’ (SR7986). However, infixed prons. and poss. prons. were confused in MidIr., which made it possible for the poss. pron. 2pl. to be used as a personal ending, for example *bid-for coscraig* ‘you will be victorious’ (SR 4706) (McCone 1997: 169–7, 236; Murphy 1940: 74). As a proclitic, the copula tends to have a broad final consonant, but it could be palatalised based on analogy with stressed verbal endings, for example, *atbar* (MS. *abtar*) ‘you are’ (LU 6870) vs. *atabair* (LU 8097). The use of the poss. pron. 2pl. as an ending then spread to suffixless pret. 2pl. i.e. *-aba(i)r* in order to bring it in uniformity with the 1pl. *-mar* and 3pl. *-tar*. An example in the text is in 23.3, N: *conacechlaphair*, H: *conacechlabair*, R: *conacechlabair*, which is MidIr. fut. 2pl. for OIr. *coná·cechlaid* ‘so that you will not hear’.

In MidIr., the pret. 3sg. deponent ending *-astar/-estar* could be used as an alternative to the *s*-pret. zero ending (Breatnach 1994: 300) and this is seen in the following: in 29.14, N: *tregtastar*, H: *tregdustar*, R: *tregdustar* for OIr. *tris-gata* ‘pierces, transfixes, wounds’; in 29.15, N: *fegustar*, H: *fegastar*, R: *fegustar* for OIr. *fég* ‘observed’; in 29.16, N: *cocrustar*, H: *cocrastar*, R: *cocrastar* for OIr. *cocra* ‘conspired’; in 29.17, N: *scailustar*, H: *sgaeilestar*, R: *scailistar* for OIr. *scaíl* ‘released’; in 29.18 N: *munestar*, H: *muainestar*, R: *muáinistar* for OIr. *múin* ‘instructed’; and in 29.19, N: *cinnestar*, H: *cinnestar*, R: *cinnistair* for OIr. *cinn* ‘decided’.

Conversely, the OIr. deponent imperative endings were replaced by MidIr. active endings. The trend in replacing deponent with active endings had already started in the OIr. period and accelerated in the MidIr. period (McCone 1997: 75, 216; 2005: 168). There is no example in the text of an OIr. depon. ending that is not the subj. 1sg. *-ar* or the *s*-pret. 3sg. *-estar*. Stifter (pers. comm.) suggests that ‘The pragmatic brevity of an imperative could have led to a situation, where a shorter ending was preferred over a longer one’.

There are a few examples of confusion between abs. and conj. endings, and they are: in 23.2, R: *dolfam-ne* and H: *dolfam-ne* for OIr. *dolbfaimmi*²⁷ ‘we will magically conjure...’; in 27.13, N:

²⁷ Breatnach (1994: 361) has cited another example of a conj. ending being used for an absol. ending in the future tense in *ar collaib cneittfem* LL 10411.

chorthaiscet, H: *gortaiscet*, R: *cortaiscit* for OIr. *cor-taiscet* ‘so that ... may guard’; in 29.12, N: *roraidhsit*, H: *doraidhsit*, R: *roráidsit* for OIr. *ro-ráidset* ‘they spoke ...’; in 31.3, N: *roleicsiut*²⁸, H: *ruslecsit*, R: *doleicset* for OIr. *ro-léicset* ‘they entrusted ...’; in 33.1, N: *robrethaighset*, H: *robrethaighset*, R: *dobrethaighsid* for OIr. *ro-brethigset* ‘... had judged...’; and in 33.2, N: *roordaighset*, H: *doordaighsit*, R: *roordaigset* for OIr. *ro-ordaigset* ‘...ordained...’

During the MidIr. period, the aug. *ro-* could be replaced by *do-* (Breatnach 1994: 280) and this can be seen in 26.1, N: *doradh*, H: *dorad*, R: *dorád* ‘...spoke...’; in 26.10, N: *Rotoll*, H: *Rotoll*, R: *Dotoll* ‘... pierced ...’; in 27.3 N: *rohairgi*, H: *dohoirged*, R: *dohairged* ‘...had been despoiled...’; in 27.13, N: *domarp*, H: *domarb*, R: *romarb* ‘...killed...’; in 28.5, N: *dochuitcetar*, H: *docuitchertar* and R: *docutchertar* ‘...swore...’; in 29.12, N: *roraidhsit*, H: *doraidhsit*, R: *roráidsit* ‘they spoke...’; in 31.3, N: *roleicsiut*, H: *ruslecsit*, R: *doleicset* ‘they entrusted...’; in 33.1, N: *robrethaighset*, H: *robrethaighset*, R: *dobrethaighsid* ‘...had judged...’; in 33.2, N: *roordaighset*, H: *doordaighsit*, R: *roordaigset* ‘they ordained...’

The augment *ro* with the pret. in OIr. imparted a perfective sense, but in MidIr., the distinction between augmented and unaugmented form disappeared as the former came to be used as a past tense marker (McCone 1997: 186). Some examples are in 22.1, N: *robátar*, H: *robátar*, R: *bátar* ‘...had been...’; in 22.2, N: *rofaidhe*, H: *rofaide*, R: *Rofaidi* ‘...sent...’ , in 23.2, N: *rofaidhe*, H: *rofaide*, R: *rofaide* ‘...sent...’; in 27.1, N: *isbert*, H: *atbert* and R: *asrubart* ‘...said...’; in 27.2, N: *conerbuirt*, H: *gonepert*, R: *conepert* ‘... so that...said...’; in 27.2, N: *frisrogart*, H: *frisrogart*, R: *frisrogart* ‘...answered...’; and in 28.1, N: *frisgart*, H: *frisrogart*, R: *frisrogart* ‘...answered...’

In Poem Two, there are several seemingly third plural verbs when the context would require a third singular verb. These instances are: in 26.9, *fognit*, H: *fogni*, R: *fogni*, in 26.10, N: *atbelad*, H: *atbelad*, R: *atbelat*, in 26.13, N: *nosmolfad*, H: *nosmolfad*, R: *nosmolfat*, and in 26.13, N: *nisaerfat*, H: *nissarfat*, R: *nísaerfat*. A brief overview of the linguistic process of the voicing of *-th /θ/* or *-d /ð/* will initially be given to conclude with the argument that the <*t*> ending in the aforementioned verbs should be viewed as either *-th /θ/* or *-d /ð/*. Thurneysen (1946) §130 states that in OIr. ‘in final position (word-auslaut) there is complete confusion between the two classes of spirant’ and concerning dental spirants he writes that *-d /ð/* is more common than *-th /θ/*. One of the environments in which the voicing of the dental spirants can occur is on word-final dentals after an unstressed vowel and on word boundary, including proclitics and the following stressed syllable. McCone (1981: 44) has dated this feature to the late seventh century based on the *Cambrai Homily* and *Wb.* and he provides the following examples: *ro-slogeth* (*Wb.* 13d24 *prima manus*) vs. OIr. *ro-slocad* ‘has been swallowed’, EOIr. pres. subj. *gorith* (*Cambrai*) vs. OIr. *gor(a)id* ‘may warm’, EOIr. *diltuth* (*Wb.* 6c2

²⁸ N’s *-siut* may be the 3pl. conj. ending but with the broad *t* ending.

prima manus and Cambrai) vs. OIr. *díltud* ‘denial’. According to Stifter (2013a: 173), the more conservative spelling <th> is very common in AU until the 730s and then begins to decline and by the end of the ninth century any occurrences of <th> thereafter are instances of archaising spelling. In MidIr., <d> for /ð/ in final position was the most common spelling, however, Breatnach (2005: 96–7) has shown that <th> reappears as an orthographical feature in the thirteenth century via examples from AI. Some of the examples he gives are as follows (with the number referring to the year the entry is found under): *Donncath* 1270, *imputh* 1271, *(du) marbaht* 1268, *amlait* 1285 and *(do) marbhat* 1284. These examples show that it is not only <th> for <dh> that can be seen but also <ʰ> for <dh>. The confusion between final <th> and <dh> can already be found in OIr. and this becomes common in the EModIr. period, and McManus (1994: 354) gives the following examples, *fáith/-dh*, *tnúith/-dh*, *Gormlaith/-dh* and *comhráth/-dh*. Further, final <dh> could now become /h/, thus resulting in forms such as *oba/obadh*, *labhra/labhradh*, *teibe/teibeadh*, *peacadh/peaca* (McManus 1994: 352). This linguistic process could potentially help explain the issues concerning the 3pl. verbs and each of these instances will now be analysed.

In 26.9, N: *fognit* is the pres. 3pl., and H: *fogni* and R: *fogni* is the pres. 3sg. of *fo·gní* ‘serves, is subject to’. Although H and R do have the 3sg., the present tense does not fit the context; instead a preterite would be expected because the king’s messenger Robad mac Rofúacra is reciting past examples of poets who have satirised kings. If N’s <ʰ> is interpreted as <d> for /ð/, then it could be the impf. 3sg. or pret. pass. 3sg., with both having the *-ad* /ð/ or *-ath* /θ/ endings. It has been interpreted as the impf. 3sg., with Crithinbél as the subject. The lack of ending in H and R could be the result of a silent *d* /ð/. Thus, *fo·gnith* is used in the normalised text.

In 26.10, R: *atbelat* is the fut. 3pl. of *at·baill* ‘dies’; N’s *atbel[~]* and H’s *atbel[~]* have a suspension stroke in place of an ending. A 3sg. verb is required as the Dagda, who is mentioned in line two, is the subject of the verb. If R’s <at>, yet again, is taken as *-ad* /ð/ or *-ath* /θ/, then the verb potentially could be past subj. 3sg. or cond. fut. 3sg., both having the *-ad* /ð/ or *-ath* /θ/ endings. In this instance, fut. cond. would fit the context as the line is about an action that could have possibly happened if Óengus Mac ind Óc did not advise him to put three gold coins in his meals for Crithinbél to consume. Hence, *at·bélad* is used in the normalised text and N’s and H’s form are expanded accordingly. However, it should be noted that this line in R is corrupt and R’s ending may be the result of this corruption.

In 26.13, N: *nosmolfad* H: *nosmolfad*, R: *nosmolfat*; and N: *nisaerfat*, H: *nissarfat* and R: *nísaerfat* have the fut. 3pl. of *molaid* ‘praise’ and *áeraid* ‘satirise, lampoon’, respectively; however, yet again, there is no third plural subject in the stanza. This line perhaps lends support to <ʰ> being <d> for /ð/ as N’s and R’s scribes have written a <d> ending. If <ad> and <at> are analysed as *-ad*

/ð/ or *-ath* /θ/, then another two cond. fut. 3sg. is found. Consequently, *nos·molfad* and *nis·áerfad* are used in the normalised text.

It is acknowledged that this explanation is not entirely satisfactory as it relies on many assumptions. It would also either mean that the exemplar the scribes copied from may already have had the <*t*> ending or that the exemplar could have had archaising <*th*>, thus the instances of <*t*> could be cases of lenition not orthographically expressed. At the same time, it could mean all scribes independently archaised and wrote <*t*> for /ð/. More examples from other texts would need to be found to lend further support to this argument; however, this thesis cannot offer any other explanation and as such, the correct 3sg. endings have been restored.

Miscellaneous Middle Irish verbal features

- a) In 27.3, N: *dogní* and H: *dogní* is OIr. pres. 3sg. of *do·gní* ‘to do, make’ which has its MidIr. form in R: *doní*.
- b) In 27.3, N: *rohairgi*, H: *dohoirged* and R: *dohairged* are all MidIr. forms of the OIr. aug. pret. pass. 3sg. of *oirgid* ‘despoils, ravages, devastates’. In OIr., the pret. stem was *ort·* but in MidIr., the stems *airg·* and *oirg·* were used instead. In OIr., the pret. pass. 3sg. would have been *ro·ort*, but in MidIr., *oirgid* became a weak verb and adopted the *s*-pret. whose pret. pass. 3sg. ending would have been *-ed*. N’s *-i* ending instead of *-ed* ending is due to unstressed final vowels becoming /ə/ and EModIr. /ð/ not always being written (McManus 1994: 351).
- c) In 27.9, the MidIr. stem *fiur·* instead of OIr. *fer·* for the aug. cond. fut. 3sg. of *feraid* ‘suffices, supplies’ is found in N: *rusfiurfa*, H: *rusfiurfad*, R: *rosfiurfad*.
- d) In 28.5, N: *niroail* and H: *niroail* have OIr. *niró·* while R: *nirail* is MidIr. *nir·* due to being metrically inferior.
- e) In 28.6, N: *daronus*, H: *doronas* and R: *daronus* is MidIr. aug. pret. 1sg. for OIr. *do·rignius* of *do·gní* ‘makes, do’. Similarly, in 30.1, N: *dorona*, H: *doronadh* is the aug. pret. pass. 3sg. of *do·gní* ‘makes, do’ but R: *doroíne* is MidIr. aug. pret. 3sg. of *do·gní* for OIr. *do·rigni* or *do·rigéni*. In both instances, the MidIr. form was the result of homogenising the active and passive forms through the adoption of the active stem *do·rón-* (McCone 1997: 233–4).
- f) In 28.8, N: *nimlamair* and H: *nimlamair* is the pret. 3sg. of *ro·laimethar* ‘dares, ventures’ which has its MidIr. form in R: *nimrolam*, the pret. 3sg. of the now simple verb *lamaid* with *ro·* as MidIr. pret. marker.
- g) In 23.2, N: *dolbfamait-ni* is MidIr. *f*-fut. 1pl. for OIr. *dolbfaimmi* ‘we will magically conjure...’ McCone (1997: 174) disagrees with GOI §431 statement that the 3sg. m. or n. suffixed pronoun *-it* could be attached to the fut. 1pl. *-m(a)i* and the 1sg. *-a*. He argues that ‘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

absolutely endings’. Instead, the *f*-future in MidIr. obtained the new 1pl. abs. ending *-fam(a)it* under the influence of the pres. ind. 1pl. absol. ending *-m(a)e* adopting the *t* of the pres. 3pl. absol. ending *-(a)it*, for example, OIr. *léicmi* > MidIr. *léicmit/-mít* ‘we leave’ in order to distinguish it from the rel. 1pl. *-m(a)e* whereby both endings had now fallen together as /ə/ (McCone 1997: 174–5). This new ending could then influence the *f*-fut. endings, for example, *anfamít frit* ‘we will wait for you’ (SR 1425) and *fāicfimmít* ‘we will leave’ (LL 10993). Both short and long vowels, therefore, *-mit* and *-mít*, can be found and this is due to MidIr. lengthening of vowels in verbal personal endings of the structure consonant + vowel +/- consonant (Greene 1973: 124). Greene (1973: 124–5) suggests that this was influenced by analytic verbal forms, for example, *as·beir sé*, and the long vowel variants do not survive into later language.

- h) In 22.7, N: *olsiad*, H: *olsiath*, R: *olsiat*; and in 23.2, N: *oliat*, H: *oleat* and R: *oleat* are all MidIr. forms of OIr. *olseat* ‘they say’. Similarly, in 29.21, N: *olsiat* is MidIr. form which is seen in its OIr. form in H: *olseat* and R: *olseat*. The OIr. indep. pron. 3pl. was *é* but this became MidIr. *íat* or *eat* with the latter under the influence of *ol-seat* which then allowed for the creation of MidIr. *ol-íat* or *ol-eat* ‘they said’ (Breatnach 1994: 273–4; McCone 2005: 155; GOI §408).
- i) In 28.4, N: *basam*, H: *bamsu* and R: *bamsa* are MidIr. of OIr. *basa* pret. 1sg. of the copula. During the MidIr. period, the infixed pronoun 1sg. *-m* could be attached to *basa* to form the new 1sg. pret. and this was done under the influence of infixing pronouns to passive verbs (McCone 2005: 171). According to Thurneysen’s GOI §811, the *-sa* is the emphasising pron. 1sg. that had amalgamated with the verb and was no longer felt as a particle. Thus, R’s and H’s form is pret. 3sg. *ba* with the infixed pron. 1sg. *-m* and the emphasising pron. 1sg. *-sa*. Similarly, in 28.7, N: *ropsa*, H: *ropsa* and R: *ropsam*, R’s form is MidIr. with an infixed pronoun class A 1sg. *-m* attached to the aug. pret. 1sg. of the copula.
- j) In 30.15, N: *lasait*, H: *lasaid*, R: *lasait* is analysed as the ipv. 3pl. of *lasaid* ‘light up’. In OIr. the expected form would have been *lasat*, but Ó Cuív (1952: 176) has examined the MidIr. and ModIr. development of the 1pl. and the 3pl. imperative verbs and concluded that during the MidIr. period, the 3pl. obtained a slender ending which superseded the broad one in ModIr. prose and then eventually was replaced by the endings of the past subjunctive.
- k) In 32.10, H: *mesair* has the correct pres. subj. pass. 3sg. of *midithir* ‘judges’ and N: *meisir* has a palatalised ending which may be due to MidIr. confusion between non-palatal and palatal *-r* in the passive. R: *mesir* is ambiguous as to whether it has a non-palatal or palatal *r*.
- l) In 32.12, N: *madow*, H: *maddom* and R: *rodam*. [rewrite] In OIr., the expected *ā*-pret. 3sg. form would be *dámair* or aug. pret. *ro-dámair* ‘submitted’, but in MidIr., it obtained an *s*-pret. ending due to the spread of the *s*-pret. beyond AI and AII verbs (McCone 2005: 165-6). It is the *s*-pret. form found in the line. It is uncertain how N and H obtained *ma* instead of R’s *ro*, but R’s form is followed in the normalised text.

m) In 32.5, N: *emnaighter* and H: *emnaighter* has the correct pres. pass. 3pl. to form concord with the 3pl. subj. *ildire* but R: *emnaighther* ‘...are doubled...’ is the pres. pass. 3sg; similarly, in 30.17, N: *baidhither*, H: *baidhither*, R: *badighther*, is the the ipv. pass. 3sg. ‘let...suppressed...’ and it is agreeing with the nom. pl. *drochdála*. In MidIr., the lack of concord between the 3pl. subject antecedent with the 3sg. copula would spread to non-relative usage. McCone (1997: 181–2) comments that the ModIr. use of a 3sg. verb with a 3pl. subject can already be seen in MidIr., for example, *ro:báided ann ... cóic cét rí* (SR 4013-5) ‘five hundred kings were drowned there’ and *at· raacht in Galéoin 7 in Mumnig* (LL 11319, 11758-9), ‘the Leinstermen and the Munstermen arose’. Therefore, 32.5 and 30.17 could be two other examples.

Middle Irish confusion with infixes

During the Middle Irish period, the demise of the infixes led to confusion in their usage. This led to new forms being created, for example, the infixes class C 3pl. *-da* has the MidIr. form *-das* and this new form was based on the infixes class A 3pl. *-s* combining with the infixes class C 3pl., *-da* (Breatnach 1994: 267). Examples can be seen in 22.3, N: *rodusgaph*, H: *rodusgab* and R: *rodusgab*, similarly in 22.3, N: *condusrala*, H: *conusralai* versus R: *condarala*. H: *conusralai* shows further *nd > n.*; in 27.15, N: *nodusbera*, H: *nodusberae*, R: *nodusbera*. In 30.7, N: *danroet*, H: *danroet*, R: *Danroet* has MidIr. infixes class A 3sg. m. *-a* as *-n*. Strachan (1904: 157) comments that the infixes class A 3sg. m. *a^N* became *-n* in MidIr. due to the confusion between *-o-* and *-a-* in *ro·n* and *ra·n* which was then reanalysed as *ro·* plus the infixes pronoun 3sg. m. *-n*. The later development was done under analogy with other infixes pronouns such as the 1sg. *-m*, 2sg. *-t*, 3sg. f. *-s* etc. which was attached to the preverb. Other examples involving the letter *r* can be found in *Cath Ruis na Rí* from the Book of Leinster: *donrat* LL 22631, 22634, 22640 (Mac Gearailt 1989: 36); and from *Táin Bó Cúailnge* from also the Book of Leinster: *danringni* LL 8075 (Mac Gearailt (1997: 506). Breatnach (1994: 266) has identified similar examples in SR and they are: *ron báidsemmar* SR 3621 *ran lín* SR 1911 and *nīn len* SR 3839. In these examples, an *n* before those consonants would not be expected, especially if it was to indicate nasalisation.

In MidIr., McCone (1997: 175) states that the infixes pronoun class C 3sg. n. *-d* could be used as a relative marker, for example, in 26.12, N: *notbera ... nodgena*, H: *notberai ... notgenai*, R: *nodbera ... notgéna*. Breatnach (1994: 288) also provides example of the rarer non-neuter 3sg. *-s* as relative markers and this may potentially be found in 31.3, N: *roleicsiut*, H: *ruslecsit*, R: *doleicset* where H’s *-s* may be the relative marker. However, there are other instances of infixes pronouns of other numbers occurring when one is not required, for example, in 22.9, N: *rodaerc*, H: *rodaerc*, R: *rodaerc* is the aug. pret. 3sg. 3sg. *erc* ‘had filled’ with the infixes pronoun class C 3pl. *-da^H*. The infixes pronoun is not required as the object is already found in *triär* ‘three men’. The infixes pronoun may be used to simply indicate relativity.

Similarly, the infix pronoun sg. neuter came to be used as a meaningless pronoun and at times superseded forms without the infix pronoun (McCone 1997: 172). For example, in 26.1, N: *roncualadh*, H: *roncualai*, R: *roncuala* (with the infix pronoun 3sg. n. *-d* becoming *nd > nn > n*); in N: *adrupairt*, H: *atrubairt*, R: *atrubairt* [22.4]; 27.1, N: *isbert*, H: *atbert*, R: *asrubart* and in 27.7, N: *atberadh*, H: *atberad*, R: *atberat*, both have the petrified meaningless infix pronoun class A 3sg. n. *-d*; in 27.8, N: *nochanerbert*, H: *nochanerbert*, R: *nochanderbairt*, R could potentially have the meaningless infix pronoun class B 3sg. n. *-t*, but spelt *-d*.

The petrification of the infix pronoun class A 3sg. n. *-a^L*, as well as MidIr. unstressed final vowels becoming schwa, led to the distinction between a verb with an infix pronoun and one without one based purely on lenition, for example, *fo·ceird* ‘puts’ and *fo·cheird* ‘puts it’ (McCone 1997: 173).²⁹ Examples in the text can be found at 26.1, N: *Dochorastar*, H: *Docotar*, R: *Docuotar* and in 27.5, N: *nithard*, H: *nitard*, R: *nitarat*.

Other examples of MidIr. confusion of infix pronouns are as follows. In 23.13 N: *atacomnuic*, H: *atacomnaic*, R: *atacomnaic*, the infix pronoun class B 3sg. f. or 3pl. *-ta^H* is found instead of the expected infix pronoun class C 3sg. m. *-id^N* as the verb occurs in a relative clause; in 23.14 (N: *notasaraigfeth*, H: *nodosaraigedh*, R: *nodasáraiged*), the infix pronoun class C 3sg. f. *-da^H* is found instead of the expected 3sg. m. *-id^N* to refer to Máel Milscothach; in 27.10 N: *ronas*, H: *rosnass*, R: *ronas*, H’s infix pronoun class A 3sg. f. *-s* or 3pl. *-s* may be a hypercorrection. Similarly, in 28.6 N: *Rodamolus*, H: *Rotomolas*, R: *Rotamolus*, the infix pronoun class C 3pl. *-da^H* is found instead of infix pronoun class A 3pl. *-s*. Breatnach (1994: 267) comments that the confusion of infix pronouns saw the infix pronoun class C being used in a non-relative construction as seen in 28.6.

There are instances of correct use of infix pronouns, and they are: in 22.7, N: *donrocht*, H: *deroacht*, R: *donrócht*; in 26.8, N: *dusfarlaic*, H: *dusfarlaic*, R: *dusfarlaic*; in 26.11, N: *romgeguin*, H: *romgeogain*, R: *romgeogain*; in 26.12, N: *notbera ... nodgena ...nimgena*, H: *notberai ... notgenai ... ningenad*, R: *nodbera ... notgéna ... ningenad*; in 26.13, N: *nosmolfad ... nisaefat*, H: *nosmolfad ... nisarfat*, R: *nosmolfat ... nísaerfat*; in 27.8, N: *rotbia*, H: *rotbía*, R: *rotbia*; in 27.9, N: *rusfiurfa*, H: *rusfiurfad*, R: *rosfiurfad*; in 27.11, N: *cotagaiu*, H: *cotogaib*, R: *cottagaib*; in 28.3, N: *rombiathus romeitiss*, H: *rombiathas rometius*, R: *rombiathus rométius*; in 27.8, N: *dianamfeissi nimoirgfidh*, H: *diamunfesid nimnoirgfed*, R: *diamanfeisid nimorcfed*; in 28.8, N: *conamort-sa ... nimlamair*, H: *conomort ... nimlamair*, R: *conamort ... nimrolam*; in 29.1, N: *dogeine*, H: *dogenae*, R: *dosgénai*.

²⁹ McCone (1997: 173) states that this feature could already be seen in the OIr. glosses, for example, *ro·chrochsát* ‘they have crucified’ Wb. 5c11, *du·thluchedar* ‘he asks’ Ml. 38d1 and *du·thluchim-se* ‘I ask’ Ml. 71c.

Middle Irish indication of relativity

During the Middle Irish period, the nasalising relative clause was replaced by the leniting relative clause. Ó hUiginn (1986: 74–5) comments that the nasalising relative clause ‘ceased to be a productive feature in the language during the course of the earlier part of the tenth century’ and in later texts, ‘they are sporadic and must be seen as archaisms for their time as the leniting relative establishes itself more and more in these clauses’.³⁰ Two potential examples in the text are in 22.3 N: *rochualatar*, H: *roncolatar*, R: *roncualatar* where a leniting relative clause is found after the conj. *amal* which would usually have a nasalising relative clause; and in 28.6 N: *bes*, H: *bes*, R: *bes* where a leniting relative clause is found instead of the nasalising clause after the temporal conj. *céin*.

In OIr., simple verbs had relative endings in the 3sg. *-as/-es*, 1pl. *-mae*, *-me* and 3pl. *-tae*, *-te*, but in MidIr., along with the relative endings, the initial of the verb is also lenited (McCone 1997: 181). McCone (1997: 181) states that this feature could already be found in the Glosses and he provides the following examples: with object antecedent: *aní chanas* (Ml. 24d14) ‘what it sings’, *intí charas nech* (Ml. 30c3) ‘he whom anyone loves’, *cid fólad slúindes* (Sg. 25b17) ‘what substance it signifies’. There are two examples from *Airec Menman*: in 26.11, N: *bherus*, H: *berass*, R: *berus* and in 27.17, N: *bhus*, H: *bus*, R: *bus*.

In OIr., after a fronted prepositional phrase, a non-relative clause should follow; however, in MidIr., a relative verb could now be found. This can already be seen in Ml., for example, *ní fris ru:chét* Ml 64a.13 (McCone 1997: 180–1). There is one example in *Airec Menman* at 26.3, N: *dlighis*, H: *dliges*, R: *dliges*.

Early Modern Irish Developments

An overview of EModIr. developments can be found in McManus’s (1994: 351–3) section in *Stair na Gaeilge*. There are a number of EModIr. developments in the manuscripts that may have been introduced by the ModIr. scribes. They are as follows:

Phonology:

Confusion between *-th-* / *θ*/ and *-ch-* / *χ*/

N: *creithe*, H: *creche*, R: *crichi* [23.1]; N: *crithenbel*, H: *crichinbel*, R:

³⁰ For example, McCone (2005: 157) provides *amal imme:chomairsed nech* ‘as if someone had asked’ (Ml. 63c9) and Ó hUiginn (1986: 73) lists *amal chomailter* ‘as is fulfilled’, from *Bethu Phátraic*, which is dated from at least the tenth century. In *Saltair na Rann*, dated to the end of the tenth century, Ó hUiginn (1986: 74) identifies two instances of a nasalising relative clause: *Nī maith ro mbā, a Ādaim!* (SR 1400) and *Húair rombatar imbochtai* (SR 1477), and five instances of a nasalising relative clause being replaced by a leniting relative clause: *feib tharngert duit* ‘as he promised you’ (SR 6359), *Ind uair thēigtis as chech crích* (SR 1113), *Hūand ūair thall Noe a chéill de* (SR 2557), *ōnd úair thānic a amser* (SR 4972), and *feib thorgaib bríg im ratha* (SR 5847).

crithinbél [26.9], N: *sodeichbir*, H: *sodethphir*, R: *sodethbir* [27.2]; N: *chreith*, H: *creich*, R: *crech* [33.1].

Confusion of *dh* /ð/ and *gh* /ɣ/

N: *ndiagh*, H: *ndiaid*, R: *diaid* [23.4]; *coclaigh*, H: *coclaid*, R: *coclaid* [23.13]; N: *adhuigh*, H: *agadh*, R – [26.5]; N: *lorca*, H: *lorcaidh*, R: *lorgaig* [26.10]; N: *ruagh*, H: *ruad*, R: *ruad* [27.5]; N: *aghaidh*, H: *adaig*, R: *agaid* [27.10]; N: *uridh*, H: *bricch*, R: *brig* [27.18]; N: *uagh*, H: *uad*, R: *úagh* [28.6]; N: *ecnaighe*, H: *ecnaide*, R: *ecnaide* [30.7]; N: *bruidhen*, H: *brugen*, R: *bruigin* [30.12].

Silent /ð/

Since final /ð/ was not pronounced, it meant that it was not always represented orthographically.

Some examples are: N: *imderga*, H: *imdercad*, R: *imdergadh* [23.4]; N: *soa*, H: *soed*, R: *soed* [26.4]; N: *nimgena*, H: *ningenad*, R: *ningenad* [26.12]; N: *forsambia*, H: *forsmbiat*, R: *forsmbíad* [26.12]; N: *aurchuitmhe*, H: *aurcuidme*, R: *aurchaimned* [27.2]; N: *rohairgi*, H: *dohoirged*, R: *dohairged* [27.3]; N: *gaisce*, H: *gáisced*, R: *gaisced* [27.7]; N: *ambiathi*, H: *ambiathad*, R: *ambiathad* [28.5]; N: *indligi*, H: *indliged*, R: *indliged* [31.2]

Some examples of hypercorrections are: N: *roncualadh*, R: *roncuala*, H: *roncualai* [26.1]; N: *rofuagradh*, H: *rofhuaicra*, R: *rofuáicra* [26.2]; N: *masa*, H: *masa*, R: *masad* [26.3]; N: *diamba*, H: *diammad*, R: *diamba* [30.12]; N: *madom*, H: *maddom*, R: *rodam* [32.12]

Miscellaneous Early Modern Irish features

Indication of mutations: in 22.10, N: *do tsil*, H: *do sil*, R: *di síl*, similarly, in 33.2, N: *na tsarugad* has its OIr. form in H: *na sarghadh*, R: *ina sarugad*. This EModIr. feature of a lenited *s* being prefixed with a *t* resulted from the OIr. article ending in *-nt* being used before a lenited *s*. By EModIr., the *t* had been transferred across the word boundary and attached to the *s* as a mutation. Other examples are *tiomna an tshósair gan tsheanóir* (IGT i §68) and *ma tá san tshíodh an tshleagh ghorm* (IGT i §39) (McManus 1994: 360). This *t* was then commonly added to an initial *s* in speech, even when there was no article, for example the English placename *Carnteel* < *Carn tShiadhail* and *tsh/ts* is often seen in manuscripts (McManus 1994: 360). In 26.2, N: *cobfuair* has EModIr. indication of a nasalised *f* with the orthography *bhf* while R: *cofuáir* and H: *gofuair* have OIr. orthographical representation, where no change is seen.

Metrical Analysis of the Poems and the Rosc

Poems One to Four are written in the metre *deibide scáilte fota*, which has the syllabic pattern 7^x 7^{x+1} or 2 ; 7^x 7^{x+1} or 2 , that is, there are seven syllables in each line, and the final word in lines *a* and *c* has one syllable and in lines *b* and *d*, it has either two or three syllables (Murphy 1961: 65). There is rime

with the final words in lines *a* and *b*; and then in lines *c* and *d*. While most of the stanzas follow this pattern, there are exceptions, for example, §22.9:

Triär do muintir ind rí 7¹
roda·erc bruth 7 bríg 7¹
tri cathlúain glana amail glain 7¹
rop ferr di Máel dia rochtain 7²

and in §26.9:

Bir chrúaid bélra – búan a glé – . 7¹
fo·gníth Crithinbél cáinte, 7²
oc claidi dúin Breis brais. 6¹
Ba birchrúaid fír imamnais. 7³

In Poem One, one of the four stanzas does not follow the aforementioned pattern, namely §22.9 (7¹ 7¹ 7¹ 7²). In Poem Two, four of the thirteen stanzas diverge, namely: §26.9 (7¹ 7² 6¹ 7³), §26.11 (7¹ 7¹ 7¹ 7³), §26.13 (7¹ 7¹ 7¹ 7²), §26.15 (7¹ 7¹ 7¹ 7²). In Poem Three, nine of the sixteen stanzas diverge: §27.4 (7¹ 7¹ 7¹ 7²), §27.6-8 (7¹ 7¹ 7¹ 7² / 7¹ 7¹ 7¹ 7³ / 7¹ 7¹ 8¹ 7¹ / 7¹ 7¹ 8¹ 7¹), §27.12 (7² 7² 7¹ 7³), §27.15–18 (7² 7² 7¹ 7³ / 7² 7² 7¹ 7² / 7¹ 7¹ 7¹ 7² / 7¹ 7¹ 7¹ 7¹). Finally, in Poem Four, five of the seven stanzas diverge: §28.2-3 (7¹ 7¹ 7² 7³ / 7² 7³ 7¹ 7²), §28.5-6 (7¹ 7³ 7² 7³ / 7¹ 7¹ 7¹ 7²), §28.8 (7¹ 7³ 7¹ 7¹). Therefore, nineteen of the forty stanzas break the *deibide scaílte fota* pattern. In the majority of cases, the syllable count is adhered to, and it is the syllable count in the final words of each lines, i.e. the cadence, that tends to not follow the appropriate pattern. Rime between the lines is largely adhered to with the exception of §28.3: *athair : derbráthair* (imperfect rime).

Alliteration is not found in all stanzas. For example, in Poem Three, two of sixteen stanzas do not show alliteration; they are: §27.7 (*Mad ed at·bérad a rí, / amail nocha·béra ní. / Co·ndesid sodain cen acht, / for gaisced nó filidecht.*); §27.12 (*Ní ar lagat a n·éite, / is ar aidblitin méite. / Acht ná·hanat a ndi láim, / oca scaíl tre imfórráin.*).

Complex alliteration is also found in §26.8 *dus·farlaic Dallán Forgaill*, that is *d ... f... d... f*. Unlike with regular alliteration, complex alliteration can involve unstressed elements and becomes common in the Middle Irish period (Sproul 1987). Also, in §26.8, there is mirrored alliteration with *Áeda móir maic Ainmirech*, that is *a ... m ... m ... a*.

There is also *fidrad freccomail*, which is alliteration across stanzas. This is found in Poem Two: §26.3 (d) and §26.4 (a) i.e. *a n·éisliss / Atá*; §26.13 (d) and §26.14 (a) i.e. *Domnall / Cid in Domnall*; §26.14 (d) and §26.15 (a) i.e. *Máel Milscothach / Máel Milscothach*; in Poem Three, §27.4 (d) and §27.5 (a) i.e. *dúumus / Deccair*; §27.6 (d) and §27.7 (a) i.e. *n·úadh / Mad ed*; §27.8 (d) and

§27.9 (a) i.e. *gréin / Ciaptis ganna*; §27.9 (d) and §27.10 (a) i.e. *Domnaill / Do-róega*; §27.12 (d) and §27.13 (a) i.e. *imfórráin / Nocon-esérracht*; §27.13 (d) and §17.14 (a) i.e. *bronnargut / Cen co-beth*; §27.15 (d) and §27.16 (a) i.e. *aithrechus / Andam*; §27.17 (d) and §27.18 (a) i.e. *Chlarthú / Aisec*; and in Poem Four, §28.6 (d) and §28.7 (a) i.e. *do Domnall / Domnall dáili dían*; §28.7 (d) and §28.8 (a) i.e. *banbáin / Bíth*.

Rosc in Early Irish Literature

Kelly (1988: 196) states that *rosc* can be found in both legal and non-legal material, for example, in non-legal material: *Cath Maige Tuired*, *Togail Bruidne Da Derga*, *Táin Bó Cúailnge*, and *Airec Menman* itself; and in legal material: *Bretha Nemed Toísech*, *Bretha Nemed Dédenach* and *Bretha Déin Chécht* (Binchy 1966, 1–66). Breatnach (1984b: 452; 1991: 197–205) describes three different forms a text can appear in, and they are: prose, rhyming syllabic verse and *rosc* and these forms can be found alongside each other. For example, *Amra Senáin* ‘The Eulogy of Senán’ (Breatnach 1989), which is dated to the tenth century, contains three verses in rhyming syllabic verse alongside thirteen in *rosc*, while in *The Caldron of Poesy* and *Bretha Déin Chécht*, as well as *Airec Menman*, all three forms can be found. Breatnach (1984b: 452) defines *rosc* as ‘neither of the other two’, that is it is neither verse or prose, and identifies three types: ‘the first consists of syllabically regular lines with a fixed cadence and alliteration, but without rhyme; the second of lines with regular number of stressed words per line and alliteration; while the third type shows no apparently regular syllabic or stressed pattern but is heavily alliterative’. Similarly, Corthals (1996: 17) defines *rosc* as ‘non-rhyming poetry as well as non-metrical rhetorical style in direct speech’. Consider, for example, §2 of the ‘Caldron of Poesy: *Ara-caun Coire Sofís / sernar dliged cach dáno / dia moiget moín / móras cach ceird coitchiunn / con-utaing duine dán*, ‘I acclaim the Cauldron of Knowledge / where the law of every art is set out / as a result of which prosperity increases / which magnifies every artist in general / which exalts a person by means of an art’ (Breatnach 1981: 62–3). The *rosc* has the pattern of ‘units of two or three stressed words with connecting alliteration’ (Breatnach 1996: 71). Another example of *rosc* is in *Bretha Nemed Toísech*, §9:

Trén cách co heclais i ndá secht sluindter; / sluindter secht ndánae in Spiruto Noib, / nóebthus sluindiud secht ngrád n-ecalso. / Íar n-ordaib cengair co hepscop co secht ngrádaib, / comgrád Maic Dé Athar do doínib / dóenacht do-ratai tlacht n-ecalso ord.

‘Everyone is strong until compared with the church, in which two sevens are declared (to be); let the seven gifts of the Holy Ghost be declared, the declaration of the seven grades of the church sanctifies it. In accordance with orders one advances to the bishop with seven grades; he who of men has the same grade as the Son of God the Father [viz. the bishop] can confer to mankind the ornament of the orders of the church’ (Breatnach 1989: 12–13).

There are ‘six lines of five stressed words each; with the exception of lines 3 and 4 the link between the lines is not only alliterative but also morphological’ (Breatnach 1996: 71). However, sometimes a combination of rhyming syllabic metre with *rosc* can be found, for example, in §1 of *Tiughraind Bhécáin meic Luigdech do Cholom Cille* ‘The last verses of Bécán mac Luigdech for Colum Cille’, we find: *To-fed andes / i ndáil fíadat / findáil caingel / Columb Cille / cétaib landa / lethan caindel* ‘Colum Cille brings from the south to the Lord a fair gathering of chancels, / churches for hundreds, wide candle’ (Kelly 1975: 80). Breatnach analyses this line as ‘rhyming syllabic metre ... At the same time, it can be analysed as a composition consisting of 150 units each with two stresses and mostly ... connected to each other by alliteration’ (1996: 72).

Another characteristic of *rosc* is that it is written in so-called ‘Archaic Irish’, with Breatnach (1996: 73) commenting ‘there is nothing necessarily archaic (as opposed to ‘archaising’ or ‘artificial’) about compositions in *rosc*’. This linguistic feature has resulted in earlier scholars assuming that *rosc* texts should be dated to an early period of the language, for example, Binchy (1972: 31) argues that *rosc* ‘must go back to the oral tradition of native schools which were in existence long before the coming of Christianity’. Likewise, Mac Cana (1966: 72) argues that ‘*roscada* is also the recognized term for those legal aphorisms which derive from the oral teaching of the schools, and which may well preserve the oldest stratum of the legal tradition’. This focus on oral teaching is perhaps exemplified in *Uraicecht na Ríar*, §18, gloss 5: *ina rosgadha canaid fria chach*, ‘The *roscads* which they chant to all...’. However, Breatnach (1984b: 458) has dispelled the belief that *rosc* is ‘archaic’, arguing that it continued to be composed well into the eighth century and onwards. Similarly, Corthals (1996: 20) has argued that ‘In the middle period of the later eighth and ninth centuries, *retoirics*, at least in the context of narrative literature, seem to have become either a means of producing solemn statements, or an inventive literary game intended to amuse a public which must have been able to appreciate the many allusions and puns with which they abound ... By the later tenth century, the period of *Airec Menman Uraird Maic Coisse*, ... the borderline between *retoirics*, descriptive style and mannered prose disappears’. Further, O’Connor (2013a: 38) comments that *rosc* ‘was supposed to sound ancient and mysterious, and later Irish authors were perfectly capable of composing such passages themselves’. In other words, *rosc* was simply a different style of language that is usually used in heightened periods of the text or to mark legal portions of the text.

A main feature of *rosc* was that it was usually written in an obscure style. For example, Corthals (1996: 26, 34) discusses the unusual word order patterns ‘involving *temesis* and end position of the verb’, preposed genitives, independent prototonic compounds and the use of rarer words. He (1996: 26) further states that it ‘can be understood as adaptations of obsolete constructions to contemporary grammar, which were adopted as features of this particular level of style’. The obscure style of *rosc* gave the speaker an authoritative voice. An example of this can be seen in *Uraicecht*

Becc: Consuiter fir for rosgadhaibh 7 fasaidibh 7 tesitemhnaibh 7 firaibh ... Breth filedh im[murgu] forosgahaibh consuiter (CIH 634.12–636.1), ‘Truth is established on the basis of *roscada* and maxims and true testimonies ... [The] judgement of a poet, moreover, is established on the basis of *roscada*’ (Stacey 2007: 168). Similar ideas are also expressed in *Uraicecht na Ríar* §18: *Ní rannat roscadae / ranna fír / forregat tamain teiscleimnig / trebnu airechtae*, ‘*Roscad*’s (alone) do not make the apportioning of truth; gleanings *taman*’s oppress the chiefs of a court’ (Breatnach 1987: 112–13). On the other hand, Stacey (2007: 210) points out that *Bretha Nemed Toísech* states that judgements should be made in *rosc* if they are to be effective (CIH 2222.9). Although the sources do not exactly agree on the extent of power of a *rosc*, it was evidently used by poets when giving judgments, as the elevated language marked the *rosc* out from the regular prose or rhyming verse. Indeed, while *Airec Menman* is not a legal text, the *rosc* itself concerns legal matters. The *rosc* is found at the end of the text and is used in making judgement on the compensation to be made to Urard as well as on the honour-price of an *ollam*.

The *rosc* in *Airec Menman* is found at §§29–30 and in that section, there are three *rosc* passages that are separated by prose. The prose is found at §29.1, §§29–30.1 and §§30.2–30.12; and the *rosc* at §§29.2–21, §§31.1–3 and §§32.1–10. In the first *rosc*, lines §§29.3–29.12, can be divided into lines beginning with the neg. past tense 3sg. of the copula; similarly, §§29.16–21 is divided into lines beginning with the past tense 3sg. of the copula. The first *rosc* would fall into the third type of *rosc* that was identified by Breatnach. In §§29.3–12, alliteration is found in §§29.6–7, §29.9, §29.11; lines §§29.13–29.21 show heavy alliteration, for example, §29.12 *Acht ropdar srotha sídamlai soinmecha soithcherna ro-ráidsit*, §29.13 *Nirbo aithesc ndíbech ndúaibsech ndíultadach ndo[th]chernsa do-racartatar*; §29.15 *Úaire ba Dubgall déltae derscaigthe tregtastar*.

The second and third *rosc* passages fall into Breatnach’s category of the second type of *rosc*. The lines largely adhere to two stressed counts in each line with alliteration. Some lines are exceptions to this pattern, for example, §30.6 *Breithemain brechtnaiget*, §30.14 *Drochdála tocabthar sídamlae*, §32.4, *Brethaigim dó di sechtaib cumal*, §30.11 *Teintea derga do lasaraib*. Alliteration is found in a majority of the lines, and likewise there is linking alliteration across lines, for example, §30.2-3 *sretha fían fianeírge / fechat coir coicerta / iar cintaib cnedh*, §30.4 *íar táscaib duinebáis / do delmaib díth* and §30.6 *Breithemain brechtnaiget / breth enich ollaman*. While this thesis has translated and linguistically analysed the *rosc*, several uncertainties of interpretation remain, and more work needs to be done on its contents.

Normalised text

Poem One

§22 Conid and sin trá con·acart Máel Milscothach cucai na náe n-onchoin n-anbli ro·bátar for indarba n-úad blíadnai ar fichit resin orcain. Ro·faídi úad inna cona-sin for lurg inna n-óc i ndiaid inna ngabála. Ocus amal ro·cúalatar ind óic bátar imna gabála ecetach na n-onchon n-anbli ina ndegaid, rodus·gab crith 7 úaman conda·rala in grith 7 úaman 7 grindell co·ndergénsat lorg 7 tosach íar suidiu. Is ann sin trá at·rubairt Nél mac Laích Lasamain friu, ‘Do·rairngert-sa dúib’, ol Nél, ‘a n-í no·biäd dind orcain-si’. ‘Cid arná·dénam maith dé·sium indosa’, ol Athais ind Ardapstail 7 ar Lethainm Fir Annatha dá chomalta ind rí. ‘Talla foraib ón’, ol Nél mac Laích Lasamain friu. ‘Má thalla forn ém’, olsiat, ‘Da·beram la fáilti 7 bennachtain do Máel Milscothach a n-í don·roächt fo imthach’. Batar óentadaig trá íar suidiu in tríar-so im chórai 7 im aithrigi fri Máel Milscothach, co·n·epert Máel Milscothach friu:

§22.9 Triär de muintir ind rí,
roda·erc bruth 7 bríg,
trí cathlúain glana amal glain,
rop ferr di Máel dia rochtain.

§22.10 Diäs diib do Leith Chuinn,
fer di síl Ailella Áluim,
trí bráthair óentad fo chres,
cen cop focus a cairdes.

§22.11 Níall mac Áeda – erctha máil –
Máel Cainnich úa Brádacáin,
Ócán ard ergaire ngaill,
comaltai détla Domnaill.

§22.12 Tánctar co réir dia thaig,
Mafl menmanaig Milscothaig,
Is ferrde Máel ás cach cur,
ferra-sum dé a triür.
Triär.

§23 In tan trá both forsna bríathraib-sin 7 tarmartatar ind óic fácbáil a creche la Máel Milscothach, is and ad·rubairt Ainfesach mac Becéolais in fáith boí oca 7 Sanntachán mac Snéidriaglae 7 Accobrach mac Indile: ‘Dolfam-ni a óca’, ol eat-side, ‘.ui. mucca míeneich úaib-si i n-enech na sé n-onchon n-able-sin ro·faíde Máel Milscothach, co·mba·géba dóib etir cona 7 muca. Et

coná·cechlabair- ucat frib'. Batar hé anmanna na sé n-onchon ro·faíde Máel Milscothach ina ndiaid-sim Áer 7 Aithis 7 Imdergad, Glám 7 Grís 7 Gortbríathar. Et batar hé anmann na sé muc míeneich ro·dolbsat-sum ina n-enech-aide Dochall 7 Díbe 7 Dochernas, Cailte 7 Galma 7 Forngabáil. Ba fír trá a n-í-sin. Ro·dolbsat na sé muca míeneich co'mba·rogab dóib etir cona 7 muca. Et coná·cúalatar ind óic etir aithairic óna conaib ucut frib. Co·lloitar ind óic i lláim cona n-orcain léo. Lotar echlacha ón rígar sin i ndíaid inna ngabála con·ralta díb sech láim, co·ndernta preid dé fri Máel Milscothach. Nícon·rucsat ind óic a n-í sin ar thairisin ind rígar léo. Ar aí trá nibo tabartha-sum a n-éislis. Ar ba teine i coclaid ata·comnaic-sium. Et ba féth dar cnucu cecha·epert do degbríathraib fri nech noda·sáraiged.

Poem Two

§26 Amal ron·cúala Domnall trá inna féigbríathra fithnaise do·rád dó Máel Milscothach fíada, do·cótar echlacha úad i ndíaid inna gabála. Et ba hé luide forsin echlachus-sin .i. Robad mac Rofúacra di thúathaib fían filidechta co·fuáir-side na hóca inna gabála ac roinn tórainn fuirri co·n-epert friu:

§26.3 A óca batar ar daig,
oc orcain Maíl Milscothaig.
Masa dírb dliges greis,
ferr dúib ná·tartae a n-éislis.

§26.4 Atá lais gaí gona rígar,
nád·soëd, nád i mórbrígar.
Is dé ro·góet – grádaib gal –,
grúad Breisi maic Elathan.

§26.5 Con·rala agaid a taig,
flatha dia·raba a Temraig.
Co·torchar dé isin chath
Muige Túathbhuillig Tuired.

§26.6 Int aël tend dlomad gail,
ro·(s)reng Caíar a Crúachnaib,
ní·fargaib i llomain laic,
ro·lá fo muir de charraic.

§26.7 In da n-ainm-sin for cach n-aí
mac Etnai 7 mac Adnai
acht na ní do·mbeir amach
marait la Máel Milscothach.

- §26.8 Saiget réime rígtis rainn,
dus·farlaic Dallán Forgaill.
Batis dé tolltai enech,
Áeda móir maic Ainmirech.
- §26.9 Bir chrúaid bélra – búan a glé – ,
fo·gníth Crithinbél cáinte,
oc claidi dúin Breise brais.
Ba bir chrúaid fír imamnais.
- §26.10 Ro·toll clúasa – gairm co fraig –,
Dagda, in lorgaig littenaig,
At·bélad tria rinde rus,
Munbad Mac ind Óc Áengus.
- §26.11 Biäid nech úaib diamba gúais,
béras in bir·sin tre chlúais
co·n·érbara ‘Uchán! Ach!,
rom·geguin Máel Milscothach’.
- §26.12 Eól dam·sa int í nod·béra,
7 int í nod·géna.
Acht ní·ngénad ciabad gall,
cech óen fors·mbiäd Domnall.
- §26.13 Fo bíthin Domnaill uí Néill,
anais cach Domnall fo gréin,
Nos·molfad tar maigri mall.
Nis·áerfad acht óen Domnall.
- §26.14 Cid in Domnall·sin amein,
is esbuid dia airmitin,
mas do síl na ríge co rath,
cen síd fri Máel Milscothach.

§26.15 Máel Milsothach d'éis a bó,
etir Clartha 7 Cló.
Masa nech úaib ruc a bú,
nifor·marfot, a ócu!
A óca!

§27 Is ed sin as·bert Robad mac Rofúacraí friu.

Poem Three

§27 Fris·rogart Aurchoimted mac Sodeithbir: 'Dúal cairdesa dó·side fri muintir ind rí'g', co·n·epert·side, 'oc aurchoimted assa leith'.

§27.3 A fír thall dar ferba fis,
masa thú do·gní in mbúaidris,
is derb ní cen cin cen chath,
ro·hairged Máel Milsothach.

§27.4 Guin maic bráthar ind rí'g dó,
ar abae ailbíne bó.
Dia·mbeth ní·tísad fria gus,
is bec nach tonn do díumuis.

§27.5 Deccair lim·sa tinchosc cáich,
do Máel Milsothach milbláith.
A dál féine fil i losc,
Ní·tard airi fria tinchosc.

§27.6 In fer fris·tarlae a ír,
nochaba ris boí a dír.
Ná·hacallad a rí'g rúad,
dús in·mbérad n·éra n·úad.

§27.7 Mad ed at·bérad a rí,
amail nocha·béra ní,
co·ndesid sodain cen acht,
for gaisced nó filidecht.

- §27.8 Ecmaing nochan·érbert ríam,
fris nach duine i mbrat nó i mbíad.
Acht rot·bía ar Domnall úa Néill,
fri cach duine fil fo gréin.
- §27.9 Ciaptis ganna fir betha,
óthá Lifi co Letha,
ros·fiurfad ól, níptis gainn,
dige do dernainn Domnaill.
- §27.10 Do·róega ind adaig ro·nass,
cucái – cucang comadas – ,
Derbáil Badbgnai breccas graig,
ingen Taidg tarbgnai táebaig.
- §27.11 Fíal·sum, fíal·si, cota·gaib,
comrar garta díb línaib,
sant dóib cen dimda fo chlith,
olc dóib cen ní do thaiscid.
- §27.12 Ní ar lagat a n·éite,
is ar aidblitin méite.
Acht ná·hanat a ndi láim,
oca scaíl tre imfórráin.
- §27.13 Nocon·esérracht amach,
in gall ro·marb Congalach.
Cor·taisct a ndís fo brut,
ceithri méich do bronnargut.
- §27.14 Cen co·beth oc Máel acht sin,
in días·sin dia thesargain.
Ricfaitis a baí dia thaig,
Maíl merúallaig Milscothaig.
- §27.15 Turma a n·é Cenél Éogain,
ó ro·fersat a ngléogail.
Is fair nodus·béra a thlus –
for ícc 7 aithrechus.

§27.16 Andam léo crád a ndalta.
Batis meinci im gáir ngarta.
Batis gnátha ar búadaib bann,
d'orcain i tírib echtrann.

§27.17 Má do·rónsat ní nád cóir,
it eat fuille bus fóir.
Etir eochu 7 bú,
ind-í rucad ó Chlarthú.

§27.18 Aisec dó ó mac ind rí,
ór is balc a bruth 's a bríg.
Apair fri Máel a n-í-sin,
a ógríar ó Áed, a fír,
A fír.

Poem Four

§28 Fris·rogart Máel Milscothach fadesin i suidiu con·epert:

§28.2 Cid ro·mboth dam-sa for Máel,
a·n-érbert nech úaib fri hÁed.
Am fer cumtha dia athair.
am dalta dia senathair.

§28.3 Ropsa altra dia athair.
Am aiti dá derbráthair.
Cid é féin fo·fuair mo thlus.
Sech rom·bíathus, rom·éitius.

§28.4 In dar lem fri haisc mo on,
baí lem ní dom anacol,
do chenéul Éogain co sé,
bamsa dalta tairise.

§28.5 Do·cuitchetar frim fo secht.
do·cuitches-sa a coimaitecht.
Níro·áil-sium a mbíathad,
ní·mo-fríth mo gubríathar.

- §28.6 Roda·molus cena lúag,
méraid céin bes Ériu úag.
Conid óg Gaidel 7 Gall,
a ndo·rónus do Domnall.
- §28.7 Domnall dáili – dían i cath –,
díánam·fessed, ním·oirgfed.
Acht in dar lais ina dáil,
ropsa bachlach duib banbáin.
- §28.8 Bíth a menma cid ar gáib,
slat úa Núadat Argatláim.
Condam·ort-sa ina ré,
ním·lámair nech for bith cé.
Cid.

Rosc

§29 Amail ro·chúala Domnall trá inna ferba follscaidi-si do·rád dó Máel Milscothach fíada,
con·acantha dó i suidiu ard·flaithi cenéoil Éogain 7 dos·génai comairli friu cid betis immon orcain.

- §29.2 Angá trá ní·tartastar forru-side.
- §29.3 Nirbo lecc for tlám.
- §29.4 Nirbo cloch for tragna.
- §29.5 Nirbo gic-goc Gallgáidel.
- §29.6 Nirbo h-esorcain darach do dorn.
- §29.7 Nirbo saiget i coirthe.
- §29.8 Nirbo búain mela a mecnaib ibair.
- §29.9 Nirbo cuingid imme i llige chon.
- §29.10 Nirbo gipa-gapa na cennaigi.
- §29.11 Nirbo himpide nenta im chloich áeil
a n·impide ceneóil Éogain imma ríg.
- §29.12 Acht ropdar srotha sídamlai soinmecha soithcherna ro·ráidsit.
- §29.13 Nirbo aithesc ndíbech ndúaibsech ndíultadach ndo[th]chernsa do·racartatar.
- §29.14 úaire ba Dubgall détlae derscaigthe tregtastar.
- §29.15 Ba Fogartach forusta fírán fégastar.
- §29.16 Ba Corbmac mac Goich cocrastar.
- §26.17 Ba Scolaige scorach scaílestar.
- §29.18 Ba Muiredach Menn mórchlothach múinestar.

§29.19 Ba Conaing comramach costadach cinnestar.

§29.20 Ba hócláechrad immúallach immamnas imfáebrach cenéoil Éogain achtatar in comairli-sin .i. aisec a chreiche 7 a enich do Máel Milscothach.

§29.21 Et as·bertatar frisin rí: ‘A Domnaill’, olseat, ‘déna-sa do chomairli féin dot áes creche 7 orgne. Mad sinne cid do neoch úain-ne nad-ráinic ind orcain, do-béram boin cach óthigernae 7 cach rígamuis nar cenél nÉogain do Máel Milscothach’.

§30. Conid ann sin trá do-ruirmestar Domnall ina menmain in indliged mór do-rónad for Máel Milscothach fria ré co-n-epert iar sin fria brethemna 7 fria senchaidib.

§30.2 ‘Senchaidi suidet’, ol Domnall,
‘sretha fían fíaneírge.

§30.3 Féchat cóir coicerta
íar cintaib cned.

§30.4 Cía do-tindreda
arc n-amnas n-áigthide
íar táscaib duinebáis
do delmaib díth.

§30.5 Tacarar cocarar
cocairt nát·cumscaigther,
corop ail an fúgail cén bas bith-bés.

§30.6 Breithemain brechtnaiget
breth enich ollaman.

§30.7 Dan-róet rí-éicse Elga
i n-ucht ecnaide.
Ainmniget ainm
ndíri dligedaig d’orcain
cen imdítned cathrach
Maíl Milscothaig
tar rechtgai rí.

§30.8 Ríaraigter roruited rí,
diambo Mide Mag Maíl.

§30.9 Diamba bruiden Breg breithem,
cinn co córai co mara muir.

§30.10 Múchaigther teng.

§30.11 Teintea derga do lasaraib,

lasait cen urdíbdud
tar Fúata fonn.

§30.12 Foclaim is focalta
fo thricce tesairgne tened
do rúadrúided ríg
etir imfáebra
fo bretha báis.

§30.13 Báidither drochdála

§30.14 Tocabthar sídamlae
íar córaib cert.

§31 In tan trá tarnaic do Domnall a n-í-sin do apearit 7 do aisnéis ba h-ann tarmartatar filid Fálmaige dol do thathchur a chotaig admolta fri ríg Temrach i suidiu fo bíthin orcne Maíl Milscothaig. Conid íar sin trá con-ráncatar coimgne senhad Érenn filid 7 breithemna †imcoctar† in díri 7 eineclainn Maíl Milscothaig íarna orcain 7 íarna indred i n-indliged. Conid ann sin ro-léicset do Flann, lann labarglan fer léiginn Clúana Mac Nóis, brethugad na caingne-se asa comdeóin d'f b línaib itir filida 7 brethemna, con·epert:

§32.1 ‘Mórgnám crod neich
nátba néoit nemíath.

§32.2 Mad co sé slán Día di chimbaib
cúan ngonfíach ngéiríath.

§32.3 Glanaim dé díbdud
do·femat ferba fúach filed,
felsuí for·aci ollamain
de dligid dían dagnóisech;
di bunad bae.

§32.4 Brethaigim dó di sechtaib cumal,
comleithet a aigthe d'ór ara bibal.

§32.5 Breth rígbaird regair
cota·sein slán enech,
emnaigter ildíri
i n-orðaib ilgrádaib.
cid óen i·fogabtar
fo bretha bíth bó
cach cinn chomfúataig
cip áitt i·cocurar

- dia toglá techt.
- §32.6 Taisced án umaide
la cach mboin mboiníne
fo dela déol.
- §32.7 Dligid comdíre cummae
fri rí g ro-amrae
fo·n-idbarr bís.
- §32.8 Fó teinm láeda
lánfocail lánuinseim
soillsiges sruthlinn
mbairr búais,
búadchu dó díchetal
do chollaib cenn.
- §32.9 Glanóg a eneclainn íarsin
éicsi uird.
- §32.10 Mesair aí aimsera
i·mbretha breth.
- §32.11 Bid cach ndán téchtaide dí.
- §32.12 Romarb rí g rí gmaíni
Maíl Milscothaig
ro·dam dia tol.’

§33 Do·ratad trá do Máel Milscothach cech ní ro·brethaigset na suíde·sin etir ecnaidi 7 fileda 7 brethemna la tóeb ógaisic dá chreich. Et is amlaid·sin ro·ordaigset do thabairt da cach ollamain ina enech 7 ina sárugud co bráth acht co·tísed dé imbas for·osnai 7 díchetal do chollaib cenn 7 teinm láeda .i. com·eneclann fri rí g Temra dó acht co·tí dé in tréide·sin. Fínit.

Translation

Poem One

§22 So that it is then that Máel Milscothach summoned to him the nine savage wolves that had been in banishment from him for twenty-one years before the raid. He sent away from him those savage wolves in pursuit of the warriors after the spoils. And when the warriors, who were plundering, heard the *ecetach* of the savage wild wolves behind them, shaking and fear took hold of them so that the shaking, fear, and terror overthrew them, and they made a battlefront and rear-guard afterwards. It is then that Néil mac Laích Lasamain said to them, ‘I have prophesied to you’, said Néil, ‘what would result from this raid’. ‘Why do we not make the situation good with him now?’ said Athais ind Ardapstail (‘Insult of High Apostle’) and said Lethainm Fir Annatha (‘Half-name of a Man of Bad Poetic Composition’), two foster brothers of the king. ‘This is possible for you’, said Néil mac Laích Lasamain to them. ‘If it is possible for us, then’, they said, ‘let us give that which we acquired under compurgatory oath with welcome and blessing to Máel Milscothach’. After this, this trio were in agreement concerning the justice and regret to Máel Milscothach, so that Máel Milscothach said to them:

§22.9 Three men from the household of the king,
whom fury and strength had filled,
three clear pure battles like glass,
it may be better for Máel to reach them.

§22.10 A pair of them from Leth Cuinn,
a man from the seed of Ailill Áulomm,
three brothers in close friendship of fellowship,
though their kinship might not be close.

§22.11 Níall mac Áeda – *ertha* of a prince – ,
Máel Cainnich úa Brádacáin,
noble Ócán, the hindering of a foreigner,
brave foster-brothers of Domnall.

§22.12 They came with a request to the house,
of intelligent Máel Milscothach.
Máel is the better for it – above every warrior –
The three of them were the better for it.
A group of three.

§23 Indeed, when these words had been said and the warriors were on the point of leaving their spoils with Máel Milscothach, it is then that Ainfesach mac Becéolais (‘Ignorant son of Little Knowledge’), the seer, who was with them, and Sanntachán mac Snéidríaglae (‘Covetous son of Swift Rule’), and Accobrach mac Indile (‘Greedy son of Possessions’) said: ‘Oh warriors, let us magically conjure’, they said, ‘six pigs of dishonour from you against the honour of these six savage beasts whom Máel Milscothach sent so that they will attack each other, both beasts and pigs. And so that you will not hear at all an argument against you from the wolves yonder’. These were the names of the six wild beasts whom Máel Milscothach sent in their pursuit .i. Satire and Reproach and Shame, Lampoon and Passion and Sharp-Word. And the names of the six pigs of dishonour whom they had conjured against them were: Inhospitality and Refusal and Churlishness, Meanness and Harshness and Capture. That was true, then. They conjured the six pigs of dishonour so that both wolves and pigs attacked each other. And the warriors did not hear an argument against them from the wolves yonder. And the warriors went with their spoils in hand. Thereafter, messengers went from the king after the spoils so that it would have been thrown out of their control, and the spoils would have been taken from it [their control] on behalf of Máel Milscothach. The warriors had not carried away this thing because of their loyalty to the king. Nevertheless, he is not to be given in contempt. For it was a fire in hiding that he was. And he was a breeze over hills, whatever good utterances he spoke to anyone who used to violate him.

Poem Two

§26 When Domnall heard the sharp words of sorcery which Máel Milscothach spoke to him in his presence, messengers were sent on an errand from him after the spoils. And it was he who went on this errand, namely Robad mac Rofúacra (‘Warning son of Proclamation’), from the people of a band of warriors of poetry and he found the warriors around the spoils, sharing the division over it, and he said to them:

§26.3 Oh, warriors who were on fire,
at the plundering of Máel Milscothach,
If it is from you that he claims for injury,
(it is) better for you that he would not be given in contempt.

§26.4 He has a spear that wounds kings,
which used to not deflect, which is not in great strength,
It is from it that had been wounded by feats of valour —,
the cheek of Bres mac Elathan.

- §26.5 And he had thrown honour from the house,
of the ruler when he was in Tara.
So that he fell from it in the battle,
of the Wicked-Striking Plain of Tuired.
- §26.6 The firm prong that used to announce conflict,
that dragged Caíar out from Crúachán,
it did not leave him in a weak rope,
it cast him into the sea from the rock.
- §26.7 The two weapons upon each of them,
mac Etnai 7 mac Adnai,
except for whatever he gives out,
they remain with Máel Milscothach.
- §26.8 An arrow of thickness that quatrains used to direct,
Dallán Forgaill cast it.
From it would be pierced the face,
of Great Áed son of Ainmire.
- §26.9 (It was) a harsh spear of speech – everlasting its brightness –,
which Crithinbél, the satirist, used to serve,
at the digging of boastful Bres' fort.
It was a harsh spear of very fierce truth.
- §26.10 It pierced the ears – a cry to the wall –,
of the Dagda, the armed [and] porridge-eating one.
He would have died through shame of piercings,
if it had not been for Óengus Mac ind Óc.
- §26.11 There will be one among you for whom there will be danger,
who will get his spear through an ear.
And he says 'Woe, ah! Alas!,
Máel Milscothach has pierced me'.
- §26.12 I know him who will receive,
and he whom it will wound,
But it would not wound him, even if he were a foreigner,
Everyone whom Domnall protects.

§26.13 On account of Domnall úa Néill,
he will protect each Domnall under the sun.
He would praise them over a slow salmon.
He would not satirise them, only Domnall.

§26.14 Well then, though it be this Domnall,
it is a defect to his honour,
if he is from the seed of prosperous kings,
without peace for Máel Milscothach.

§26.15 Máel Milscothach seeking his cows,
between Clartha and Cló.
If it was one of you who has taken his cows,
they will not remain with you, oh warriors!
Oh warriors!

§27 It is that that Robad mac Rofúacraí said to them.

Poem Three

§27 Aurchoimted mac Sodeithbir ('Excusing One, son of Good Reason') answered: '(It is) a reason of friendship to him to the people of the king', and he said, 'making excuses on their behalf'.

§27.3 Oh man, yonder, by words of knowledge,
if it is you who cause turbulence,
it is certain that it is not without crime, without battle,
that Máel Milscothach has been despoiled.

§27.4 He could wound the son of the brother of the king,
on account of a small flock of cows.
If it should be that it did not come to force,
any outpouring of your arrogance is petty.

§27.5 It is hard for me to bear the instructing of everyone
by honey-smooth Máel Milscothach.
(It is) his own case that is deficient,
I would not pay heed to the instruction.

- §27.6 The man whom his anger encounters,
it was not him for whom it was proper.
Let him not address his mighty king,
to see if he would get refusal from him.
- §27.7 If it is this that his king would say,
as he will not get anything,
so that this, without doubt, has been settled
upon weaponry or poetry.
- §27.8 It happens that he has not said before,
to any person in clothing and with sustenance.
But you will have it on account of Domnall úa Néill
to every man that is alive.
- §27.9 Although the men of the world might be needy,
from Liffey to Letha,
a draught would suffice for them, they would not be needy,
of a drink by the hand of Domnall.
- §27.10 She chose him on the night she was betrothed,
to him – a fitting match –,
Derbáil of Badbgnæ whom horses adorn,
Daughter of stout, trusty Tadg.
- §27.11 He is generous, she is generous, it supports them,
a chest of generosity, both of them,
they have eagerness without secret dissatisfaction,
they have misfortune without anything to guard.
- §27.12 It is not for fewness of their cattle,
it is for vastness of size.
But let their two hands not desist,
from scattering them through great violence.
- §27.13 He has not risen yet,
the foreigner who killed Congalach.
So that the two of them may guard, under a spike,
four bushels of refined silver.

- §27.14 Although Máel may only have that,
 this pair to protect him.
 The cows of spiritedly, proud Máel Milscothach
 would come to his house.
- §27.15 It is multitudes, the aforementioned Cenél nÉogain,
 when they poured forth their prowess in battle.
 It is upon it that his treasure will judge them –
 upon compensation and repentance.
- §27.16 It is unusual for them to offend their foster-son.
 They used to be frequently at battlefields of shouting.
 They used to be well-known for victories of deeds,
 plundering in territories of foreigners.
- §27.17 If they had done anything that is not proper,
 this is interest that will be an assistance.
 Both horses and cows,
 of that which had been carried from Clártha.
- §27.18 Restitution to him from the son of the king,
 because his anger and his power are strong.
 Say this thing to Máel,
 All he wants from Áed, oh man!,
 Oh man!

Poem Four

§28 Máel Milscothach himself then answered, and he said:

- §28.2 Why is it that I was angry, said Máel,
 concerning what anyone of you said to Áed.
 I am a companion to his father.
 I am a foster-son to his grandfather.
- §28.3 I was a foster-father to his father.
 I am a tutor to his blood-brother.
 Even he himself has obtained my property.
 Although I had fed myself, I had clothed myself.

- §28.4 Methinks against reproach of my blemishes,
I had something to protect me,
to the tribe of Éogan, until now,
I was a faithful foster-son.
- §28.5 They swore to me seven times.
I have sworn their company.
He was not entitled to feed them,
my false words have not been found well.
- §28.6 I have praised them without payment from him,
it will remain as long as Ireland will be untouched.
So that it is perfect for Gaels and foreigners,
that which I have done for Domnall.
- §28.7 Domnall of dispensation – swift in battle –
if he found me, he would not kill me.
But he thinks in his dispensing,
that I was a servant of a small, black pig.
- §28.8 His mind is always on – even on account of spears –
the twig of the grandson of Núada Argatlám.
Until he wounded me in his time,
no one had dared me in this world.
Even if it may be.

Rosc

§29 When Domnall had heard these ardent words uttered which Máel Milscothach spoke to him in his presence, he then summoned the chief princes of the Cenél nÉogain to him and he took counsel with them on what ailed them with regard to the plundering.

- §29.2 Indeed, it was a great falsehood which had not fallen upon them.
- §29.3 It was not a flagstone upon a handful of wool.
- §29.4 It was not a stone upon a cornrake.
- §29.5 It was not a guttural chatter of one of Viking and Irish blood.
- §29.6 It was not a striking of an oak by a fist.
- §29.7 It was not an arrow in a pillar.
- §29.8 It was not extracting honey from roots of a yew.
- §29.9 It was not a seeking of butter in a dog's kennel.

- §29.10 It was not the unintelligible gabbing of merchants.
- §29.11 The intercession of the Cenél nÉogain regarding their king was not the intercession of nettles regarding a limestone.
- §29.12 But it was tranquil, prosperous, generous streams [of words] that they spoke.
- §29.13 It was not a churlish, irksome, grudging message of niggardliness which they pleaded,
- §29.14 since it was the distinguished bold Dubgall who wounded.
- §29.15 It was steady, righteous Focartach who watched.
- §29.16 It was Cormac mac Goich who conspired.
- §29.17 It was the horse-possessing Scolaige who released [the spoils].
- §29.18 It was the greatly renowned Muiredach the Stammerer who instructed.
- §29.19 It was the victorious, behaved Conaing who decided.
- §29.20 It was a very fierce, very proud, very keen group of young warriors of Cenél nÉogain who made that decision, namely, restitution of his booty and his honour to Máel Milscothach.
- §29.21 And they said to the king: ‘Oh Domnall’, they said, ‘Give your counsel to your people of plundering and raiding.
- §29.22 With regards to us, even though the attack came from none of us, we will give to Máel Milscothach one cow for each young noble and each royal mercenary in the service of the king from among our Cenél nÉogain’.
- §30 So that it is then, indeed, that Domnall considered in his mind the great injustice that had been done to Máel Milscothach in his time, so that he said afterwards to his judges and to his historians:
- §30.2 ‘Let experts in law establish’, said Domnall,
‘ranks of rising warrior-bands.
- §30.3 Let them observe rightness of judgement
after crimes of wounds.
- §30.4 Although he may plunder
a clever prominent champion
after reports of mortality,
for tidings of destruction.
- §30.5 Let it be pleaded: let it be adjudged,
a decision which is not confused,
so that it can be the bedrock of passing judgement as long as it be a perpetual practice.
- §30.6 Let judges dispute
the judgement of honour-price of an *ollam*.

- §30.7 A royal poet of Elg has defended him
in front of scholars.
Let them name the name
of a lawful honour price for the plundering
without protection of the fortress
of Máel Milscothach
by the decree of a king.
- §30.8 Let them enforce their will on the great shaming of a king,
whether it be the Plain of Máel in Mide.
- §30.9 Whether it be a hostel in Brega of judges,
let you settle with correctness as far as the sea.
- §30.10 Let a tongue be extinguished.
- §30.11 Red fires of flames,
let them light up without extinguishing,
across the territory of Ireland.
- §30.12 I declare that it is to be enjoined
with the swiftness of rescuing from a fire,
for the great reddening of a king
among illegalities under judgements of death.
- §30.13 Let bad judgements be suppressed.
- §30.14 Let tranquillity be established
after the corrections of rights.

§31 When Domnall had finished saying and relating that thing, it was then that the poets of Ireland intended to set about restoring his friendship of great praise to the king of Tara in that case because of the raiding of Máel Milscothach. So, it is thereafter the poets and judges arrived at a synchronism of the historians of Ireland ... the honour-price and compensation of Maél Milscothach after the illegal plundering and invasion of him. So that it is then that they entrusted to pure-spoken Flann, lector of Clonmacnoise, the judgement of this dispute arising from their mutual agreement on both of them, poets and judges, and he said:

- §32.1 Plundering of a person is a major act,
who was not niggardly as a *nemed*-person.
- §32.2 If it is until now that God is immune from imported silver,
bringing wounding penalties of sharp honour.
- §32.3 I purge destruction from him,
blisters defend a poet's word,

a sage who is equivalent in value to an *ollam*
by swift, very-distinguished, right;
forever of benefit.

- §32.4 I decree for him twice seven cumals,
gold that is equal in breadth to his face on account of ...
- §32.5 The judgement of a royal-poet is being extended
until payment of honour-price befalls them(?).
Many fines are doubled,
in many distinguished orders.
Even though it be one in which they are found,
under the judgements of a cow
of each chief of joint plundering,
though it may be a place where they are conspiring
to attack properties.
- §32.6 Let him keep a copper drinking-vessel
with every cow that has a calf
sucking under teats.
- §32.7 He is entitled to equal honour-price
that is the same as the
very wonderful king under
whom it is being granted ... (?)
- §32.8 Good divinatory incantation
of full speech [and] of full impact,
which illuminates streaming liquid
of supremacy of inspiration,
most preeminent for him [is]
díchetal do chollaib cenn.
- §32.9 His compensation is pure and complete after the
wisdom of the procedure.
- §32.10 A metrical composition may be judged
according to the stages in which a legal ruling was passed.
- §32.11 Every poem will be due from it.
- §32.12 Máel Milsothach had amortised the royal treasures of the king,
he submitted to their will.

§33 Therefore, each thing that those wise men, including scholars and poets and judges, had judged was given to Máel Milsothach, in addition to complete restoration for the plundering. And it

is on account of this that they ordained to give [the following] until Doomsday to each *ollam* in compensation for his honour-price and for his violation, provided that he deliver *imbais for-osnai 7 díchetal do chollaib cenn 7 teinm láeda*, .i. honour-price equal to the king of Tara for him, provided that he may know these three things. *Finit.*

Edition of Airec Menman Uraird maic Coisse with Textual Notes

Poem One

Poem One occurs after Máel Milscothach is informed of the raid of his home while he is on a circuit with a king. The king responds that the incident is not his fault and that his king will compensate Máel. In this line, there is confusion on which king is speaking as the dialogue is said to be spoken by both *rí* 'king' (eDIL s.v. *rí*, www.dil.ie/35181) and *tigerna* 'lord, superior, chief' (eDIL s.v. *tigerna*, www.dil.ie/40734). Afterwards, Máel Milscothach summons wild beasts to apprehend the plunderers in order to bring them to king Domnall and this incident (§22) begins the edition of Poem One.

22.1 23 N 10: *Conad ann sin conacart mael milscothach chuca na .ui. nonchoin nanbhle rouatar bliadnai ar xxit for innarba uadh resan orgain*

Harl. 5280: *Gonath ann sin tra conacart maol milscothach cucai na nae nonchoin nanble robatar for innarbai uad bliadnai ar fichet resin orcain.*

Rawl B512: *Conid and sin tra conacart mael milscothach cuigi na .ix. nonchoin anbli batar for indarba nuad bliadnai ar fichit résan orcain.*

Normalised text:

Conid and sin trá con·acart Máel Milscothach cucai na náe n-onchoin n-anbli ro·bátar for indarba n-úad blíadnai ar fíchet resin orcain.

Translation:

So that it is then that Máel Milscothach summoned to him the nine savage wolves that had been in banishment from him for twenty-one years before the raid.

R's *Conid*, N's *Conad* and H's *Gonath* is the conj. *co*^N 'so that' with the pres. 3sg. of the copula. N's and H's is a later form of R's. The change of final voiceless dental stop *-th* to voiced *-d* after an unstressed vowel is an OIr. feature that can be dated to the early eighth century (McCone 1981: 43–4), with Thurneysen (GOI §130.2) stating that *-d* is more common than *-th*. H's *-th* ending could also be a hypercorrection.

Whether the conj. *trá* 'then, therefore, so, indeed' was originally found in the text is uncertain as N could have omitted *trá* or both H and R could have independently added it. Since *trá* is found in both branches of the manuscripts, it is retained in the normalised text.

Breatnach (2020: 122) has shown that after conjugated prepositions, the demonstrative *sin* is stressed and he cites the following examples from the *Dindsenchas*: *dena lágnib tuctha and sin dē atát Lagin for Laginib*, 'From the spears that were brought in that time, hence the Laigin are so called'

(LL lines 21057–28); *and sin* [: *mōrneim*] (LL line 26995); *and sin* [: *mīlid*] (LL line 25712); *and sain* [: *Alpain*] (LL line 27837). As a result, *and* and *sin* is written separately in the normalised text.

N's *chuca* and H's *cucai* have the expected broad *g* for the conj. prep. 3sg. m. of *co*^N 'with', while R's *cuigi* is found with the slender *g* and this is due to the influence of 3sg. f. *cuice* (McCone 2005: 154).

There is disagreement between the manuscripts on the number of wild wolves. H's *na nae* and R's *na .ix*. 'the nine' is in contrast to N's *na .ui*. 'the six'. The nasalisation seen on the following acc. pl. *nonchoin* 'wolves' in all three manuscripts suggests that the archetype may have had *noí* 'nine', which causes nasalisation, unlike *sé*, which causes *h*-mutation. However, later in the text at 23.4, only six wild wolves are mentioned, and the nasalisation pattern is correct. The text also only lists the names of six wolves at 23.5. Despite the discrepancy in the numbers between the two lines, *noí* 'nine' is used in the normalised text based on the nasalisation pattern found in the line.

Furthermore, O'Connor (2013b: 8–9) has examined the numeral inconsistencies in *Togail Bruidne Derga* and states 'it is worth remembering that, in early medieval Irish narrative, numbers are often used in a symbolic rather than strictly arithmetical manner. The numbers 3, 5, 7, and 9 were particularly popular and sometimes almost interchangeable for this purpose, and arithmetical inconsistencies are frequent in the sagas'. O'Connor specifically refers to the inconsistencies in the number of pupils in Ingcél's eye and argues that the motif of the eyes with numerous pupils was so well-known that the number of the actual pupils did not matter. The contemporary audience would have understood the motif's meaning, and overall, the inconsistencies did not impact on the structure or understanding of the narrative. Similarly, O'Connor (2013b: 9) argues that in *Táin Bó Cúailnge*, the disagreement in the number of Ailill and Medb's sons was unlikely to impact the structure of the story and thus the scribes would have not noticed it. In the tale, it is said that Ailill and Medb had seven sons, but when their names are recited, eight names are given for eight sons instead (O'Rahilly 1976: 6). Another example is found in *Immram Brain*, where a woman is said to have recited fifty stanzas to Bran but in actual fact, she only recites twenty-eight stanzas (Mac Mathúna 1985: 33–8). Likewise in this example of *Airec Menman*, the discrepancies in the number of wolves does not impact on the story's structure or plot, and it does not necessarily mean the scribes copied their sources incorrectly. The differences between the numbers are then to be viewed as trivial. However, it is also possible that N was aware of this discrepancy and changed the number to six but did not remove the nasalisation or that the scribe had miscopied the Roman numerals, which was a common mistake during the period.

All manuscripts have MidIr. acc. pl. *onchoin* 'wolves' instead of OIr. acc. pl. *onchona*.

R has the acc. pl. f. *anbli* with the *-i* instead of the *-a* ending expected for *o-* or *ā-* stem adjectives and this is due to ‘Disyllabic adjectives with palatal consonance resulting from syncope [which] have the ending *-i* in the nom. acc. pl., like the *i*-stem ... and the *io*-stems’ (GOI §353). N’s *anbhle* and H’s *anble* could simply be a variant of the acc. pl. due to MidIr. unstressed final vowels becoming schwas /ə/, a process which left the *io/iā*-stems indeclinable and resulted in the *-e* ending being used throughout the paradigm, both in the sg. and pl. (Breatnach 1994: 254).

Since the acc. pl. of an *n*-stem f. does not cause nasalisation, there should be no nasalisation on *anbli* but it is seen in N’s *nanbhle* and H’s *nanble*. Uhlich (2019: 13, 15) argues that nasalisation from the headword of a phrase can be transferred to the final word of a phrase, in other words, nasalisation can skip a word. A word causing nasalisation can appear not only immediately in the following word but can also be transferred to the second word and he cites the MidIr. example of *Loch nEchach n-án* (LL 1. 28572), where the nasalisation caused by the acc. sg. *Loch* can be found both on *Echach* and *án*. He argues that this feature can already be seen in the OIr. glosses, for example, *dliged rehto ndé* ‘of the rules of the law of God’ (Wb. 46c8) and in *déde didiu nand* ‘two things, then, are therein’ (Wb1a5). In the former example, the gen. sg. *rehto* cannot nasalise *ndé* and this nasalisation could have only come from the gen. pl. *dliged*. In the latter example, the nasalisation caused by the nom. sg. of *déde* has skipped *didiu* and been transferred to *nand*. Thus, in N’s *nanbhle* and H’s *nanble*, the nasalisation is to be viewed as the result of *noí* ‘nine’. The lack of nasalisation in R’s *anbli*, if the premise that R’s copy originally had *noí*, could possibly be due to the scribe recognising that *nonchoin* did not cause nasalisation and he then may have removed the *n*.

The phrase *na náe nonchoin nanbli* is the subject antecedent of the following leniting relative clause with N’s *rouatar* and H’s *robatar* being MidIr. pret. 3pl. of *at-tá* ‘to be’, while R’s *batar* is the OIr. pret. 3pl. of the same verb. N’s *u* is the orthographical representation of a lenited *b* /β/, thus indicating that there is a leniting relative clause. N’s and H’s forms in OIr. would be the aug. pret. but in MidIr. this is reinterpreted as the general past tense.

Byrne (1908: 60) has expanded N’s *bġiā* as *bliada[i]n*. Schoen (2015: 72) has expanded R’s *bġ* as *bliada(i)n*. H has *bliad̄* and neither scholar expanded H. An acc. sg. is expected as it refers to time (GOI §249.3) and this form in OIr. would have been *bliadnai*; however, during the EModIr. period, *bliadain* obtained the new acc. sg. *bliadhain* with the dat. sg. now being used as the acc. sg. (McManus 1994: 374). Since the word has been greatly abbreviated in the manuscripts, it is difficult to know which form the scribes had in mind. The OIr. form is used in the normalised text.

N’s *bliadnai ar xxit for innarba uadh* goes against H’s *for innarbai uad bliadnai ar fichet* and R’s *for indarba nuad bliadnai ar fichit* in word-order. Only R’s *nuad* has the expected nasalisation caused by the acc. sg. of *indarba* ‘expulsion, ejection, rejection, banishment’. N’s and H’s lack of

nasalisation may be due to eye-skip with the next line in 22.2. In the normalised text, H's and R's word order is used because it is more likely for the numeral phrase *bliadain ar fichit* to be followed by the prep. phrase *resin orcain*. N's *xxit* and R's *fichit* have the correct dat. sg. of *fiche* 'twenty', with H's *fichet* being the gen. sg. of *fiche*. H's form could be a scribal modernisation. The prep. *ar^L* 'in front of, upon' is used with *fichit* and an unexpressed *óen* 'one', which may be left out before a substantive to form the numeral twenty-one (GOI §391).

- 22.2** **N:** *rofaidhe uadha ina conasin forlurg inanóg indiagh inagabhala*
 H: *rofaide uadh na conasin for lurg inna noc indiaid ina ngabalu*
 R: **Rofaidi nuad for lurg inahorgne inna conasin 7 indiaid innangabala.**

Normalised text:

Ro-fáidí úad inna cona-sin for lurg inna n-óc i ndiaid inna ngabála.

Translation:

He sent away from him those savage wolves in pursuit of the warriors after the spoils.

N's *rofaidhe*, H's *rofaide* and R's *rofaidi* is the aug. pret. 3sg. of *foídid* 'sends' and shows the merger of the diphthongs *oí* and *aí* (GOI §66). Since *aí* is found in all manuscripts, it is retained in the normalised text.

R's *nuad* shows incorrect use of nasalisation. In OIr., when the conj. prep. forms of *ó* 'from' occur after a nasalising element, nasalisation could be seen, for example, in 22.1 in R's *for lurg indarba nuad*, where the acc. sg. *lurg* nasalises *uad* (McCone 2005: 152). In 22.2, R may have introduced the nasalisation under the influence of 22.1's *for indarba nuad*, and as such, in 22.2, R's form is not used in the normalised text.

N's *ina conasin for lurg ina nóg* and H's *na conasin for lurg inna noc* have a different word order from R's *for lurg ina horgne inna conasin*. In N and H, the acc. pl. of *cú* 'dog, hound, wolf' occurs immediately after *ro-fáidí* and this is then followed by the prep. phrase *for lurg* and the gen. pl. *inna nóc* 'of the warriors'. In R, the opposite is found, that is, *for lurg* occurs first, then the gen. sg. *ina horgne* 'booty, spoils' and finally, the acc. pl. *cona* follows. N and H has the more regular word order of verb, object, prep. phrase and gen. than R, thus the former is followed in the normalised text.

The literal meaning of *for lurg* is 'upon track, trail, path', but the phrase can also be translated as 'in pursuit, following after' (eDIL s.v. 1 *lorg*, www.dil.ie/30682). The term *orcun* primarily means 'slaying, murdering' or 'a raid, attack, massacre' and this definition can be seen in the tale lists; additionally, Urard mac Coisse has given his in-tale the title *Orgain Cathrach Mail Milscothaig* 'The

Raiding of the Fortress of Maél Milscothach'.³¹ However, the term can also mean 'spoils, booty', and this is the definition most suited for this sentence as Máel is seeking his robbed belongings. In N and H, the wolves are after the warriors, and in R, they are after the spoils. As previously mentioned, N and H have the better word order, but if R was to be followed, then there are two references to the spoils: *ina horgne* and *inna ngabala*. This makes one of the references to the spoils redundant and raises the possibility that *gabála* could be derived from an otherwise unattested *iā*-stem **gabálae* that is not recorded in eDIL which potentially has the meaning of 'raiding party; things taken, spoils'.

N's *indiagh* is seen in its MidIr. form in H's *indiaid* and R's *indíaid*. The phrase *i ndiad* 'after, following after' (prep. *i*^N 'in/into' + acc. sg. of *dead* 'end, conclusion') fell together with *ndegaid* (prep. *i*^N 'in/into' + acc. sg. of *degaid* 'seeks, searches') during the MidIr. period and gave rise to *i ndiaid* (eDIL s.v. *dead*, www.dil.ie/14812).

Schoen (2015: 73) made the following comments on R's *inna ngabala*: 'The nasalisation is incorrect, but when we accept the *v.l.* by N *for lurg ina n-óg* for the previous phrase, this phrase can be read as *ina ngabala* "in pursuit of their taking". She analyses *inna ngabala* as the prep. *i*^N + poss. pron. 3pl. *a*^N + gen. sg. or pl. of *gabál* 'taking, seizing, conquest'; however, this is incorrect as the prep. *i*^N 'in/into' takes the acc. not the gen. Instead, *inna* is the gen. pl. art. f. and it may be found with the gen. pl. of the previously mentioned, unattested **gabálae*.

- 22.3 N:** Et *amal rochualatar ind óic batar umna gaphala eicethach na nonchon nanbhli inandeghuidh rodusgaph crith 7 uaman condusrala ingrith 7 uaman 7 grindell condergen sat lorg 7 tosach iar suidheiu*
- H:** 7 *\amal/ roncolatar an oicc batar imna gabalai ecetach na nonchon nanble ina degaid rodusgab crith 7 uaman conusralai an grith 7 uaman 7 grindiuil condergensiuat lorg 7 tosach iar suide*
- R:** **Ocus** *amal ron cualatar indoic batar imna gabala ecetach nanonchon anbli ina ndegaid. rodusgab crith 7 uaman. condarala ingrith 7 uaman 7 grindeld condergensat lorg 7 tosach forthaib iar suidiu.*

³¹N: *catrach mail milscothaigh maic anma air/mitin maic sochoisc sochuide maic ollaman aircetail maic dana dligedaig maic lughdach/ illdanaigh maic rua rofesai maic creidme inspirdai naimb aithairsceo maic* (p. 32 ll. 6–9).

R: *orcain catrach/ mail milscothach meic anma airmiten/ meic sofis sochaide meic ollaman airdcetail meic/ dana dligthemnaig meic lugdach ildánaig meic/ ruáid rofessa meic creitmi insperuta naim/ athar sceó mac* (f. 110r, ll. 6a–11a).

H: *orgain cathrach maoilscothaigh maic anma airmite maic socoisc sochuide maic/ olloman air cheatail maic dana dligheadhaig maic luighdech hilldanaig maic ruaidh rofessa maic creitmhe inspiorata naoim athair sceó mac* (f. 58v, ll. 34–6).

Normalised text:

Ocus amal ro·cúalatar ind óic bátar imna gabála ecetach na n-onchon n-anbli ina ndegaid, rodus·gab crith 7 úaman conda·rala in grith 7 úaman 7 grindell co·ndergénsat lorg 7 tosach iar suidiu.

Translation:

And when the warriors, who were plundering, heard the *ecetach* of the savage wild wolves behind them, shaking and fear took hold of them so that the shaking, fear, and terror overthrew them, and they made a battlefront and rear-guard afterwards.

There are two possible explanations for the *n* in H's *roncolatar* and R's *roncualatar*. Firstly, the *n* could be the infix pronoun class C 3sg. n. $-d^l$ and in OIr., the expected form would be *rond·chúalatar*, but MidIr. *nd* > *nn* could then result in H's and R's form. An issue with this explanation is the lack of lenition on the verbal stem that the infix pronoun would have caused. Alternatively, Griffith (2023) suggests that the *n* could be the infix pronoun class C 3sg. m. $-d^N$ and if MidIr. *nd* > *nn* is taken into consideration then this would result in H's and R's form, particularly as nasalisation is generally not indicated on a *c*. This infix pronoun could be used to refer to a previous noun, and in this case it would be referring to *ecetach* which is evidently not a feminine noun as the form would have been *ecetaig* (GOI §421). At the same time, N's *rochualatar* could be due to MidIr. confusion between infix pronouns which resulted in N removing the *n* due to not understanding the form (Breatnach 1994: 265–8). This explanation, however, is unsatisfactory as there is no linguistic reason for the lack of *-n* in N's *rochualatar*.

Alternatively, after the conj. *amal* 'when', a nasalising relative clause follows because it 'designates the manner of the relative clause' (GOI §498(b)). Despite the fact that nasalisation is generally not orthographically indicated on a *c* (the /c/ would become /g/), the *n* in H's *roncolatar* and R's *roncualatar* could be an indication of a nasalising relative clause. N's *rochualatar* could be an example of MidIr. leniting relative clause replacing an OIr. nasalising relative clause. H's and R's form may be a hypercorrection and the archetype may have had *ro·cualatar*. Both scribes may have independently added the *n*, particularly as the incorrect use of nasalisation has already been seen many times. Thus, H's and R's form would be the *lectio difficilior* as it would be easier for a scribe to replace it with a leniting relative clause such as that found in N.

The meaning of N's *EICETHACH*, H's *ECETACH* and R's *ECETACH* is uncertain, but it must be in the accusative since it is then followed by a series of genitives. eDIL s.v. ? *ecetach* (www.dil.ie/19504) gives this line as the only attestation and does not provide a meaning. Schoen (2015: 73) has translated the term as 'pack' and this seems like a possible definition, but she offers no discussion on her translation. The word may be related to eDil s.v. ? *écét* (www.dil.ie/19503), whose definition is also uncertain and it is also not well attested. The first attestation given in eDIL is: *Cac maiden dot-*

airceba. / écét con seingbla seola / milrad Muidi Murtemni. / Ima-dec fid ar Bredmad from *Tochmarc Ailbe* (Thurneysen 1912: 276). Thurneysen (1912: 277) has translated the stanza as ‘*Jeden Morgen wirst du erhalten / [...], das Wild von Mag Muirtheimni, das den Wald beim Bregia-Feld durchstreift*’. He left *écét con seingbla seola* untranslated, and this thesis cannot make any sense of the line, except that the gen. sg. / pl. *con* ‘hounds, wolves’ seems to be dependent on *écét*. Since the aforementioned stanza concerns the chasing of hounds at Mag Muirthemne, a plausible meaning of *écét* could be ‘barking’.

The second attestation *ecet cor find foscod tráid* comes from a poem in a text concerning the levy placed on the Leinstermen. The poem is spoken by Finn mac Cumail and the beginning of the poem describes wolves trampling an area known as Broccross (O’Grady 1892: 366). The translation of this line is uncertain, and O’Grady did not translate the verse sections of the text. If *cor* is taken as *cór* ‘chorus, singing, music’, then *ecet* could still be translated as ‘barking’. Alternatively, *cor* could be a mistake for *con* which would form the same phrase as the previously mentioned *écét con*.

The last attestation in *eDIL* is *na foithe, oculus cor bhaat saghalerlabra letratacha maighseisc 7 murain na mona ac dlomad 7 ace ecet air* (Sjoestedt 1926: 84). Sjoestedt (1926: 85) leaves *ecet* untranslated but she translates the rest of the line as ‘*Les laiches de la plaine prirent la voix de chiens et devinrent coupantes, et les herbes du marais se mirent à le repousser et àcontre lui*’ (Sjoestedt 1926: 85–6). The meaning of *ecet* in this stanza is also unclear but it is evident that it is an action that is made against a person. Alternatively, it is possible that N’s *ecethach*, H’s *ecetach* and R’s *ecetach* could be related to *éigem* ‘a scream, cry; screaming, calling aloud’ or *éigid* ‘cries out, screams’ with the adjectival suffix *-ach* which denotes possession (GOI §347). The definition of ‘barking’ could still fit in this context as a bark could be viewed as a form of screaming. Since the meaning of the word is still unclear, it is left untranslated in the normalised text.

N’s *nanbhli* and H’s *nanble* have the correct nasalisation caused by the gen. pl. *onchon* which is lacking in R’s *anbli*. The same phrase, including the pattern of nasalisation, occurs in 22.1, although the words are in different cases. R may have miscopied the phrase in 22.1 for this phrase in 22.3 and subsequently copied the same nasalisation pattern. Since all manuscripts have the uninflected MidIr. gen. pl., it is retained in the normalised text.

The phrase *ina ndegaid* has the meaning ‘after them, behind them’, with the poss. pron. 3pl. causing nasalisation and acting as the object of *degaid*. This phrase has already been discussed in 22.2, where nasalisation was found in all manuscripts; in this line, nasalisation is not found in H’s *ina degaid*.

R would have innovated by adding the younger form *forthaib* of OIr. *foraib* ‘upon them’, particularly as this form can also be found in EModIr. as *orthaibh* (McManus 1994: 435), and as such it is omitted in the normalised text.

Both *crith* and *grith* were commonly confused with both words meaning ‘shaking, trembling, quivering’. The scribe may have used both terms as a form of word play. All manuscripts have MidIr. *úaman* ‘fear, the state of being afraid’ for OIr. *omun* or *ómun*, which could either be an *o*-stem or *u*-stem masculine. eDIL s.v. *omun*, *ómun* (www.dil.ie/33853) states that only *omun* occurs in MidIr., but from *ómun* comes MidIr. *úamun* and the latter form eventually supersedes *omun*, which comes to be treated only as an *o*-stem masculine.

The secondary meaning of *lorg* is ‘rear, rear-guard’; similarly, *tosach* has the secondary meaning ‘van, battlefront’ and those definitions are used here. These words are military terms whereby ‘van, battlefront’ is the front line of battle and ‘rear-guard’ is protecting the back of an army. As a phrase ‘battlefront and rear-guard’, it could mean that the warriors gathered in a circle, with their backs to each other, to prepare themselves for a possible battle with the wolves.

- 22.4** **N:** IS ann sin tra adruphairt nel mac laich lasamain friu Dorairngertsa duip ol nel ani nobhiadh don orgainsi
- H:** IS and sin tra atrubairt nel mac laich lasamain riu dorarngertsae duib ol nel anni nobiad don orcain-si
- R:** **IS** and sin tra atrubairt nél mac laich lasamain friu. Dorairngertsa duib ol nel an ambiad dindorcainsi.

Normalised text:

Is ann sin trá at·rubairt Nél mac Laích Lasamain friu, ‘Do·rairngert-sa dúib’, ol Nél, ‘a n·í no·biäd dind orcain-si’.

Translation:

It is then that Nél mac Laích Lasamain said to them, ‘I have prophesied to you’, said Nél, ‘what would result from this raid’.

R’s *atrubairt* is MidIr. aug. *t*-pret. 3sg. for OIr. *as·rubart* ‘had said’. Both N’s and H’s expansion strokes above the *b* have been expanded to the MidIr. ending, that is, N’s *adrupairt* and H’s *atrubairt*, based on R. N’s *ad·* is modern spelling of *at·* and since H and R have *at·*, *at·rubairt* is used in the normalised text. These forms contain the fossilised infixed pronoun class B 3sg. n. *-t^l*.

Similarly, OIr. aug. pret. 1sg. *do·rairngiurt* of *do·airngir* ‘promises; foretells, prophesies,’ is found with *-ert* in N’s *dorairngert* and H’s *dorarngert* and based on these forms, R has been expanded to *dorairngert* too. While the *-ert* ending could also be the aug. pret. 3sg., the emphasising pronoun 1sg. *-sa* indicates that the verb is in the 1sg.

N's OIr. *aní* 'that thing' has its MidIr. form in H's *an ní* which was created through the confusion with the substantive *ní* 'thing' (eDIL s.v. 4 *í, hí*, www.dil.ie/26897). R's *ana* is unusual; since *í* is stressed, there is no linguistic reason for it to become *a* but in MidIr., *í* could become *é* under the influence of the independent pronoun 3sg. f. *é* (Breatnach 1994: 277). A similar process may have occurred with R's *ana* but with the poss. pron. 3sg. m. *a^l*; however, no other example of *ana* can be found in eDIL. After *a n-í*, a relative clause should follow and since *a n-í* is the subject antecedent, a leniting relative clause is expected. In OIr., a lenited *b* is not orthographically indicated and this can be seen in H's *nobiad*. On the other hand, the EModIr. indication of a lenited *b* via a *h* can be seen in N's *nobhiadh*. R's *mbiad* is a MidIr. form whereby the relative particle *a^N* 'that which', which originally was followed by an independent verb, could now take a dependent verb (Breatnach 1994: 276). The particle could have been elided with the previous *ana*, thus giving R's *mbiad*.

Other possible explanations for R's *ana* are that the form could have originally been *aní a mbiad* and there was a loss of minims, or there may have been a doubling of the relative to have *a n- a n-*.

After *orcain/orgain*, the demonstrative *-se, -seo* or *-sea* is expected but due to unstressed final vowels becoming /ə/, *-si* is found instead in all manuscripts (GOI §475(a)).

- 22.5** **N:** *Cidh* arnadenemne maith deseom innosa ol aithis inardapstail. 7 arlethainm fir andatha da comalta inrigh
- H:** *Cid* arna denaimne maith deisium indosa ol aithes an artapstail 7 ar lethainm fir annatha da comaltai an righ.
- R:** *Cid immoro* arná dénam maith desium indosa ol athais ind ardapstail 7 ar lethainm fir anduda dá comalta indrig.

Normalised text:

‘Cid arná·dénam maith dé·sium indosa’, ol Athais ind Ardapstail 7 ar Lethainm Fir Annatha dá chomalta ind ríg.

Translation:

‘Why do we not make the situation good with him now?’ said Athais ind Ardapstail (‘Insult of High Apostle’) and said Lethainm Fir Annatha (‘Half-name of a Man of Bad Poetic Composition’), two foster brothers of the king.

Only R has MidIr. *immorro* (OIr. *immurgu*) ‘then, now, indeed’ and this could have easily been added by the scribe and consequently, it is left out of the normalised text.

R's *·denam* is the pres. 1pl. of *do·gní* ‘to do, make’. H's *·denaim* is also the pres. 1pl. of the same verb, however, it has had the emphasising pronoun 1pl. *-ni* assimilated into the verbal ending.

N's *·denem* is ambiguous as to whether a 1sg. or pl. is found but the emphasising pronoun 1pl. *-ni* indicates *·denam* is required. The emphasising pronoun *-ni* is retained in the normalised text as it is found in both N and H.

Breatnach (2003: 136) has demonstrated that the conj. prep. 3sg. m. of *di/de^L* 'from' has a long *e* and as such, it is written as *dé* in the normalised text. H's and R's *-sium* is the emphasising pronoun 3sg. m. and this is seen in its later form in N's *-seom*.

OIr. *indorsa* 'now; for example, for instance' became MidIr. *indossa* and this is found in all manuscripts. R's *athais* 'insult, disgrace' has its MidIr. form in N's *aithis*, while H's *aithes* is ambiguous as to whether it is an OIr. or MidIr. form.

It is unusual for OIr. *ol* 'says' to be found alongside MidIr. *ar* 'says' and this is seen in all three manuscripts.

R's *dá* is a later version of N's and H's OIr. *da* 'two'; despite *da* causing lenition, it is not found on *comalta* 'foster-brother' in any of manuscript. The lenition is restored in the normalised text. The two foster-brothers' names are given earlier in the text in N's and H's §13; however, in R, only one of the plunderers' names is mentioned.³² The names of the plunderers are: Athais ind Ardapstail is identified as Máel Cainnich úa Brádacain and Lethainm Fir Anduda is also known as Ócán úa hUrthaile.

The analysis of N's *andatha*, H's *annatha* and R's *anduda* is uncertain. N's and H's form may be the neg. prefix *an-* with the gen. sg. of *nath* 'a poetical composition'. The term *nath* more specifically refers to a type of poem that is associated with an *ánruth*, which was a poet that was beneath the level of an *ollam*, therefore, the translation 'bad poetic composition' is used to indicate the plunderer is not as skilful with language as Máél. R's form may also be *annatha* if one takes into consideration hypercorrection of *nn* > *nd* and EModIr. confusion of *dh* /ð/ and *th* /θ/ (McManus 1994: 354). Alternatively, R's *anduda* may be the gen. sg. of *andud* 'inspiring, kindling'. Similarly, N's and H's form could also be a form of *anduda*, if MidIr. *nd* > *nn* and EModIr. confusion of *dh* /ð/ and *th* /θ/ is taken into consideration. N's and H's analysis has been followed as it makes the most sense in the current context. The *lethainm* 'half-name' may be referring to the fact that Ócán is not at the level of an *ollam* like Máél and *annatha* is mocking his inability to compose poems.

³² The following is found in the manuscripts: in N: *Aithis an Ard-apstail .i. Maolcainne ua Bradagain/Leth-ainm fir annatha .i. ogan ua hUrthaile*; in H: *H: Aithis anardapstail .i. moel cainach uobradagain/ Leth ainm fir andudha .i. ogan uahurthuile*; and in R: *Leth ainm fir anduda .i. ócan hua hurtaili*.

- 22.6** **N:** Talla *foraiph on ol nel mac laoch lasamain friu*
H: Talla *foraib on ol nel mac laich lasamain friu*
R: Talla *foraib ón ol nél mac laich lasamain friu.*

Normalised text:

‘Talla *foraib ón*’, ol Nél mac Laích Lasamain friu.

Translation:

‘This is possible for you’, said Nél mac Laích Lasamain to them.

The pres. ind. 3sg. of *do·alla* ‘there is room for’ is found in its contracted deuterotonic form as *talla* in all manuscripts. When *do·alla* is used with prep. *for* ‘to/for’ it has the figurative meaning ‘it is possible for...’ The demonstrative pronoun 3sg. n. *ón* refers to the desire of the two plunderers to make amends with Máel Milscothach, which is mentioned in 22.5.

- 22.7** **N:** Mad *thalla forn ém ol siad doueraum labennachtauin 7 la failti do maol milscothach aní donrocht fo imthuach*
H: Ma *talla forn em ol siath doberam la bennachtain 7 la failte do moel milscothach anni deroacht foimtoch*
R: Ma *tall/a\ forn ém olsiat donberam la failti 7 bennachtain do mael milscothach anní donrócht foimthuch.*

Normalised text:

‘Má *thalla forn ém*’, olsiat, ‘Da·beram la fáilti 7 bennachtain do Máel Milscothach a n-í don·roächt, fo imthach’.

Translation:

‘If it is possible for us, then’, they said, ‘let us give that which we acquired under compurgatory oath with welcome and blessing to Máel Milscothach’.

N’s *mad* for H’s and R’s conj. *má^L* ‘if’ has EModIr. silent /ð/ (McManus 1994: 351). Only N’s *thalla* shows the lenition caused by *má* and this is restored in the normalised text. See 22.6 for the verb *talla*.

There is confusion with the verbal form of *do·beir* ‘give, bring’. N’s *doueram*, H’s *doberam* and R’s *donberam* could be the fut. 1pl., but R has an *n* which could indicate nasalisation or the infixed pronoun class A 3sg. m. *a^N*. However, N’s *u* in *doueram* shows that the *b* has been lenited, which could indicate the infixed pronoun class A 3sg. n. *a^L*. Griffith (2023) suggests that this infixed pronoun could be referring to *a n-í* and thus the lack of nasalisation in H’s form. R’s nasalisation

could be an innovation, particularly as the confusion of nasalisation has been seen many times already. If there is indeed an infix pronoun, the verb could also be the ipv. 1pl. and this mood would make more grammatical sense than the fut. because the plunderers are trying to persuade one another to make amends with Máel Milscothach. Alternatively, Stifter (2024) has suggested that R's *-n-* could be due, not to an infix pronoun in the preverb, but the anticipatory of the *-n-* in the following *donrócht*. Ultimately, the verb is interpreted as the ipv. 1pl. of *do-beir* with an infix pronoun class A 3sg. n. Despite the infix pronoun not being seen in any of the manuscripts, it is added in the normalised text.

R's *la failti 7 bennachtain* is in a different word order to N's *la bennachtauin 7 la failti* and H's *la bennachtain 7 la failte*. The second prep. *la^H* 'with' is missing in R but this could have easily been left out by the scribe. Whether R or N and H have the correct word order can perhaps be determined through a linguistic principle termed Behaghel's Law of Increasing Terms (*das Gesetz der wachsenden Glieder*). The law states that: *von zwei Satzgliedern geht, wenn möglich, das kürzere dem längeren voran* 'Given two phrases, when possible, the shorter precedes the longer.' (Behaghel 1909: 138–9; Stifter 2009: 105–6). Therefore, R would more likely have the natural word-order due to *failti* being a shorter word than *bennachtain* and it is this word order that is used for the normalised text.

N's *a ní* 'that which' versus H's *an ni* and R's *an ní* has already been discussed in 22.4. The deictic particle refers to something that has already been mentioned, in this case the spoils from the raid, and it is the subject antecedent of the pret. 3sg. of *do-roích* 'comes, reaches; attains; acquires' in all manuscripts. N's *donrocht* and R's *donrócht* may have an infix pronoun class A 1pl. *-n-*, which references a destination. The lack of *n* in H's *deroacht* could be another example of confusion with nasalisation, or the scribe could have accidentally forgotten to put a suspension stroke above the *e*. Further, H gives evidence in support of the OIr. form *do-roächt*, but N and R have the MidIr. *do-rócht*, with OIr. hiatus disappearing in MidIr. (Breatnach 1994: 231). H's form is used in the normalised text.

- 22.8** **N:** *Patar antaigh tra iar suidiu in triarso am chorai 7 im aithrige fri maol milscothach
 conepert maol milscothach friu.*
- H:** *batar oentaigt—tra iar suidiu an triarsiu am corai 7 aithrige fri mael milscothach
 conepert moel milscothach friu*
- R:** **Batar** oentadaig tra in triarsa *im chorai 7 im aithrige fri mael. Conepert mael friu.*

Normalised text:

Batar óentadaig trá íar suidiu in tríar-so im chórai 7 im aithrige fri Máel Milscothach,
co·n-epert Máel Milscothach friu:

Translation:

After this, this trio were in agreement concerning the justice and regret to Máel Milscothach, so that Máel Milscothach said to them:

eDIL's entry for *óentach* (www.dil.ie/33537) 'united, agreed' cites N's nom. pl. *antaigh* as the only attestation of the form, thus making the entry doubtful. R's *oentadaig* is the nom. pl. of the better attested *óentadach* 'willing, agreed', which is *óentu* 'unity' with the adjective suffix *-ach*, but most of the attestations come from later texts. There is uncertainty about H's form due to the suspension above the second *t* and it is left unexpanded in the manuscript transcription. The word could possibly be a form of *oentaigech* 'willing, agreed; voluntary', but this would not explain the presence of the second *t*. The *t* and suspension stroke could also be an expansion for a verbal form; however, one would not expect a verb after the copula, but rather an adjective or noun. N's and H's common archetype may have had a corruption that neither scribe understood. The word is analysed as a form of *óentadach* as it is the simplest explanation.

N and H have OIr. *iar suidiu* 'after this' and this is missing in R. N and H have two instances of *mael milscothach* while R has two instances of only *mael*. There could be a possibility that the scribe of R has forgotten to add a suspension stroke after *mael*.

The prep. *imm*^L (+ acc) usually has the meaning 'around, about' but can also have the abstract meaning 'concerning'. Only N's *chorai* and R's *chorai* show the lenition caused by *imm*, and this is missing in H.

Schoen (2015: 77) writes that the literal translation of *im aitrighi* is '(they were) in apology', taking *im* as the prep. *i*^N 'in/into' with the *m* being nasalisation; however, this is incorrect as an *n* would be expected for the orthographical representation of a nasalised vowel. Instead, *im* is to be interpreted as the prep. *imm*^L with the same meaning as discussed in the previous paragraph.

The OIr. personal numeral *triär* 'trio, three persons' is originally disyllabic but MidIr. loss of hiatus led to *tríar* (Breatnach 1994: 231). It is difficult to determine whether the archetype had the OIr. or MidIr. form, but as this is a MidIr. text, *tríar* is used in the normalised text.

N and R has the correct demonstrative pronoun *-so* or *-sa* used after a broad vowel, but H's *-siu* form is the consequence of final unstressed vowels becoming schwas /ə/.

22.9 N: Triar *fer* do muinntir in righ.
Rodaerc bruth 7 brigh.
Tri cathluain glana amail glain.
Rop *ferrdi maol* dia rochtain

H: Triar \fer/ de muntir an rig.
 Rodaerc bruth 7 brig
 tri cathluain glana amal glain.
 Rop ferr de mael dia rochtain

R: Triar do muintir indríg.
 Rodaerc bruth 7 brígh.
 Tri cathluain glana amal glain.
 Rop ferr di mael dia rochtain.

Normalised text:

Triär de muintir ind ríg,
roda·erc bruth 7 bríg,
trí cathlúain glana amal glain,
rop ferr di Máel dia rochtain.

Translation:

Three men from the household of the king,
whom fury and strength had filled,
three clear pure battles like glass,
it may be better for Máel to reach them.

In OIr., the personal numeral *triär* is used as a substantive in the meaning ‘three men’ and this construction is seen in R. In MidIr., the personal numerals were treated as nouns that were then followed by the gen. pl. and this construction is seen in N’s and H’s *triar fer* (Breatnach 1994: 262; Greene 1992: 516). Since in MidIr. *triar* has the meaning ‘three people’ the *fer* may have been added to stress the plunderers were men. OIr. *triär* is found in R in order to adhere to the syllable count of seven, but in N and H, MidIr. *triar* is found as the addition of *fer* adds an extra syllable. In H, however, the scribe may have forgotten to add *fer* so wrote it above the line, and this may indicate that he may have been aware of the disyllabic scansion of *triär* but his archetype had *triar fer*. The use of OIr. hiatuses may be a scribal stylistic choice to imply that Máel was a highly educated poet.

Since prepositions were unstressed, the prep *di/de*^L ‘from’ and *do*^L ‘to/for’ were both pronounced as /də/ and either could have been intended in this line but based on context *di/de* would be the most suitable preposition.

N’s, H’s and R’s *rodaerc* is analysed as the aug. pret. 3sg. *erc* ‘hand filled’ and is used in a relative clause with the object antecedent being *triär* ‘three men’. The use of infixed pronoun class C

3pl. *-da^H* is unusual as there is already an object. Griffith (2023) suggests that the first line could be taken as a *nominativus pendens*, however, he notes that the verb should not then be in a relative construction and the expected infix pronoun would be a class A. However, McCone (1997: 175) states that the infix pronoun class C 3sg. n. *-d* could be used as a relative mark, and it is more likely that the infix pronoun in N's, H's and R's form is an example of this use.

N's *in* and H's *an* is the reduced MidIr. form of R's *ind*, which is the OIr. gen. sg. m. of the article.

Both *bruth* and *bríg* are in the nom. sg. as a broad *g /y/* is required to rime with the broad *g* of the gen. sg. *ríg*. If *bríg* was in the acc. sg., the *g* would be slender, and this would not rime with *ríg*.

All manuscripts have MidIr. nom. pl. m. *glana* 'clean, pure, clear, bright' for OIr. *glain*.

N's *amail* is the EOIr. form of OIr. *amal* 'like, as' (GOI §168). H's and R's *am-* has been expanded to OIr. *amal*.

In *rop*, the augm. pres. subj. 3sg. of the copula, the augm. *ro·* expresses 'an action as potential, therefore as not actually or necessarily happening at the moment but as in various degrees likely to happen or capable of happening' (McCone 1997: 93). The meaning of line four may be that Máel should approach the plunderers himself in order to persuade them to return the spoils.

22.10 N: Diass diph do leth cuind.
fer do tsil oilella oluim.
tri braithre aontaigh fo cress.
cen cop foccus agcairdiss.

H: dias diib do leith cuim.
fer do sil oilella auluim
tri brathair oentad fo craess
cen cob focus a cairdes.

R: Dias diib do leith cuind.
fer di síl ailella auluim.
tri brathair aentad fo cres.
cen cop focus acairdes.

Normalised text:

Diäs diib do Leith Chuinn,
 fer di síl Ailella Áluim,
 trí bráthair óntad fo chres,
 cen cop focus a cairdes.

Translation:

A pair of them from Leth Cuinn,
 a man from the seed of Ailill Áulomm,
 three brothers in close friendship, of fellowship,
 though their kinship might not be close.

OIr. *diäs* ‘a pair’ is found instead of MidIr. *dias* in order to adhere to the seven-syllable count. Similarly, OIr. *diib* ‘from them’ is found instead of *diib*, *dīb* or even the contracted *dīb* as seen in N, and which leaves the line one syllable short of the required seven-syllable count (GOI §114, §435).

The personal name Ailill Áulomm has the meaning ‘Bare-Ear’. The name Ailill has its OIr. form in R’s *aillella* but shows MidIr. *ai* > *oi* in N’s and H’s *oilella* (Breatnach 1994: 232). H’s and R’s *auluim* has a later form in N’s *oluim* as a result of OIr. *áu* becoming *ó* during the OIr. period (GOI §69). In *Cóir Anmann* (Arbuthnot 2007: 12–13, 88–9), the name is described as a compound of *ó* ‘ear’ with *lom* ‘bare’. eDIL s.v. 3 *ó* (www.dil.ie/33366) lists examples of both *ó* and *áu* forms. As this is a MidIr. text, it is unusual that *áu* is found in the text. In Qiu’s (2019: 365–7) examination of the distribution of *ae* ‘descendant, grandson’ and its variants *úa* and *ó* in the Annals of Ulster, he concludes that the *o*-forms of *ae* were already seen in the 8th century ‘but did not become significant until the mid-9th century’. He further speculates that the *o*-forms of *ae* ‘was probably hindered after the mid-9th century when most of these words fell into disuse: *ó* ‘ear’ was gradually replaced by *clúas* ‘ear’...’ Thus, it could be possible that H’s and R’s *auluim* is an archaism. Another reason could be because it is a name, the *au* became fossilised. Since it is found in both branches, it is used in the normalised text.

R’s and H’s *brathair* is the OIr. nom. pl. of *bráthair* ‘brothers’; however, N’s *braithre* is MidIr. acc. pl. used as a nom. pl.

N’s *aontaigh* disagrees with R’s *aentad*, and H’s *oent-* is ambiguous as to what form it could be. The meaning of these words is unclear. Byrne (1908: 62) does not include the transcription of H in her edition and Schoen (2015: 76–7) amends R’s *aentad* to *aenta[ig]*, seemingly with the intention to follow N. She translates the line as ‘they were as close as brothers’. eDIL has an entry for *oentach* (www.dil.ie/33537) ‘united, agreed’ and lists only two attestations which are both from *Airec*

Menman. N's *aontaigh* could be the nom. pl. m. of *oentach* to agree with *bráthair*. However, this does not explain R's *aentad* whose form could be the gen. sg. of *oentu* 'oneness, unity; association, fellowship, alliance'. H's *oent-* could be either *oentach* or *oentu*. Under eDIL s.v. *oentu*, *aentaide* is cited as a later gen. sg. form and if MidIr. confusion between *d /ð/* and *g /ɣ/* (Breatnach 1994: 234–5) is taken into consideration then N's *aontaigh* could be a form of *oentu*, although this would not explain the lack of *-e* ending. Alternatively, N could have the later nom. sg. *aentaíd* for *oentu* and this line, if taken with an unexpressed copula, could mean: 'A fellowship were the three brothers'. So far, the argument is in favour of *oentu*, especially because its secondary meaning of 'association, fellowship, alliance,' semantically fits this context. R's form is interpreted as the gen. sg. and has been followed in the normalised text as it is the simplest explanation and H's *oent-* has been expanded to follow R.

It is uncertain what the translation of *fo cres* is. eDIL has an entry for *cress* (s.v. ? *cress*), however, there is a question mark next to the entry, thus making the attestation of the word doubtful. eDIL only cites one example from the MidIr. tale 'The Colloquy Between Fintan and the Hawk of Achill' and it is: *Meissi do thóguib in mess / iss do chuiris é rem chress* (Meyer 1907: 35). Hull (1932: 398) translates these lines as 'I it was who picked up the fruits. / And put them in my girdle.' There is also the better attested *cris* (s.v. *cris*) 'girdle, belt, loop', but one would expect *crius* for the dat. sg. and this is not attested. The translation 'girdle' would also not make sense in this context. Further, the word would not make perfect rime with *cairdes* in the next line.

eDIL also has two entries for *cres*, the first is under s.v. 1 *cres* (o/ā) 'narrow, slender, restricted' and one of the examples that may be relevant for this context is: *nirbu chres coicne / coimchnis bráithre / balcc ellach án / aithre scéo máithre* and this line comes from the *Genealogies* in Rawl. B. 502 (O'Brien 1962: 4). Meyer (1913: 45) translates these lines as '*Nicht war es eine winzige Genossenschaft gleichgearteter Brüder; eine starke Gemeinde waren ihre Väter and Mütter*'.³³ The context of this example is similar to this stanza in *Airec Menman*, which is also talking about brothers. Therefore, *fo cres* could have the meaning of 'under closeness/tightness' to describe their relationship and *cres* is used as a substantive.³⁴ The second eDIL entry for s.v. 2 *cres* has the meaning 'brandishing', and this is the definition Schoen has used for her translation, but the definition does not fit semantically as brandishing is the physical act of shaking something. Its only attestation is also from *Airec Menman*, specifically the current line under discussion. The most plausible solution to the issue of this word is the substantival use of the adjective *cres* and this would lend further support for the previously discussed *oentad*. The line then may mean that although these three brothers are not

³³ 'It was not a tiny cooperative of like-minded brothers. A strong community was their fathers and mothers.'

³⁴ There is potentially another attestation in the poem 'King and Hermit' beginning: *A Marbáin, a díthruabaig* (Meyer 1901b). In stanza nine, l. 3, it states: *feruid in coill imma cress* 'The forest around its narrowness sheds' (Meyer 1901b: 12–3). While this alternate definition was considered, it does not make sense within the context of *Airec Menman*.

blood brothers, they are, nevertheless, three friends that have formed a strong bond akin to brothers. Consequently, *cairdes* in the next line is translated as ‘kinship’ instead of ‘friendship’ in order to highlight their lack of blood relations.

Despite the lenition caused by the prep. *fo*^L ‘under’ not appearing in any of the manuscripts, it is restored in the normalised text. N’s *gcairdiss* shows modern orthographical representation of a nasalised *c* with a *g*.

22.11 N: Niald *mac aodh arca máil.*
maol *caindeigh* ua *bradagain.*
ócan ard ergaire gaild
comalta dé^tla domnaill

H: Niall *mac Aeda erc^tha mal.*
maelcaindic ua *bradacain*
ocan ard ergairi goill
comaltae detla domnaill

R: Níall *mac aeda erc^tha mail.*
maelcainnich ua *bradradain.*
ócan ard ergairi ngaill.
com\^d/alta detla domnaill.

Normalised text:

Níall mac Aeda – erc^tha máil –
Máel Cainnich úa Brádacáin,
Ócán ard ergaire ngaill,
comaltai dé^tla Domnaill.

Transation:

Níall mac Áeda – erc^tha of a prince – ,
Máel Cainnich úa Brádacáin,
noble Ócán, the hindering of a foreigner,
brave foster-brothers of Domnall.

eDIL has an entry for ‘? erc^tha’ (www.dil.ie/20253) and suggests that it may be an adjective although the meaning is unknown. The entry lists three other attestations³⁵ and our text is another

³⁵ The other attestations from eDIL are: *clann Amargin erc^tha chned*, ZCP viii 218.1 = *ercda cned*, 333.19. *eol dam aided*, *erc[th]a gním | na secht Maine*, ix 175.8. Cf. *erca .i. imAmad*, LL 44b31.

attestation that could be added to the list. In the examples, the word is used in the context of wounding and death. In eDIL there are also the following two entries: s.v. 1 *ercaid* (www.dil.ie/20232) ‘fills; abounds, increases (?)’, and 2 *ercaid* (www.dil.ie/20233) ‘pricks, pierces, wounds, reddens; adorns, displays, makes known’. Since *mail* is the gen. sg. of *mál* ‘prince, chief noble or eminent’, *erctha* cannot be a verb but it is likely to be an adjective that occurs in a cheville with *mail*. The word could be related to a verbal noun that is related to either verbs and standing in apposition to *Áed* to mean ‘wounding of a prince’ or ‘adorning of a prince’. The word is left untranslated as all of these definitions are plausible.

N’s *máil* ‘of a prince’ and R’s *mail* contrast with H’s *mal* and the former forms are used in the normalised text.

R’s *bradradain* may be a corruption of N’s *bradagain* and H’s *bradacain*. R seems to have misread the line while copying and wrote *ra* twice. H’s form is used in the normalised text as the suffix *-acán* is commonly found in names (GOI §271).

The personal name *Ócán* has the meaning ‘a youth, a young man’. Only R’s *ngaiill* ‘of a foreigner’ has the nasalisation caused by the nom. sg. *airgaire* ‘prohibiting, preventing, hindering’. The lack of nasalisation on N’s *gaild* and H’s *goill* may be due to the originally neuter *airgaire* now becoming a masculine noun, the nom. sg. of which did not cause mutation. One would expect the gen. pl. *gall* ‘foreigner’ instead of the gen. sg., and this may be the scribe’s veiled insult at *Ócán*’s lack of fighting skills, that is, instead of being able to stop a group of foreigners, he was only able to stop one foreigner.

The nom. sg. or pl. of *comaltae* ‘foster-brother’ cannot formally be determined due to MidIr. unstressed final vowels becoming /ə/. H’s *comaltae* ostensibly has the nom. sg. ending, whereas N’s *comalta* could be either sg. or pl. If it is the nom. sg., it could be referring to the previously mentioned *Ócán*; however, since this is the final line of the stanza and the previous three lines have been concerned with King Domnall’s relatives, H’s *comaltae* and N’s *comalta* has been taken as the nom. pl. Similarly, R’s *comdalta* is the nom. pl. of *comdaltae* ‘foster-brother’, but the scribe seems to have forgotten the *d* and added it above the line. In eDIL s.v. *comdalta* (www.dil.ie/10976), there are few attestations of this word and they come from later texts. R’s archetype may have had *comalta* but the scribe changed the word to the, for him, more common *comdalta*.

22.12 N: *Tancatar có rer dia tigh*
 mail menmanuigh milscothaig
 is ferrdi maol as gach cur
 ferrasum de atriur.
 Triar.

H: Tancutar go rer da taeicch
mael menmonnaig milscothaig
is ferrde mael as cech cur
ferrasium de a triuar.
Triar do muintir.

R: Tacatar co reir da thaigh.
máil menmannaigh milscothaig.
is ferrdi mael as cach cur.
ferrasum de atriur.
Triur.

Normalised text:

Táncatar co réir dia thaig,
Maíl menmanaig Milscóthaig,
Is ferrde Máel ás cach cur,
ferra-sum dé a triür.
Triär.

Translation:

They came with a request to the house,
of intelligent Máel Milscóthach.
Máel is the better for it – above every warrior –
The three of them were the better for it.
A group of three.

R's *tacatar* has a missing *n* for the pret. indep. prot. 3pl. of *do-icc* 'to come' and this could possibly be due to a missing suspension stroke. N's *Tancatar* and H's *Tancutar* has the correct form, and this is used in the normalised text.

Scribes haphazardly use length-marks in manuscripts where long vowels are not always marked and at times, short vowels are also marked (Russell 1995: 225), and this can be seen in N's *có* for the prep. *co*^N 'with'.

OIr. prep. *do*^L 'to for' is found in H and R as MidIr. *da* (eDIL s.v. 1 *do*, www.dil.ie/17096). N's *dia* could be the prep. *do* with the poss. pron. 3sg. m. *a*^L, however, as in line 3 we are told the house belongs to Máel Milscóthach, the poss. pron. may be unnecessary. Instead *dia* perhaps should be interpreted as a MidIr. form for the prep. *do* as well. In MidIr. *dia* could later become *dá*

(Breatnach 1994: 326), thus it is not inconceivable that *dia* could become the simple prep. *do*^L ‘to/for’. Only R’s *thaigh* has the lenition caused by the prep. *do* on the dat. sg. *taig* of *tech* ‘house’ and this is restored in the normalised text.

eDIL s.v. *menmnach* (www.dil.ie/31956) gives the following definitions: ‘a) spirited, bold, stout-hearted, self-confident; b) in good spirits, glad’ and it is derived from the word *menma* ‘mind, intelligence: a) the thinking faculty, the understanding; b) emotional nature, state of mind, feeling; c) spirit, courage, self-confidence’. Since Máel Milscothach is regularly praised for his mind, specifically for his skills with words, N’ *menmanuigh*, H’s *menmonnaig* and R’s *menmannaigh* has been translated as ‘intelligent’ as it better fits the context.

In OIr., the comparative *ferr* ‘better’ and the prep. *de* ‘of/from it’ were two separate words, but in MidIr., *-de* became a suffix and attached to *ferr*, thus in the normalised text the phrase is written as a single word (eDIL s.v. 5 *de*, www.dil.ie/14791). The prep. *ós* can also be found as *ás* ‘above’ (Breatnach 1994: 329). The alternative spelling of *caur* ‘warrior, hero’ is *cur* (eDIL s.v. *caur*, www.dil.ie/8406) with EOIr. *au* > OIr. *u* (McCone 1996b: 139).

Schoen (2015: 77–8) has read *ferra* as *ferrda*, therefore as a comparative or superlative, and translates it as ‘the most manly’; however, this is incorrect. Although OIr. *ferr* ‘better’ is indeclinable, later the plural form *ferra* can also be found (Thurneysen 1946: 236). Further, as all manuscripts agree on *ferra*, amending the line to *ferrda* is unnecessary. It is also interesting that *ferra de* has been separated by *-sum*. The construction of *ferrdi* in line 3 and then *ferra-sum dé* in line 4 could potentially be a stylistic construction used to convey Máel Milscothach’s superior command of the language when compared to the plunderers.

N’s and R’s *-sum* is the correct form of the emphasising pronoun when preceded by a broad vowel, unlike in H’s *-sium*. The emphasising pronoun 3pl. is highlighting the subject found in an unexpressed past. 3pl. *atar* of the copula.

The personal numeral *triär*, like in 22.12 (a), is disyllabic to provide the seven-syllable count and it is in the dative of apposition with the poss. pron. 3pl. *a* to have the meaning ‘the three of them’ (Thurneysen 1946: 244).

H’s *dúnad* also has *do muintir*, which could have been easily added by the scribe and is omitted in the normalised text.

- 23.1** **N:** IN tan tra bouth forsna briathruiphsin 7 tarmartatar inn óig facuail a creithe la maol milscothach
- H:** IN tan tra both forsna briathraibsin 7 tarmartatar an oic facbail a creche la mael milscothach
- R:** IN tan tra both forna briatraibsin 7 tarmartatar indóic fácbail a crichi la mael milscothach.

Normalised text:

In tan trá both forsna bríathraib-sin 7 tarmartatar ind óic fácbáil a creche la Máel Milscothach.

Translation:

Indeed, when these words had been said and the warriors were on the point of leaving their spoils with Máel Milscothach,

The pret. rel. impers. 3sg. of *at-tá* ‘to be’ is *both* and it has the literal meaning ‘when one was’ but idiomatically is translated as ‘when ... had been said.’

N’s and H’s *forsna* can also be found without an *s* like in R’s *forna*. An *s* is usually found with prepositions that do not lenite, for example, *for* ‘upon’, *co*^N ‘with’ (*cosin*) and *fri*^H ‘against, towards’ (*frisin*) and in MidIr. manuscripts, the forms with *s* are the norm (Stifter 2006: 63). Both forms could have been in the archetype, but as *forsna* is more common it is used in the normalised text.

The pret. 3pl. of *do-armairt* ‘was on the point of, was likely to, was nearly,’ is only found in the pret. and attestations in eDIL s.v. *do-armairt* (www.dil.ie/17186) come mostly from later texts. Pedersen (1909: 675) suggests that the verb belongs to the verbal root *-bert*, although if this was the case, one would expect an *s*-pret. and not the suffixless pret.

- 23.2** **N:** IS and adrupairt anufessach mac begeolais infaigh boi aca .7 sandtathachan mac sneidriagla 7 accouhrach mac indili. dolbfamaitni aóca oliatsidhe sé muca mieinigh uaibsi a neinech na sé noncon nanblei rofaidhe maol milscothach comageba doib itir chona 7 muca
- H:** IS and adrubairt anbfesach mac beceolais an fath 7 santachan mac snedriaglae 7 accobrach mac indili. dolfamne a ocae ol eatside .uí. muca mienich uaibsi i nenach na se nonchonsin nanble rofaide mael milscothach combagebai doib itir conae 7 mucai
- R:** IS and adubairt anfesach mac beceolais an faith bai oca 7 sanntachan mac sneídriagla 7 ocabrach mac indile. dolfamne aóca oleatsaide .uí. muca mieneich uabsi anenech na sé noncon nanblisin rofaide mael milscothach. combageba dóib etir cona 7 muca.

Normalised text:

Is and ad-rubairt Ainfesach mac Becéolais in fáith boí oca 7 Sanntachán mac Snéidríaglae 7 Accobrach mac Indile: ‘Dolfam-ni a óca’, ol eat-side, ‘.ui. mucca míeneich úaib-si i n-enech na sé n-onchon n-anble-sin ro-fáide Máel Milscothach, co’mba-géba dóib etir cona 7 muca’.

Translation:

It is then that Ainfesach mac Becéolais (‘Ignorant son of Little Knowledge’), the seer, who was with them, and Sanntachán mac Snéidríaglae (‘Covetous son of Swift Rule’), and Accobrach mac Indile (‘Greedy son of Possessions’) said: ‘Oh warriors, let us magically conjure’, they said, ‘six pigs of dishonour from you against the honour of these six savage beasts whom Máel Milscothach sent so that they will attack each other, both beasts and pigs’.

OIr. pret. 3sg. *as-rubart* becomes MidIr. *at-rubairt*, which itself later becomes *adubairt* and then ModIr. *adúirt* > *dúirt* (Breatnach 1994: 285, 324; McManus 1994: 414). All manuscripts have the MidIr. form with *ad-* and this could be MidIr. confusion of *d* for *t* /*d*/ or ModIr. spelling. The normalised text has maintained *ad-* as it is found in all manuscripts.

Since there are three subjects, namely Ainfesach mac Becéolais, Santachán mac Sneidriagalae and Accobrach mac Indile, one would expect the pret. 3pl. of *as-beir* ‘says’; however, if one of the noun phrases occurs immediately after the verb and the rest is separated by other phrases, then only a 3sg. verb is needed (Lash & Griffith 2018: 105–6).

N’s *oliat* and H’s and R’s *oleat* are MidIr. forms of OIr. *olseat* ‘they say’. N’s *sidhe* and H’s *side* is the anaphoric pronoun 3pl. *-side* but later R’s *saide* is also found (GOI §479).

N’s *anufessach* and H’s *anbfesach* have the modern indication of a nasalised *f*, therefore *bhf-*, as the neg. pref. *an-* nasalises; however, later *an-* comes to lenite. R’s *anfesach* is ambiguous as regards whether the nasalised /*β*/ or lenited silent *f* is found. In the normalised text, *an-* that nasalises is used, and the orthography of an *f* to represent /*β*/ is also used.

N’s *faigh* is from *fáid* ‘seer’ and shows MidIr. confusion of *d* /*ð*/ and *g* /*ɣ*/ but *fáid* could also be written as *fáith* and this is the form found in H’s *fath* and R’s *faith*. N’s *boi aca* and R’s *bai oca* is missing in H, but as it is found in both branches of the stemma, it is used in the normalised text, particularly as H’s scribe could have easily left it out.

H’s *santachan* ‘greedy, covetous’ is found in N’s *sandtathachan* and R’s *sanntachan* as a later form with the double *n*. This word consists of *santach*, later *sanntach*, ‘desirous, greedy, covetous’ with the diminutive or hypocoristic suffix *-án* added (GOI §270). In eDIL s.v. *santachán* (www.dil.ie/36191), the only attestation is from this text. N has an example of dittography with the

repetition of *-ta-* with the spiritus asper above the *t*, perhaps originally for the following *ch*. It is difficult to decide whether to normalise to a single or double *n*, but as the double *n* is found in both N and H, it has been used in the normalised text.

N's *dolbfamaitni* is MidIr. f-fut. 1pl. of *dolbaid*, *doilbid* 'a) fashions, shapes, forms; b) esp. of magical formation'. The lack of *b* in R's *dolfamne* and H's *dolfamne* could be due to the merger of the *b* of the verbal stem and *f* of the future-suffix (Stifter 2006: 283). Another alternative explanation is that H's and R's *dolfam* could be the 1pl. ipv. of the same verb with the expected OIr. ipv. being *dolbam*. The *b* would have been pronounced as /β/ and this could have been written as *-f-*, thus obtaining *dolfam*. N may not have understood *dolfam* and changed the verb to the MidIr. fut. 1pl. *dolbfamait*. The ipv. tense would make the most sense as the plunderers are discussing their strategy to fight against the hounds. Therefore, R's and H's form is used in the normalised text.

N has the Arabic numeral for *sé* 'six,' but H and R has the Roman numeral for *sé*. The use of Arabic numerals in medieval manuscripts 'first became known in Spain in the tenth century', and then 'spread in Western Europe in the twelfth century and became common from the fourteenth century' (Clemens & Graham 2007: 93). Thus, N's form is a late addition and H's and R's *.ui.* is used in the normalised text.

There are two main definitions for *enech*, *ainech*: 'i) face, front' and ii) 'honour, repute, good name.' When it is used with the pejorative particle *mi-* 'less', therefore *míenech*, it has the meaning 'dishonour'; however, when it is used with the prep. *i^N* 'in, into', therefore *i enech*, it has the meaning 'against, in opposition to'. Further, in OIr., the word is a neuter *plurale tantum*, but in later language, it is reinterpreted as a singular noun and this line is an example of the singular use.

All manuscripts agree on the number of wild wolves and all manuscripts have the nasalisation caused by the gen. of *sé* on the following gen. pl. *onchon* 'savage beast'; similarly, the nasalisation caused by *onchon* is found on the following gen. pl. *anble* 'fierce, savage'. The correct use of nasalisation in this phrase is in contrast to 22.1 where there was also disagreement on the number of hounds (N: *sé*, R and H: *noí*). According to GOI §475(b), when the unstressed demonstrative particle *-sin* is used with a substantive that is followed by a qualifying word, the particle is attached to the qualifying word, such as found in R's *nanblisin* and unlike in H's *nonchonsin*, where it occurs after the substantive. This *-sin* is missing in N. Since R has the correct structure, it is used in the normalised text, but it is also quite conceivable for N to have left out the *-sin*. This phrase is the object antecedent of *ro-fáidi* 'had sent', and in OIr., an object antecedent could have caused nasalisation on the following verbal stem but in MidIr., this nasalisation was replaced by lenition (GOI §494; McCone 1997: 180). Since lenition is not always indicated on an *f*, it is unsurprising that none of the manuscripts have the orthographical representation of it, but it is restored in the normalised text.

Further, the OIr. aug. pret. 3sg. of *foídid* is *ro-fáidi* is seen in all manuscripts with MidIr. unstressed final vowel *-e /ə/* ending and this is kept in the normalised text.

Schoen (2015: 81) has translated R's *comageba* as 'so that he may retrieve them', or literally 'so that he may take hold', thus the pres. subj. 3sg. of the *gaibid* 'takes hold'; however, this would not give the prototonic verbal form beginning with *·ba-*. Another possibility is that the conj. *co^N* 'so that' is combined with the new *ē*-fut. 3sg. *·bagéba* for OIr. *·fogéba* of *fo-gaib* 'will get, gain, obtains', and the *m* would represent the nasalisation caused by *co^N*. The form *·bagéba* was created due to the following two processes: *fo > fa*, which generally happened when the following syllable contained an *a* (GOI §82), and then during MidIr., an *f* was voiced to a *b*, thus leading to confusion between *fo·* and *bo·* (Breatnach 1994: 284; O'Daly 1946: 130). However, this does not explain the lack of *b* in N's *comageba*. Further, syncope usually does not happen in the future stem in order to retain the *é* marker of the *ē*-fut. (McCone 2005: 48). eDIL s.v. 1 *techt* (www.dil.ie/40269) does cite the following EModIr. example: *teacht isteach go bhfaighir air* 'that you will take advantage of him,' taken from *Danta Aodhagáin Uí Rathaille* (Dinneen 1900: 210). ModIr. *faigh* 'obtain, procure, acquire, gain, win', which originated from OIr. *fo-gaib*, in EModIr. became *do-gheibh* (Stenson 2012: 1333–4). An issue with this argument is that there are no attested prototonic forms starting with a *b* in eDIL for *fo-gaib*.

Alternatively, the verbal form could be the reflexive and reciprocal preverb *imma n-* 'mutually' with prototonic form of *gaibid* 'takes' to form *imma-ngaib* 'mutually takes', but when *gaibid* is found with prep. *do*, it has the meaning of 'attacks', thus *imma-ngaib do* has the meaning 'mutually attacks' (eDIL s.v. *gaibid*, www.dil.ie/25119). Therefore, N's *comageba*, H's *combaegebai* and R's *combaegebai* could be analysed as conj. *co^N* 'so that' + *imma n-* 'mutually' + *·géba*, fut. 3sg. conj. of *gaibid*. Since nasalisation is usually marked on a *g*, the lack of *·ng* to represent nasalised *g* may represent the loss of nasalisation. The *-mb-* could be hypercorrection for *mm*. The conj. *co^N* and *imma n-* also shows vowel elision to give *co'mma-*. This explanation is used for the normalised text, particularly as its meaning fits the context, that is, the beasts and pigs are in battle with one another.

The conj. prep. 3pl. of *do^L* 'to/for' is *doaib* with the dat. pl. marker *-aib* but the *o* and *a* underwent contraction to form *dóib* (GOI §114, §435).

The unstressed prep. *eter*, *etir* can also appear with an *i*-variant, therefore *iter*, *itir*. The abbreviation *eī* is found in Wb., Ml. and Sg., whereby Ml. prefers *etir*, Wb. has a near-even occurrence between *eter* and *etir* and Sg. majorly prefers *etir*, but the *i*-variant becomes common during the ninth century (Griffith 2016: 56; Lash 2017: 158; Malthaner 2022: 137). N's and H's *iī* and R's *eī* make it difficult to determine which forms the scribes had intended but as this text is commonly dated to the tenth century, the forms have been expanded to *itir*. Likewise, in the rest of the edition, *iī* and *eī* have

been expanded to *itir* or *etir*. In OIr., this prep. does not cause mutation but in MidIr., it began to lenite, and this is only seen in N's *chona* 'beasts'.

- 23.3** N: 7 *conacechlabair*si *etir* *athairic* *ona* *conaibh* *ucat* *fribh*
H: 7 *conacechlabair*si *etir* *atairic* *ona* *conaib* *ucat* *frib*
R: Et *conacechlabair*si *itir* *atairic* *ona* *conaib*

Normalised text:

Et *coná·cechlabair*-si *etir* *aithairic* *ona* *conaib* *ucat* *frib*.

Translation:

And so that you will not hear at all an argument against you from the wolves yonder.

MidIr. *·cechlabair* is the fut. 2pl. of *ro·cluine*thar 'hears', therefore, *cechla·*, with MidIr. 2pl. ending *-abair*, In OIr. the fut. 2pl. would have been *·cechlaid*.

The second occurrence of *etir/itir* in the sentence is not simply the unstressed prep. but the 3sg. n. of *eter/iter* and it is used as an adverb with the meaning 'at all'. Unlike the simple prep., there is no confusion regarding the expansion of the conj. prep. 3sg. n., which is simply *etir/itir* (GOI §433).

eDIL s.v. *aithairec* (www.dil.ie/2548) 'argument' does not give the gender for the word, but Thurneysen (1946: §669, §724) suggests it may be masculine because of the acc. pl. in the following example: *inna aithirciu* Ml.31a21. The word is related to *airec* 'invention, contrivance, plan', which appears many times in the text, and eDIL s.v. *airec* (www.dil.ie/1890) gives the gender as masculine, thus supporting the argument that *aithairec* may be masculine. The word could mean that the plunderers would not hear the wolves barking after them in the distance in their search for the spoils.

N's *ucat fribh* and H's *ucat frib* 'yonder/yon from you; against you' is missing in R. Although it is more likely for a sentence to become longer than shorter, the fact that this exact phrase occurs again in 23.8 in all manuscripts including R, suggests that R may have accidentally left *ucat frib* out in this line. Thus, it is retained in the normalised text.

- 23.4** N: *Batar* *he* *anmanna* *na* *sé* *noncon* *rofaidhe* *maol* *milscothach* *inandiaghseom* .i. *aer*
.7 *aithis* *.7* *imderga* *.glam* *7* *griss* *7* *goirturiathar*
H: *batar* *e* *iarum* *anmonna* *na* *se* *n-onchon* *rofaide* *mael* *milscothach* *ina* *ndiaid-sim* *aer* *7*
aithes *7* *imdercad* *glam* *7* *grios* *7* *gortbriathar*
R: *rofaide* *mael* *milscothach* *ina* *diaidsim* .i. *aer* *7*
athais *7* *imdergadh* *glam* *7* *gris* *7* *gortbriathar*.

Normalised text:

Batar hé anmanna na sé n-onchon ro-fáide Máel Milscothach ina ndiaid-sim Áer 7 Aithis 7 Imdergad, Glám 7 Grís 7 Gortbríathar.

Translation:

These were the names of the six wild beasts whom Máel Milscothach sent in their pursuit .i. Satire and Reproach and Shame, Lampoon and Passion and Sharp-Word.

The cleft sentence of N's *Batar he anmanna na sé n-onchon* and H's *batar é iarum anmonna na se n-onchon* is missing in R, which begins with *rofaide*, the aug. pret. rel. 3sg. of *foídid* 'sends' with object antecedent. R's omission may be an example of eye skip because in the manuscript, three lines above this line, *rofaide Máel Milscothach* occurs again.³⁶ Only H has *iarum* and this is left out in the normalised text as the scribe could have easily added it in.

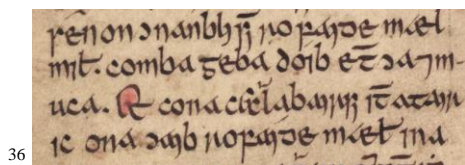
The OIr. *ro-fáidi* versus the manuscripts' *ro-fáide* has been discussed in 23.2.

N's *anmanna* and H's *anmonna* is MidIr. nom. pl. *anmanna* for OIr. *anmann* of *ainmm* 'name' with the overt ending *-a* added.

N's *ina ndiagh* versus H's *ina ndiaid* and R's *ina diaid* has already been discussed in 22.1, except the poss. pron. 3pl. is found here to refer to the plunderers and the correct nasalisation is only found in N and H, unlike in 22.1, where nasalisation was found in all three manuscripts.

N's *aithis* 'reproach' has a later form seen in R's *athais*, and H's *aithes* is ambiguous (eDIL s.v. *aithis*, (www.dil.ie/2716)). Russell (1995: 37–8) argues that the spread of palatalisation seen in PrimIr. continued onto OIr. He writes:

'The spread of palatal variants continued into Middle Irish and into the modern language in many grammatical categories. For example, there was a tendency from Middle Irish onwards to use palatalisation to mark gender so that in Modern Irish there is a general and growing tendency for feminine nouns to be marked by a final palatized consonant and masculine nouns by a neutral, non-palatal consonant... Already in Middle Irish it was common for the accusative/dative singular form with a final palatal consonant to be used as a nominative.'



However, the contrary occurs with *aithis*, an *i/ī* feminine noun which obtains a broad final consonant and becomes an extension of the *ā*-stem paradigm.

N's and R's OIr. *gris(s)* 'glow, ardour, valour, passion' later becomes H's *gríos* (eDIL s.v. *grís*, www.dil.ie/26675). N's *goirt-* shows the correct nom. sg. fem. of *goirt* 'sharp' with H's and R's *gort-* showing a broad form.

- 23.5** **N:** Et batar he anmann na sé muc mieinigh rodolbsataidhe inanenechsom Dochald 7 diue .7 docernus Cailte .7 galma 7 forngabhail.
- H:** Et batar e anmonn na se muc mienigh rodolbsatsum ina nenechaide Dochall 7 dibe 7 dothcernsa cailte 7 galma 7 forngabail
- R:** Et batar hé anmand na. ui. muca mienich rodolbsatsum ina nenechaide. Dochall 7 dibi 7 dochernais. cailti 7 galma 7 forngabáil.

Normalised text:

Et batar hé anmann na sé muc míeneich ro·dolbsat·sum ina n·enech·aide Dochall 7 Díbe 7 Dochernas, Cailte 7 Galma 7 Forngabáil.

Translation:

And the names of the six pigs of dishonour whom they had conjured against them were: Inhospitability and Refusal and Churlishness, Meanness and Harshness and Capture.

The structure of this sentence is similar to 23.4, except in this instance, R has not omitted the cleft sentence. Unlike in 23.4, only N has MidIr. *anmann* 'names', while H's *anmonn* and R's *anmand* is the OIr. nom. pl. *anmann*.

N's *muc* and H's *muc* is the gen. pl. of *muc(c)* 'pigs', and R's *muca* could be nom. or acc. pl. but context requires a gen. Although *muc(c)* historically was a *u*-stem feminine, it then became an *ā*-stem feminine in OIr. (GOI §308), it is unlikely in this context that R's *muca* is a *u*-stem gen. pl. Instead, during MidIr., the nom. and acc. pl. *-a* ending was extended to the gen. pl., which now meant that the gen. pl. of *mucc* could be *muca* as seen in R (McCone 2005: 145).

N's *aidhe* is the anaphoric pronoun 3pl. of *side* while H's and R's *sum* is the emphasising pronoun 3pl. Griffith (2013: 67–70) has suggested that *-side* is used when a topic is newly introduced via a noun phrase but *-som* is used for background information or continuing topics via a pronoun. In N, the newly introduced six pigs of dishonour in the cleft sentence are resumed in the main clause by *aidhe*, while in H and R, *-sum* emphasises the 3pl. of *ro·dolbsat* 'they had conjured' and refers to plunderers that have already been mentioned and continue to be active characters in the story so far.

eDIL s.v. *dochell* (www.dil.ie/17318) ‘niggardliness, inhospitality; grudging, a sullen demeanour’ has attestations with an *-a-* instead of an *-e-*, thus N’s, H’s and R’s *dochall* is maintained in the normalised text.

N’s *docernus* is the nom. pl. of *dothchernas* ‘niggardliness, churlishness, inhospitality’. R’s *dochernais* has a palatalised form of the same noun and this may be a gen. sg. or nom. pl. of an *o*-stem m. noun; however, neither case is expected as the nom. sg. would be needed. Both N’s and R’s form shows EModIr. confusion of *-chth-*, *-thch-* and *-ch-* as they were now pronounced the same (McManus 1994: 351). eDIL s.v. *dothchernsa* (www.dil.ie/18508) suggests it may be the same noun as *dothchernas* and no definition is provided. Two of the attestations come from *Airec Menman* itself,³⁷ and the other one from AU. H seems to have innovated or did not understand *dothchernas* and wrote *dothchernsa* instead. Since *dothchernas* is better attested and found in both branches of the manuscripts, it is used in the normalised text.

N’s *forngabhail*, H’s *forngabail* and R’s *forngabáil* show acc. sg. for MidIr. nom. sg. of *forgabál*, *forngabál* (ā,f) ‘force, capturing’.

23.6 N: Ba fir tra aní sin
H: ba fíor tra annísín
R: Bá fir tra innísín

Normalised text:

Ba fír trá a n-í-sín.

Translation:

That was true, then.

See 22.4 for N’s *anísín*, H’s *annísín* and R’s *innísín*.

23.7 N: rodolbsat na sé muca mieinigh combarogaba doiu itir chona 7 muca
H: rodolbsat na se mucai mienigh. combarogab doib itir conai 7 mucui
R: rodolbsat na .ui. muca mieinich combarogab dóib etir conu 7 muca.

Normalised text:

Ro·dolbsat na sé muca míeneich co’mba·rogab dóib etir cona 7 muca.

Translation:

They conjured the six pigs of dishonour so that both wolves and pigs attacked each other.

³⁷ N: *ndocernsai* p. 42, l. 16, H: *ndocernsai* f. 62v, l. 1, R: *ndochernsa* f. 114r, l. 3a.

This sentence is similar to 23.2, where *co'mba-géba* is found instead of *combarogab* here. The latter is taken as conj. *co*^N + *imma n-* ‘mutually’ + *·rogab* (3sg. aug. pret. of *gaibid* ‘takes’) and has the meaning ‘so that he had mutually obtained.’ Like in 23.2 there is vowel elision between *co* and *imma n-*; *mb* later becoming *mm* to give *co'mma*; and nasalisation is not shown on an *r*. When *gaibid* occurs with *do*, it has the meaning ‘attack’ which is the translation used here. Since all manuscripts have *mb*, it is retained in the normalised text. eDIL s.v. *imma n-* (www.dil.ie/27638) also has the following attestation from *Cath Maige Mucrama* ‘The Battle of Mag Mucrame’: *tair chucum co 'mmaragba dún* ‘come to me that thou mayst betake thyself (?) to us’ (Stokes 1892: 462-3). The use of *imma n-* in the aforementioned quote is similar to the form found in this line.

- 23.8** **N:** Et *conacualatar* indóic *etir athairicc* ona *conuiph* ucat friu
 H: Et *conacolar* and oic *etir atariic* ona *conaib* ucut friu.
 R: **Et** *connácualatar* indóic *etir atarnaicc* dona *conaib* ucut friu.

Normalised text:

Et *coná·cúalatar* ind óic *etir aithairic* óna *conaib* ucut *frib*.

Translation:

And the warriors did not hear an argument against them from the wolves yonder.

Many features of this sentence have already been discussed in 23.3, except this sentence is found with *·cúalatar*, the redup. pret. 3pl. of *ro·cluine* ‘to hear’, which drops *ro·* when in dependent position. Unlike in 23.3, R does not omit *ucut frib*.

R’s *atarnaic dona conaib* is different from N’s *athairicc ona conuiph* and H’s *atariic ona conaib*. Schoen (2015: 80–1) incorrectly transcribes this phrase in R as *tarnaicc dona* and translates it as ‘he came for the hounds’. She takes *tarnaicc* as the pret. 3sg. of *do·airicc* ‘comes’, but this translation does not make sense in this context. It is uncertain why R’s *atarnaic* has an *n* unless the scribe became confused with the minims of the letters. This is in contrast to 23.3 where R has the correct form. N’s and H’s form are used in the normalised text. The ‘argument’ that the plunderers would not hear from the wolves has a similar meaning to line 23.3, that is the plunderers would not hear the wolves barking after them.

R’s *dona* and N’s and H’s *ona* both show MidIr. dropping of the dat. pl. ending *-ib* and are semantically similar.

- 23.9** **N:** Collotar ind óig alaim *conanorgain* léo
 H: collotar an oic allaim *cona norcain* leo
 R: Collotar inóic illaim *conanorcain* leo

Normalised text:

Co-llotar ind óic i lláim cona n-orcain léo.

Translation:

And the warriors went with their spoils in hand.

N's and H's *a* is analysed as the prep. *i*^N 'in/into', which causes nasalisation and can be seen as double *ll* on *laim* 'hand' in H and R. The prep. *a*^H 'out of' causes *h*-mutation and the meaning does not fit the context.

Schoen (2015: 80–1) interprets N's *alaim*, H's *allaim* and R's *illaim* as the adjective *ellam*, *ullam*, *ollam* 'quick, prompt, speedy; soon, readily'; however, an issue with this analysis is that the forms in the text begin with an *a*- or an *i*- and eDIL s.v. 1 *ellam*, *ullam*, *ollam* (www.dil.ie/19975) gives no attestation of such forms under 'adj I'. Further, N only has an *l*, unlike H's and R's *ll*. Instead, it could be the prep. *i*^N with the dat. sg. of *lám* 'hands'. Since prepositions were unstressed, *i* and *a* were interchangeable and their unstressed nature meant they could be written as one word with the noun. Nasalisation is also not always written on an *l*, which would orthographically be written as *ll*. eDIL s.v. *lám* (www.dil.ie/29507) gives the meaning of *i lláim* as 'captive, subservient (to),' however, the literal translation 'in hand' makes better sense in the context.

- 23.10 N:** Lotar echlacha on rígh iar sin andiagh inagaphala conralta dibh sech laim condernta preit de fri maol milscothach
- H:** lotar echlacha iar sin on rígh andiaid ina ngabalui conralta diib sech laim, conderntai preidde fri mael milscothach.
- R:** Lotar echlacha on rígh iar sin indíaidh innangabala conralta dib sech láim. Conderna preid de fri mael milscothach.

Normalised text:

Lotar echlacha ón rígh iar sin i ndíaid inna ngabála con·ralta díb sech láim, co·ndernta preid dé fri Máel Milscothach.

Translation:

Thereafter, messengers went from the king after the spoils so that it would have been thrown out of their control, and the spoils would have been taken from it [their control] on behalf of Máel Milscothach.

The discussion on *i ndíaid inna ngabála* can also be found in 22.2.

N's *on righ iar sin* and R's *on rí g iar sin* has different word order from H's *iar sin on righ*. N's and R's syntax is used in the normalised text as it is found in two branches of the stemma.

GOI §896 states that when *co^N* 'so that' occurs with *ro* it can appear as either *corro·* or *conro·*. Uhlich (2006: 40) argues that when the monosyllabic conjunctions, such as *co^N*, precede the augment *ro* then *conro·* is found and the *n* represents nasalisation. The abbreviation *o* in manuscripts, which can result in either *co* or *con*, may have aided the spread of *conro·*, for example, *conrucca* (Wb. 12c32) 'so that he may bring'; *conrochra* (Wb. 6d1) 'so that he may love'; and *conropua ladia* (Ml. 67c9) 'so that it was God's'. In other instances, after a nasalising element, nasalisation is indicated via *(r)r* on the augment *ro*, for example, *irrúnaib* (Wb. 15b19, 21c22. 21d8, 26d10); *írúnaib* (Wb. 2b10) 'in (the mysteries)'. In all manuscripts, *co^N* is followed by *·raltae* which is the aug. past. subj. pass. 3sg. of *fo·ceird* 'a) sets, puts, places, b) throws, casts, often of missiles.'

In the previous line, *i láim* was translated as 'in hand', but eDIL s.v. *lám* (www.dil.ie/29507) also gives the meaning 'control, power' which is the translation used in this line. The poet could potentially be demonstrating his cleverness through word play.

N's *condernta* and H's *conderntai* is the conj. *co^N* 'so that' with *·dérntae*, the aug. past subj. pass. 3sg. of *do·gní* 'to do, make'. R's *conderna* has the aug. pres. ind. or aug. pres. subj. *·derna* of *do·gní*. Since the previous verb was also a passive, it does not make sense for R to switch to the active, therefore, N's and H's form is used in the normalised text.

N's, H's and R's *de* is the conj. prep. 3sg. n. of prep *di/de^L* 'from' and potentially refers to the *i láim*.

Both *gabála* and *preid* have the meaning of 'booty, spoils' and this could either be word play by the scribe or the aforementioned *gabálae* 'raiding party; things taken, spoils' (cf. 22.2), as suggested in relation to §22.2. However, as *gabála* is in the gen. pl., the translation 'raiding parties' does not make sense as there is only one plundering group. Therefore, *gabála* has been translated as 'spoils'.

- 23.11** N: Nochorucsat inn óicc inisin artairisin in righ leo
H: nochorucsat and oic annísín ar tairisin an rí g leo
R: Niconrucsat indóic innísín ar tarisin indríg leo.

Normalised text:

Nícon·rucsat ind óic a n-í sin ar thairisin ind rí g léo.

Translation:

The warriors had not carried away this thing because of their loyalty to the king.

R's OIr. *nicon* is N's and H's MidIr. *nocho*.

For a discussion of N's *i nisin*, H's *a nnísin* and R's *i nnísin* see 22.4.

The prep. *ar*^L 'because of' does not show lenition on dat. sg. *tairisin* 'faithfulness, loyalty, allegiance' in any of the manuscripts. This may be due to OIr. prep. *for* > MidIr. *far*, and then confusion arose between *far*^H and *ar*^L including with their respective mutations (McCone 2005: 151–2). The lenition has been restored in the normalised text.

23.12 N: *araidhe tra nipa tauarthasum aneislis*
 H: *araei tra nibo tabartasium esslis*
 R: *Arai tra niba tabartha aneslis.*

Normalised text:

Ar aí trá nibo tabartha-sum a n-éislis.

Translation:

Nevertheless, he is not to be given in contempt.

H's *ar aei* and R's *ar ai* consist of the prep. *ar*^L 'because of, for' and *aí*, which eDIL 3 *aí* (www.dil.ie/716) suggests may be the dat. sg. of *áe* 'litigation, fault'. N's *araidhe* is analysed by Zimmer (1890: 6–7) as a later form and consists of prep. *ar* + *aí* + poss. pron. *a* + anaphoric pron. *side*. The adverb has the meaning 'nevertheless, however'. Unlike in previous sentences where *trá* has been used as a conjunction, here it is used with an adversative force with the meaning 'however, but, on the other hand', thus it has similar meaning to *ar aí*.

The verbal of necessity is usually used to translate the Latin gerundive. It becomes uncommon in the later language and does not survive into Modern Irish (Russell 1995: 259–60). The occurrence of *tabartha* 'to be given, placed' is then unusual. As *tabartha* ends in a front vowel, the emphasising pronoun 3sg. in H's *-sium* is the expected form, however, due to unstressed final vowels becoming schwas /ə/, N's use of *-sum* after broad vowels is unsurprising, and R has omitted it. This emphasising pronoun refers to Máel and is retained in the normalised text.

N's *a neislis* and R's *a neslis* is interpreted as the prep. *i*^N 'in/into' with the dat. sg. of *éislis* 'disdain, disregards, neglect, contempt'. eDIL s.v. *éislis* (www.dil.ie/19885) lists the phrase *i n-éislis* 'in/into contempt'. The spelling of the prep. as *a* is retained in the normalised text but it is to be interpreted as the prep. *i*. H has omitted this phrase.

- 23.13 N:** ar ba tene a coclaigh atacomnuicsium
H: ar ba tene a coclaid atacomnaicsium
R: Ar ba teini icoclaid atacomnaicsium

Normalised text:

Ar ba teine i coclaid ata·comnaic-sium.

Translation:

For it was a fire in hiding that he was.

eDIL s.v. *coclad* (www.dil.ie/9911) cites N's *coclaigh* and H's and R's *coclaid* as examples of the noun which has the meaning of 'saving a fire'. The entry also states it may be related to eDIL s.v. *coicill* (www.dil.ie/10072) 'act of sparing, preserving', but this is incorrect as it is the dat. sg. of the vn. of *con-ceil* 'hides, conceals' that is found in this line.

When the pret. 3sg. *ata-comnaic* of *ad-cumaing* 'strikes, happens' is used with an infixed pronoun, the verb has the literal meaning 'it has happened to x (to be)', thus it becomes a verb of existence (eDIL s.v. 1 *ad-cumaing*, www.dil.ie/411). There is confusion with infixed pronouns as class B 3sg. f. or 3pl. *-ta^H* is found instead of the expected infixed pronoun class C 3sg. m. *-id^N*, as the verb occurs in a relative clause.

- 23.14 N:** Et ba feith tar cnuca cachanepert do degbriathra fri nech notasaraigfeth
H: 7 ba feith dar cnucae cecha epert do degbriathraib fri nech nodosaraigedh
R: 7 ba feth dar cnoce cech eperd di degbriathraib fri nech nodasáraiged.

Normalised text:

Et ba féth dar cnuce cecha·epert do degbriathraib fri nech noda·sáraiged.

Translation:

And he was a breeze over hills, whatever good utterances he spoke to anyone who used to violates him.

There are two possible analyses for N's and H's *feith* and R's *feth*. Firstly, it could be eDIL s.v. 1 *féth* (www.dil.ie/21819) 'a magic mist, veil, which renders those under it invisible', however, the nom. sg. does not have a palatalised ending as seen in N and H. Secondly, it could be eDIL s.v. 2 *féth* (www.dil.ie/21820) but the entry does not give the declension class for the word. Stifter (2018: 223) argues it is an *ā*-stem based on examples from the Poems of Blathmac and Milan Glosses, where nom. sg. *feith* and *féth* can be found. Likewise in this line, the palatalised form of N's and H's *feith*

contrasts with R's *feth* and this is explained as a MidIr. acc. sg. of the \bar{a} -stems spreading to the nom. sg. As the correct OIr. form is found in R, it is used in the normalised text.

N's *cnuca* and H's *cnucae*, acc. pl. of *cnocc* 'hill, mound', shows the underlying historical **u* but all three manuscripts show MidIr. ending schwa /ə/ for OIr. *-u*. The normalised text has restored the OIr. *-u* ending.

H's and R's *dar* 'over, across' versus N's *tar* shows OIr. voicing of *t* to *d*.

N's and H's *cecha*, *cacha* 'whoever, whatever, whichever,' contrasts with R's *cech*, which is a variant of N's and H's form; it also functions as the accusative. After *cecha*, *cacha*, nasalisation is not expected in OIr., but in later language nasalisation is found (GOI §461 (a)). See eDIL s.v. *cach*, *cech* (www.dil.ie/7528) under (c) for examples of nasalisation. N then likely innovated with the nasalisation.

H's *nodasáraiged* and R's *nodosaraighedh* is the impf. 3sg. of *sáraigid* 'violates' with the infixed pronoun class C 3sg. f. *-da*; on the other hand, N's *notasaraigfeth* is the cond. fut. 3sg. of *sáraiged* with an infixed pronoun class C 3sg. f. *-da*. The use of the impf. 3sg. with the previous *ba* refers simply to a past situation, whereas the use of the cond. fut. 3sg. with *ba* refers to an experience that is relevant for the future. Both situations would fit the current context. Since the form in H and R is better attested in both branches, it is used in the normalised text. Further, despite the infixed pronoun class C 3sg. f. being found instead of the expected 3sg. m. to refer to Máel, the former is kept in the normalised text as it is found in all three manuscripts.

Poem Two

After the events of Poem One, the king summons his royal advisers and they hold a council to discuss the situation. The councillors decide that Máel Milscothach should give his judgement on the plundering. An angel from heaven then appears and recounts the events of the raid and also reveals that Máel Milscothach is an alias for Urard mac Coisse who is the true victim of the crime. This scene is then followed by Poem Two which is spoken by the king's messengers Robad mac Rofúacra who apprehends the raiders and accuses them of unjustly raiding the poet.

- 26.1 N:** *Amal roncuiladh domnall tra nafeighbriathra fithnaise do radh domaol milscothach fiadha Dochorastar³⁸ echlacha uadha indiadh inagaphala*
- H:** *Amuil roncuilaid domnall tra ina feigbriathrae fidhnasiu do rad do moel milscothach fiadha Docotar echlachai uad andiaid nangabalui*
- R:** *Amal roncuilala domnall tra inna féigbriatra fidnaisisi do rád do mael milscothach fiadha Docuotar echlacha úad indiaid ina ngabala.*

Normalised text:

Amal ron·cúala Domnall trá inna féigbriathra fithnaise do·rád dó Máel Milscothach fiada, do·cótar echlacha úad i ndiaid inna gabála.

Translation:

When Domnall heard the sharp words of sorcery which Máel Milscothach spoke to him in his presence, messengers were sent on an errand from him after the spoils.

The issue of the *n* in N's *roncuiladh*, H's *roncuilaid*, and R's *roncuilala* has similarly been discussed in 22.3. The *n* is analysed as the nasalisation after the conj. *amal*^N 'like, as'. None of the manuscripts have the expected OIr. pret. 3sg. *ro·cúalae* as they all show MidIr. unstressed final vowels being a schwa /ə/ and this is retained in the normalised text. N also shows hypercorrection of EModIr. *-d /ð/* (McManus 1994: 351).

MidIr. *-d-* for *-th-* is seen in H's *fidnasiu* and R's *findaisisi* but the correct spelling is seen in N's *fithnaise* (Breatnach 1994: 229). R shows further confusion with orthography with *-nd-* for *-thn-* and the doubling of *-si-* in which the latter may simply be dittography. According to eDIL s.v. *fithnais* (www.dil.ie/22256), the meaning of the word is 'some kind of sorcery or malefic magic' and the declension is unknown, but the word would have to be in the gen. sg. as it follows another noun. N is used in the normalised text as it has the better OIr. form.

N's *dochorastar* is the pret. 3sg. of *do·cuirethar* 'throws, casts, sends', but H's *docotar* and R's *docuotar* is the aug. pret. 3pl. of *téit* 'to go'. H and R may not have understood N's deponent

³⁸ I thank Dr Chantal Kobel for assisting with this transcription.

ending and changed it to a form of *téit*. It is difficult to know what was in the original, and N's *echlacha*, H's *echlacha* and R's *echlachai* do not help in determining whether N or H and R have the correct verb, as *echlacha* could be analysed as either the nom. or acc. pl. of *echlach* 'messenger'.

When *téit* 'to go' is used with the prep. *ó* 'from' it has the meaning 'is sent (on an errand)' (eDIL s.v. 1 *téit* 14 (e), www.dil.ie/40447).

N's *uadha* vs. R's *uad* vs. H's *uad*, and N's *i ndiadh ina gaphala* vs. R's *ina ngabala* vs. H's *na ngabalui* has already been discussed in 22.2. Note that the pattern of nasalisation discussed in 22.2 is the same in this line. The latter phrase is analysed as prep. *i*^N + dat. sg. of *degaid* + gen. sg. f. art. *inna* + gen. sg. of *gabál* 'taking, spoils'.

- 26.2** **N:** Et ba he *luidh forsán echlachus sin .i. robad mac rofuagradh dotuathuib fian filidhachta cobfuairseidhe na hóca imna gapala agroinn toruind furri conePERT friu*
- H:** Et ba he *luide forsin echlachaisin Robhad mac rofhuaccra a tuathaib fian filidectai gofuairside nahocae imna gabala og roind torainn forri conePERT friu*
- R:** **Ocus** bá hé *luide forsán echlussin Robhud mac rofúacra di túathaib fian filidechta cofuáirside na hóca imman ngabail ac roinn torainn fuirri conePERT frissuide.*

Normalised text:

Et ba hé luide forsin echlachus-sin .i. Robad mac Rofúacra di thúathaib fian filidechta co-fuáir-side na hóca imna gabála ac roinn tórainn fuirri co-n-epert friu:

Translation:

And it was he who went on this errand, namely Robad mac Rofúacra ('Warning son of Proclamation'), from the people of a band of warriors of poetry and he found the warriors around the spoils, sharing the division over it, and he said to them:

After the cleft sentence *et hé* 'it was he ...', a relative clause is expected with *é* 'he' being the subject antecedent. H's and R's *luide* of *téit* 'to go' has OIr. relative ending 3sg. *-e*, but this is lacking in N's *luidh* which potentially could have its relativity indicated by leniting the initial letter of the verb; however, since lenition is not marked on an *l*, it is difficult to know whether the initial of N's *luidh* is lenited.

There is confusion between N's *echlachus*, H's *echlachai* and R's *echlus*. N's form is the dat. sg. of *echlachus*, which eDIL s.v. *echlachus* (www.dil.ie/19521) describes as 'the function of an *echlach*' and it has been translated in this line as 'errand'. H's *echlachai* could be the acc. pl. of *echlach* 'messenger, courier; attendant', however, the previous *forsán* 'upon the' takes the acc. sg. due to the acc. sg. art., or it could also take the dat. sg. if one takes into consideration the possibility of a

change of the dat. sg. art. *-ind* > *in*. It is not known why N has the acc. pl. R's *echlus* is the dat. sg. of *echlas*, *echlais* 'a horse-cloth?; a shelter for horses or cattle; a stall', but R's meaning does not make sense in this context. O'Rahilly (1921/23: 16) suggests that the terms *echlach* and *echlais* have become confused in folklore, thus, R's form could be an example of this confusion and it is *echlach* that is intended here. Since N's *echlachus* has both the correct acc./dat. sg and the most suitable definition, it is the form used in the normalised text.

There is disagreement between N's *do*, H's *a*, and R's *di*. The prep. *di* 'from' has been chosen for the normalised text as it is the best translation for the line. N's *filidhachta* is an earlier form of H's *filidechtaí* and R's *filidechta* 'poetry; poetic composition', with the later form with a palatalised *d* 'presumably influenced by the adjectival suffix *-(a)ide* 'pertaining to' + abstract suffix *-e/acht* '-ness' (McCone 2005: xxiv). eDIL s. v. *filidecht* (www.dil.ie/22071) cites part of this line (*do tuathuib fian filidhachta*) and suggests the meaning of 'of fiction or romance', although it is uncertain how this meaning was obtained. Further, how this phrase fits into this stanza is uncertain and as a result, the literal translation 'from the peoples of a band of warriors of poetry' is used.

Since N's *hóca*, H's *hocae* and R's *hóca* all show MidIr. unstressed final vowel becoming schwa /ə/, the *-a* ending instead of the *-u* ending of the acc. pl. is maintained in the normalised text.

In N's *imna gapala* and H's *imna gabala*, the prep. *imm^L* 'about, around; at, by, along' is found with the acc. pl. f. art. and acc. pl. *gabála* 'booty, spoils', but in R's *imman ngabail*, the prep. *imm^L* with the acc. sg. f. art. and the acc. sg. *gabáil* is found instead. In the case of R, the correct nasalisation caused by the acc. sg. f. art. can be seen on *gabáil*. In 22.2 the following similar phrase is seen and there is agreement between all manuscripts on the forms. In this stanza, since R has the correct nasalisation, it seems likely that R's copy did have *imman ngabail*; however, N's and H's plural form would be more appropriate for the line as the plunderers would have taken more than a piece of booty and based on this information as well as the phrase in 22.2, N's and H's form are used in the normalised text. Alternatively, as mentioned in 22.2, N's *imna gapala* and H's *imna gabala* is a form of **gabálae* (cf. 22.2) and R did not understand the word so replaced it with a form of *gabál*.

N's *furri*, H's *forri* and R's *fuirri* is the conj. prep. 3sg. f. of *for* 'upon her' and it could refer to *gabála* which is an *ā*-stem feminine noun.

N's and H's *friu* 'to them' is the conj. prep. 3pl. of *fri^H* 'to, against', but R's *frissuide* is the conj. prep. 3sg. m./n. of the same preposition but it is also found with the anaphoric pronoun masculine *suide* 'the aforementioned'. N's and H's form would be the more expected form as the messenger Robad mac Rofúacraí is addressing a group of plunderers and as such is used in the normalised text.

- 26.3** **N:** A óca batar ar daigh.
 ag orcain maoil milscothaig.
 masa dibh dlig^his greiss.
 fearr duibh na tarta aneisslis
- H:** A occae batar ardaig
 acorcain mael milscothaig
 masadib dliges greis.
 ferr duib natartae anesles.
- R:** A óca batar ar daig.
 oc orcain mail milscothaig.
 masad diib dliges greis
 ferr duib natarda aneisleis.

Normalised text:

A óca bátar ar daig,
 oc orcain Maíl Milscothaig.
 Masa diib dliges greis,
 ferr dúib ná·tartae a n·éislis.

Translation:

Oh, warriors who were on fire,
 at the plundering of Máel Milscothach,
 If it is from you that he claims for injury,
 (it is) better for you that he would not be given in contempt.

eDIL s.v.? *ardaigh* (www.dil.ie/4049) cites this stanza as an example of *ardaigh* but there is a question mark indicating the uncertainty of the entry. The form *ardaigh* could be analysed as the prep. *ar*^L ‘on account of, because of’ with *daig* ‘flame, blaze, conflagration, fire’.

N’s *dibh*, H’s *dib* and R’s *diib* is the conj. prep. 2pl. of *di/de*^L ‘from’, and R’s form is used in the normalised text in order to adhere to the seven-syllable count. N’s *dlig^his*, H’s *dliges* and R’s *dliges* is the pres. rel. 3sg. of *dligid* ‘is entitled to, has a right to, is owned (as a debt)’.

N’s *greiss*, H’s *greis* and R’s *greis* is acc. sg. of *gres(s)* ‘an attack, a hostile encounter’ but the word can also have the secondary meaning ‘an attack on the honour, an insult, an injury’. This line is a warning to the plunderers that they are at risk of Máel Milscothach satirising them if they do not confess to their crime.

In line four, there is an unexpressed copula that is used with the comparative *ferr* ‘better’. N’s *natarta*, R’s *natarda* and H’s *natartae* is the aug. past subj. pass. 3sg. of the perfective *do-ratus* ‘give’ and it is found with the neg. particle *ná*. Alternatively, Griffith (2023) has suggested that the verb could be the aug. past subj. pass. 2pl. which looks identical to the 3sg and would give the translation ‘(It would be) better for you, that you would not give (it) into neglect’. A present subjunctive should be expected as the previous verbs are all in the present tense; however, Thurneysen GOI §520 III 2 (b) states that the aug. past. subj. can replace the pres. subj. in final clauses when the principal clause is in the present tense. Further, despite all manuscripts having an *a*, the form should be analysed as the prep. *i^N* ‘in/into’ and it is found with *éislis* ‘disregards, disdain, contempt, neglect’. This phrase has already been seen in 23.12.

If the previously discussed verb in line four is analysed as the aug. past subj. pass. 3sg., then Máel is the subject of the line and *i n-éislis* can be translated as ‘in contempt’. The line has the meaning that Máel should be treated with respect. This message is also seen in 23.12. On the other hand, if the verb is taken as the aug. past subj. pass. 2pl. then the plunderers are the subject of the line and *i n-éislis* can be translated as ‘in neglect’. The line can be interpreted as the plunderers should not ignore Máel’s claims to injury. The former analysis is taken in this thesis because the plunderers do not ignore Máel’s claims but rather they are downplaying the severity of the crime as well as Máel’s anger. The line may be a repeat of 23.12 to emphasise the treatment of Máel.

26.4	N:	Ata leis ga gona righ natsoa nadimarbrigh. is de rongaut gradaib gal gruadh breisi maic elathan
	H:	Ata lais \gaei/ gona rig nad soed nadimor (am) ³⁹ brig is dei rongoet gradhaib gal gruad bresi maic elathan
	R:	Atá lais gai gona rí. nad soed nadimór (a) ⁴⁰ mbríg. is dib rogaet gradaib gal. gruad breisi maic elathan.

³⁹ *Puctum delens* under the *a* and *m*.

⁴⁰ *Puctum delens* under the *a*.

Normalised text:

Atá lais gaí gona ríḡ,
nád·soëd, nád i mórbríḡ.
Is dé ro·góet – grádaib gal –,
grúad Breisi maic Elathan.

Translation:

He has a spear that wounds kings,
which used to not deflect, which is not in great strength,
It is from it that had been wounded – by feats of valour –,
the cheek of Bres mac Elathan.

It is difficult to know whether *ríḡ* is to be analysed as the gen. sg. or pl., but it has been translated as the pl. on account of the upcoming examples of past satirisations of kings.

The relative particle used in neg. sentences is *nád* but this can also be written as *nad*, *nat* and *nát* when used in a nominal relation and it lenites the following word; however, in this instance, it is not indicated on the *s*. N's *soa* shows another instance of EModIr. silent /ð/ unlike in H's and R's *soed* for the impf. 3sg. of *soïd* 'to turn, return'. The impf. implies that the spear has repeatedly wounded kings and has not failed because it has always metaphorically hit its target directly, in other words, the spear did not deflect and miss its victims.

There is evidently confusion between N's *imarbrigh*, H's *imor(am)brig* and R's *imór(a)mbríḡ*. The form could be the prep. *i^N* 'in/into' + *mór* 'great, big' + *bríḡ* 'power, strength, force, authority; vigour, virtue'; however, the translation 'in great power' does not fit the context. Alternatively, it could be the prep. *i* 'in/into' + *airbríḡ* 'great power', but this similarly does not fit the context and it does not explain H's and R's *o* instead of *a*. There is also the intensifying prefix *immar-* 'great, very' + *bríḡ*, but, yet again, the translation does not make sense. An issue with these analyses is that the word contains a palatalised *g* which would not form rime with *ríḡ*, which has a non-palatalised *g*. The last possible solution is the prep. *i^N* + *mór* 'great' + *bréc* 'falsehood, lie, deception', and gives the translation 'in great falsehood'. Although eDIL s.v. *bréc* (www.dil.ie/6611) does not give any attestations of the *é* becoming an *í*, the meaning of *bréc* is the most suitable for this context; however, this explanation is not possible as the *-c-* of *bréc* does not rime with the *-g-* of *ríḡ*. Despite the first explanation, which has the translation 'which is not in great strength', not fitting the context (as one would expect the satire to be powerful if it has wounded someone), linguistically it is the best explanation and used in the normalised text. H's and R's deleted letters suggest that at some intermediate stage of the stemma, the letters had been added, and this may be because the scribes did

not understand *imarbríg*. R only deleted the *a* and not the *m*, unlike H who deleted both *a* and *m*, and this could have been another error on R's part.

Another instance of incorrect nasalisation can be found in N's *rongaot*, H's *rongoet* versus R's *rogaet* for the aug. pret. 3sg. of *gonaid* 'pierces, wounds'. A nasalisation is not expected as it is not a relative clause and it may have been that the archetype did not have the *n*, but N's and H's common ancestor did, and they copied the nasalisation. Conversely, R's copy could have had *n* and R had removed it. It is difficult to determine which scenario occurred, but since R has the correct OIr. form, it is used in the normalised text.

- 26.5** **N:** *Conrolu adhuigh ataigh*
 flatha darabha atemraig
 cotorchar de isin cath
 muiġhe tuathbhuille tuireth
- H:** *Gonrala agadh atig*
 flatha darabai atemraig
 contorchar de isincath.
 muige tuathbuillig tuireth
- R:** *Conad rola ataig.*
 flatha diaraba a temraig.
 cotorcar de isin cath.
 muigi tuathbuillig tuired.

Normalised text:

Con·rala agaid a taig,
flatha dia·raba a Temraig.
Co·torchar dé isin chath
Muige Túathbhuillig Tuired.

Translation:

And he had thrown honour from the house,
of the ruler when he was in Tara.
So that he fell from it in the battle,
Of the Wicked-Striking Plain of Tuired.

N's *conrolu*, H's *gonrala* and R's *conadrola* could either be the aug. pret. 3sg. of *con·cuirethar* 'composes' or the conj. *co^N* 'so that' with the aug. pret. 3sg. of *fo·ceird* 'sets, puts,

places; throws, casts'. The former does not make sense, while the latter could mean that Bres mac Elathan had brought dishonour to the king's house. Since *fo-ceird* makes the most sense, the forms are analysed as deriving from that verb. R's *-ad* is the infixed pronoun class C 3sg. m. *-id^N* or 3sg. n. *id^L* and could be referring to *grúad* in the previous stanza.

N's *adhuigh* is the MidIr. nom. sg. of H's *agadh*, the OIr. nom. sg. of *agad*, *aiged*. The word has the primary meaning of 'face, front' but can also have the abstract meaning 'honour' and it is the latter translation that is used. This word is not found in R, which leaves R one syllable short of the required seven syllables. It is evident that R's copy had some sort of corruption as the line is quite different from N's and H's line.

A genitive relative is seen in line two with the gen. sg. *flatha* 'of the ruler' being the antecedent of the following aug. pret. 3sg. of *at-tá* 'to be', which in OIr. is *·rabae*. Breatnach (2016b) has demonstrated that a head-noun and its following genitive can occur across a line-break and that this feature is quite common in Old and Middle Irish verse. This stanza is another example of this feature. Further, N's *darabha* and H's *darabai* show MidIr. *dá·* for OIr. conj. *dia·* 'when' and this is seen in R's *diaraba*. N's, H's and R's *a temraig* is to be analysed as the prep. *i* 'in/into' with the dat. sg. of *Temair*. When a relative is followed by a placename it imparts a definiteness to the antecedent and thus the translation 'of the ruler'. Since all the manuscripts have *a*, this is retained in the normalised text but is to be interpreted as the prep. *i*.

H's *contorchar* 'so that he fell' is found without an *n* in N's *cotorchar* and R's *cotarcar*. H's *n* is the result of a *ɔ* being used as an abbreviation even when nasalisation was not intended, and as a result, it has been removed from the normalised text.

The conj. prep. 3sg. *dé* 'from it' refers to the honour that Bres lost when he was almost killed in battle but convinced the Túatha Dé Danann to spare his life in exchange for him teaching them about agriculture, which allowed their society to prosper (see pp. 39–40).

While N fully spells the word *tuathbhuille*, in R and H, there is a suspension stroke through the *ls*. Schoen (2015: 87) has transcribed this as *tuathbuillig*. N's form is a compound of *túath* 'perverse, wicked, evil' and the gen. sg. of *buille* 'blow, stroke', while Schoen has analysed the word in R as a compound of *túath* 'perverse, wicked' with gen. sg. of the adjective *buillech* 'striking blows'. An argument that is in favour of Schoen's expansion is that a suspension stroke used with an adjective is generally expanded as *-ig*. Ultimately, both forms have the same meaning, and it is difficult to know what was in the archetype. It has been decided that the gen. sg. adjectival *túathbullig* will be used in the normalised text based on the aforementioned argument. Further, the place is generally known as Mag Tuired, but it is likely that *túathbullig* has been added for syllable count and

orthographically represent it. H's palatalised *l* ending is a later form of R's *ael*. Since seven syllables are needed in the line, it must be *aël* and not *áel* that is found, and the former is used in the normalised text. eDIL s.v. 2 *áel* (www.dil.ie/619) suggests that the noun was masculine and then became feminine. The nom. sg. m. article *int* in all manuscripts means that *áel* is masculine since the nom. sg. f. article would have been *ind*; however, the lenition in N's *thenn* suggests that N's scribe could have taken it as a feminine noun. Another issue with N's form is that due to homorganic delenition, there should be no lenition on *tenn*. N's form may be an example of hypercorrection. In OIr., the *t* of the article *int* was a part of the article itself but later, the *t* gets transferred over word boundary and is written as part of the noun (McManus 1994: 359). Griffith (2023) has suggested that the transposing of the *t* may be an attempt to show alliteration with *tend*. In the normalised text, OIr. *int* has been restored.

N's *dlomadh* and R's *dlomad* is the impf. 3sg. of *dlomaid* 'announces, proclaims, declares', which has the dummy particle *no* dropped for metrical reasons. H's *dlomtad* could be gen. sg. of *dlomad* 'announcing, declaring' with hypercorrection of silent *d* /ð/. H's use of the verbal noun means that there is no need for *no*.

N's, H's and R's *roreng* could be the aug. pret. 3sg. of *ringid* 'tears, mangles'; however, the expected OIr. form would be *ro-ring*. Alternatively, it could be the aug. pret. 3sg. of *srengaid* 'pulls, drags, draws, tears', and since *roreng* may have been in a leniting relative clause with subject antecedent, the *s* would be lenited and would now be pronounced as /h/, thus the *s* could then have easily not been written. It is also possible, however, that it is a cleft sentence. There is a parallel line in *Tochmarc Luaine ocus Aided Athairne, ro reng Caíar mac Uithir* l. 395 and Breatnach (1980: 27) comments that the *e* of *ro-reng* is 'probably due to contamination with *srengaid*. H in fact has *ro sreng*'. Since the scribe of *Tochmarc Luaine ocus Aided Athairne* likely copied from *Airec Menman*, it suggests this line could also be read as *ro-sreng*. Furthermore, *ro-sreng* would semantically make more sense because Caíar was forced to flee from Crúachán, rather than him being torn or mangled. Since all manuscripts agree on *roreng*, it is kept in the normalised text, but the *ś* is placed in brackets to indicate it is to be analysed as the aug. pret. 3sg. of *srengid*.

There is uncertainty on the analysis of N's *nifarguimbh* vs. H's *imfargaib* and R's *imfarcaib*. N's form could be the neg. *ní* with the aug. pret. 3sg. of *fo-ácaib* 'to leave'. N's ending may be due to confusion between *b* /β/ and *m* /μ/ as they were pronounced in a similar manner. H and R have the aug. pret. 3sg. of *imm-fácaib* 'leaves mutually'. A similar line is also found in *Tochmarc Luaine ocus Aided Athairne: ní fargaib ollamain laic* 'it did not leave a weak *ollam*'; note also that the line has *ní* like N (Breatnach 1980: 4). Breatnach (1980: 18) states that this line 'hardly makes much sense in this context' which could suggest that some sort of corruption has occurred during the copying of *Airec Menman*. It could also be likely that the scribes were confused with the minims of *ni* and *im*, which

can look very similar. An argument against H's and R's form is that the definition 'leaves mutually' implies that there are at least two people or things involved in the action, but in this stanza, there has only been one person mentioned and that is Caíar. If H's and R's *im* is indeed a scribal error, both scribes would have independently made the mistake as they represent different branches of the stemma. N's form is followed in the normalised text as it fits the context.

N's *ilomain laic*, H's *allomain laic* and R's *ilomain laic* can be analysed in two ways. Firstly, it might be the prep. *i^N* + *lumman* 'cloak, (protecting) mantle' + *lac* 'weak, feeble' to mean 'in a weak mantle'. An issue with this analysis is that it does not explain the *-o-* found in all the manuscripts. Secondly, the phrase can be interpreted as prep. *i^N* + *loman* 'cord, rope, thong, string' + *lac* 'weak, feeble' to mean 'in a weak rope'. If N's *nifarguimbh* is taken seriously, then only the translation 'it did not leave him in a weak string' would make sense as the act of dragging described in line 2 suggests a rope is involved. The subject of N's *nifarguimbh* would be *int aël tend* 'the strong prong', that is the satire, which had a powerful hold over Caíar and forced him to flee from Crúachán after he was satirised. The verb could also contain an infixed pronoun class A 3sg. m. *a^L*, which commonly appears simply as *ní*, to refer to Caíar. Line 3 could mean that the satire metaphorically pulled Caíar out of Crúachán via a strong rope from which he could not free himself.

N's, H's and R's *rola* could be analysed as the aug. pret. 3sg. of *fo-ceird* 'throws off, expels' and despite the infixed pronoun class A 3sg. m. *a^L* not being seen in *ro·*, the 3sg. m. pronoun would be required to refer to Caíar, with *int aël tend* as the subject of *ro·lá*. In MidIr., proclitics ending in a vowel became a schwa /ə/, which now meant *ro·* and *ra·* merged together, thus, *ro·lá* and *ra·lá* could both now have the meaning of 'it cast him' (McCone 1994: 169).

- 26.7** **N:** Na danarm *sin* for cach nai.
 mac etna 7 mac adhna
 acht na dombeir amach.
 maruit la maol millscothach.
- H:** Natanairmsin *fri* cach nai
 mac etnai 7 mac adnai
 acht nachdomber amach
 marait lamael milscothach.
- R:** **IN** tanainmsin *for* cach nai.
 mac etnai 7 mac adnai.
 acht nach dombeir imach.
 marait lamael milscothach.

Normalised text:

In da n-ainm-sin for cach n-aí
mac Etnai 7 mac Adnai
acht na ní do-mbeir amach
marait la Máel Milscothach.

Translation:

The two weapons upon each of them,
mac Etnai 7 mac Adnai.
Except for whatever he gives out,
they remain with Máel Milscothach.

There is great confusion between N's *Na danarm sin*, H's *Natanairmsin* and R's *In tanainmsin*. N's *arm* could be analysed as the nom. du. of *arm* 'armour, battle-equipment', while H's *airm* is the nom. pl. of *arm*. H's form may be the result of the demise of the dual category during the MidIr. period (McCone 2005: 150). Both N's and H's *Na* could be MidIr. nom. pl. m. art. *na* which replaced OIr. nom. pl. m. art. *ind* (Breatnach 1994: 258, 260–1). On the other hand, R's *ainm* is the nom. du. of *ainmm* 'name' and is found with the expected OIr. nom. du. art. *in*. The confusion between N's *arm* and H's *airm* with R's *ainm* may be due to confusion of minims as *i*, *r*, and *m* can look very similar. Semantically speaking, R's *ainmm* would fit the context the most as the next line states the names of two poets: Coirpre mac Etnai and Néide mac Adnae. At the same time, *arm* 'weapons' could be used in a metaphorical way to mean that the two poets have used satire as an instrument to attack the kings and it is this analysis used in the normalised text.

N's *da* is the numeral *dá* 'two' but H's and R's *tan* is the nom. sg. of *tan* 'time, while, a point in time'. In N's *da*, nasalisation is found on *arm*, but *da* only nasalises when it is neuter; however, as discussed, N's *na* is the nom. pl. m. article. Since *arm* used to be a neuter noun that became masculine, N may represent a mixture of Old and MidIr. forms. It is uncertain why *tan* would replace *da* unless the scribe confused the orthography of *d* with a *t* as they could look very similar in manuscripts or the *t* could be the spelling of an unlenited /d/ between vowels. Another possible explanation is that, with the decline of the neuter, the scribes did not understand that neuter *dá* could cause nasalisation; consequently, they interpreted the *n* not as a mutation but as part of the previous word *ta-*, although this would not explain the *t-* instead of *d-*.

N's *na* is OIr. adj. acc. n. of *nach* 'any' that in MidIr. gets replaced by *nach* as seen in H and R; however, the line is one syllable short, and this may be due to a missing substantival neuter *ní* (Breatnach 1994: 278). The adjectival and substantival neuter *na* and *ní* are often combined to form *na-*nní**, *na ní* 'anything, whatever' (GOI§ 489 (b)). eDIL s.v. 1 *nach* (www.dil.ie/32906) states that

nach ní can also be found as a variant of *na ní* and the former is presumably a later feature. The entry also provides one example of *nach* being used alone as a pronoun before a relative clause and it is: *nach adchi gataid a lám* ‘whatever she sees, her hand takes’. However, eDIL states this may be a mistake for OIr. *na ní*. It is difficult to know what to do for the normalised text, whether *nach* or *na* should be used and whether the indef. pron. *ní* should be added, particularly as N tends to modernise and H and R generally have the more correct OIr. form. Since N does have the OIr. form, it is used in the normalised text and despite none of the manuscripts having *ní*, it has been restored in in order to obtain the required seven-syllable count.

When *do-beir* ‘gives, brings’ is used with *immach, ammach* ‘outwards’ it has the meaning ‘gives out, gives away, dispenses’ or literally ‘to bring it out’.

N’s *marnit* may be a copying mistake with the scribe mistaking a *u* for an *n*, and this is supported by H’s and R’s *marait*. The subject of the pres. 3pl. of *maraid* ‘lasts, persists, is extant, remains (in existence)’ could be the two weapons previously discussed. The line could mean that mac Etnai’s and mac Adnai’s power to satirise has passed on to Máel Milscothach and as such the plunderers should be wary about angering Máel Milscothach.

- 26.8** **N:** Saiget reime rígtis rainn.
 dusfarlaic dallan forgaill.
 batis de toлта drech.
 aoda mair maic ainmmirech.
- H:** Saiget remhei rictis roinn
 dusfarlaic dallan forcaill
 badis de toлтаi drech
 aedai moir maic ainmirech
- R:** Saiget reimhe rígtis rainn.
 dusfarlaic dallan forgaill.
 batis de tollta drech.
 aeda maic anmirech.

Normalised text:

Saight réime rígtis rainn,
 dus·farlaic Dallán Forgaill.
 Batis dé toлтаi enech,
 Áeda móir maic Ainmirech.

Translation:

An arrow of thickness that quatrains used to direct,
Dallán Forgaill cast it.
From it would be pierced the face,
of Great Áed son of Ainmire.

All manuscripts have *dusfarlaic*, the pret. 3sg. *do-léic* ‘throws, casts’ with the infixed pronoun class A 3sg. f. -s, which refers to *saiget* in the previous line. Similar to 26.7 (d), in line 3 of this stanza, a third plural verb is used with the nom. sg. subject *drech*. N’s *batis*, H’ *badis* and R’s *batis* is the cond. fut. 3pl. but its predicate *tollta* ‘pierced, hollow’ in N and R and its subject *drech* ‘face, countenance’ are both in the singular. While H’s *toltai* is in the nom. pl., this seems more likely a hypercorrection than a genuine intentional nom. pl. ending. Another issue with this line is that it is one syllable short of the required seven syllables. An OIr. word that is similar to *drech* is *enech* ‘face, front; honour, repute, good name’ and its nom. pl. would also be *enech*, thus it would agree with the verb in number but also give the required seven-syllable count and still make rime with *Ainmirech*. However, this would be a drastic emendation and there is the question of how *enech* became *drech*. One suggestion is that *enech* was glossed with *drech* and over time, *drech* replaced *enech*, but why *enech* would need glossing needs to also be answered as *enech* is a common word. Two possible explanations are: firstly, that the scribe may have wanted to emphasise the physical manifestation of satire on one’s face so glossed *enech* with *drech* or, secondly, *enech* was later reinterpreted as a singular noun, and a later scribe may no longer have understood what the plural of *enech* was. However, an issue with the second explanation is that the scribe did not change *batis* to *ba*. Since *enech* solves the three issues found in the line, *drech* has been emended to *enech*.

N’s *mair* and H’s *moir* ‘great’ is missing in R, which leaves the latter a syllable short.

- 26.9**
- | | |
|-----------|--|
| N: | Bir chruaid belra buan agle.
fognit crithenbel cainte.
oc claide duin breisi brais
ba bir chruaid fir <i>imamnuis</i> . |
| H: | Pior cruaid berlai buan aglei
fogni crichinbel cainte
occlaide duin bresi brais.
babir cruaid fir <i>imamnuis</i> |

R: Bir *chruáid* belrai buan agle.
fogní *crithinbél* cainte.
oc claidi duin breis brais.
ba bir *chruaid* fír *imamnais*.

Normalised text:

Bir chrúaid bélra – búan a glé – ,
fo·gníth Crithinbél cáinte,
oc claidi dúin Breise brais.
Ba bir chrúaid fír imamnais.

Translation:

(It was) a harsh spear of speech – everlasting its brightness –,
which Crithinbél, the satirist, used to serve,
at the digging of boastful Bres' fort.
It was a harsh spear of very fierce truth.

H's *Pior* is OIr. *biur* 'spear, spike' and is a late ModIr. spelling of N's and R's *bir* and this is in the dat. sg. as it is dative of instrument (GOI §251.3), thus explaining the lenition on N's *chruaid* and R's *chruáid*, which is not on H's *cruaid* 'hardy, harsh; stern, strict'. It is used as a feminine substantive and is the subject of an unexpressed copula.

N's *fognit* and H's and R's *fogni* is analysed as the impf. 3sg. of *fo·gní* 'serves, is subject to' with the subject being Crithinbél (see pp. 84-6).

R's *breis* is in contrast to N's *breisi* and H's *bresí*. N and H have the gen. sg. of the personal name *Bres*, which is an *ā*-stem feminine noun meaning 'beauty, worth'. R may have treated the word as masculine because it refers to a masculine character (GOI §288), and thus the gen. sg. m. would be *breis*. All manuscripts have *brais*, the gen. sg. m. of *bras* 'boastful, defiant', which makes rime with *imamnais* in line four. In the normalised text, N's *breisi* and H's *bresí* is used as it has the correct number of syllables.

26.10 **N:** Rotoll cluasa gairm co fraig.
 dagdha in lorca litemaigh
 atbelad tria rindib rus.
 munbad mac in og aongus

H: Rotoll cluasae gairm go froicc
dagdai inlorcaidh littenaiḡ
atbelad tria rinde rus.
munbad mac anócc aengas

R: Dotoll cluasa gairm co fraig.
dagdain lorgaig lictinaig.
atbelat dorinne \rus/.
minbad mac indóc oengus.

Normalised text:

Ro·toll clúasa – gairm co fraig –,
Dagda, in lorgaig littenaiḡ,
At·bélad tria rinde rus,
Munbad Mac ind Óc Áengus.

Translation:

It pierced the ears – a cry to the wall –,
of the Dagda, the armed [and] porridge-eating one.
He would have died through shame of piercings,
if it had not been for Óengus Mac ind Óc.

The cheville *gairm co fraig* literally means ‘a cry/call/summon to the wall’ and in this stanza can be interpreted as the satire was heard everywhere in Ireland.

R’s *lictinaig* is a by-form of N’s *littenaiḡ* and H’s *littenaiḡ*. R may be an attempt at archaising.

R’s *atbelat* is analysed as the cond. fut. 3sg. of *at-baill* ‘dies’ (see pp. 84-6). The correct 3sg. -*ad* ending is used in the normalised text and N and H have been expanded accordingly.

It is difficult to know whether to use N’s and H’s *tria* or R’s *do*, as either fits the context, but as *tria* is found in two of the three manuscripts, it is used in the normalised text.

A preposed genitive is found with the gen. pl. of H’s *rinde* and R’s *rinne* ‘spears’ and both are followed by the dat. sg. *rus* ‘the face, a blush, shame’. N has reinterpreted these forms as dat. pl. *rindib* and gen. pl. *rus*. N’s *rus* is MidIr. gen. pl. for OIr. *rosa*. Carney (1982–1983: 201–2) states that the substitution of the dat., or even the acc., for the gen. commonly occurs in *Saltair na Rann*, for example, *iar n-eladnaib ildánaib* ‘according to the many arts of learning’, 2226; *acht fairrgi fraig* ‘but (only) the horizon of the sea’, 2579, *fri riagla recht* ‘in rightful rule’ 3683; *fo riagla (riaglaib MS)*

recht ‘under the rules of laws’, 4425 and *fo thalman* (*thalmain* MS) *tlacht* ‘under the surface of the earth’, 4743 (Greene 2007). He concludes that the use of the preposed genitive became less common towards the second part of the tenth century and was no longer in used from about 1000 onwards.

OIr. *manibad* ‘if it had not been’ is found in its MidIr. form in N’s and H’s *munbad* (Breatnach 1994: 281). R’s *minbad* is a variation in spelling of *munbad*.

26.11 **N:** Biadh nech uaibh diambaguais
 bherus in bir *sin tria* chluais
 conerbara ochan *auch*
 romgeguin .maol. milscothach.

H: Biaid nech uaib diamba guais
 berass anbirsin *trecluais*
 conerbarai uchan ach.
 romgeogain mael *milscothach*

R: **Biaid** nech uaib diamba guais.
 berus in birsin *tria cluáis.*
 conerbara uchan *uch.*
 romgeogain mael *milscothach.*

Normalised text:

Biäid nech úaib diamba gúais,
béras in bir-sin tre chlúais
co·n·érbara ‘Uchán! Ach!,
rom·geguin Máel Milscóthach’.

Translation:

There will be one among you for whom there will be danger,
who will get his spear through an ear.
So that he says ‘Woe, ah! Alas!,
Máel Milscóthach has pierced me’.

N’s *bherus* ‘who will take’ has MidIr. indication of relativity through the lenition of the initial of the verb unlike H’s *berass* and R’s *berus*, which has the OIr. *-as* relative ending.

N's and R's *conerbara* and H's *conerbarai* is analysed as the conj. *co^N* 'so that, in order that' with the aug. pres. subj. 3sg. of *as·beir* 'says'. While the form could potentially be the aug. fut. 3sg., one would expect a long *e*, that is *·érbára*, but this is not found in any of the manuscripts.

Since the previous two verbs are in the future tense, it might be expected that N's and R's *conerbara* and H's *conerbarai* would also be in the future tense, and in this instance it would be, the aug. fut. 3sg. of *as·beir* 'says' is *·érbára* and a long *e* is not found in any of the forms in the manuscript.

The acc. sg. of *bir* 'spear' was originally a neuter but became a masculine noun in MidIr. and this is indicated via the acc. sg. m. art. *in*, instead of the acc. sg. n. *a*. Further, there is a lack of nasalisation seen on *bir* from the acc. sg. art. in all manuscripts.

26.12 **N:** Eol *damsa* intí notbera
 7 inti nodgena
 acht nimgena ciapad gall
 cach aon forsambia \domnall/

H: Eoul *damsa* anti notberai
 7 inti notgenai
 acht ningenad ciabad gall
 cechoen forsmbiat domnald

R: Eol *damsa* inti nodbera.
 7 inti notgéna.
 acht ningenad cíabad gall.
 cech aen forsmbíad domnall.

Normalised text:

Eól dam-sa int í nod·béra,
7 int í nod·géna.
Acht ní·ngénad ciabad gall,
cech óen fors·mbiäd Domnall.

Translation:

I know him who will receive,
and he whom it will wound,
But it would not wound him, even if he were a foreigner,
Everyone whom Domnall protects.

R: Cid in *domnallsin* mein
is esbuid di armitin.
maso do síl na rig corath.
cin sid fri mael *milscothach*.

Normalised text:

Cid in Domnall-sin amein,
is esbuid dia airmitin,
mas do síl na rí g co rath,
cen síd fri Máel Milscothach.

Translation:

Well then, though it be this Domnall,
it is a defect to his honour,
if he is from the seed of prosperous kings,
without peace for Máel Milscothach.

R's *mein* leaves the line one syllable short when compared to N's *amein* and H's *immen*. The adverb *amein* 'thus, in that way; accordingly, then' is stressed on the second syllable and may explain H's and R's form.

N's and H's *dia* 'to his' is in contrast to R's *di*. R's lack of an *a* may be due to elision with before the following dat. sg. *airmitin* 'act of honouring or respecting'. Despite R's *maso* 'if it is...' being the correct OIr. form, it leaves the line with one too many syllables, thus N's and H's *mas* is used in the normalised text.

26.15 **N:** Maol *milscothach*. deis abó
 itir chlartha 7 chló.
 massa neach uaibh rug abhú
 niconmarfot aócu.
 aóca. *atar*.

H: Moel *milscothach* des abáu
 itir clóartha 7 cloo
 masanech uaib *ruc* abhú
 niformarfot aogguu.
 aoga.

R: Moel milscothach andiáid abó.
etir clothra 7 clo
masanech uaib ruc a bú.
niformairfot aócu.
A óca.

Normalised text:

Máel Milscothach d'éis a bó,
etir Clartha 7 Cló.
Masa nech úaib ruc a bú,
nifor·marfot, a ócu!
A óca!

Translation:

Máel Milscothach seeking his cows,
between Clartha and Cló.
If it was one of you who has taken his cows,
they will not remain with you, oh warriors!
Oh warriors!

N's *deis* and H's *des* is in contrast to R's *a ndiáid*. It is more likely that *a ndiáid* 'after' would replace *d'éis* 'after' than the other way around, particularly as the former survives into Modern Irish as *i ndiaidh*. As a result, *d'éis* is used in the normalised text.

The prep. *eter* lenites in MidIr. and can be seen in N's *itir chlartha*. This feature has already been seen in 23.2 where it was also seen in N. It has been omitted from the normalised text as it is not found in the other two manuscripts.

In OIr., the perfective forms of *beirid* are supplied by *ro-ucc-* and later it is supplied by *ruc-* which then comes to entirely be used as the pret., thus N's *rug*, H's *ruc* and R's *ruc* is the pret. 3sg. of the perfective *beirid*.

Unlike in 26.14, in this stanza, all manuscripts have OIr. *masa*.

In H, *niformar̄fot* is found with a suspension stroke above the *r*, which is not found in the other manuscripts with N's *niconmarfot* and R's *niformairfot*. N's suspension stroke may be a mistake. Since it occurs at the end of the line, when the scribe began a new line, he may have forgotten that a suspension stroke was already written so still wrote the ending *-fot*. The suspension stroke has been ignored and the verb is taken as the fut. 3pl. of *maraid* 'lasts, persists, is extant,

remains'. The MidIr. forms found in the manuscripts have its OIr. form as *·mérat*. The forms could potentially be the fut. of *marbaid* 'kills' but this meaning does not fit the context. The correct fut. 3pl. ending is *-at* but *-ot* is found in all manuscripts and the latter is used in the text on account of all manuscripts agreeing. The third plural would be referring to the spoils the plunderers had taken with the messenger, implying that the spoils will be returned to Máel Milscothach.

H's and R's *for* is MidIr. use of the poss. pron. 2pl. *for* for OIr. infixed pronoun class A *-b* and in N; this has been replaced by the strengthened negative particle *nícon*. The new form of the poss. pron. 2pl. *for* form was created under the influence of the OIr. infixed pronoun 1sg. *-m* and 2sg. *-t* being the same as the corresponding possessives *mo* 'my' and *do* 'yours' when used after the prep. *for* or a prep. ending in a vowel (McCone 2005: 156; Breatnach 1994: 267). N's *nícon* may be due to the scribe not understanding the use of the infixed pronouns; as previously mentioned, over time there was great confusion over its use. Since *nifor* is found in both branches of the manuscript, it is used in the normalised text.

The placename *Clartha* can be alternatively spelt as *Clathra*. Hogan (1910: §9644) has identified a place called *Clartha*, or *Clathra* as being in Clare in County Westmeath, but he also identified *Clarhá* as *Urard mac Coisse's* fort and suggested it may be the same as *Clartha*.

- 27.1** N: *ISed sin isbert rophadh mac rofhuaacraid friu*
 H: *ISSed sin atbert robat mac rofocraí ru.*
 R: *ISsed⁴³ sin asrubart robad mac rofúacra friu.*

Normalised text:

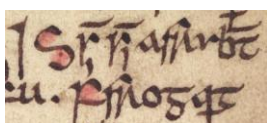
Is ed sin as·bert Robad mac Rofúacraí friu.

Translation:

It is that that Robad mac Rofúacraí said to them.

The differences between N's OIr. *isbert* and H's MidIr. *atbert* and R's MidIr. *asrubart* has already been discussed in 22.4.

In R and H, OIr. *fócræ*, *fúacrae* 'announcement, warning' is found, but N's *fhuacraid* is a later spelling with hypercorrection of the *-d /ð/*. eDIL s.v. *fócræ(e)*, *fúacra* (www.dil.ie/22543) lists three attested forms ending with a *-d* which come from later texts.⁴⁴ Byrne (1908: 68) has expanded



⁴³ Schoen (2015: 89) has incorrectly transcribed R's *IS ed* as *Is sin sin*.

⁴⁴ The examples from eDIL s.v. *fócræ(e)*, *fúacra* are: *can a focrad* Laws v 274.9; *bheith ag murmur no ag fuagradh go bhfuilmidne san gceimsi ar earraid*, Luc. Fid. 194.1.

Ns *rofhuaċr̄* as *rofhuaċraig* and has taken the word as the gen. sg. of *fócrach* ‘proclaiming, one who proclaims or challenges’. However, eDIL s.v. *fócrach* (www.dil.ie/22544) lists only one other attestation of the word. Based on R’s and H’s form, it has been decided to expand Ns *rofhuaċr̄* to *rofhuaċr̄aid*. The *-d* ending is supported earlier in the text at 26.2 where the word is found again but this time N has fully written the word as *rofuagradh*.

Poem Three

This section immediately follows the previous as indicated in the paragraph numbers. This poem is spoken by Aurchoimted mac Sodeithbir, presumably one of the plunderers, and is in response to Robad mac Rofúacraí's accusation that they have raided Máel Milscothach's fort.

- 27.2** **N:** Frisrogart aurchuimthe mac sodeichbir dual cairdesa dosidhe fri muinnter in righ
 conerbuirtsidhe ac urchuimthe assa leith
- H:** Frisrogart aurchuidme mac sodethphir dual cairdesai doside fri muinntir anriog
 gonepertsidhe ocaurchuidbeth assaleith
- R:** Frisrogart aurchoimned mac sodethbir. Dual cardesaide dósaide fri muintir indrígh.
 conepertsaide ac aurcomdet asaleith.

Normalised text:

Fris-rogart Aurchoimted mac Sodeithbir: 'Dúal cairdesa dó-side fri muintir ind rígh', con-epert-side, 'oc aurchoimted assa leith'.

Translation:

Aurchoimted mac Sodeithbir ('Excusing One, son of Good Reason') answered: '(It is) a reason of friendship to him to the people of the king', and he said, 'making excuses on their behalf'.

N's *aurchuimthe* and H's *aurchuidme* are later forms, which have metathesis of *-tm-* for *-mt-*, of OIr. *airchoimted* 'act of excusing'. H's *-dm-* instead of *-tm-* is due to an orthographical variation whereby the voiced stop /d/ could be written as either *d* or *t*. It is uncertain why R's *aurchoimned* has *mn* for *mt* but eDIL s.v. *airchoimted* (www.dil.ie/1736) does cite the following similar example from the Early Irish glossary *Dúil Dromma Cetta: auráin .i. aurcomndeth* 'refusal .i.e. excusing' (Stokes 1859: 195). The word evidently has undergone various transformations and despite *-mt-* not being found in any of the manuscripts, the word has been normalised to *aurchoimted*. The second occurrence of this word in the line also shows variations for *-mt-*. N's *urchuimthe* has the metathesis *-tm-*, R's *aurcomdet* has the correct *-mt-* but H's *aurchuidbeth* has *-db-* instead of *-mt-* or *-tm-*. H's *-db-* could be the result of *m /μ/* becoming confused with *b /β/* with both having similar sounds. There is also wordplay in this line with *airchoimted* being used as a proper noun for the name of one of the plunderers as well as a verbal noun to describe the plunderers' attempts to pacify Máel Milscothach.

eDIL s.v. 1 *dúal* (www.dil.ie/18951) lists many definitions for the word with the most appropriate definition being 'just case, reason, fit occasion' and when it occurs with gen. sg. of *cairdes* 'friend', the phrase has the translation of 'a reason of friendship'. This phrase could be interpreted as the plunderers are willing to make amends with Máel Milscothach due to his close relationship with the king.

R's *cardesaide* seems to be a copying error with the following *dósaide*, since the anaphoric pron. *side*, later form *saide*, can only be used to stress a third person pronoun (eDIL s.v. 2 *side*, www.dil.ie/37463; GOI §479). In OIr., the correct anaphoric pronoun would have been *-suidiu* (GOI §480). The conj. prep. 3sg. *dó* 'to him' refers to Máel Milscothach, while the phrase *fri muintir* refers to the plunderers themselves who are related to the king. The previous discussion on the anaphoric pron. *side* also applies to the anaphoric pron. found after *dó*. In both instances, the MidIr. *-side* is used in the normalised text.

N's and H's *assa* and R's *asa* are unlikely to contain the poss. pron. 3sg. m. *a^L* as the only person the poss. pron. could be referring to is the king. It would also not make sense for Aurchoimted to act on behalf of the king especially when he is talking to the king's messenger Robad mac Rofúacraí. Instead, the forms contain the poss. pron. 3pl. *a^N* and refers to the plunderers, on whose behalf Aurchoimted is acting in defending their actions.

27.3 **N:** A *fhir* thall dar fearba fis.
 masa *thu* dogni in mbuid*hris*
 is dear*ph* ní gin \cin gan/ *chath*
 rohairgi *maol milscothach*

H: A *fhir* thall dar ferbae fis
 masu tu dogni anmbuaid*hris*
 as derb ní gan cin gen cath
 dohairged mael *milscothach*

R: A fir tall dar ferba fis.
 masa tú doní inmbuaidris.
 is derbh ní gan *chin* cen cath.
 dohairged mael *milscothach*.

Normalised text:

A fír thall dar ferba fis,
 masa thú do·gní in mbúaidris,
 is derb ní cen cin cen chath,
 ro·hairged Máel Milscothach.

Translation:

Oh man, yonder, by words of knowledge,
if it is you who causes turbulence,
it is certain that it is not without crime, without battle,
that Máel Milsothach has been despoiled.

The prep. *dar* ‘over, across’ can also have an asseverative meaning, in other words, it is used when making a declaration solemnly or emphatically and it can be translated as ‘by’ (eDIL s.v. 1 *tar, dar*, www.dil.ie/40049). In eDIL there are three possible meanings of *ferb* and they are: s.v. 1 *ferb(b)* (www.dil.ie/21691) ‘a cow (poetic word)”; s.v. 2 *ferb* (www.dil.ie/21692) ‘a blister (raised on the face by satire or moral blemishes’); and s.v. 3 *ferb* (www.dil.ie/21693) ‘a word (poetic word)’. The last meaning is used in the translation (see pp. 17–18).

There are two possible analyses for *fis*, which is a variant form of *fius* ‘knowledge, information’. The first analysis is that *fis* is the acc. sg. and *ferba* ‘word’ is a preposed gen. sg. with H’s *ferbae* having the correct gen. sg. ending; however, H’s ending may be a hypercorrection. The other analysis is that *fis* is the MidIr. gen. sg. for OIr. *fessa* and this is preceded by the acc. pl. of *ferb*. This new MidIr. gen. sg. form was modelled on the *o*-stem nouns (Breatnach 1994: 245). Since N’s *mbuidhris*, H’s *mbuaidhris* and R’s *mbuaidris* has a palatal *s*, only the second analysis is correct due to rime. In the first analysis, the acc. sg. *fis* has a broad *s*, but in the second analysis, the MidIr. gen. sg. *fis* has a palatal *s*. Therefore, the MidIr. gen. sg. *fis* is used in the normalised text.

The conj. *ma* with the pres. ind. 3sg. copula causes lenition and this is only indicated in N’s *thú* (GOI§233, 1(d)). N’s and H’s OIr. *dogní* is found in its MidIr. form in R’s *doní* (Breatnach 1994: 325). The prep. *cen*^L ‘without’ also had the MidIr. forms *can*, *gan*, *gen* or *gin* (Breatnach 1994: 326; eDIL s.v. *cen*, www.dil.ie/8581).

Since N’s *rohairgi*, H’s *dohoirged* and R’s *dohairged* all contain MidIr. features, it is difficult to determine what form should be used in the normalised text. Since OIr. *ro* is found in N, *ro* is used in the normalised text, and the *-ed* ending has been restored based on the fact that it is found in both H and R.

27.4 N: *Guin maic brathar in righ dó*
 ar aba ailuine bó.
 diambeth nitisad fri ghus
 is beg nach tond do diúmuís

H: Guin maic brathar anrig do
arabae albine bou
diambeth \ni/ tisadh friagus
as beg natonn do diumuis

R: Guin mic brathar indrígh dó.
ar aba albine bó.
día mbeith nítísad fría gus.
is bec nách tond do dimuis.

Normalised text:

Guin maic bráthar ind rígh dó,
ar abae ailbíne bó.
Dia·mbeth ní·tísad fría gus,
is bec nach tonn do díumuis.

Translation:

He could wound the son of the brother of the king,
on account of a small flock of cows.
If it should be that it did not come to force,
any outpouring of your arrogance is petty.

Since the verbal noun *guin* is transitive, the object is indicated via a genitive and the agent of the verbal noun is expressed through the prep. *do*^L ‘to/for’ (Stüber 2010: 242). In this instance, the object of the wounding is *maic bráthar ind rígh* and the agent of wounding is the conj. prep. 3sg. m. *dó*. The conj. prep. must be referring to Máel Milscothach and the object of wounding would be one of the plunderers. Máel Milscothach cannot be the object of the verbal noun because he does not have any blood relations with the king nor the king’s brother. However, an issue with this analysis is that Máel is yet to wound anyone. The line could perhaps be interpreted as Máel having the potential to wound a person, and thus the translation ‘he could...’ is used.

OIr. *apa*, originally *apae*, is seen in its later form in N’s and R’s *aba* and H’s *abae* ‘reason, cause’.

All manuscripts have the OIr. diminutive suffix *-íne*, an *iō*-stem suffix (GOI §274), added to *alam* ‘flock, herd’ to form *albíne* ‘small flock, herd’. Later, the suffix *-íne* is replaced by *-ín*, an *o*-stem suffix, to form *ailbín* ‘small flock’ (de Bhaldraithe 1990: 7; Stifter 2015: 2012–1). A parallel example is seen in the name *Oiséne* which later becomes *Oisín*. The suffix *-ín* becomes common in

late MidIr. and originally could only be added to masculine nouns, but later could be added to nouns of all genders, such as *alam* which is an *o*-stem neuter.

R's *·beith* may be an innovative form of the past subj. 3sg. of *at-tá* 'to be' which is found in its OIr. form in N's and H's *beth*. The subject of the neg. past. subj. 3sg. *ní-tisad* of *do-icc* 'comes' is taken as an impersonal 'it'. N's *fri*^H 'against, towards' is in contrast to H's and R's *fria*. The latter is analysed as MidIr. *fria* for OIr. *fri*. N's use of *spiritus asper* could simply be an orthographic indication for *g /γ/* and it is unusual that a lenition would occur after the prep. *fri*^H.

N's and R's *nách* 'any' has its MidIr. form in H's *na*.

N's *do díúmuis*, H's *do diumuis* and R's *do dimuis* can be analysed in two manners. The first is that the prep. *do*^L 'to/for' or *dí*^L 'from, of' is found with the dat. sg. of *díummus*, later *dímus*, 'arrogance, pride'. Alternatively, the phrase can be analysed as the poss. pron. 2sg. *do*^L and gen. sg. of *díummus*, which was a *u*-stem that later became an *o*-stem; therefore, its gen. sg. could be either *díumsa* or *díumais*. In all manuscripts, the *us*-compendium is written for the ending of the word, and this can be expanded to *-uis* to give the gen. sg. ending of an *o*-stem (cf. 26.13). The second analysis is chosen as it fits the context best.

The usual meaning of *bec* is 'small, little', but it can also be used as a substantive to mean 'small, petty, unimportant' when referring to a person or thing (eDIL s.v. *bec*, www.dil.ie/5512). The substantivised definition is used in the translation.

- 27.5** **N:** Decair liumsa tinchosc caich
 do maol *milscothach* milblaith.
 a dal feine fil i losc.
 nithard aire *fria* tinchosc
- H:** decoir limsai tincosg caigh
 do moel *milscothach* milblaith
 adal fein fíl allosc.
 nitard airi *friatincosc*
- R:** Decair lemmsa tinchosc cáich.
 do mael *milscothach* milbláith.
 a dál féin fail ilosc.
 nitarat aire *fria* tinchosc.

Normalised text:

Deccair lim-sa tinchosc cáich,
do Máel Milscothach milbláith.
A dál féine fil i losc,
Ní-tard airi fria tinchosc.

Translation:

It is hard for me to bear the instructing of everyone
by honey-smooth Máel Milscothach.
(It is) his own case that is deficient,
I would not pay heed to the instruction.

H's *fein* and R's *feín*, the reflexive pronoun 3sg. *m.* 'self', has its MidIr. form in N's *feine*. Since OIr. *fein* leaves the line one syllable short of the required seven, MidIr. *féine* is used in the normalised text.

N's and H's *fil* is the OIr. rel. form of *at-tá* 'to be', which has its MidIr. form in R's *fail*, whereby a broad *f* is found instead of a slender *f* (McCone 2005: 158).

N's *nithard* and H's *nitard* is the neg. pres. subj. 1sg. of the perfective *do-rat* from *do-beir* 'to bring, give' with the expected OIr. form being *ní-tart*. R's *nitarat* is the aug. pret. 3sg. of the aforementioned verb. R's form makes the line one syllable too long and thus the scribe most likely had innovated. If the verb was originally a 3sg. one might expect a *nota augens* to be used to indicate a change in person, which is not found in any of the manuscripts. Thus, N's and H's form is used in the normalised text and, since both N and H having *d* for *t*/*t'*, it is maintained in the normalised text.

The lack of lenition on the acc. sg. of *tinchosc* suggests that it is the MidIr. *fria* for OIr. *fri* 'to, against' that is found and not prep. *fri*^H 'against, towards' with a poss. pron. 3sg. *m./n.* *a*^L.

- 27.6** **N:** IN fer fristarla a ír
 nochaba ris boi a dír.
 na hacaillad a righ ruagh
 dus inmberadh éra uadh
- H:** IN fer fris/a\tarlae a ir
 nochbaris bui adir
 nahacullad ari ruad
 dussimberad nerae nuadh

R: **IN** fer fristarla a^ír.
 nochaba ris báí adír.
 na hacallad aríg ruad.
 dosmberaid nera nuad.

Normalised text:

In fer fris·tarlae a ír,
nochaba ris boí a dír.
Ná·hacallad a ríg rúad,
dús in·mbérad n-éra n-úad.

Translation:

The man whom his anger encounters,
it was not him for whom it was proper.
Let him not address his mighty king,
to see if he would get refusal from him.

The prep. rel. *fri* + (s)*a*^N can have either the form *frisa·* or *fris·* and the latter variation is the result of the vowels being elided when used with the substantive verb, which then spread to other verbs and was commonly used in poetry (GOI §492). Despite H's *frisa·* being correct OIr. grammar, it leaves the line one syllable too long, thus N's and R's *fris·* is used for the normalised text. However, it should be noted that in H's *frisa·* the scribe seems to have retrospectively added the *a*.

N's *ír* and H's *ir* lack an *f*, unlike R's *í^ír*. The forms could be the nom. sg. *fír* 'truth' and the lack of *f* in N and H may be due to a lenited *f* not being pronounced. The word could be referring to the news of the plundering; however, this meaning does not make much sense in the context. Alternatively, the forms could be the nom. sg. of *ír* 'anger, ill-feeling' which would fit the context better and is used in the normalised text. R's *í^ír* may contain a prosthetic *f* that has been lenited due to the preceding poss. pron. 3sg. m. *a^l*.

N's and R's *nocha·* is the MidIr. form of the strengthened negative particle *nícon·* (Breatnach 1994: 280). H's *noch·* is also a MidIr. form but it leaves the line one syllable short and this may be due to the scribe misreading the line and confusing the missing *a* with the *a* of the following pret. 3sg. *ba* of the copula.

N's, H's and R's *ris* could be the nom. sg. *ris* 'a piece of news, tidings, story'; alternatively, it could also be the conj. prep. 3sg. m. or n. *fris* 'to him'. Since the past 3sg. conjunct of the copula *·ba* would lenite, *fris* could be written as *ris*. Two other points can be made in support of the alternative explanation. Firstly, *ris* could form a parallelism with *fris* in line 1 and therefore be a form of word-

play. Secondly, a prepositional phrase is generally expected before *at-tá* ‘to be’ and in this case, it is the 3sg. pret. of *at-tá* (Stifter 2006: 119). The alternative explanation may mean that *ris* and not *fris* was in the archetype and all manuscripts have omitted the *f*. Despite the first explanation being the simplest, the second explanation is used in the normalised text due to the aforementioned reasons. The form *ris* is also maintained in the normalised text.

Byrne (1908: 68) has transcribed *acaih̄*, that is a suspension stroke through the two *ls* in 23 N 10, as *hacaillamh*, and Schoen (2015: 90) has similarly translated *acaih̄* in Rawl. B512 as *hacallam*. Neither scholar has expanded H’s *acuh̄*. Both scholars seem to have interpreted the word as the gen. pl. of *accallam* ‘address, colloquy’, but since the preceding *na* causes aspiration, it would mean *na* is the gen. sg. f. art. and not the pl. art., which would cause nasalisation. While Breatnach (2016b) has argued that the head-noun and its following genitive can occur across a line-break, and that this feature is quite common in Old and Middle Irish verse,⁴⁵ *acaih̄* or *acaih̄* cannot be a noun as a verb would be expected, in particular as the next line begins with the conj. *dús* ‘if’. Instead, N’s *acaih̄*, H’s *acuh̄* and R’s *acaih̄* should be analysed as the ipv. 3sg. *·accallad* of *ad·gládathar* ‘addressing’ and it is found with the negative particle *ná*, which would prefix a *h* to a following vowel (GOI §862).

While the main meaning of *rúad* is ‘red, of a brownish or dark red’, in poetry, it can also have the figurative meaning ‘strong, mighty, formidable’ (eDIL s.v. *rúad*, www.dil.ie/356614) and it is the latter meaning used in this translation.

There is disagreement between N’s *dusinmberadh*, H’s *dussimberad* and R’s *dosmberaid*. In N and H, the conj. *dús* ‘if’, a contracted form of *do fíus* ‘to know, ascertain (if)’, is found with the interrogative *in* and the fut. cond. 3sg. *·bérad* of *beirid* ‘carry’, with the verb also having the definition ‘gets, wins, takes’. When the interrogative *in* is used before a *b*, the former becomes *im·* (GOI §463) and this is seen in H’s *dussimberad*. The *m* in N’s *dusinmberadh* may be hypercorrection as the interrogative *in*^N causes nasalisation. R’s form shows confusion with both the conj. *dús* and verbal ending. R’s *dos* may be because the scribe interpreted the verb as *do·beir* ‘bring, give’ with an infixed pronoun class A 3sg. f. or 3pl. *-s*^(N). The verbal ending *-aid* indicates it could be either the pres. subj. 2pl. or the fut. 2pl; neither verbal ending is correct as the sudden switch from the 3sg. to the 2pl. would be unusual. Similarly, the infixed pronoun would be unnecessary as the object of the verb is the

⁴⁵ Breatnach (2016: 199) gives the following Old Irish examples: *I n-Antóig a ordan/ Petair, atfét ecnae (Fél., Feb 22)* ‘In Antionch the installation of Peter, wisdom declares it’; *nícon cualamar a séit/ in maic sin for biuth* (Carney 1964: 96–97, quatrain 19cd, from the Irish Gospel of Thomas) ‘we never heard of the equal of that boy in the world’; *ro clos cían son a gorma/ macraide caille Fochlad* (Thes. li, 312, line 16: Fiacc’s Hymn) ‘far had been heard the sound of the cry of the children of Fochlad wood’. Some of the Middle Irish examples Breatnach (2016: 203–4) gives are: *Íarom roda car a ben/ in tigernai do-rúacel* (SnR, ll. 3173–74) ‘Then the wife of the lord who had bought him fell in love with him’ (trans. Greene, SRTR); *Geiss do Bress a n-opa,/ na cless do-breth chuca* (Met Dind. iii, 220–21) ‘Bress had a vow not to refuse any feat that was offered him’; *Is iat sain a meicc sa huí/ ind ardrig Cathaīr clethnuí* (Met. Dind. iv, 286–87) ‘They are the sons and the grandsons of the high king Cathair of the new spear’.

acc. sg. *éra* ‘refusing, a refusal’. Alternatively, the infix pronoun 3sg. f. could be used proleptically with *éra*, which was originally a neuter but became a feminine noun (GOI §421). The nasalisation found in *·mberaid* may be the nasalisation from the infix pronoun. R could have been confused with the minims and interpreted the interrogative particle *in·* as the nasalisation caused by the infix pronoun, thus the form *·mberaid*.

The nasalisation in H’s *nerae* and R’s *nera* is incorrect and could potentially be another example of nasalisation being transferred to the second word which has already been discussed in 22.1. Although the example in 22.1 concerns a noun phrase, it is not inconceivable that the transfer of nasalisation could happen with a verb-noun phrase. Alternatively, the nasalisation could be a copying error with the following *núad*. Despite the nasalisation being incorrect, the fact that it is found in both branches of the stemma suggests that it may have been in the archetype and that N could have removed the nasalisation. Consequently, the nasalisation is retained in the normalised text.

The nasalisation caused by the acc. sg. *éra* is found in H’s *n-uadh* and R’s *n-uad*.

27.7 **N:** *Madh eadh atberadh a righ*
 amail nochabera ní
 condeisidh sodhain gin acht
 for gaisce no filiacht

H: *Madedh atberad a r[i]*
 amaeil nochaberae ní
 condesit sodain can acht
 ar gaisced no ar filidecht

R: *Mád ed atberat arí.*
 amáil nochabera ní.
 condesed sodain can acht.
 for gaisced 7 filidecht.

Normalised text:

Mad ed at·bérad a rí,
amail nocha·béra ní,
co·ndesid sodain cen acht,
for gaisced nó filidecht.

Translation:

If it is this that his king would say,
as he will not get anything,
so that this, without doubt, has been settled
upon weaponry or poetry.

All manuscripts have MidIr. *at* for OIr. *as* as seen in the cond. fut. 3sg. *at-bérad*.

N's, H's and R's MidIr. *nocha* for OIr. *nícon* has already been seen in 27.6.

H's *r* is missing a letter, presumably an *i*, and this may be due to an erasure in the manuscript. H's *r[i]* and R's *rí* is the nom. sg. of *rí* 'king' but N's *righ* has MidIr. acc. sg. for nom. sg. (Breatnach 1994: 249). The poss. pron. 3sg. m. *a^L* must be referring to Máel Milscothach as he is the one asking the king for compensation for his losses.

N's *condeisidh*, H's *condesit* and R's *condesed* is the conj. *co^N* 'so that' with the aug. pret. 3sg. of *saidid*. The use of the augment preterite is unusual as this tense is used to refer to a past situation; however, in this stanza it is a contemporaneous situation. When *saidid* 'sits, sits down' is used with the prep. *for* 'upon, on', it has the meaning of 'settles on, falls to the lot of'.

N's and R's *for* is the OIr. prep. *for* 'to/for', which has its MidIr. form in H's *ar* (McCone 2005: 152–3). H's repetition of the prep. *ar* leaves the line with one syllable too many and could have easily been a copying mistake. N's and H's *no* 'or' would provide the correct syllable count unlike R's *7* 'and'.

- 27.8**
- N:** Ecmaing nochanerbert riam.
fris nach duine i mbrat no i mbiad
acht rotbia ar domnall uaneill
fri gach duine fil fonn grein
- H:** Ecmaing nochanerbert riam
fris nach mbeo ambrat nóimbíad
acht rotbía ar domnall uaneill
frigech nduine fil fo grein
- R:** Ecmaing nochanderbairt riam.
fris nách duine imbrat ná imbíad.
acht rotbia ar domnall hua néill.
fri cach duine fail fo greín.

Normalised text:

Ecmaing nochan·érbert ríam,
fris nach duine i mbrat nó i mbíad.
Acht rot·bia ar Domnall úa Néill,
fri cach duine fil fo gréin.

Translation:

It happens that he has not spoken before,
to any person in clothing and with sustenance.
But you will have it on account of Domnall úa Néill
to every man that is alive.

OIr. *nícon* being replaced by *nocha·* has been seen already in 27.6, but in this line a variant MidIr. form *nochan·* is also found. It is commonly used before a word beginning with a vowel (Breatnach 1994: 280). R's *nochand·* could potentially have the meaningless infix pronoun class B 3sg. n. *-t*, but spelt *-d*.

There are difficulties with the analysis of line two. N's, H's and R's *fris* is analysed as the conj. prep. *fri*^H 'upon' with the 3sg. m, however, the conj. 3sg. m. does not fit in this context as N's *nach duine i mbrat nó i mbíad* and R's *nách duine i mbhrat ná i mbíad* 'any person in clothing and with sustenance' is dependent on it. A possible explanation is that *fris* was reinterpreted as the simple prep. *fri*^H 'upon', like that found with *tria* for *tre* and *fria* for *fri* (cf. 26.10 and 27.4). However, an issue with this theory is that there are no attestations of *fris* for *fri*, but no other explanation can be found for this line. H's *nach mbeo a mbrat nó i mbíad* has replaced N's and R's *duine* 'person' with *beo* 'a living being'. It is uncertain why H has these differences nor why nasalisation is found on *beo*.

Griffith (2023) has proposed that N's *biad* and H's and R's *bíad* should be analysed as *míad* 'honour, dignity, elevation' as it better fits the context. However, other examples of the phrase *brat ocus bíad* can be found at eDIL s. v. *biad* (www.dil.ie/5813): *aire .uii. n-ech do braich 7 biud* (LL 36986); and at eDIL s.v. *bratt* (www.dil.ie/6598): *imbet bruit 7 bīdh* (Anecd. v. 25.4), *ni biad tacha broit na biid ann co brath* (Gold. 104.8 (Lib. Hymn.)), and *bidh a cin for a lepuidh, bruit 7 biud* (Laws iv 240.8). Consequently, *bíad* is analysed as 'food'.

OIr. disyllabic adverb *riām* 'before' became MidIr. monosyllable *ríam*. Likewise, OIr. *biād* 'food' became MidIr. *bíad*.

In line four, N's *fri gach duine*, H's *fri gech nduine* and R's *fri cach duine* is similar in phrasing to the one previously discussed in line two. Although acc. sg. *cach* would have caused

nasalisation on *duine* and only H has indicated this nasalisation. H's nasalisation, especially when viewed with *mbeo*, might be the scribe's attempt at archaisation.

OIr. *nó* 'or' is also found as MidIr. *na* or *ná* and this was the result of confusion with *ná* 'nor'.

H's and R's *fo grein* is in contrast to N's *fonn grein*, whereby the latter has the prep. *fo*^H 'under' with the dat. sg. art. *-n*. The phrase has the literal meaning 'under the sun (heaven)' but can figuratively mean 'alive, in the world'.

An issue with line three is that it is a syllable too many for the expected seven syllables.

27.9 **N:** Ciapdis ganna fir *betha*
 ótha lifi co *letha*
 rusfiurfa ól nipdais *gaind*.
 dighi do dernaind *domnaill*

H: Ciabdis ganna fir *bethai*
 otha life *goletha*
 rusfiurfad ol nipdis *gaind*
 dige do dernaind *domnauld*

R: Ciaptis ganna fir *betha*.
 ota lifi co *letha*.
 rosfiurfad ol niptís *gain*.
 digi do dernainn *domnaill*.

Normalised text:

Ciaptis ganna fir *betha*,
óthá Lifi co *Letha*,
ros·fiurfad ól, níptis *gainn*,
dige do dernainn *Domnaill*.

Translation:

Although the men of the world might be needy,
from Liffey to Letha,
a draught would suffice for them, they would not be needy,
of a drink by the hand of Domnall.

There are two other occurrences of this stanza in other texts. The first text it occurs in is AU s.v. 980, which lists the death of King Domnall. The verse is attributed to a *M. Coissi* and this is

assumed to be Urard mac Coisse due to the stanza also being found in *Airec Menman*. The praise poem for the king reads: *Giamtis ganna fir beatha/ ota Liphe co Letha, / nos firfed ol nípdais gainn / dige do dernainn Domhnaill / - M. Coissi cecint*, ‘If the men of the world were not numerous / From Life to Letha, / Satiety from the hand of Domnall / Would cause them to be more plentiful. – Mac Coisse sang this’ (Mac Airt & Mac Niocaill 1983: 414–15). This stanza only occurs in one of the three manuscripts of AU, namely TCD MS 1282 (H 1.8), where the stanza is written in the lower margins of f. 52r. The other attestation of the stanza occurs in the *Trefocul* tract on verse faults which is found in three manuscripts: TCD MS 1339 (H 2.18) Book of Leinster, TCD MS 1337 (H. 3.18) and RIA MS D ii 1 Leabhar Uí Mhaíne. From the Book of Leinster the following stanza is found: *Gemtís ganna fir betha / Otha Liphi gu Letha, / Nasfurfead ol níptais ga[i]nn / Digi do dernaind Domhnaill*’ (Breatnach 2017: 40, 46). Breatnach does not provide a translation for the stanza from the Book of Leinster, but he does provide a translation for the stanza from *Airec Menman* 23 N 10 and it is: ‘Though the men of the world from the Liffey plain to Latium were needy, a draught of a drink from the hand of Domnall would satisfy them; they would not be needy [any more]’ (Breatnach 2017: 14).

The prep. *óthá* or *ótá* consists of *ól* ‘from’ with the pres. ind. 3sg. of *at-tá* ‘from where is; from’ and it indicates the inner limit of a space; on the other hand, when it is followed by the prep *co^H* ‘to’, it is used to indicate the outer limit of a space. According to eDIL s.v. *óthá*, (*ótá*) (www.dil.ie/34102), this construction becomes obsolete by the end of the MidIr. period and what case this prep. takes is uncertain as the dat., acc. and nom. have all been attested. Thus, it is unclear what case N’s and R’s *lifi* and H’s *life* is; similarly, whether N’s and R’s *-i* ending or H’s *-e* ending is correct is uncertain with both forms being attested in eDIL. N’s and R’s *-i* ending is used in the normalised text as it is found in both branches of the stemma.

In N’s *rusfiurfa*, H’s *rusfiurfad*, and R’s *rosfiurfad*, the infixed pronoun class A 3pl. *-s* refers to the *fir* in line one.

H’s *nipdis* and R’s *niptis* could either be the past. subj. 3pl. or the cond. fut. 3pl. of the copula. N’s *nipdais* is also attested in AU, in which Ó Máille (1910: 154) has analysed *nipdais* as the cond. fut. 3pl. of the copula. Since the preceding verb is in the aug. cond. fut., N’s, H’s and R’s form are analysed as the cond. fut. 3pl. as it is still talking about a hypothetical future action from a past perspective.

N’s *dighi*, H’s *dige* and R’s *digi* is the gen. sg. of *deog*, *deoch* ‘drink, draught, potion’ and is dependent on *ól* in line three. It has already been discussed that a head-word and its genitive can occur across a line break (cf. 27.6) but Breatnach (2016: 198–9, 205) has also demonstrated that the head-

word and its genitive can also be separated by interposed words or phrases.⁴⁶ A similar situation is found in this stanza with the headword *ól* separated from its genitive *dige* by the copula phrase *nípdís gainn*.

27.10 **N:** Doraegha in aghaidh ronas.
 cuca *chucang comadhus*
 deruail uaghna ureacas graidh
 ingen taidg tarudha taoudha.

H: Doroegai anadaig rosnass
 cucai cucang comadhas
 derbail badhnae breccus graig
 ingen taidc tarbgnai taebaig

R: Doraega indagaid ronas.
 chuca *cugang comadas*.
 derbail babdgnai breccus graid.
 ingen taidg tarbgnai taebhaidh.

Normalised text:

Do·róega ind adaig ro·nass,
 cucai – cucang comadas – ,
 Derbáil Badbgnai breccas graig,
 ingen Taidg tarbgnai táebaig.

Translation:

She chose him on the night she was betrothed,
 to him – a fitting match –,
 Derbáil of Badbgnae whom horses adorn,
 Daughter of stout, trusty Tadg.

The aug. pret. 3sg. of *do·goa* ‘choose, selects; betroth’ is *do·roígu* (GOI § 702) but it has its MidIr. forms in all manuscripts with the diphthong *-óe-* or *-áe-* and the ending *-a* or *-ai*. The subject could either be the king or queen. Alternatively, N’s *Doraegha*, H’s *Doroegai* and R’s *Doraega* could be analysed as having the infixed pronoun class A 3sg. m. *a^N* with the unstressed nature of *do·* and *da·*

⁴⁶ Breatnach (2016: 198–9, 205) gives the following examples: *Inmain n-ainm nítat núabla, / Áeda nád airdlig dígna* (Thes. Ii, 295, §4) ‘Beloved the name – they are no new fames – of Áed who deserves not reproach’; *aue, ní frith nach ammail, / na ríge di chlandaib Cúalann* (Thes. Ii, 295, §5) ‘a descendant – no evil person was found, of the kings of the clans of Cualu’.

making the two interchangeable. Despite none of the forms having *da-*, this latter analysis is chosen as it fits semantically the best.

N's *aghaidh*, H's *adaig*, and R's *agaid* is the dat. sg. of *adaig* and functions as an adverb in time (GOI §251.3). Only R's *ind* has the OIr. dat. sg. f. art. while N's *in* and H's *an* shows MidIr. *nd* > *nn*.

All manuscripts have the pret. pass. 3sg. *ro-nass* of *naiscid* 'binds; pledges; betroths' but H's *rosnass* also has the infix pronoun class A 3sg. f. or 3pl. *-s*. H's form may be an example of MidIr. confusion on the use of infix pronouns.

N's *chucang* has a lenited *c* which is not found in H's *cucang* and R's *cugang*. N's lenition may be a scribal mistake whereby the *spiritus asper* could have been intended for the preceding *cuca* (conj. prep. 3sg. m. of *co*^H 'to') which can be found with lenition in R's *chuca*. The definition of the word is uncertain. eDIL s.v. ? *cucang* (www.dil.ie/13410) cites line two of this stanza as the only attestation of the form. There is also eDIL s.v. ? *cocung* (www.dil.ie/9951), where it is stated that it may be related to s.v. *cucang*. The entry for *cocung* has only two attestations. The first example is from *O'Davoren's Glossary: Cocung .i. slabrad, [ut est] cocung druine déchon*, which Stokes has translated as '*cocung*, i.e. a chain, *ut est* 'an embroidered leash of two hounds' (Stokes 1904: 253). Stokes (1904a: 253) also suggests that *co-cung* may be cognate with *cuing*. The other attestation of *cocung* is from *Sanas Cormaic: coceng .i. co-cuing .i. com-cuing .i. is comchomus for cechtar na dā leithe, nō cumma is comcuing for cechtar nde* (Meyer 1912a: 26). In the *Sanas Cormaic* attestation, *coceng* seems to be derived from *cuing* 'yoke; of (one of) a pair of opponents' compounded with the prep. *co*^N 'with' and when used with a noun has the meaning '(together) with, accompanied by, and' (eDIL s.v. 2 *co*, www.dil.ie/9787), therefore, *cocung* could mean 'a pair'. Breatnach (2006: 70) has translated this stanza and suggested the definition of 'match'. An issue with the analysis of *cocang* deriving from *cuing* is that one would expect *cocaing*, therefore, a palatalised ending, but this is not found in any of the manuscripts. Since there is no other alternative explanation, *cocang* is translated as 'match, pair'.

The personal name *Derbáil* can be found in many different forms as listed in eDIL s.v. *der* (www.dil.ie/15534). Some of the attested forms are: *Derbail* in AU 1009 (i 522.15); *Dearbhail* in AFM 929 and 1012; *Derbfail* in AU 930; and *Derb áil* ZCP vi 269 §1. In the last example it is found as two separate words and the second word must be a monosyllabic final in order to adhere to rime. Breatnach (2006: 69) cites another example from the *Trefócal* Tract where *Derbáil* is found as two syllables due to the requirement of *Áil* riming with *gráin*. Thus, the personal name can appear as one or two words. It is difficult to know which form was intended for this line in *Airec Menman* and rime cannot be used to identify the form of the name as the word is found at the beginning of the line.

Since it is written as a single word in all the manuscripts, it is also written as a single word in the normalised text. Ó Corrain & Maguire (1990: 71) suggest that the personal name consists of *der* ‘daughter’, which can also appear as *derb* when followed by an *f*, and the gen. sg. *fál* ‘a name of Ireland’, which can appear with or without the *f* as seen in this line. O’Brien (1956: 178–9) points out that *der* is commonly used to form personal names and functions as an unstressed proclitic that can also appear as *dar*, *tar*, and *ter*.⁴⁷

N’s *ureac*-, H’s *brec*- and R’s *brec*- all have the *us*-compendium attached to the ending. The *us*-compendium is usually transcribed as *us*, however, it could also stand for *as* (*CODECS*, [www.codecs.vanhamel.nl/Us_\(symbol\)](http://www.codecs.vanhamel.nl/Us_(symbol))). This is the transcription used for the pres. ind. 3sg. rel. *breccas* ‘who speckles, makes chequered, adorns’ with the nom. sg. *graig* ‘horses’ which is treated as a collective noun.

N’s *uaghna*, H’s *badhnae*, and R’s *babdgnai* disagree on the spelling of the placename. The following placenames listed in the *Onomasticon Goedelicum* (Hogan 1910) are relevant: *badna*; *badbgna*, *badhghna*, and *baghna*. These placenames have been identified with modern day Slieve Bawn, Roscommon, Connacht, which agrees with the fact that Derbáil is the daughter of a king of Connacht. It is difficult to know which form should be used in the normalised text and there is also the issue of which ending is correct. N’s *uaghna* makes internal rime with line four N’s *tarudha*; H’s *badhnae* makes internal rime with H’s *tarbgnai*, similarly, R’s *babdgnai* makes internal rime with R’s *tarbgnai*. N’s *tarudha* may be the gen. sg. of *tarbdae* ‘fierce, strong’, while H’s and R’s *tarbgnai* could possibly be a compound of *tarb* ‘bull’ but can also have the meaning ‘strong, great, furious’ and *gnóe*, later *gnáe* or *gnáí* but also *gnae* ‘beautiful, fine, exquisite; illustrious, noteworthy’ (eDIL s.v. 2 *gnóe*, www.dil.ie/26254). The compound word has the meaning ‘strong-illustrious’. Regardless of the form, both words have very similar meanings. Since R’s *babdgnai*, which show metathesis of *-bd-* for *-db-*, is better attested in *Onomasticon Goedelicum*, it is used in the normalised text. Further, since *tarbgnai* is found in both branches in the stemma, it is used in the normalised text.

There is disagreement between N’s *taoudha* and R’s *taebhaidh*. H’s *taeb-* can be expanded to either N’s or R’s form. N’s and R’s form is cited under eDIL s.v. *taebach* (www.dil.ie/39455), the primary meaning of which is ‘sided, having (many) sides’ but when referring to persons, it has the potential meaning ‘trustful, trustworthy’. Only two attestations are cited for the latter meaning, one of them being this line, while another is from Keating’s *Foras Feasa ar Éirinn: nach taobhach leis mé* ‘trusts me not’ (Comyn & Dinnenn 1908: 132–133). Keating’s text is an EModIr. example and *taobhach* survives into Modern Irish, with one of its meanings being ‘trusting’. An issue with this analysis is that R has a *d /ð/* instead of *g /y/*, however, this variant could be MidIr. confusion of *d /ð/*

⁴⁷ Ó Corrain (1990: 71) lists other examples of *der* being used as a personal name and some examples are: *Der Áine*, *Der Bile*, *Derbiled*, *Der Erca*, *Der Finn* and *Der Bfogaill*,

with *g /y/* (Breatnach 1994: 234–5). eDIL’s entry has also amended N’s *taoudha* to *taoudhaig*, presumably based on R’s form. Alternatively, R’s *taebhaidh* could be MidIr. gen. sg. *taebaid* of *taebad* ‘trusting, placing confidence in’ for expected OIr. gen. sg. *taebdo/taebda*, which is seen in N’s *taoudha*. Since the first explanation is the better of the two, R’s *taebhaidh* has been analysed as gen. sg. of *taebach*, H’s form has been expanded to *taebaig* and N’s *taoudha* could be viewed as a corruption of R’s form.

- 27.11** **N:** *Fialsum fialsi cotagaiu.*
 comrair garta dib lionuiu
 saint doiu cin dimga fo chlith.
 ulc doiu cin ni do taiscid
- H:** *Fiallsum fiallsi cotogaib*
 comrair gartai diblinaib
 sant doib gandinga foclith
 ulc doiph cen ni dotaiscid
- R:** *Fialsam fialsi cottagaib.*
 comrar garta dib linaib.
 sant can dimdai fo clith.
 olc dóib gan ni do taiscidh.

Normalised text:

Fíal-sum, fíal-si, cota·gaib,
comrar garta díb línaib,
sant dóib cen dimda fo chlith,
olc dóib cen ní do thaiscid.

Translation:

He is generous, she is generous, it supports them,
 a chest of generosity, both of them,
 they have eagerness without secret dissatisfaction,
 they have misfortune without anything to guard.

The nom. sg. of *fíal* ‘generous, hospitable’ occurs twice, once with the emphasising pronoun 3sg. m. *-som*, which is found as N’s and H’s *sum* and R’s *sam*, and secondly, with the emphasising pronoun 3sg. f. *-si*. Both have the copula omitted, presumably to adhere to the syllable count of seven. The subject of the pres. ind. 3sg. of *con·gaib* ‘contains, preserves, supports’ is found in line two with N’s and H’s *comrair* and R’s *comrar*. The OIr. nom. sg. found in R’s *comrar* ‘chest’ has its MidIr.

form in N's and H's *comrair*. Similarly, the OIr. nom. sg. in R's *sant* 'strong desire, eagerness' has its MidIr. form in N's and H's *saint*. In both instances, the acc. sg. has been used for the nom. sg.

N's *doiu* and H's *doib* is missing in R and without it, R is one syllable short of the required seven syllables.

The prep. *fo*^L 'under, beneath' with *cleth* 'concealment, deception' has the meaning 'secretly, hidden, in seclusion'.

27.12 **N:** Ni ar laghat anéte.
 is ar aidhblitin méthe.
 acht nach anat andi laim
 aga sgail tre imforrain

H: Ni ar lagat aneide
 is araidblaithin meide
 act nach anad andilaim
 ogaa scáil treimforrain

R: Ni har lagat anéti.
 is ar adblitin méti.
 acht na hanat andi laim.
 aca scáil tria imfoiraín.

Normalised text:

Ní ar lagat a n-éite,
is ar aidblitin méite.
Acht ná·hanat a ndi láim,
oca scaíl tre imfórráin.

Translation:

It is not for fewness of their cattle,
it is for vastness of size.
But let their two hands not desist,
from scattering them through great violence.

The dat. sg. of *lagat* 'smallness, scantiness, fewness' would have been *lagait* but the word later became indeclinable except for gen. sg. (eDIL s.v. *lagat*, www.dil.ie/29345).

The poss. pron. 3pl. *a^N* ‘their’ refers to the king and queen that is mentioned in the previous stanzas.

eDIL s.v. *aidblitin* (www.dil.ie/839) cites N’s *aidhblitin* as being a variant dat. sg. of *aidble* ‘vastness, greatness’; the regular dat. sg. of this would have been *aidbli*, however, the only attestation of the variant form is from this stanza. The form could also potentially be the dat. sg. of an *n*-stem feminine unattested noun **aidblitiu* with the verbal noun ending *-tiu* (GOI §730). Since no other theory as to what N’s *aidhblitin*, H’s *aidblaithin* and R’s *adblitin* could be, eDIL’s analysis is followed.

The negation particle in R’s *ná* is replaced in MidIr. by *nach*, which is seen in N and H (eDIL s.v. 2 *nach*, *nách*, www.dil.ie/32907; Breatnach 1994: 281).

- 27.13** **N:** Nocon esarracht amach
 ingall domarp *congalach*.
 chorthaiscet andis fobrut
 cethre meich do *bhronnargut*
- H:** Nocaneserracht amach
 angall domarb *congalach*
 gortaiscet andís fobrot
 cetri meich *dobronnarcut*
- R:** Nochan eserracht amach.
 in gall romarb *congalach*
 cor taiscit andís fo brut.
 ceithir meich do *bronnarcut*.

Normalised text:

Nocon·esérracht amach,
in gall ro·marb Congalach.
Cor·taiscet a ndís fo brut,
ceithri méich do bronnargut.

Translation:

He has not risen yet,
the foreigner who killed Congalach.
So that the two of them may guard, under a spike,
four bushels of refined silver.

Like in 27.8, OIr. *nicon* is found in its MidIr. form in N's *nocon* H's *nocan* and R's *nochan* (Breatnach 1994: 280).

The adverb *amach* 'outwards; afar, abroad' is used to reinforce the motion implied in N's *·esarracht*, R's and H's *·eserracht*, which is the pret. 3sg. of *as·éirig* 'rises again'.

In line two, it is ambiguous as to whether Congalach was killed by a foreigner or Congalach killed a foreigner, but historical sources inform us that it is the former situation (see. p. 3).

N's *chorthaiscet*, H's *gortaiscet* and R's *cortaiscit* show MidIr. use of the augment *ro·* as a conjunct particle, as opposed to the OIr. use of *ro·* as a preverb. This is found with the aug. pres. ind. 3pl. of *taiscid* 'keeps, guards, stores, lays up', which itself may have come from *do·coisig* 'keeps, preserves' (McCone 1997: 188). When the conj. *co^N* is found with the aug. *ro*, the form *coro·* is found but in MidIr. it became *cor·* and this is found in all manuscripts. N's initial lenition of the verbal root itself may be the MidIr. tendency for main clause lenition after a pretonic preverb (McCone 1997: 173)

N's *a ndis*, H's and R's *a ndís* 'the two of them' consists of the poss. pron. 3pl. used as a dat. of apposition with the originally disyllabic dat. sg. *díis*, *díis* 'two' but found as monosyllabic *dís* in this line in order to adhere to the seven-syllable count. The phrase serves as the subject of *cor·taiscet* and the object is found in line four.

The original gender of *míach* 'a bushel' is neuter but this later became feminine. None of the manuscripts have the acc. pl. of *míach* which, if a neuter could either be *míach* or *míacha*, or if feminine noun, *míacha*. Instead, it seems all manuscripts have the nom. pl. m. of *míach*. Alternatively, the form could be the acc. sg. f. *méich*. The expected acc. m. form of *cethair* is *ceithri* and this is perhaps seen in N's *cethre* and potentially in H's *ceiri*. Alternatively, N's *cethre* and H's *ceiri* could be interpreted as examples of indeclinable MidIr. *cethri* or *cethre* replacing declinable *cethair* (McCone 2005: 149). R's *ceithir* seems to be the nom. pl. m. and this may be due to confusion of the acc. pl. *ceithri* now being used as nom. pl.

27.14 N: Cen cobeth ag maol acht sin
 in diassin diatesargain.
 ricbhatis aba dia toigh
 mail meruallaig milscothaigh

H: Cen cobeth oc mael *acht* sain
andiassin dotesorcain
ricfaidis abae diaticch
moel meruallaig milscothaig

R: Cen cobeith oc mael *acht* sain.
in dias *sin* do thesarcain.
ricfaitis a bai da taigh.
mail meruallaig milscothaig.

Normalised text:

Cen co·beth oc Máel acht sin,
in días-sin dia thesargain.
Ricfaitis a baí dia thaig,
Maíl merúallaig Milscothaig.

Translation:

Although Máel may only have that,
this pair to protect him.
The cows of spiritedly, proud Máel Milscothach
would come to his house.

When the prep. *cen*^L ‘without’ is used with the conj. *co*^N ‘so that, until’, the phrase has the meaning ‘without that, though ... not’.

The OIr. substantivised demonstrative pronoun is found in N’s *sin* ‘there, those that’, which has its MidIr. form in H’s and R’s *sain*. Since MidIr. *sain* is found in both branches of the stemma, it could be possible that *sain* was in the archetype and N’s archaising *sain* to *sin*. N’s form is used in the normalised text as it does have the correct OIr. form. The demonstrative pronoun could be referring to the previously mentioned four bushels of refined silver.

In line two, H’s and R’s *do* ‘to/for’ is in contrast to N’s *dia*. N’s *dia* could be the prep. *do*^L with the poss. pron. 3pl. *-a*^N. N’s poss. pron. 3pl. is due to the lack of lenition on *tesargain*, however, a 3pl. poss. pron. does not fit the context. Instead, the 3sg. poss. pron. *a*^L is expected and it refers to Máel, who is the object of the dat. sg. *tesargain* ‘saving, delivering, protecting’l. Therefore, N’s *dia* is used in the normalised text but interpreted with a 3sg. poss. pron.

Similarly, in line three, N's and H's *dia* is in contrast to R's *da*; however, in this instance N's and H's form is the prep. *do*^L with the poss. pron. 3sg. *a*^L and this is in its MidIr. form in R's *da*. Despite the lack of lenition on *taig* in all manuscripts, it has been restored in the normalised text.

eDIL s.v. *tesargain* (www.dil.ie/40583) lists two main definitions of the term and they are: 'saving, delivering, protecting' or 'striking, injuring'. The two definitions are the antithesis of one another. The first definition is used with the meaning that Mael has the protection of the king and queen.

The use of a head-noun and its genitive across a line break, even when there are interposing words, has already been discussed in 27.6, where it was also seen that a poss. pron. could proleptically refer to a genitive. Similarly, the poss. pron. 3sg. m. *a*^L in line three is co-referential with the genitives in line four.

N's *ba* is the ModIr. form of H's *bae* and R's *bai* which is the nom. pl. of *bó* 'cow'.

N's *ricbhatís*, H's *ricfaídís* and R's *ricfaitís* is found in its contracted prototonic form as the cond. fut. 3pl. form of *ro·icc* 'attains to, gets' whereby the vowel of the conj. part. *ro·* has been elided before the vowel of the verbal stem.

In early texts, *mer* (*o/ā*) 'off one's head, demented, crazy; foolhardy, rash' has a negative connotation when describing persons or warriors, but in later texts the term obtains a positive connotation to mean 'spiritedly, lively, agile'. The latter meaning is used in the translation since Máel is repeatedly described with positive attributes, unlike the plunderers.

27.15 **N:** Turma ine cinel eogain.
 o rofersat angleoghaoil.
 is fair nodusbera athlus
 for íoc 7 aithrechus

H: Turma anní cineoil eogain
 orofersat angleogail
 isfair nodusberae atlus
 for íc 7 aithrechas

R: Turma ane *cenel eogain*.
orofersat angléogail.⁴⁸
is fair nodusbera a thlus.
for íc 7 aithrechus.

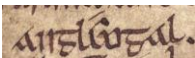
Normalised text:

Turma a n-é Cenél Éogain,
ó ro-fersat a ngléogail.
Is fair nodus·béra a thlus –
for ícc 7 aithrechus.

Translation:

It is multitudes, the aforementioned Cenél nÉogain,
when they poured forth their prowess in battle.
It is upon it that his treasure will judge them –
upon compensation and repentance.

eDIL s.v. *tuirem* (www.dil.ie/42381) lists this example of *turma* as the nom. pl. of *tuirem* ‘enumerating, recounting, telling, relating’, however, the expected nom. pl. would have been *tuirmea* and the entry lists no other attestation with a broad consonant cluster after syncope. eDIL also has an entry for s.v. ? *turma* (www.dil.ie/42523), with the only example listed as *turmā .i. mōrmō, ut dicitur: doberthe dot gilla turmu duit fēin* from O’Mulconry’s Glossary. Mac Neill (1932: 115) translates this gloss as ‘*turma*, i.e. much more, *ut dicitur* [*an doberthe?*] wast thou won’t to give to thy servant, may it give increase [*torma?*] to thyself’. From this gloss, it seems that a possible meaning of *turma* may be ‘increase’ and *turma* could be related to *turba* ‘host, multitude’, although the latter word is not well attested (eDIL s.v. *turba*, www.dil.ie/42490). If one takes into consideration that the *m* in *turma* would be pronounced as /μ/ and during MidIr., there was confusion between /μ/ and /β/, *turma* could have been created from *turba*. Griffith (2023) disagrees with this analysis and states that the *m* in *turma* and *b* in *turba* would have been unlenited. thus, the two words could not have gotten confused. However, neither the eDIL entry for *turma* or *turba* provide conclusive evidence that these consonants would not have been lenited. If Griffith’s comments are accepted than the alternative explanation would be that *turma* is a variant of *tuirmea* with unexpected non-palatalisation or that it is a loan word from the Latin *turma* ‘a troop, squadron’. Since it cannot be certain which analysis is correct, this thesis has analysed N’s, H’s and R’s form as being a confusion of *turma* for *turba* as the definition ‘multitude’ also fits the context.

⁴⁸ 

Schoen (2015: 91) has incorrectly transcribed this word as *angledgal*.

For N's *ine*, H's *anní* and R's *ane* see 22.4. Since the article a^N was unstressed, it could be written with an *i* like in N. H's *an ní* is MidIr. for *a n-í* 'that thing'. In MidIr. *int-í* could become *int-é* (eDIL s.v. 4 *í*, *hí*, www.dil.ie/26897; Breatnach 1994: 277), thus by extension *a n-í* could potentially become *a n-é*. Since both *a n-é* and *an ní* are MidIr. forms, it is uncertain what was in the archetype; however, as MidIr. *a n-é* is found in both branches of the stemma, it is used in the normalised text. The deictic particle seems to be in the nom. sg. neuter and this is used to emphasise *Cenél Éogain*. N's *cinel* is the nom. sg. but H's *cineoil* is the gen. sg. of *cenél* 'kindred, race, tribe, nation'. R's *c̄n̄l* is ambiguous as it could be expanded to either nom. or gen. sg. It is uncertain why N and H have different forms, but if the word is the nom. sg., then the expected nasalisation on the following *Éogain* is missing in all manuscripts. If *cenél* is taken as the gen. sg., then the deictic particle with the article should be *ind í*. It is difficult to determine whether a nom. or gen. is required for the line. If *cenél* is analysed as a nom. sg. then it would be the predicate of an unexpressed copula; on the other hand, if *cenél* is analysed as a gen. sg., then there is a hanging phrase that does not syntactically fit into the stanza. The former solution is preferred as *cenél* could be analysed as a fronted subject in a copula sentence for the pret. 3pl. *ro-fersat* 'had poured forth' in the next line. Thus, R's *c̄n̄l* is expanded to the nom. sg.

N's and R's *nodusbera* and H's *nodusberae* is the fut. 3sg. of *beirid* 'gets, obtains, takes'. H's *-ae* is the fut. 2sg. ending but this ending could potentially be scribal archaism. N's and R's *a thlus* and H's *a thlus* is the subj. of *·béra*. The intended meaning may have been that the spoils that the plunderers took from Máel will determine what sort of compensation Máel will receive.

- 27.16** **N:** Andam leo *crad* andalta.
 batis minca am gair ngarta.
 batis gnatha arbuadhuiph band.
 dorccain i tiriú *achtrand*
- H:** Andom leo *crad* an dalta
 badis mence *um* gair ngartai
 badis gnatha arbuadaib bann.
 dorccain a crichaib *echtrann*
- R:** Andam leo *crád* andalta.
 batís meinci im gair ngartai.
 batis gnatha ar buada band.
 dorccain itírib *echtrann*.

Normalised text:

Andam léo crád a ndalta.
Batis meinci im gáir ngarta.
Batis gnátha ar búadaib bann,
d'orcain i tírib echtrann.

Translation:

It is unusual for them to offend their foster-son.
They used to be frequently at battlefields of shouting.
They used to be well-known for victories of deeds,
plundering in territories of foreigners.

N's *minca*, H's *mence* and R's *meinci* can be analysed as the nom. pl. of *meinic* 'frequent, reoccurring often' or it could be the comparative of *meinic*, which has the form *meinciu*. In this line, the word is analysed as the nom. pl. of *meinic* as it is the simplest explanation.

N's, H's and R's *ndalta* could either be the gen. sg. or gen. pl. of *daltae* 'foster-son, fosterling'. The former has the ending *-ai* while the latter has the ending *-ae*, however, due to MidIr. final unstressed vowels, the forms could be spelt simply with an *a* as found in all manuscripts. It is the gen. sg. that is used in the normalised text, and it could be referring to Máel.

N's *ngarta* and H's and R's *ngartai* could be the gen. sg. of *gart* 'generosity, hospitality, honourable behaviour' with MidIr. unstressed final vowel schwa /ə/. In OIr., the expected gen. sg. would have had an *-ae* ending. Alternatively, the forms could be the acc. pl. of *gort* (also *gart*) which has the early meaning of 'a field (of arable or pastureland)' but later obtained the meaning 'a field of battle'. The expected acc. pl. of *gort* or *gart* is *garta*, which makes rime with *dalta*. N's and H's *gair* and R's *gáir* could be a proposed MidIr. gen. pl. of *gáir* 'a shout, cry', with the expected OIr. gen. pl. being *gáire*. This alternative explanation is chosen as it semantically fits within the stanza while also continuing the plural nouns found in the last two lines.

R's *buada* could be MidIr. for N's *buadhuiph* and H's *buadaib* with the loss of the OIr. dat. pl. *-aib*. Alternatively, R could have understood the term as a preposed genitive.

N's *i tíriu* and R's *i tírib* is the prep. *i^N* 'in, into' with the dat. pl. of *tír* 'portion of land; territory, province', while H's *a crichaib* is the prep. *a^H* 'out of, from' with the dat. pl. of *crích* 'confines, territory, district land'.

27.17 **N:** Ma doronsat ní nach coir
 it eat fuille *bhus* foir
 itir eocha 7 bu.
 aní rucadh o *chlarthu*

H: Ma doronsat ní nad coir
 ateat fuille*bus* foir
 etir eochai 7 buo
 andíí rucadh o clothruu

R: Mado rónsat ní nad coír.
 ateat fuille *bus* foir.
 eter eochu 7 bú.
 inni rucad o clothrú.

Normalised text:

Má do·rónsat ní nád cóir,
it eat fuille bus fóir.
Etir eochu 7 bú,
ind-í rucad ó Chlarthú.

Translation:

If they had done anything that is not proper,
this is interest that will be an assistance.
Both horses and cows,
of that which had been carried from Clártha.

The OIr. neg. rel. particle *nád* is found in H's and R's *nad* while its MidIr. form is seen in N's *nach*.

All manuscripts have MidIr. 3pl. indep. pron. *éat* for OIr. *é*. If *éat* is counted as one syllable, then the line is one syllable short of the required seven syllables. A similar example can be found in the *Metrical Dinnshenchas Érenn: ráidset ris tre gle-alt nglan/ ba hed ... fodroirgetar* with *hed* having the variant reading *éat* (Gwynn 1906: 28). If *éat* is taken as monosyllabic, then like *hed*, it leaves the line one syllable short. Thurneysen, Hessen & O'Nolan (1912: 524n) comment that since *gle-alt* must rime with *éat*, *éat* may originally have been disyllabic. Similarly, in this stanza of *Airec Menman*, *éat* could also be another possible example of it being disyllabic which would then give the required seven-syllable count.

N's, H's and R's *foir* has three potential meanings. Firstly, *foir* could mean 'site, area, confine; place of abode'; secondly, 'help, assistance'; and lastly, 'pursuing party'. The second definition is chosen.

The analysis of *fuille* is uncertain. eDIL s.v. *fuille* (www.dil.ie/24810) leads to the entry for s.v. *fuilled* (www.dil.ie/24813) 'filling up, completing (the orig. sense)' but in MidIr., it can also mean 'adding to, supplementing; an addition, increase'; and also the entry s.v. *fuillem* (www.dil.ie/24814) 'gain, profit, interest'. eDIL s.v. *fuillem* cites line two of this stanza as an attestation and states that *fuillem* and *fuilled* are commonly confused and are 'indistinguishable in most cases in the manuscript spelling'. In all manuscripts, the form *fuille* could potentially be *fuilled* with EModIr. silent /ð/ (McManus 1994: 351). Since none of the manuscripts has the *d*, it raises the possibility that *fuille* may be a distinct word itself from *fuillem* or *fuilled*. In this stanza, it is analysed as *fuilled* and when it is used in a legal context, it refers to the extra payment made on top of a fine or contract. Thus according to this stanza, Máel Milsothach will not only get compensation for his property, but he will also be entitled to extra payment.

N's *bhus* and H's and R's *bus* is the fut. rel. 3sg. of the copula with N's *bhus* showing MidIr. lenition of the initial letter of the verb as well as the pres. ind. 3sg. rel. ending *-us*.

For N's *aní*, H's *andii* and R's *inni*, see 22.4. H's and R's form could potentially be the gen. sg. m. which has the form *ind í* 'of that which...', however, this does not explain nom. sg. n. of N's *aní*. H's and R's form are followed in the normalised text as it is found in both branches of the stemma.

For the analysis of the placename *Clartha* see 26.15.

27.18 **N:** *Aisic dó o mac in righ*
 oir is baile a bruth's auridh.
 abuir fri maol aní sin
 aoghriar óaodh afhir
 a fir. tall.

H: *asec dó ó mac anrig*
 orisbaile abruth sabricch
 abair fri mael andisin
 aogriar o aed afir.
 Air

R: Asec do omac indrigh.
or is balc abruth sa brígh.
apair fria⁴⁹ mael inni sin.
a ogriar o aed afír.
A fir.

Normalised text:

Aisec dó ó mac ind rígh,
ór is balc a bruth 's a brígh.
Apair fri Máel a n-í-sin,
a ógríar ó Áed, a fír,
A fír.

Translation:

Restitution to him from the son of the king,
because his anger and his power is strong.
Say this thing to Máel,
All he wants from Áed, oh man!,
Oh man!

The conj. *úair* has the MidIr. variant *ór*, *óir* in N's *oir* and H's and R's *or*.

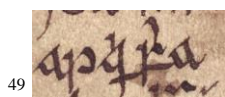
R's *balc* is the predicate sg. of *balc* 'strong, powerful, stout', which was originally an *o/ā*-stem adjective and can later also be found as the *i*-stem, as seen in N's and H's *bailc*.

The reduced form of *ocus* as *'s* is found in all manuscripts (Breatnach 1994: 331). Although one would expect a reduced form after a vowel, in this line it is found after a consonant. Another example can be found in *la toeb ar n-ōir 's ar n-argait* SR 3980.

The OIr. prep. *fri* can appear as MidIr. *fria* as seen in R.

OIr. imperative 2sg. of *as-beir* is *epir* but this can appear in MidIr. as *apair* and is seen in all manuscripts (McManus 1994: 414).

For N's *aní*, H's *andi* and R's *inni*, see 22.4.



⁴⁹ Schoen (2015: 92) has *for*.

Poem Four

This poem immediately follows Poem Three and it is spoken by Máel Milscothach who responds to Aurchoimted mac Sodeithbir.

- 28.1** **N:** Frisgart *maol milscothach* i suidhiu *conepertsidhe* aga *fregrae*
 H: Frisrogart mael *milscothach* fodesin isuidiu *conepertside*
 R: Frisrogart mael *milscothach* fadesin hi suidfu *conepert*.

Normalised text:

Frisrogart Máel Milscothach fadesin i suidiu con·epert:

Translation:

Máel Milscothach himself then answered, and he said:

N's *frisgart* is OIr. pret. 3sg. of *fris·gair* 'answers', which has its MidIr. form in H's and R's *frisrogart* with MidIr. *ro·* as a pret. marker.

N's *sidhe* and H's *side* is missing in R. Griffith (2013: 68–70) has argued that *-side* is used when a new topic is being introduced, otherwise, *-som* is used when the topic has already been mentioned. Thus, N's and H's use of *-side* is unusual and one would rather expect *-som* as Máel is not a newly introduced character. N's and H's form could have easily been added by the scribe, likewise with N's *aga fregrad* 'at their answer' which is missing in H and R. Byrne (1908: 71) has expanded *freg̃r* as *fregrad* and this is incorrect. While a suspension stroke over a verbal noun could be expanded to the typical verbal noun ending *-ad* (GOI § 723), the correct expansion of *freg̃r* is *fregrae* 'answers' and this is used for N's expansion.

The 'self' pronoun 3sg. m. of H's *fodesin* and R's *fadesin* is missing in N. While the more usual form is *fadésin*, later forms beginning with *fod-* could also be found (eDIL s.v. *fadéin*, *féin*, www.dil.ie/20990).

- 28.2** **N:** Cidh romboth *damhsa for* mael.
 anerbuirt nech uaibh fri haodh
 am fer *cumtha* dia aithair
 am dalta dia hsenathair
- H:** Cid romboth damsui *for* mael
 anerbert nech uaib re haed
 am fer *cumtha* dia athair
 am daltaí dia senathair

R: Cid romboth damsa for mael.
inérbert nech uaib fri háedh.
am fer cumtha dia athair.
am dalta dia senathair.

Normalised text:

Cid ro·mboth dam-sa for Máel,
a·n-érbert nech úaib fri hÁed.
Am fer cumtha dia athair.
am dalta dia senathair.

Translation:

Why is it that I was angry, said Máel,
concerning what anyone of you said to Áed.
I am a companion to his father.
I am a foster-son to his grandfather.

When the substantive *at-tá* ‘to be’ is used with the prep. *do*^L, it can have the meaning ‘feels (inimically) towards, is angry with, worries’ (eDIL s.v. *attá*, www.dil.ie/4927 [d]) and in this line the impers. perf. 3sg. of *at-tá* with the conj. prep. 1sg. of *do* is found.

While *for* could be the prep. *for* ‘upon, on’, it could also be MidIr. *for* for OIr. *ol* ‘said’ or the prep. *ar*^L ‘on account of, because of, for the sake of’. The prep. *for* and *ar*^L were commonly confused in the MidIr. period. It has been analysed as MidIr. *for* for OIr. *ol*, although it is unusual that Máel is now referring to himself in the third person.

N’s *anerbuirt*, H’s *anerbert* and R’s *inérbert* show a mixture of OIr. and MidIr. features. N’s and H’s *an* is the OIr. demonstrative relative *a*^N ‘that which’, and R’s *in* is the MidIr. form (Breatnach 1994: 276). After *a*^N, the deuterotonic form of the verb should follow, however, in MidIr. *a*^N could now be followed by the prototonic verbal form and this is seen in N’s *·erbuirt*, H’s *·erbert* and R’s *·erbert* ‘said’ (Breatnach 1994: 276). H’s *·erbert* and R’s *·erbert* has its MidIr. form in N’s *·erbuirt* for the t-pret. 3sg. of *as·beir* ‘says’. Both H’s *erbt̄* and R’s *érbt̄* has been expanded to the correct OIr. form.

N’s and R’s *fri* has its MidIr. form in H’s *re*.

The literal meaning of N’s, H’s and R’s *fer cumtha* is ‘a man of companionship’ and this is analysed as the nom. sg. of *fer* ‘man’ and gen. sg. of *commaid* ‘companionship, partnership, compact’; however, the phrase can simply be translated as ‘a companion’.

N's and R's *dalta* 'foster-son' show MidIr. nom. sg. of OIr. nom. sg. *daltae* 'foster-son' with *-a* being a schwa for *-ae*. Since none of the manuscripts have the correct OIr. form, MidIr. *-a* is used in the normalised text.

- 28.3** **N:** Ropsa altra dia aithair
 am aiti *daderpraithair*.
 cidh é fein fofuair muthlus
 sec rombiathus romeitiss.
- H:** Ropsa altrai da athair
 am aiti daderbuhraithair
 cide fein fofuair motlus
 sech rombiathas rometius
- R:** Ropsa⁵⁰ altra da athair.
 aiti da derbrathair.
 cid é féin fofuair mo thlus.
 sech rombiathus rométius.

Normalised text:

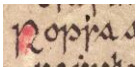
Ropsa altra dia athair.
 Am aiti dá derbráthair.
 Cid é fein fo·fuair mo thlus.
 Sech rom·bíathus, rom·éitius.

Translation:

I was a foster-father to his father.
 I am a tutor to his blood-brother.
 Even he himself has obtained my property.
 Although I had fed myself, I had clothed myself.

N's and R's *altra* is the nom. sg. *altra* 'foster-father'. N's, H's and R's *aiti* is MidIr. for OIr. nom. sg. *aite* 'tutor, teacher'.

N's, H's and R's *da* is OIr. conj. prep. 3sg. *dia* 'to his'. Since all manuscripts have the MidIr. form, it is maintained in the normalised text.

⁵⁰  There is a *punctum delens* above the letter *s* and this is unusual as one would not generally find one above an *s* in the copula, however, it is still transcribed.

Since the independent pron. 3sg. m. *é* is the subj. antecedent of the pret. 3sg. *fo·fúair* of *fo·gaib* ‘gets, obtains, gains’, a leniting relative clause is expected and this is only found in R’s *fofúair*. The *é* could be referring to *Áed*, who was mentioned in the previous poem.

28.4 **N:** IN dar lem frihaisc mo on.
 bai leam ni dom anacol
 do cenéul eogain co se.
 basam dalta tairisi

H: IN dar lium fri aisc mo on
 bui lem ni dom anacol
 do cinéul eogain go se.
 bamsu daltaí tairesiu

R: An dar lem fri haisc mo on.
 bui lem ni dom anacol.
 do cenéul eogain co se.
 bamsa dalta tairise.

Normalised text:

In dar lem fri haisc mo on,
baí lem ní dom anacol,
do chenéul Éogain co sé,
bamsa dalta tairise.

Translation:

Methinks against reproach of my blemishes,
I had something to protect me,
to the tribe of Éogan, until now,
I was a faithful foster-son.

There is difficulty of how to expand N’s and R’s *cnl-* and H’s *cinl-*. Byrne (1908: 71) has expanded N’s *cnl-* as *c[h]ineol*, and Schoen (2015: 92) has expanded R’s *cnl-* as *cenel*. Neither scholar have expanded H’s *cinl-*. The dat. sg. of *cenél* is required, the endings of which could be *-eul*, *-éul*, *-iul*, *-íul* and later also *-eol*, *-él* (eDIL s.v. *cenél*, www.dil.ie/8601). Further, *cenél* could later be found as *cinél*, but, unlike in N and R, the initial of the word is spelled out in H’s *cinl-*. In the normalised text, it has been decided that the form *cen-* and not *cin-* would be used as it is uncertain when *cenél* became *cinél*. H could have innovated, particularly as the ModIr. form of the word is

cineál. The *-éul* ending is used in the normalised text, which has the expected *u*-affection of the dat. sg. *o*-stem neuter.

Breatnach (2003: 138) has shown that the stressed demonstrative *se* ‘this’ has a long *e*. N’s, H’s and R’s *se* is normalised to *sé*.

N’s *basam*, H’s *bamsu* and R’s *bamsa* is MidIr. for OIr. *basa* pret. 1sg. of the copula. Both *basam* and *bamsa* occur regularly throughout the MidIr. period and thus it is difficult to know which form was in the archetype. Since *bamsa* is found in both branches of the stemma, it is used in the normalised text.

H’s *tairesiu* is the nom. sg. of *tairisiu* ‘faithfulness, loyalty, allegiance’ and this form is perhaps a hypercorrect spelling for N’s *tairsi* and R’s *tairise*, which is the nom. sg. of *tairise* ‘trustworthy, faithful, worthy of confidence’. N’s *tairsi* may be a scribal mistake whereby the scribe incorrectly copied *-rs-* instead of *-ris-*. R’s *tairise* is used in the normalised text as it creates rime with the previous *se*.

28.5 **N:** *Dochuuitcetar frim fahsecht.*
 dochuitchesa acoimaitecht.
 niro ail sium a biathi
 ni mó frith mughuuriathar

H: *Docuitchertar frim fa secht*
 docuitsechtsai acomaidecht
 niro ail sium ambiathad
 nimo frith mo gubriathar

R: *Docutichertar frim fo .uii.*
 docuichtsa acomaitecht.
 nir ailsin ambiathad.
 nimofrith mo gubriathar.

Normalised text:

*Do·cui*chetar frim fo *šecht.*
*do·cui*ches-sa a *coimaitecht.*
Níro·áil-sium a *mbíathad,*
ní·mo·fríth mo *gubríathar.*

Translation:

They swore to me seven times.

I have sworn their company.

He was not entitled to feed them,

my false words have not been found well.

The analysis of N's *dochuitcetar*, H's *docuitchertar* and R's *docutchertar* is uncertain. There is eDIL s.v. *cúitigid* (www.dil.ie/13740) 'requites, repays; makes recompense, expiates, atones', which would have an *s*-pret. and its 3pl. form would be *cúitigsait* or its aug. pret. *ro-cúitigsat*. In MidIr. *do·* (for OIr. *ro·*), the aug. marker would also be found. However, since the word is only attested in much later texts, it seems unlikely that this analysis is correct.

Alternatively, there is also eDIL s.v. *cuiti(gi)d* (www.dil.ie/13739) 'shares, partakes (of), participates (in); helps, aids, assists', which is better attested and whose aug. pret. 3pl. would have been *ro-cuitigset*. eDIL does cite line one of this stanza as an example of the verb. Like with the previous analysis, MidIr. *do·* for OIr. *ro·* would also be found. An issue with the analysis is that all the manuscripts seem to have the *s*-pret. depon. 3pl. ending with the correct form being *do-cuitchestar*. eDIL s.v. *cuiti(gi)d* lists one other example of a deponent ending and it is *ind fir isa crodh rochuitsetar* (Anecd. ii 56.z). However, none of the manuscripts have the *s* marker of the *s*-pret. ending and there is also the issue of H's and R's form containing an *r*. It is evident that some sort of corruption has occurred in the text. There is also the possibility that the forms may have derived from the unattested **do-cuitig(edar)* which would have the pret. depon. 3pl. form of **do-cuitigsetar*. Lastly, another explanation is that the forms could be the aug. pret. 3pl. of *tongaid* 'swears, takes an oath', which has the form *do-cuitchetar*. This last explanation fits the context the best and is used in the normalised text, although there is still the issue of H's and R's form containing an *r*.

N's *dochuitchesa*, H's *docuitsechtsai* and R's *docuichtsa* also presents difficulties. The forms may be the aug. *s*-pret. 1sg. of *tongaid* 'swears, takes an oath' with the emphasising pron. 1sg. *-sa*. The expected form would be *do-cuitches-sa* and this can be seen in N, which has the *s* of the verb combining with the *s* of the emphasising pronoun. H potentially could have expanded the *acht*-compendium incorrectly as *secht*. R's ending also does not have the *-es* of the *s*-pret. 1sg. Alternatively, the forms could also possibly be from an unattested **do-cuitet-* 'to go together'. The first analysis has been taken as the meaning fits the context and it is the simplest; however, this would also mean that that the verb *tongaid* occurs twice in the stanza, that is, in lines one and two.

N's and H's *nirō·* has its MidIr. form in R's *nir·* (McCone 1997: 188). R's form leaves the line one syllable short and this suggests that it may be a secondary form. N's and H's *-sium* is the emphasising pron. 3sg. m. which can later be replaced with the demonstrative *-sin*, as seen in R's *sin*.

N's *biathi* and H's and R's *biathad* is analysed as the acc. sg. of *biathad* 'feeding, maintaining'. N's lack of *d* could be MidIr. silent final *d* /ð/ not being written, although why an *i-* instead of *a-* ending is found is uncertain; this may be MidIr. unstressed final vowels being schwa /ə/.

N's *mó* and H's and R's *mo* is analysed as the MidIr. form of OIr. *mad* 'well, fortunately', the *d* of which is usually dropped after a negative in MidIr. When the word is used with the pret., it has the meaning 'did not well to ..., would that... had not...' and this construction is found in line four with the pret. pass. 3sg. of *fo-gaib* 'finds, gets'.

- 28.6** **N:** *Rodamolus cenaluagh.*
 meraigh cein bes ere uagh
 conda oghus 7 gall
 indaronus do domnall.
- H:** *Rotomolas ganaluag*
 meraid cen bes eriu uad
 conidh oghus 7 gall
 andoronas do domnall
- R:** *Rota molus cana lúag.*
 meraith cen bes heriu úagh.
 conid od gaidel is gall.
 andoronus do domnall.

Normalised text:

Roda·molus cena lúag,
méraid céin bes Ériu úag.
Conid óg Gáidel 7 Gall,
a ndo·rónus do Domnall.

Translation:

I have praised them without payment from him,
 it will remain as long as Ireland will be untouched.
 So that it is perfect for Gaels and foreigners,
 that which I have done for Domnall.

N's *da·* H's *to·* and R's *ta·* may be the infixed pronoun class C 3pl. *·da* or 3sg. f. *·da*. It is analysed as the 3pl. and refers to the king and queen. N's and R's *·molus* is the aug. pret. 1sg. of *molaid* 'praise, judge'; H's *·molas* has *-as* ending for *-us*.

N's *meraigh*, H's *meraid* and R's *meraith* is the fut. 3sg. of *mairid* or *maraid* 'to remain', which has the expected form *méraid*. N and H show MidIr. confusion of *d* /*ð*/ and *g* /*ɣ*/ and R's *meraith* may be an example of EModIr. confusion between *d* /*ð*/ and *th* /*θ*/ (McManus 1994: 354). Similarly, N's, H's and R's *bes* could either be the rel. fut. 3sg. or the rel. pres. subj. 3sg. of the copula. Both forms have been analysed as the pres. subj. as the line is about a hypothetical situation that potentially could happen if Máel does not obtain his compensation.

N's *cein* is the correct OIr. spelling of the temporal conj. *céin* 'as long as, since, when' which is incorrectly spelt in H's and R's *cen*. After *céin*, a nasalising relative clause is expected but no nasalisation is found on the predicate *Ériu* 'Ireland' in any of the manuscripts. Instead, a MidIr. leniting relative clause may potentially be found instead of an OIr. nasalising relative clause.

H's *conidh* and R's *conid* is the conj. *co*^N 'so that' with the pres. 3sg. of the copula. N's *conda* seems to be the conj. *co* with the pres. 1sg. of the copula. It is uncertain why N's form is different.

N's and H's *oghus* is the predicate *ógus* 'the whole, full amount or sum total', while R's *od gaidel* is predicate *óg* 'whole, complete'. R's *gaidel* is missing in N and H and it may be the gen. pl. of *Goídel* 'a Gael, an Irishman'. N's, H's and R's *gall* is also the gen. pl. of *gall* 'foreigners'. R's form is used in the normalised text as the phrase *gáidel ocus gall* is common. How N and H obtained their form is uncertain.

28.7 **N:** *Domnall daili dian acath.*
 dianamfeissi nim oirgfidh
 acht in dar lais ina dáil
 ropsa bachlach diu banbhain

H: *Domnall daeili dian icath*
 diamunfesid nim noirgfed
 acht andar les inadail
 ropsa bachlach duib banbain

R: *Domnall dáili dían achath.*
 diamanfeisid nim orcfed.
 acht dar lais ina dáil.
 ropsam bachlach dib banbain.

Normalised text:

Domnall dáili – dían i cath –,
díánam·fessed, ním·oirgfed.
Acht in dar lais ina dáil,
ropsa bachlach duib banbáin.

Translation:

Domnall of dispensation – swift in battle –
if he found me, he would not kill me.
But he thinks in his dispensing,
that I was a servant of a small, black pig.

N's *a* and H's *i* is analysed as the prep. *i*^N 'in, into'. Since prepositions were unstressed there were confusion on the spellings. Further, the prep. *i*^N 'in/into' causes nasalisation and consequently, the lenition in R's *chath* is incorrect. It is unknown why R's form is lenited, unless the scribe mistakenly wrote the first *spiritus asper* for the second *spiritus asper* that is found on the following *t*.⁵¹ Griffith (2023) has suggested that R's *a* could potentially be the poss. pron. 3sg. m. *a*^L which would cause lenition and this can be seen in the following *chath*. It is difficult to know which was intended in the original text but the first analysis is followed in the normalised text.

N's *daili*, H's *daeili* and R's *dáili* analysis is uncertain. The form could potentially be the gen. sg. of eDIL s.v. 2 *dál* (www.dil.ie/14345) 'a hostile meeting, an encounter' or eDIL s.v. 4 *dál* (www.dil.ie/14347) 'dispensing of drink or food; distributing, dispensing, bestowing, granting'. The forms are analysed as the gen. sg. of *dál* 'dispensing of drink or food' as its meaning best fits the context. While the gen. sg. of the *ā*-stems would have internal palatal consonant, for example, the gen. sg. *túaithe* of *túath* 'tribe, people'; *dál* is an exception to this pattern with its gen. sg. being *dálae*. eDIL s.v 4 *dál* does not list any gen. sg. forms, but eDIL s.v. 2 *dál* do lists attestations of *dálae*. However, in all of the manuscripts a palatal *l* is instead found, and this represents the later gen. sg. *dáile* which was created based on analogy with the regular gen. sg. of the *ā*-stem nouns. Uhlich (2009: 78) discusses a similar example found in *Baile in Scáil* 'The Phantom's Frenzy' (Murray 2004) where the gen. sg. *láma* of *lám* 'hand' is found. This gen. sg. has a neutral *m* instead of the expected palatal *m* with the latter then seen in the later gen. sg. *láime* which, like *dáile*, is a result of the spread of palatalisation. Therefore, N's *daili*, H's *daeili* and R's *dáili* is the later gen. sg. *dáile* and it is found with *-i* ending representing MidIr. unstressed final vowels being /ə/. This *-i* ending is maintained in the normalised text as it is found in all three manuscripts.

⁵¹ R:



N's *dianamfesissi*, H's *diamnunfesid* and R's *diamanfeisid* show some form of corruption. The forms could be analysed as conj. *día*^N 'if' with infixed pronoun class C 1sg. ·dom/·dam and the cond. fut. 3sg. *ro·finnadar* 'finds out, discovers'. MidIr. *nd* > *nn* would give the form *díanam·feisid*. H's *diamun·* and R's *diaman·* may be due to confusion of minims.

H's *nimnoirged* shows hypercorrection with the nasalisation being incorrect, and it is not found in N's *nimoirgfídh* and R's *nimorcfeid*.

In line three, N's *in* and H's *an* is not found in R. R's error may be a due to haplography whereby he may have anticipated the following *ina* later in the line.

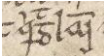
N's and H's *ropsa* has its MidIr. form in R's *ropsam* of the aug. pret. 1sg. of the copula.

eDIL s.v. *banbán* (www.dil.ie/5332) suggests N's *diu banbhain* be read as *dub-banbhāin* 'black small pig'. If *dub* 'black' forms a compound with *banbán*, then the palatalisation of *dub* is unusual as the expected form would simply be *dub*. Alternatively, it could be the gen. sg. m. *dub* which qualifies *banbáin*, but due to rime, the scribe wrote *duib* before, instead of after, a noun. It is the latter analysis that is used in the normalised text. This stanza could be interpreted as Domnall's generosity not extending to Máel who in turn compares himself to a *dub-banbáin*.

28.8 **N:** *Bith amenma cidh argaibh*
 *slat uad nuadhat airgat*⁵² *laim*
 conamortsa inaré
 nimlamair nech for bith cé.
 Cidh.

H: *Bith amenmai cid argaib*
 slat ua nuadat argatlaim
 conomortsui ina re.
 nimlamair nech for bith ce
 Cid Romboth.

R: **Bith amenma cid ar gáib.**
 slat .hua. nuadat argatlaim
 conamortsa ina ré.
 nimrolam nech for bith ché.
 Cidh.

⁵²  Byrne (1908: 71) has *airget*.

Normalised text:

Bíth a menma cid ar gáib,
 slat úa Núadat Argatlám.
 Condam·ort-sa ina ré,
 ním·lámaid nech for bith cé.
 Cid.

Translation:

His mind is always on – even account of spears –
 the twig of the grandson of Núada Argatlám.
 Until he wounded me in his time,
 no one had dared me in this world.
 Even if it may be.

N's *cidh* and H's and R's *cid* is the conj. *cía* 'if, even, though' and used as an adverb.

N's, H's and R's *slat* could either be *slat* 'plundering, robbery; or *slat* 'rod, lath, twig'. The second definition is used in the translation as it is a common metaphor for 'offspring, descendent'.

R's *.h.* is usually expanded to *úa* 'grandson', which is supported by H's *ua*. N's *uad* is another example of hypercorrection of MidIr. final silent *d* /ð/.

The translation of the first two lines are difficult but Griffith (2023) has suggested translation 'His mind (even on account of spears) is always a twig of the grandson of Núada Argatlám'. An issue with Griffith's translation is his interpretation of *slat* describing *a menma* 'his mind', however, as previously noted, the word is a common metaphor for 'offspring, descendent'. Stifter (pers. comm) has suggested that the first line could be translated as 'Furthermore/also, his mind is always set on spears'. Overall, all three translations, including the one used in the thesis, do not make a lot of sense.

N's and R's *conamort* and H's *conomort* is the conj. *co^N* 'so that, until' with the infixed pronoun class C 1sg. *-dam* or *-dom* and shows MidIr. assimilation of *nd* > *nn* > *n* with the pret. 3sg. of *oirgid* 'kills, slays; despoils, ravages, devastates' (cf. 27.8 R's *nochand*).

N's and H's *nimlamair* is the pret. 3sg. of *ro·laimethar* 'dares, ventures', while R's *nimrolam* is a later form whereby *ro·laimethar* became the simple verb *lamaid* with *ro·* as the MidIr. pret. marker.

Rosc

This *rosca* occurs immediately after Poem Four and is the legal judgement regarding the unjust plundering of Máel Milscothach.

- 29.1 N:** *Amal rochuala domnall naferba follscaidhesi doradh do⁵³ maol milscothach fiadha conagartha dóasuidhiu ardflatha cinéoil eogain 7 dogeine comairli friu cidh beidis imon orcain*
- H:** *Amail rocuala domnall tra naferbai follscaidesi do rad do mael milscothach fiadoi conacarthae do isuidiu ardflathae cineil eogain 7 do genae comairli friu cidh betís immonorcain*
- R:** *Amail rochuala domnall tra inna ferba follscaidisi era do rád do mael milscothach fiada conacartha doisuidiu ardflaithi cenéoil eogain 7 dos géna comarli friu cid betis imonorcain*

Normalised text:

Amail ro·chúala Domnall trá inna ferba follscaidi-si do·rád dó Máel Milscothach fiada, con·acartha dó i suidiu ard·flaithi cenéoil Éogain 7 dos·génai comairli friu cid betis immon orcain.

Translation:

When Domnall had heard these ardent words uttered which Máel Milscothach spoke to him in his presence, he then summoned the chief princes of the Cenél nÉogain to him and he took counsel with them on what ailed them with regards to the plundering.

N's *Amal rochuala*, H's *Amail rocuala* and R's *Amail rochuala* has been discussed at 22.3.

R's *era* 'refusing, a refusal' is missing in both N and H. The word does not add any further meaning to the sentence and as such is omitted in the normalised text. It could perhaps be a gloss for *follscaide* 'scorched'.

N's *fl⁻a*, H's *fl⁻ae* and R's *fl⁻i* should be the acc. pl. of *flaith* 'lordship, sovereignty, rule', which is not written out fully. The expected form would be *flaithi*. R's form could be expanded to *flaithi* due to the *-i* ending. On the other hand, N's *-a* and H's *-ae* broad ending would mean N's and R's form would be expanded to *flatha* and *flathae*, respectively. The non-palatalised stem should only be found in the gen. sg. or pl., which has the form *flathae*, but its spread beyond the gen. sg. and pl. may be the result of the merger between the *ā-* and *i-*stem, with the former having a non-palatalised

⁵³  Byrne (1908: 65) has *da*.

stem in the plural (McCone 2005: 146). The expected form *flaithi* is used in the normalised text based on R's form.

The issue of how to expand N's *cnl-*, and R's *cnl-* has similarly been discussed at 28.4. H's *cineil* is the only manuscript to spell out the word in its entirety. In this line, the gen. sg. is expected and its form could have been *cenéoil*. This is used in the normalised text, and N's and R's form has been expanded to *cenéoil*.

N's *dogeine* and H's *dogenae* contrast with R's *dosgéna*. The pret. 3sg. of *do·gní* 'do, make' has its OIr. form as *do·génai*. R's form is found with the infixed pronoun class A 3sg. f. *-s*, which could be anticipating the acc. sg. of *comairle* 'advice, counsel'. Since the infixed pronoun is grammatical, it is retained in the normalised text.

N's *beidis* and H's and R's *betis* is the impf. subj. 3pl. of the *at-tá* 'to be'. After *cid* 'why', a nasalising relative clause should follow (GOI §502); as a result, the form *no·mbetis* would be expected, however, none of the manuscripts have *no·m-*. The omission may be a stylistic choice, as *no·* is commonly dropped in poetry. When *at-tá* is used with a nasalising relative clause it can have the meaning 'has something the matter, is ailing' (eDIL s.v. *attá* I(d)), www.dil.ie/4927) and it is this construction used in the normalised text.

- 29.2** **N:** *Anga tra nitartustar forrasidhe*
 H: *Anga tra innítarastar forraside*
 R: *Anga \nó o/ tra nitarrus\tir/ar forrosaide.*

Normalised text:

Angá trá ní-tartastar forru-side.

Translation:

Indeed, it was a great falsehood which had not fallen upon them.

N's and H's *anga* and R's *anga* or *ango* could either be eDIL s.v. *angae* (www.dil.ie/3617) 'great falsehood, great wrong', or eDIL s.v. *angó* (www.dil.ie/3641) 'indeed, truly (?)'. In eDIL, the former is not as well attested as the latter. Both forms consist of the neg. prefix *an-* used as an intensifying prefix 'very, great', which is a later use of *an-*, with the nom. sg. of *gáú*. R's *nó* is perhaps due to analogy with stressed *gáú*, which could also be found as *gó*. eDIL s.v. *angó* 'indeed, truly' cites this line as an attestation, however, this leaves the line missing a subject. Thus, N's, H's and R's form is analysed as *angae* 'great falsehood' as it provides the subject for the following verb.

There is confusion between N's *nitartustar*, H's *innítarastar* and R's *nitarrus\tir/ar*. N's *nitartustar* is the neg. pret. 3sg. of *do-airret* 'comes up, arrives' but when used with the prep *for*, it can have the meaning 'comes up with, overtakes, falls upon' and it is found with the MidIr. pret. 3sg. -*astar*, instead of its OIr. pret. 3sg. *·tarraid*. The beginning of H's *in-* is in contrast to N's and R's *ni-*, which is the negative particle. H's *in-* may be due to confusion of minims. It is difficult to know what R's form is, but evidently there has been some sort of corruption with the verb.

N's and H's *forra* and R's *forro* is the conj. prep. 3pl. of *for* 'upon, over', which has its OIr. form as *forru*. These forms have been normalised to the OIr. form.

- 29.3** **N:** Nirbo leac *for thlam*
 H: Nirbo lec for tlam
 R: nirba lec *for tlam*.

Normalised text:

Nirbo lecc for tlám.

Translation:

It was not a flagstone upon a handful of wool.

The lenition on N's *thlam* versus H's and R's *tlam* may be the result of confusion between the preps. *for* 'upon, on' and *ar^L* 'for, on account of' which could result in confusion between the mutations too (cf. 27.7).

- 29.4** **N:** Nirbo cloch *for traghna*
 H: Niruo cloch for thragnai
 R: nirbá cloch *for tradna*.

Normalised text:

Nirbo cloch for tragna.

Translation:

It was not a stone upon a corncrake.

For the lenition on H's *thragnai* versus N's *traghna* and R's *tradna* see 27.7 and 29.3.

- 29.5** **N:** Nirbu gíc goc gall gaidhel.
 H: Niruho gic gog galdgaidhial
 R: nirba gic goc gallgaidel.

Normalised text:

Nirbo gic-goc gallgaidel.

Translation:

It was not a guttural chatter of one of Viking and Irish blood.

- 29.6** **N:** Nirbo hesarguin darach do dorn
 H: Niruho esorcain darach do diern.
 R: nirba hesorcain darach do dirn.

Normalised text:

Nirbo h-esorcain darach do dorn.

Translation:

It was not a striking of an oak by a fist.

The earlier inflexion of *dair* belongs to the *i*-stem fem. with the gen. sg. being *daró*, but *dair* later becomes a *k*-stem fem., thus the later gen. sg. *darach* is found in this line.

H's *diern* and R's *dirn* has a palatalised ending while N's *dorn* has the correct OIr. dat. sg. of *dorn* 'hand, fist'. eDIL s.v. *dorn* (www.dil.ie/18356) does list instances of palatalised dat. sg., for example, *doirnn*, (*Trip.*² 2928 (*doirnnin*, v.1.)); *for assin duirnn* (*Fél.* 146.31), however, H's and R's spelling is still unusual.

- 29.7** **N:** Nirbo saighet agcartha
 H: nirbo saiged acairthe.
 R: nír ba saiget hicorthi.

Normalised text:

Nirbo saiget i coirthe.

Translation:

It was not an arrow in a pillar.

Further, the interchange of prep. *i*^N 'in/into' and prep. *a*^H 'out of' can be seen with N's and H's *a* and R's *i* (cf. 23.12). The nasalisation on N's *gcartha* indicates it is the prep. *i*^N 'in/into' that is found in the line. H's *cairthe* and R's *corthi* have the correct palatalised stem of the acc. sg. of *coirthe*, also *cairthe*, 'rock; pillar, standing stone'. N's *cartha* has a non-palatalised stem which is unusual.

- 29.8** **N:** Nirbo buain *mhela amecnaib iobhuir*
H: Nirbo buain melae amecnuib iubair
R: nirba buain mela amecnaib ibair.

Normalised text:

Nirbo búain mela a mecnaib ibair.

Translation:

It was not extracting honey from roots of a yew.

N's *iobhuir* and H's *iubair* has the later form of R's OIr. *ibair* which is the gen. sg. of *ibar* 'a yew, yew-wood'.

- 29.9** **N:** Nirbo cuingi ime alighe *chon*
H: Niruo cuingid imme allighe *chon*
R: nírba cuindchid imbi illighi *con*.

Normalised text:

Nirbo cuingid imme i llige chon.

Translation:

It was not a seeking of butter in a dog's kennel.

N's and H's *a* is taken as prep. *i*^N 'in, into' as it fits the context the best (cf. 23.12, 29.7). There may be confusion with cases too. While the prep. *i* can take either the acc. or dat., in this instance, a dat. sg. would be expected but the acc. sg. *lige* of *lige* 'kennel' is found in N's *lighe* and H's *llighe*. R's *llighi* could represent the dat. sg., which would have the form *ligiu*; however, these endings could simply just be MidIr. unstressed final vowels being schwas /ə/.

R's *cuindchid* is an earlier form of N's *cuingi* and H's *cuingid* 'seeking, asking, requesting'.

- 29.10** **N:** Nirbo gib gab na gcennaighi
H: Nirbo giba gapa nacendaigi.
R: nirba gipa gapa na cendaigi.

Normalised text:

Nirbo gipa-gapa na cennaigi.

Translation:

It was not the unintelligible gabbing of merchants.

N's *gib-gab* has a similar meaning to *gic-goc* in 29.5. It is an onomatopoeic word with the meaning 'unintelligible gabbling'. H's *giba gapa* and R's *gipa gapa* is found with an extra syllable.

N's *gcennaighi*, H's and R's *cendaigi* all have a MidIr. unstressed final vowel being a schwa as the expected OIr. gen. pl. is *cennaige* 'merchant, trader'. Since all manuscripts have *-i*, it is maintained in the normalised text.

- 29.11** **N:** Nirbo himpidhi nenta amchloich aóil *impidhe ceneoil eogain* imarigh
 H: nirbo impide nenta amcloich aeil an⁵⁴ impidei ceneoil eogain immarig.
 R: nirba himpide nendta *imchloich aeil animpide cheneoill eogain* immaríg

Normalised text:

Nirbo himpide nenta im chloich áeil a n-impide ceneóil Éogain imma ríg.

Translation:

The intercession of the Cenél nÉogain regarding their king was not the intercession of nettles regarding a limestone.

For the expansion of N's *cnl-*, R's *cnl-* and H's *cen-* and its difficulties see 28.4. The gen. sg. is required in this line.

The lenition on *cheneoil* is caused by the nom. sg. *impide* 'entreaty, prayer, intercession' and this lenition is missing in N's *ceneoil* and H's *ceneoil*.

R's *an* is missing in N. In H, there is a gap where one can faintly see *an* written. R's *an* is analysed as the poss. pron. 3pl. *a^N* which causes nasalisation and it is possibly used proleptically to refer to *cenéoil*.

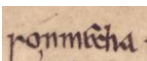
- 29.12** **N:** *Acht ropdar srotha sidhemhla soimmecha soithcerna roraidhsit*
 H: *acht ropdar srothae sidamlae soimechai soithcernae doraidhsit.*
 R: *acht ropdar srotha sídamlai sóin⁵⁵ mecha soithcherna ro ráidsit.*

Normalised text:

Acht ropdar srotha sídamlai soimmecha soithcherna ro-ráidsit.

54 

The letters 'an' can faintly be seen in the manuscript.

55 

Schoen (2015: 94) has *són*.

Translation:

But it was tranquil, prosperous, generous streams [of words] that they spoke.

N's *soithcerna*, H's *soithcernae* and R's *soithchernna* are variants of *suithchernda* 'lordly, bounteous, generous' (eDIL s.v. *suithchernna*, www.dil.ie/39269; eDIL s.v. *suithchernda*, www.dil.ie/39273).

N's and R's *srotha* and H's *srothae* is the acc. pl. of *sruth* 'stream, river'.

- 29.13** **N:** Nirbho haithesc ndibech nduaibsech ndiultadhach ndocernsai dorogartatar
H: nirbu athesc ndibech nduaibsich ndiultadach ndocernsai doracartatar
R: nirba aitesc ndibech nduáibsech ndíultadach ndochernsa doracartatar.

Normalised text:

Nirbo aithesc ndíbech ndúaibsech ndíultadach ndo[th]chernsa do-racartatar.

Translation:

It was not a churlish, irksome, grudging message of niggardliness which they pleaded.

N's and H's *ndocernsai* and R's *ndochernsa* is cited as an attestation of eDIL s.v. *dothchernsa* (www.dil.ie/18508) and the entry suggests it may be a form of eDIL s.v. *dothchernas* (www.dil.ie/18507) 'niggardliness, churlishness, inhospitality', which is an *o*-stem noun. N's, H's and R's form is the gen. sg., however it is not in the expected form *dothchernais*. Instead, all manuscripts seem to have the gen. sg. of the *u*-stem which would end in an *-a*. In OIr. there was already confusion between *o*- and *u*-stem nouns (GOI §309), and this became common in MidIr., in which the gen. sg. of the *o*-stem could be found for the gen. sg. of *u*-stem. It would then not be inconceivable that the gen. sg. of the *u*-stem could have influenced the gen. sg. of the *o*-stem, thus N's, H's, R's form may be the gen. sg. of *dothchernas*. The lack of *-th-* in all manuscripts is due to EModIr. dropping of *-th-* in spoken language (McManus 1994: 353). The *-th-* is added in the normalised text. However, it is also theoretically possible that *dothchernsa* could be a new *io*-stem adjective that is derived from *dothchernas*.

N's *dorogartatar*, H's *doracartatar* and R's *doracartatar* is the aug. pret. 3pl. of *do-accair* 'pleads, argues' and this is normalised in the text to OIr. *do-racartatar*.

- 29.14** **N:** Uair badubh gall detla derrscaithech tregtastar
H: uairi badu\bh/gall detlae derscaigthe tregdustar
R: Uairi bá dubgall dévla derscaithi treghdustar.

Normalised text:

úaire ba Dubgall détlae derscaigthe tregtastar.

Translation:

since it was the distinguished bold Dubgall who wounded.

N's *uair* can also be found as H's and R's *uairi* but with MidIr. unstressed final vowels *-e* for *-i*, for the causal conj. *úair* 'for, because, since' (eDIL s.v. 2 *úar*, *úair*, www.dil.ie/42763). In this instance, the form is normalised with the correct *-e* ending. Based on the entry in eDIL, it seems that *úaire* occurs in prose glosses while *úair* is more common in poetry.

N's *derrscaithech* is the nom. sg. m. of *derscaigthech* 'distinguished, pre-eminent, conspicuous, excellent', however, H's *dercaigthe* and R's *derscaithi* is the nom. sg. m. of *derscaigthe* 'distinguished, excelling, conspicuous, excellent'. Both words have the same meaning; however, *derscaigthech* arises in MidIr. from *derscaigthe*, and as such, it would be an easy innovation by the scribe. N's form is used in the normalised text (eDIL s.v. *derscaigthech*, www.dil.ie/15720; eDIL s.v. *derscaigthe*, www.dil.ie/15718).

N's *tregtastar*, H's *tregdustar* and R's *treghdustar* is MidIr. 3sg. pret. of the now MidIr. simple verb *tregtaid* for OIr. *tris·gata* 'pierces, transfixes, wounds'.

The personal name Dubgall is a compound of *dub* 'dark, black' and *gall* 'foreigner' and has the meaning 'dark foreigner'.

- 29.15** **N:** Ba fogartach forusta firén fegustar
 H: ba foghartach forusta firian fegastar
 R: bá fogartach forusta firian fegustar.

Normalised text:

Ba Fogartach forusta fírán fégastar.

Translation:

It was steady, righteous Focartach who watched.

The personal name Focartach has the meaning 'outlawed one'.

- 29.16** **N:** Ba *cormac mac goich cocrustar*
 H: ba *corbmac mac goich cocrastar*
 R: bá *corbmac mac goich cocrastar*.⁵⁶

Normalised text:

Ba Corbmac mac Goich cocrastar.

Translation:

It was Cormac mac Goich who conspired.

The personal name Corbmac has the meaning ‘son of a chariot’. The meaning of Goich is uncertain.

N’s *cocrustar* and H’s and R’s *cocrastar* is the pret. 3sg. of *cocraid* ‘resolves, determines, conspires’ with the verb itself being a MidIr. variant of *con-cuirethar* ‘composes’.

- 29.17** **N:** Pa *scolaigh scorach scailustar*
 H: ba *scoluide sgorach sgaeilestar*
 R: ba *scolaigi scorach scailistar*.

Normalised text:

Ba Scolaige scorach scailestar.

Translation:

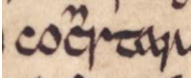
It was the horse-possessing Scolaige who released [the spoils].

N’s *scolaigh* is missing a final vowel unlike H’s *scoluide* and R’s *scolaigi*, which is the nom. sg. of *scolaige* ‘scholar, pupil, student’. The word is used as a personal name in this line. The meaning of the line is unclear as it is uncertain what Scolaige is releasing but it could possibly be the spoils with the intention of returning them back to Máel.

- 29.18** **N:** Pa *muredhach morchlothach mend muinestar*
 H: ba *murethach morclothach mend muainestar*
 R: bá *muiredach mend mórchlothach muáinistar*.

Normalised text:

Ba Muiredach Menn mórchlothach múinestar

⁵⁶  Schoen (Schoen 2015: 94) has *cocrutar*.

Translation:

It was the greatly renowned Muiredach the Stammerer who instructed.

There is a difference in word order for N's *morchlothach mend* and H's *morclothach mend* versus R's *mend mórchlothach*. N may have interpreted *menn* as an adjective qualifying Muiredach as opposed to being a personal name; alternatively, it may just have been a copying error.

The personal name *Muiredach* has the meaning 'a lord, master, proprietor'. There are two possible meanings for *Menn*; firstly, it could be eDIL s.v. 1 *menn, mend* (www.dil.ie/31959) 'conspicuous, remarkable, notable' or eDIL s.v. 2 *menn, mend* (www.dil.ie/31960) 'stammering, inarticulate'. The latter definition is taken as the former has a similar meaning to N's *morchlothach*, H's *morclothach* and R's *mórchlothach* 'greatly renowned'.

There are two possible analyses for N's *munestar*, H's *muainestar* and R's *muáinistar*. Firstly, it could be the pret. 3sg. of *muinithir* 'mediates, intends, purposes'; eDIL s.v. *muinithir* (www.dil.ie/32749) lists this line as an example and suggests the translation 'who devised'. Since *muinithir* is a deponent verb, its *-astar* ending would be an OIr. and not MidIr. ending. Alternatively, the forms could be from *múinid* 'teaches, gives instruction (in)' but in a wider sense can mean 'shows, indicates, points out' (eDIL s.v. *múinid*, www.dil.ie/32743) and would be found with MidIr. pret. 3sg. *-astar*. Since in 29.16, there is already someone who will devise a plan, the second analysis of *múinid* would fit the context better. An issue with all the analyses is that there are no other attested forms in eDIL of the verbs with the diphthong *uá* as seen in H's and R's form. The word could be interpreted as it is Muiredach Menn's job to instruct the plunderers on how to give back Máel's belongings.

29.19 **N:** Ba *conaing comramach costadhach cinnestar*
 H: ba *conaing comramach costadach cinnestar*
 R: **Bá** *conaing comramach costadach cinnistair*.

Normalised text:

Ba Conaing comramach costadach cinnestar.

Translation:

It was the victorious, behaved Conaing who decided.

eDIL s.v. *costudach* (www.dil.ie/12637) does not give a definition but suggests it is related to eDIL s.v. *costud* (www.dil.ie/12636) 'placing together, arranging, establishing; checking, restraining; behaviour, manner', thus the translation 'behaved'.

R's *cinnistair* has a palatalised ending which may be due to the influence of the confusion between the palatal and non-palatal final *-r* of the passive-impersonal (McCone 1997: 228). N's and H's form has been expanded to the expected non-palatal MidIr. 3sg. pret. *-star* ending.

- 29.20 N:** Ba hóg laochrad imamnus imuallach imfaobrach ceneoil eogain achtatar an chomairli sin .i. aisc achreiche. 7 aenich do maol milscothach
- H:** Ba oclaechrad immuallach imamnas imfaebranch ciniuil eogain achtatar ancomairle sin .i. asiuc acreche aocus aenich do moel milscothach
- R:** Ba hóclaeccraid imuallach imamnus imfaebranch⁵⁷ ceneoil eóghain actatar incomarli sin .i. asec achreichi 7 a enich do mael milscothach

Normalised text:

Ba hócláechrad immúallach immamnas imfaebranch cenéoil Éogain achtatar in comairli-sin .i. aisec a chreiche 7 a enich do Máel Milscothach.

Translation:

It was a very fierce, very proud, very keen group of young warriors of Cenél nÉogain who made that decision, namely, restitution of his booty and his honour to Máel Milscothach.

N's *hóglaochr̄* and H's *oclaechr̄* has been expanded to the expected nom. sg. *ocláechrad* 'young men-at-arms, young warriors', which has its MidIr. form in R's *hóclaeccraid*.

N's *imamnus imullach* has a different word order from H's *immullach imamnas* and R's *imullach imamnus*. N's scribe may have misread the line as both words begin with *im-*.

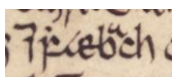
For N's and R's *cnl-*, see 28.4.

The lenition in N's *chomairli* 'advice, counsel' is incorrect as the acc. sg. f. art. *in* does not cause lenition. The lenition may be a modern influence in which the nom. causes lenition and this has been carried over to the acc.

N's *chreiche* and R's *chreichi* has the lenition caused by the previous poss. pron. 3sg. m. *a^l*, which is not found in H's *creche* 'plunder, booty'.

N's *einich*, H's *enich* and R's *enich* is the gen. sg. of *enech* 'honour, repute, good name'. In OIr., *enech* is commonly found in the pl., thus the gen. pl. *enech* would be expected, but later it is treated as a sg. which is seen in this line (eDIL s.v. 1 *enech*, *ainech*, www.dil.ie/20066).

⁵⁷



Schoen (2015: 94) has *imfaebruch*.

- 29.21 N:** Et isbertatar frisin righ A domnaill olsiat denasa do chomairle fein dotaos creche.7
orgne
- H:** Et aspertatar frisinrigh. domhnaill olseat densae do comairle fen dotaes creche 7
oirgne
- R:** 7 asbertatar frisin rí. a domnaill olseat dénasu do comarli féin dotaes crech 7 orcni.

Normalised text:

Et as·bertatar frisin rí: ‘A Domnaill’, olseat, ‘déna-sa do chomairli féin dot áes creche 7
orgne’.

Translation:

And they said to the king: ‘Oh Domnall’, they said, ‘Give your counsel to your people of
plundering and raiding’.

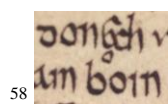
H’s *densae* for N’s *denasa* and R’s *dénasu*, which is the ipv. 2sg. of *do·gní* ‘make, do’, may
be an example of eye-skip with the following emphasising pronoun 2sg. *-sa*. Similarly, R’s *crech*,
with the lack of final *-e*, which is seen in N’s *creche* and H’s *creche*, may also be another copying
error as the next word begins with a vowel.

Only N’s *chomairle* ‘counsel, decision’ shows the lenition caused by the preceding poss.
pron. 2sg. *do^L* ‘your’.

- 29.22 N:** Madh sinde cidh do neoch uainne natrainic in orcain doberam boin cach óigthiagera
7 cach ríghamuis nar cenel eogain do maol milscothach
- H:** Mad sinde cid do neoch uainde natrainec indorcain doberam boin cech octigernai 7
gech rigamhais nar cenel eogain do moel milscothach
- R:** Mad sinde cid do ne/o\ch⁵⁸ uaíne nadrainic ind orcain doberam boin cach hóctigern
7 cach rígamais nar cenel neogain do mael milscothach.

Normalised text:

Mad sinne cid do neoch úain-ne nad·ráinic ind orcain, do·béram boin cach ócthigernae 7 cach
rígamuis nar cenél nÉogain do Máel Milscothach’.



⁵⁸ Schoen (2015:94) has mistakenly taken the *o* of *neoch* as belonging to *boin* and transcribed this
as ‘nech ... booin’.

Translation:

‘With regards to us, even though the attack came from none of us, we will give to Máel Milsothach one cow for each young noble and each royal mercenary in the service of the king from among our Cenél nÉogain’.

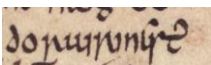
The OIr. neg. rel. *nad* seen in R’s *nadrainic* can also be written as *nat* as seen in N’s *natrainic* and H’s *natrainec*. It is uncertain why the verb is in a relative construction as none is required.

There is disagreement on the form of the unstressed pronominal *cach*, *cech* ‘each, every, all’, which occurs twice in the line, each time in the gen. sg. In OIr., it is uninflected in the sg., except for the gen. sg. f. which had the form *cacha*, but later, *cacha* spreads to other genders. H’s *cech octigernai* has MidIr. *cach* or *cech* instead of gen. sg. f. *cacha* with gen. sg. of the f. *ócthigerna* ‘young lord’. N’s *cā óigthigerna* can be expanded to either *cach* or *cacha*. However, *ócthigerna* does later become a masculine noun which would then make H’s *cech* correct and N has been expanded to *cach*. R’s *cacha hóctigern* has the gen. sg. f. *cacha* instead of the m. *cach* with the m. *ócthigern* which is a variant form of *ócthigerna* (eDIL s.v. *ócthigern*, www.dil.ie/33479). Thus, both *tigern* ‘lord’, an *o*-stem m., and *tigerna* ‘sovereignty’, an *io*-stem m. is found in this line.

Similarly, N’s *cacha ríghamuis*, H’s *gech rigamhais* and R’s *cach rígamais* have variations in *cach* and *cacha*. H’s *gech* and R’s *cach* is the correct form for the m. *rigamus* ‘servant, attendant’ while N’s *cacha* is the later form.

N’s, H’s and R’s *nar* is analysed as the prep. *i*^N ‘in/into’ with the poss. pron. 1pl. *ar*^N which gives *nar* (eDIL s.v. *5 ar*, www.dil.ie/3906). Consequently, the acc. sg. or dat. sg. of *cenél* ‘tribe, people’ is required. The nasalisation in R’s *neogain*, which is not found in N’s and H’s *eogain*, suggests that it is the acc. sg. of *cenél* that is found; consequently, N’s and R’s *cnl-* is expanded to the acc. sg. At the same time, R’s nasalisation could have been transferred from the nominative form of Cenél nÉogain.

- 30.1** **N:** *Conad ann sin tra doruimnestar domnall inamenmuin antindligi mor dorona for maol milsothach fria re coneptert iarsin fria brethemhnai 7 fria hsenchaibh*
- H:** *Gonad ann sin tra dorurmestar domnall inamenmain atinddliged mor doronadh for mael milsothach friaarei coneptert iarsin friaabrethiumnai 7 fria senchaideibh*
- R:** *Conid and sin tra doruirmestir⁵⁹ domnall inamenmain inindliged mór doroíne do mael milsothach fora creich coneptert iarsin fria abrethemna 7 senchaidiu.*

⁵⁹ 

Schoen (2015: 94) has *doruirmestar*, therefore, *-tar* instead of *-tir* ending.

Normalised text:

Conid ann sin trá do-ruirmestar Domnall ina menmain in indliged mór do-rónad for Máel Milscothach fria ré co-n-epert iar sin fria brethemna 7 fria senchaidib.

Translation:

So that it is then, indeed, that Domnall considered in his mind the great injustice that had been done to Máel Milscothach in his time, so that he said afterwards to his judges and to his historians:

N's *doruimnestar*, H's *dorurmestar*, R's *doruirmestir* may potentially be forms of *do-moinethar* 'supposes, opines, conjectures; ponders', *do-rími* 'accounts, considers', or *do-ruimnethar* 'forgets'. The expected OIr. aug. pret. 3sg. of *do-moinethar* would have been *do-ruménair*; the OIr. aug. pret. of *do-rími* is *do-ruirim*; and the OIr. pret. of *do-ruimnethar* may have been *do-ruimén*. Both *do-ruménair* and *do-ruimén* have a long *e* which is not found in any of N's, H's or R's forms and this may be due to secondary analogical syncope. All verbs seem to be inflected like a simple verb and are used with the MidIr. deponent *s*-pret. 3sg. ending *-astar*. N's form may be the aug. pret. 3sg. of *do-moinethar*, while H's and R's form is the pret. 3sg. of *do-rími*. H's and R's form is used in the normalised text as it is found in both branches of the stemma and its meaning fits the context the best.

N's *antindligi*, H's *atinddliged* and R's *inindliged* presents difficulties. The analysis of N's *ant*, H's *at-* and R's *in-* is uncertain. The acc. sg. of *indliged* 'an illegality, an illegal act, an injustice' is found in all the manuscripts. If it is taken as the acc. sg. article then the neuter *a^N* would be expected, as *indliged* is an *o*-stem neuter. This could potentially be found in H's *at*, although it is uncertain what the *t* is. Since *indliged* later becomes an *o*-stem masculine, R's *in* could be the acc. sg. m. article, however, it is possible that due to the unstressed nature of the article, R's form could also be *a n-*, that is, the acc. sg. n. *a* followed by nasalisation. Alternatively, *a n-* could have been in R's archetype but with the demise of the neuter, the scribe modernised the article to *in*. N's *ant* could be viewed as the nom. sg. m. *int*, which is used before a word starting with a vowel, being used as the acc. sg. m. It is difficult to know what to put in the normalised text, but R's *in* is used as it is the simplest explanation.

N's *dorona* and H's *doronadh* is the aug. pret. pass. 3sg. of *do-gní* 'makes, does', but R's *doroíne* is the MidIr. aug. pret. 3sg. of the same verb for OIr. *do-rigni*, *do-rigéni*. R may not have understood the OIr. passive form and so modernised the verb; consequently, N's and H's form is used in the normalised text.

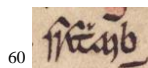
N's and H's *for* is found as R's *do*. It is difficult to know what was in the archetype, but *for* is used in the normalised text. Similarly, N's *fria re* and H's *friaa rei* is found in R as *fora creich*. N's and H's form consists of the prep. *fri* 'against, to' with the poss. pron. 3sg. m. *a^L* and the acc. sg. of *ré* 'generally of time, a period, lapse of time', with 'in his time' having the meaning that the plunder happened during Domnall's reign. R's forms are the prep. *for* 'upon, to' and the acc. sg. of *crech* 'booty, spoil'. While both phrases would make sense in the sentence, N's and H's phrase is used in the normalised text.

N's *fria* is found in H and R as *fria a* 'to his'. H's and R's form is the MidIr. *fria* for OIr. *fri^H* 'to, upon' with the poss. pron. 3sg. m. *a^L*; N's *fria* is the OIr. form. N's and H's second occurrence of *fria* is missing in R. Since R could have easily omitted *fria*, it is used in the normalised text. After both instances of *fria*, the acc. would be expected. N's *brethemhnai*, H's *brethiumnai* and R's *brethemna* is the acc. pl. of *breithem* 'judge'. However, N's *hsenchaibh* is the dat. pl. of *senchae* 'a custodian of tradition, a historian', and H's *senchaideibh* and R's *senchaidiu* is the dat. pl. of *senchaid* 'a reciter of lore; a historian; a custodian of tradition'. The latter dat. pl. instead of the acc. pl. is due to the MidIr. breakdown of the distinction between the acc. and dat. pl. when governed by a preposition, with a preference for the dat. pl. (McCone 2005: 151). eDIL s.v. *senchae* (www.dil.ie/37121) states that Thurneysen suggests that *senchae* may be an old secondary form of *senchaid* and eDIL s.v. *senchaid* (www.dil.ie/37122) states 'may, perhaps, derive from *senchae* declined as a *t*-stem, which may have been the oldest form'. However, McCone (1995: 8) has argued that *senchae* is the older form of the two and that *senchaid* could not have come into the language before the MidIr. period. He argues that 'The obvious trigger would have been the already discussed Middle Irish development of plurals of the type nom./acc. *senchada* etc by old *io*-stems, since these could be reanalysed as belonging to an *i*-stem nom. sg. *senchaid* ... on the model of a likewise Middle Irish *i*-stem pattern nom.-acc. sg *féindid*, pl. *féindeda* etc.' Thus, H's *senchaideibh* and R's *senchaidiu* could be viewed as later MidIr. forms of N's *hsenchaibh*. The MidIr. *senchaidib* is used in the normalised text as it is found in both branches of the stemma.

- 30.2** **N:** *Senchaidhe suidhighet ol domnall. sreatha fian fianeirghe.*
H: *Senchaide suidet oldomnalt srethai fír fianerghe*
R: *Senchaidi suidet ol domnall srethaib⁶⁰ fian fianergi.*

Normalised text:

'Senchaidi suidet', ol Domnall, 'sretha fian fianéirge'.



⁶⁰ Schoen (2015: 94) mistakenly transcribes this as *frethaib*.

Translation:

‘Let experts in law establish’, said Domnall, ‘ranks of rising warrior-bands’.

N’s *suidhghet* has the ipv. act. 3pl. *-et* instead of the ipv. depon. 3pl. *-etar* for *suidigidir* ‘establishes, sets up’. H’s and R’s *suidet* is the ipv. 3pl. of the causative verb *suidid* ‘to set, fix’.

N’s *sreatha* and H’s *srethai* is the acc. pl. and R’s *srethaib* is the dat. pl. of *sreth* ‘row, line, series, arrangement, order; ranks, lines of people, soldiers’. It is uncertain why R has the dat. pl., as it is the acc. pl. that is expected since it is the object of the previous verb. It perhaps may be hyperarchaism as independent datives are often found in *rosc*, however, it still stands that a dative does not fit the context.

N’s *fian fianeirghe* and R’s *fian fianergi* is in contrast to H’s *fír fianerghe*. N’s and R’s initial *fian* is the gen. pl. of *fían* ‘driving, pursuing, hunting; a band of warriors’ and this is followed by the gen. sg. of the compound of the previously mentioned *fían* with *éirge* ‘rising, standing up, springing up’ which can have the meaning ‘rising of warriors to battle; a raid’. Instead of the initial *fian*, H has either the gen. pl. of *fír* (o, n) ‘truth, correctness’ or *fír* (o/ā) ‘true, veracious’, which qualifies *sretha* i.e. ‘true ranks’. Neither form fits the context appropriately. H may have had *fían* in the archetype but replaced it with *fír*. In the manuscript, *fír* is faintly written, and this may suggest that the scribe erased a word and wrote *fír* over it. Since *fían* is found in both branches of the manuscript tradition, it is retained in the normalised text.

30.3	N:	fechat coir coicerta iar cintaib cnedh
	H:	fechat coir coiccerta iarcintaib cnedh
	R:	fegaid coir cocerta iar cintaib cnedh.

Normalised text:

‘Féchat cóir coicerta iar cintaib cned’.

Translation:

‘Let them observe rightness of a judgement after crimes of wounds’.

N’s *fechat* is in contrast to R’s *fegaid*, and H’s *fech-* is ambiguous. N’s form could be the ipv. 3pl. of *fégaid*, *féchaid* ‘looks at, observes, scans’ or *fichid* ‘fights’. Since *fichid* does not fit the current context, the forms are analysed as *fégaid*, *féchaid*. R’s form could be the ipv. 2pl., although the change from the previous 3pl. verb to a 2pl. verb would be unusual. Alternatively, R’s form could be the pres. 3pl. of *fégaid*, *féchaid*. N’s form of the ipv. 3pl. of *fégaid*, *féchaid* is the analysis used in the normalised text as it would also form a parallel with the previous sentence which has the 3pl. Why R has a different form is uncertain; perhaps the scribe misread the verbal form or, if there was a

suspension stroke like in H, R expanded the form incorrectly. N's form is followed in the normalised text and H's form is expanded accordingly.

- 30.4 N:** Cía dotindreda arc namhnus naighthighe iar tascuibh duinebhais do delmaibh dith
H: cia dotindredae arcc namnus naighithide iartascaib duinebas do delmaib dith
R: Cía dotinrada arg namnas naighthide iar tascaib duinebais. do delmaib dith.

Normalised text:

Cía do·tindreda arc n-amnas n-áigthide iar táscaib duinebáis do delmaib díth.

Translation:

Although he may plunder a clever prominent champion after reports of mortality, for tidings of destruction.

The analysis of N's *dotindreda*, H's *dotindredae* and R's *dotinrada* is uncertain. eDIL s.v. ? *do-indreth* (www.dil.ie/17891) states that the vn. *tinnriud* 'damage, injury' could belong to the verb; however, it lists this line as the only attestation. The verbal noun itself is not well attested in eDIL s.v. *tinnriud* (www.dil.ie/40902). The verb is found with what seems like the infix pronoun class A 2sg. *t^L*, however, an infix pronoun is not required as there is already an object in N's *arc*, H's *arcc* and R's *arg* which is the acc. sg. of *arg* 'prominent person, champion, hero'. The *-t* could be the meaningless infix pronoun class C 3sg. n. *-d^L* but spelt as *-t*, which could be infix to the preverb when an indicative verb is preceded by *cia* 'although' (GOI §426). The *-a* ending seems to be the 3sg. pres. subj. of the *ā*-subjunctive. This verbal form would mean the verb has been inflected as a weak verb instead of as a strong verb with an *s*-subjunctive, which would have the form *in-ré*. However, it seems odd for the verb to go from a 3pl. in the previous lines to all of sudden a 3sg., especially because there is more than one plunderer. It is possible the verb could also be the 2sg. pres. subj. which has the ending *-ae* and is seen in H's *dotindredae*, but, yet again, it seems odd for the verb to go from a 3pl. to a 2sg. verb.

Another possible explanation is that the forms are the pres. subj. 3sg. of *do-indreth* which is a verb deriving from *ind-reith* and has been compounded with *to*. The initial *t* found in all the manuscripts is what McCone (1997: 194) labels as a 'dummy reiterated first preverb'; this is when a 'dummy' preverb, usually *do* or *cum*, is used with independent verbal forms in order to avoid 'an awkward deuterotonic/prototonic alternance'. Consequently, this would then produce the pres. subj. 3sg. *do-tindreda* which is used in the normalised text.

N's *duinebhais*, H's *duinebas* and R's *duinebais* is listed in eDIL s.v. ? *duinebás* (www.dil.ie/19141) as the only attestation of the term with the meaning 'mortality'. The word is a compound of *duine* 'human being' and *bás* 'death'.

N's, H's and R's *dith* is MidIr. gen. sg. for OIr. *dítha* of *díth* 'destruction'.

- 30.5**
- N:** Tacarar cocarar cocairtt nat cumscaighther corabail anfhuihgel cein bas bith bes
- H:** tacarar cocarar cocairt nade cumscaighther corab ail an fugail cenbusbith bes
- R:** Tacarar cocarar cocairt nát cumscaider. Corop ail an fugail cein bus bith beas.

Normalised text:

Tacarar cocarar cocairt nát-cumscaighther, corop ail an fúgail céin bas bith-bés.

Translation:

Let it be pleaded: let it be adjudged, a decision which is not confused, so that it can be the bedrock of passing judgement as long as it be a perpetual practice.

N's *nat* and R's *nát* is neg. rel. *nád* but it is uncertain what H's *nade* is and it may just be an error. N's and H's *cumscaighther* and R's *cumscaider* is the pres. pass. 3sg. of *con-oscaigi* 'moves, changes; removes; shakes, upsets'. R shows EModIr. *ghth* > *th*. When the verb is used in a negative sentence, it has the meaning that a decision will be made with firmness and does not cause upset, hence the translation 'is not confused'.

N's, H's and R's *ail* could be analysed as either the nom. sg. of *áil* 'asking, request, wish' or nom. sg. of *ail*, which has the primary meaning of 'boulder, rock' but could also mean 'foundation, basis (of law)'. While both words would fit in the sentence, *ail* 'foundation, basis' is better suited and the phrase has the meaning that their judgement will form the groundwork for future judicial decisions so long as the practice lasts.

N's *fhuighel*, and H's and R's *fugail* is the gen. sg. of *fuihell*, with alternative forms *fugall*, *fugell*, 'a judicial pronouncement, a sentence, decision; passing judgement on'. H and R has the expected palatalised ending, unlike N's form. All manuscripts have MidIr. gen. sg. m. art. *an* for OIr. *ind*.

In OIr., a nasalising relative clause would follow the conj. *céin* 'as long as, since, when', but in MidIr., this may be replaced by a leniting relative clause, thus the pres. subj. rel. 3sg. of the copula is found in all manuscripts.

N's and H's *bithbes* and R's *bithbeas* is taken as the compound *bith* 'perpetual' and *bés* 'habit, custom, usual procedure, practice'.

- 30.6** **N:** *breithemhain brechtnaighat breth einich ollaman*
 H: *Brithemain brectnaidet breth enich oldoman*
 R: **Breithemain brechtnaiget breth enich olloman.**

Normalised text:

Breithemain brechtnaiget breth enich ollaman.⁶¹

Translation:

Let judges dispute the judgement of an honour-price of an ollam.

N's *breth* is MidIr. acc. sg. with the expected OIr. acc. sg. being *breith* of *breth* 'carrying away'. H's and R's form as been expanded to N's form.

N's *brechtnaighat*, H's *brectnaidet* and R's *brechtnaiget* is from MidIr. *brechtnaigid* for OIr. *mrechtnigidir* 'varies, diversifies'. N's, H's and R's form is the only attestation that begins with a *b-* in eDIL s.v. *mrechtnigidir* (www.dil.ie/32622).

- 30.7** **N:** *danroet righecsi elga i nucht ecnaighe ainmnighet ainm indiri dlighedhaigh dorgain*
 cen imditneth chathrach mail milscothaig tar rechtgai rig.
 H: *danroet righecse elgai inucht ecnaide ainmnighet ainm andiri dlighedhaig dorcain*
 cen imditnedh catrach mael milscothaig tar rechtgai rig
 R: **Danroet ecsi elga anucht ecnaide ainmniget ainm ndíri dlige daig dorcain cen**
 imditned cathrach mail milscothaig dar rechtga rí g.

Normalised text:

Dan·róet rí g·éicse Elga i n·ucht ecnaide. Ainmniget ainm ndíri dlige daig d'orcain cen imdítned cathrach Maíl Milscóthaig tar rechtgai rí g.⁶²

⁶¹ In *Tochmarc Lúaine ocus Aided Athairne*, part of this line is found and is spoken by Amairgin: '*No tráigdis márlocho/ fri fuachad forba/ enich ollaman*' (l. 365–7) (Breatnach 1980: 17). These lines are not found in Stokes' edition of the same text. The translation seems to be: 'They used to diminish great lakes in order to insult the highest point (of) honour of an ollam'. This imagery recalls the episode of the poet Athairne satirising a lake because it would not give him a salmon and consequently, the water rises up against him and he is forced to compose a praise-poem on the spot to appease the river (Gwynn 1942).

⁶² In *Tochmarc Lúaine ocus Aided Athairne*, part of this line is found and is spoken by Amairgin: '*Is dó ar-óet rí gécisi/ im roruided rí g dia rí gan, ainm ndire dlige daig*' (l. 368–370) (Breatnach 1980: 17). These lines are not found in Stokes' edition of the same text and can be translated as 'It is to him who submits a name of lawful honour price of a royal poet concerning great shame of a king to his queen'.

Translation:

A royal poet of Elg has defended him in front of scholars. Let them name the name of a lawful honour price for the plundering without protection of the fortress of Máel Milsothach by the decree of a king.

N's, H's and R's *danroet* shows incorrect indication of a nasalised *r* on the aug. pret. 3sg. of *do·eim* 'protects, defends'. The infixed pronoun class A 3sg. m. *a^N* should result in *·rr* and not *·nr* on the verbal stem. The nasalisation of *r* as *-nr-* is commonly seen after conjunctions which nasalise for example, see GOI §896 for *conro·* for *corro·*, that is the conjunction *co^N* 'so that' with the aug. (an example in this text can be seen at 23.10); and also, GOI §552 for *anru·* for *arru·* for the conjunction *a^N* 'that which' with the aug. *ro·*. Thus, it would be unusual for *·nr* to occur after an infixed pronoun; however, in MidIr., the infixed pronoun class A 3sg. m. *-a* can be found as *-n* and this is the analysis used in the normalised text (see p. 84).

N's *righecsi* and H's *righecse* is in contrast to R's *ecsi*. N and H has the compound *ríg-* 'royal' and *écse* 'poet' and R simply has *écse*. N's and H's *ríg* may have been used in order to create alliteration, and thus it is used in the normalised text.

The literal meaning of *i n-ucht* is 'in, at, on the bosom or breast of' but can figuratively mean 'before, in front of' (eDIL s.v. *ucht*, www.dil.ie/42871).

N's *ecnaighe*, H's and R's *ecnaide* could potentially be the gen. pl. of *ecnaid* 'a sage, scholar' or *ecnaide* 'a sage, scholar' as both forms are indistinguishable in the plural. It is uncertain which word it is in this line, particularly as they both have the same meaning. Since eDIL, *ecnaid* (www.dil.ie/19613) is better attested than s.v. *ecnaide* (www.dil.ie/19615), the forms are analysed as *ecnaid*.

The personal noun *Elg* is another name for Ireland (eDIL s.v. *Elg*, www.dil.ie/19953).

Only R's *ndíri* shows the nasalisation caused by the previous acc. sg. *ainm* on the gen. sg. of *díre* 'honour price'. N's *indiri* and H's *andiri* show confusion in forms. There may have been an error of too many minims in N's and H's archetype and N copied this error while H was unsure about the form and may have changed it to the ModIr. article *an*.

N's *dligedhaigh*, H's *dligedhaig* and R's *dligedaig* is the gen. sg. n. of *dligedach* 'lawful' and in OIr., syncope would have been expected but it is not found in this line. eDIL s.v. *dligedach* (www.dil.ie/17035) lists only two attestations of this form including this line.

N's *imditneth*, H's *imditnedh* and R's *imditned* seems to be the acc. sg. of *imdídnad* 'act of releasing, relieving, exempting, protecting'. eDIL s.v. *imdídnad* (www.dil.ie/27476) lists no attested forms with the ending *-ed*. Alternatively, it could be the prefix *imm-*, *im-* 'about, around, mutually' with *dítnid* 'protector', however, there is the issue of *-e-* instead of *-i-* that is found; further, its meaning does not fit the context. Since the first explanation makes the most sense, the form is analysed as such, and the *-e-* is maintained in the normalised text as it is found in all manuscripts.

Since the preceding acc. sg. *imdídned* causes nasalisation, the lenition on N's *chathrach* is incorrect, unlike H's and R's *catrach*, which has no lenition.

The phrase *d'orcain cen imdítmed cathrach Maíl Milscothaig* is interpreted as Máel's fortress has been plundered when it was not being guarded.

- 30.8** **N:** Ríaraigter roruidhed righ diambo midhe magh mail
 H: Ríaraigter roruided rig diamba mide mag mail.
 R: Ríaraigter roruided ríg diamo mide mag máil.

Normalised text:

Ríaraigter roruided ríg, diambo Mide Mag Maíl.⁶³

Translation:

Let them enforce their will on the great shaming of a king, whether it be the Plain of Máel in Mide.

The literal meaning of N's *roruidhed* and H's and R's *roruided* is 'very reddening' but is translated metaphorically as 'great shame' as in medieval Ireland, the blushing of the cheeks is associated with shame or dishonour (see pp. 15–16).

Mide is in modern Meath or Westmeath which is where Máel Milscothach's fortress is located. N's *midhe*, and H's and R's *mide* is analysed as a preposed genitive.

On the translation of N's *diambo*, H's *diamba* and R's *diamo* see 30.9.

- 30.9** **N:** Diamba bruidhen bregh breithem cind cocóra comara múir
 H: diammad brugen breg brithem cinn cocore go mara muir
 R: Diamba bruigin breg breithem cinn cocori comara múir.

⁶³ In *Tochmarc Lúaine ocus Aided Athairne*, part of this line is found (see 30.7).

Normalised text:

Diamba bruiden Breg breithem, cinn co córai co mara muir.

Translation:

Whether it be a hostel in Brega of judges, let you settle with correctness as far as the sea.

N's and R's *diamba* is analysed as the conj. *dia*^N 'if, when' with the past 3sg. of the copula; H's *diammad* may be hypercorrection of EModIr. *d /ð/* and MidIr. *mb > mm*. Griffith (2023) has suggested that *diamba* is taken with the previous *diambo* in the previous line as two clauses which can then be translated as 'whether it be ... whether it be ...'. This suggestion has been used in the thesis.

N's *bruidhen* and H's *brugen* is the nom. sg. of *bruiden* 'hostel, large banqueting-hall; house, mansion', while R has the acc. sg. for MidIr. nom. sg. This word functions as the predicate of the copula.

N's *breg* and H's and R's *breg* could be the gen. pl. of *brí* 'hill', which is the place-name Brega; however, the nasalisation caused by the gen. pl. is not found on N's and R's *breithem* and H's *brithem*. Alternatively, N's and R's *breithem* and H's *brithem* could be analysed as the nom. sg. of *breithem* 'judge'; in this scenario, the lack of nasalisation is expected as it does not form the same phrase with N's *bruidhen breg*, H's *brugen breg* and R's *bruigin breg*. This would form the subject of the copula. Griffith (2023) has suggested that *breithem* be taking as a voc. sg., however, the lack of the voc. particle *a* makes this suggestion unsuitable. Overall, the meaning of this line remains uncertain.

The analysis of N's *cind*, and H's and R's *cinn* is uncertain. It may be the ipv. 2sg. of *cinnid* 'defines, fixes, settles'; however, the switch from the ipv. 3pl. verbs to the 2sg. is unusual. Since no other explanation can be offered, it is translated as an ipv. 2sg.

Neither N's *córa*, H's *core* and R's *cori* has the correct OIr. acc. sg. of *córae* 'correctness, propriety' which has its OIr. form as *córai*. The correct form has been used in the normalised text.

The phrase *co mara muir* is more commonly found as *co mara múr* 'until the wall of the sea' or more stylistically translated as 'as far as the sea'. N's, H's and R's *mara* is the preposed gen. sg. of *muir* 'sea'. N's, H's and R's *múir* gen. sg. may be an example of case attraction as the acc. sg. *múr* would be the expected form (cf. 32.5).

- 30.10** **N:** *Muchaighther teng*
 H: *Muchaider teng*
 R: *Muchaighther teng*

Normalised text:

Múchaighther teng.

Translation:

Let a tongue be extinguished.

N's *muchaighther* and R's *muchaighther* is the ipv. pass. 3sg. of *múchaid* 'oppresses, suppresses; obliterates', which has the deponent suffix *-aig(i)-* added to ipv. pass. 3sg. depon. ending *-ther*.

- 30.11** **N:** *teinti dearga dolasaruip lasait cin urdibdud tar fuata fond*
 H: *\t/ente dergai dolasaraib lasaid gonurdibdud tar fuata fonn*
 R: *tenti derga dolasaraib. lasait can urdibdud. tar fuata fond.*

Normalised text:

Teintea derga do lasaraib, lasait cen urdíbdud tar Fúata fonn.

Translation:

Red fires of flames, let them light up without extinguishing across the territory of Ireland.

N's *teinti*, H's *tente* and R's *tenti* is taken as the nom. pl. of *teine* 'fire' which has been normalised to the OIr. *teintea* and is qualified by nom. pl. of *derg* 'red'. The phrase *teintea derga* functions as a *nominativus pendens*.

While H's *lasaid* could be analysed as pres. 3sg. of *lasaid* 'takes, fires, blazes, lights up' it is more likely to be the pres. 3pl. as found in N's and R's *lasait* as it continues the 3pl. verbs from the previous lines. However, so far in this paragraph, with the exception of §30.1, 4, 7, there have been a number of imperative verbs, thus it is analysed as MidIr. ipv. 3pl. and retained in the normalised text. In OIr., the form would have been *lasat*.

N's *cin* and R's *can* are the later forms of the prep. *cen* 'without'. H's *gon* is unusual with an *-o*. In the normalised text, *cen* has been restored as *cin* and *can* are quite later forms.

N's, H's and R's *urdibdud* show MidIr. interchange of *u-* for OIr. *ai-* with the acc. sg. *airdíbdud* 'act of extinguishing, destroying' (Breatnach 1994: 231).

N's, H's and R's *fuata* may be a preposed genitive of *Fúata* 'Ireland' and is followed by N's and R's *fond* and H's *fonn*, which is the acc. sg. of *fonn* 'base, bottom, foundation; soil, land, territory', to agree with the prep. *tar* 'across'.

- 30.12 N:** Foclaim is focalta fó trice tesairgne tened do ruadhruidhedh righ etir imfaobhra
fobretha bais
- H:** Foglam isfochalta fotrice tesaircni tened do ruadhruided rig itir imfhaebra
fobretha bais
- R:** Foclum is focalta fo trice tesargne tened doruadhruided rí. etir imfaebra fobretha baís

Normalised text:

Foclaim is focalta fo thrice tesairgne tened do rúadhruided rí. etir imfáebra fo bretha báis.

Translation:

I declare that it is to be enjoined with the swiftness of rescuing from a fire, for the great reddening of a king among illegalities under judgements of death.

N's *foclaim* is the pres. 1sg. of *foclaid* 'affirms, declares, pronounces' but H's *foglamh* and R's *foclam* have the pres. conj. ending 1pl. or the ipv. 1pl. of *foclaid*. Ó Cuív (1952: 171–4) has argued that the ipv. 1pl. was influenced by the pres. ind. ending, and thus obtained the palatalised endings *-muid*, *-mid* and *-maoid*. This new palatalised ending could have influenced N's *foclaim*. Alternatively, H's and R's form could reflect confusion with minims, especially since the following letter is an *i*. While the imperative would continue the string of imperatives seen so far, N's form is analysed as the pres. 1sg. and the line is interpreted as Domnall making a judgement on Máel's situation.

eDIL s.v. *focalta* (www.dil.ie/22401) cites this line as the only attestation of the verbal of necessity of *foclaid* 'affirms, declares, pronounces'.

The analysis of N's *imfaobhr-*, H's *imfhaebr-*, and R's *imfaebr-* is uncertain. Byrne (1908: 75) has expanded N as *imfaobhrad* and Schoen (2015: 95) has likewise expanded R as *imfaegrad*. However, no such word exists in eDIL. The forms could potentially be from *imfáebar* 'a double-edged blade; a double-edged contract; illegality' but the form does not have an *-ad* ending which is usually reserved for verbal nouns, of which *imfáebar* is not. The form could be an acc. pl. which could have a vowel added as an ending, thus causing syncope. The suspension stroke could then simply be expanded to *-a*. There is also its adjectival form *imfáebrach*, which has the meaning 'very keen, eager'; thus, *imfáebar* could also have the meaning 'keenness' or perhaps 'urgency'. The forms are analysed as the acc. pl. of *imfáebar* as it fits the context the best.

The sequence of the adverbial phrase and multiple prepositional phrases is hyperbolic and exaggerated and serves to express the urgency of the situation.

- 30.13** **N:** *baidhither drochdala*
 H: *baidither drochdalai*
 R: *badigther drochdala*

Normalised text:

Báidither drochdála.

Translation:

Let bad judgements be suppressed.

This line presents many difficulties. N's *baidhither*, H's *baidither* and R's *badigther* is analysed as the ipv. pass. 3sg. of *báidid* 'destroys, overwhelms, obliterates, suppresses' with the deponent suffix *-(a)ig-*. The expected OIr. form would have been *baitter* but it is possible that the *-i-* of AII verbs was not syncopated in order to avoid the necessary homorganic delentation of *-d-* and *-th-*, which would give *-tt-*. An issue with this 3sg. verbal form is that it does not agree with the nom. pl. *drochdála* 'bad judgements' and this is a MidIr. feature.

- 30.14** **N:** *tocathar sidhamlai iar coraip ceart*
 H: *tocabthar sidomlae iarcoraib cirtt*
 R: *tocabthar sídamla iar coraib cert.*

Normalised text:

Tocabthar sídamlae iar córaib cert.

Translation:

Let tranquillity be established after the corrections of rights.

H's and R's *tocabthar* is the ipv. pass. 3sg. of *do-fócaib* 'set up, establishes'. Byrne (1908: 74) has expanded N's *tocaī* as *tocaiter*, thus making it the ipv. 3pl. of *do-caithi* 'spends, consumes', but it has been expanded to the 3sg. *-thar* in this line in order to follow the other manuscripts. An issue with N's analysis is that 'spends, consumes' does not fit the context, but it is uncertain why N has a different form.

H's *cirtt* is analysed as the gen. sg. of *cert* 'right, what is proper, correctness'. N's *ceart* has a non-palatalised ending instead and this could be the gen. pl. form. R's *cī* could be expanded to the sg. or the pl. and it has been decided to expand to the gen. pl. and this is also used in the normalised text.

- 31.1 N:** IN tan tra rosraith do domnall ani sin do airt 7 doaisneis pahann tarmartatar filidh falmaighi dol do athchor achotaig admolta fri righ temrach a suidhiu. fobithin orcne mail milscothaig
- H:** IN tan tra tarnaic do domnall annisin do airt 7 do aisnes bahand tarmortatar filid falmuighe dol do tachur acotaich admolta fri rig temrach isuidiu Fobithin orcne mael milscothaig
- R:** IN tan tra tarnaic do domnall imni sin do airt 7 do faisneis. ba hann tarmartatar filith falmuigi dol dotathchur achotaich admolta fri rig temrach isuidiu fobithin orcne mail milscothaig.

Normalised text:

In tan trá tarnaic do Domnall a n-í-sin do airt 7 do aisneis ba h-ann tarmartatar filid Fálmaige dol do thathchur a chotaig admolta fri rígh Temrach i suidiu fo bíthin orcne Maíl Milscothaig.

Translation:

When Domnall had finished saying and relating that thing, it was then that the poets of Ireland intended to set about restoring his friendship of great praise to the king of Tara in that case because of the raiding of Máel Milsothach.

N's *rosraith* is in contrast to H's and R's *tarnaic*. H's and R's form is the pret. 3sg. of *do-airicc* 'comes to an end, is completed, finished, exhausted' in its independent prototonic form. N's form is the aug. pret. 3sg. of *scuchaid* 'comes to an end, is finished, exhausted'. N's form may potentially be a later form due to its spelling of MidIr. *g* for *c /g/* and confusion of *th* and *ch* (Breatnach 1994: 228; McManus 1994: 353). The scribe may have innovated. H's and R's form is used in the normalised text as it is supported by both branches of the stemma.

N's and R's *tarmartatar* and H's *tarmortatar* are also found in their independent prototonic form of the pret. 3pl. of *do-armairt* 'intended, attempted, was about to'.

R's *faisneis* has a later form with MidIr. prosthetic *f* unlike N's *aisneis* and H's *aisnes*, with the forms being the dat. sg. of *aisnéis* 'act of relating, telling, explaining, narration' (Breatnach 1994: 235).

The compound *fál* (o, m) 'name of Ireland' and *mag* (s, n) 'a plain, open stretch of Ireland' is a poetic name for Ireland.

For N's *ani*, H's *anní* and R's *inni* see 22.4.

N's *athchor* is the dat. sg. of *athchor* 'giving back, returning, restoring', while H's *tachur* and R's *tathchur* is the dat. sg. of *tathchor* (o, m) 'returning'. Both terms have the same meaning, that is, the restoring of friendship.

N's *chotaig*, H's *cotaich* and R's *chotaich* has two potential analyses. Firstly, it could be the gen. sg. of *cotach* 'covenant, pact, treaty of friendship, friendship' or gen. sg. of *cuit* 'share, part, portion' with the latter form originally being an *i*-stem feminine but later obtaining velar inflection. However, the gen. sg. of *cuit* would have been *cotach*, which is not attested in any of the manuscripts. Therefore, the first analysis is used for N's *chotaig*, H's *cotaich* and R's *chotaich*. The preceding *a* in N and R is analysed as the poss. pron. 3sg. m. *a^L* due to the lenition found on N's *chotaig* and R's *chotaich*, and it is used proleptically to refer to Máel. While in H, the preceding *a* is analysed as the 3pl. *a^N* due to the lack of lenition on H's *cotaich*, and could be referring to the previously mentioned *filid* 'poets'. The poss. pron. 3sg. mas. *a^L* is used in the normalised text as it is found in both branches of the stemma.

N's, H's and R's *admolta* can be translated as either 'praising, great praise' or 'praise-poem'.

This line could be interpreted as, due to Máel's anger at being plundered, he would no longer create praise poems for the king; consequently, Domnall announces that compensation is to be paid to Máel in order to make amends.

- 31.2** **N:** *conad iar sin tra conrancatar coimgne hsenchadh herenn fhilidh. 7 breithemnu imcoictar indiri 7 eineclainn mail milscothaig Iarna orcain. 7 iarna indred in indligi*
- H:** *Conad iar sin tra conrancatar comgne senchad erenn filid 7 brithemnu imcoictar indiri 7 eneclainn maeil milscothaig iarnaorgain 7 arna indred inindliged*
- R:** *Conidh iar sin tra conrancatar comgne shenchad herenn filed 7 breithemna imchoictar indiri 7 aeneclainn mail milscothaig iarna orcain 7 iarna indrad inindliged.*

Normalised text:

Conid íar sin trá con-ráncatar coimgne senchad Érenn filid 7 breithemna †imcoictar† in díri 7 eineclainn Maíl Milscothaig íarna orcain 7 íarna indred i n-indliged.

Translation:

So, it is thereafter the poets and judges arrived at a synchronism of the historians of Ireland ... the honour-price and compensation of Maél Milscothach after the illegal plundering and invasion of him.

N's and H's *conad* versus R's *conidh* has been discussed in 22.1.

N's *coimgne* and H's and R's *comgne* can be translated as 'synchronism' or 'historical knowledge' with eDIL s.v. *coimgne* (www.dil.ie/10208) stating it is the 'name of a branch of learning'. Mac Airt (1958: 142–3) states it is a term that is usually confined to the Middle Irish period and suggests the etymology of *com-* 'together, mutually, equally' and *ecnae* 'wisdom, knowledge, enlightenment' to give the meaning 'joint knowledge', 'all-embracing (acquired) knowledge' or 'very great knowledge'. Therefore, it is knowledge that is derived from all the different fields of learning.

Byrne (1908: 74) has incorrectly transcribed N's *hsenchadh* as *hsenchaidh*. eDIL s.v. *senchaid* (www.dil.ie/31722) 'a historian' has suggested *senchad* as being either the gen. sg. or pl. that may be from its old secondary form *senchae* (io, m) 'a custodian of tradition, a historian' that was itself later declined as a *t*-stem. The expected gen. sg. or pl. of *senchaid* would have been *senchada*. It is analysed as a gen. pl. in the edition.

How N's *fhilidh 7 breithemnu*, H's *fil̄ 7 brithemnu* and R's *filed 7 breithemna* syntactically fit in the line is unclear. N's *fhilidh* could be the acc. sg. or nom. pl. of *fili* 'poet'; however, R's *filed* is the gen. sg. or pl. of *fili*. H's *fil̄* could be expanded to either form. In all instances, it is followed by the acc. pl. of *breithem* 'judge'. If N's phrase is followed, then the accusatives would be the object of *con-ráncatar*; however, the translation '...had obtained... judges' does not fit the context. If R's *filed* is followed, then the gen. sg. or pl. similarly does not fit the context due to *senchad*, a word denoting a person, already being mentioned. The issue of acc. pl. of *breithem* previously mentioned also applies here. Instead, N's *breithemnu*, H's *brithemnu* and R's *breithemna* is the acc. pl. used for MidIr. nom. pl. and is the subject of *con-ráncatar*.⁶⁴ Therefore, N's *filid* is the nom. pl. and H's form is expanded to *filid*. The scribe of R may have been confused with the syntax of the phrase and analysed the word as the gen. sg./pl.

The analysis of N's *imcoictar*, H' *imcoctar* and R's *imchoctar* is uncertain. The word could be a verb in the pres. or ipv. pass. 3pl. that could be beginning a new sentence. An argument against it being a verb is that it is followed by the gen. sg. of *díre* 'honour-price' and gen. sg. *eineclainn* 'compensation', thus suggesting N's, H's and R's form is a noun.

Griffith (2023) has suggested 'a corruption in the exemplar of *imm choicert (uel sim.)* "concerning the adjudication"' with *choicert* being the acc. sg. of *coicert* 'emends, corrects; adjudicates'. He also suggests that 'the suspension stroke for *-er* may have been misplaced and misunderstood and could have led to *coctar*'. The line would then read 'so it is thereafter that the poets and judges arrived at a synchronism of the historian of Ireland concerning the adjudicating of the honour-price and the compensation of Máel Milsothach after the illegal plundering ...' While his suggestion is a possibility, it seems unlikely that the suspension stroke for *-er* and *-ar* would be

⁶⁴ For examples of other instances of the subject not occurring immediately after the verb see Lash (2014).

confused. Further, in order for *coctar* to have occurred, the original form in the manuscripts would have been *cocart* which is an earlier form of the noun. Since, no other satisfiable suggestions can be thought of, and the word is left unanalysed.

H's *indred* and R's *indrad* is the dat. sg. of *indred* 'invading, spoiling, laying waste, devastating', although the more expected form would be *indriud*. Byrne (1908: 74) has expanded N's *indr̄* as *indrad* but it is better to expand it to *indred*, as seen in H.

- 31.3** **N:** *Conad ann sin roleicsiut do fhland labarglan fer leiginn cluanu mac nois brethugadh na caingnesi asa coimdeoin diblionaibh itir filidha 7 brethemnu conePERT*
- H:** *Conadann sin ruslecsit do flonn labarglan fer leginn clúanae mac noois brethugad na caingnesea asacoimdeoin diblinaib itir filidae 7 brethemniu gonePERT*
- R:** *Conid andsin doleicset do flann labarglan fer leighind cluana muc nois brethugad na caingnesin asacomdeoin díblínaib etir filida 7 brethemna conePERT.*

Normalised text:

Conid ann sin ro-léicset do Flann, lann labarglan fer léiginn Clúana Mac Nóis, brethugad na caingne-se asa comdeóin díb línaib itir filida 7 brethemna, conePERT:

Translation:

So that it is then that they entrusted to pure-spoken Flann, lector of Clonmacnoise, the judgement of this dispute arising from their mutual agreement on both of them, poets and judges, and he said:

When *léicid* 'leaves' is used with the prep. *do*^L 'to/for' it has meaning 'leaves to or for, hands over to, entrusts to'.

The phrase *fer léiginn* has the literal meaning 'man of learning' but figuratively means 'professor, lector'. Johnston (2013: 143–4) has suggested that this Flann may be Flann mac Maíle Michíl († AFM 977).

eDIL s.v. *brethugad* (www.dil.ie/6769) suggests that it is related to s.v. *brethnugad* (www.dil.ie/6768) 'judgement, decision, opinion'. The latter seems to have older attestations than the former.

N's *-si* and H's *-sea* is the demonstrative particle 'this', while R's *-sin* is the demonstrative particle 'that'. The former refers to something that is close, present, or immediately following, while the latter refers to something that is far away or has been previously mentioned. N's and H's form are followed in the normalised text to indicate a contemporaneous situation.

Byrne (1908: 74) has expanded the acc. pl. of *breithem* (n, m) ‘judge’ as *brethumnu*, but it would be more correct to expand the suspension stroke as *brethemnu*; thus N and R have been expanded accordingly. R’s *brethemna* has the expected OIr. acc. pl. ending *-a*, while N’s *brethemnu* and H’s *brethmniu* has the innovative acc. pl. *-u* ending. Stifter (2013: 199–200) argues that this ending began in the dental nouns and was not just a replacement of the *-a* ending but was a ‘semantically conditioned morphological rule’ that began in the early ninth century. The *-u* ending was used for highly animate nouns such as those relating to human beings and animals that were deemed more economically important; otherwise, the *-a* ending was usually found. This process was influenced by the masculine *o*-stems and consonantal stems in the plural, in particular the nom., gen. and dat., and then spread to the acc. pl. and voc. pl. It could also be potentially influenced by the conj. preps. of the 3pl. in which the suffix marker was a *-u* and generally used to refer to human beings. While this innovative *-u* ending was mostly found with the dentals, it could spread to other declensional classes such as the nasal nouns, for example, *breithem*. Stifter (2013: 199) comments that, during the MidIr. period when unstressed final vowels all became schwas, ‘the conditioning factor is still one of semantics, but its surface representation shifts to the graphic plane, whence it probably becomes an orthographic, learned feature’. Thus, N’s and H’s form represents a later form of R.

H’s *filāe* and R’s *filā* has also been expanded to *filida* based on N’s *filidha*.

- 32.1** **N:** *Morngniom crodh neich natba neoit nimiath*
H: *Morgniom crod neich natba neoid nemiath*
R: *Morgnim crod neich nadba neoit nemiath*.

Normalised text:

‘Mórgním crod neich nátba néoit nemiath’.

Translation:

‘Plundering of a person, who was not niggardly as a *nemed*-person, is a major act’.

H’s *morgniom* and R’s *morgnim* is analysed as a single word consisting of *mór* ‘great, large’ and *gním* ‘acting, action, activity, work’. N’s *-n-* could be due to the scribe viewing it as two separate words, which would mean that *mór* would cause nasalisation and *gniom* could have been interpreted as the gen. pl., since in MidIr. *u*-stem nouns in the form of the nom. sg. could be used for the MidIr. gen. pl. (Breatnach 1994: 245). The expected OIr. gen. sg. would have been *gnímo*, *gníma* or gen. pl. *gnime*. eDIL s.v. *gním* (www.dil.ie26218) lists the meaning as ‘doing, performing, executing’ or ‘acting, action, activity, work’ with a more definite definition as ‘deed’. Since the actions of the

plunderers are akin to a crime, the definition ‘deed’ has a too positive meaning to it and instead the translation ‘act’ is used.

There are two definitions for *crode*, firstly eDIL s.v. 1 *crode* (www.dil.ie/13056) ‘cattle, herds, stock; goods, property, wealth’ and eDIL s.v. 2 *crode* (www.dil.ie/13057) ‘destruction, plundering’. The latter definition is taken in the analysis.

N’s *nimiath*, H’s *nemiath* and R’s *nemiath* consists of the compound *nem* ‘heaven’ with *iath* ‘land, country’ and has the meaning ‘land of heaven’. The following entry is found in *Sanas Cormaic*: *nemeth .i. nemiath .i. anus dirge do eclais* ‘*nemeth* ‘a chapel’ i.e. *nem-iath* ‘heaven-land’ i.e. what is the right of the Church’ (O’Donovan & Stokes 1868: 121; Stokes 1862: 31). eDIL s.v. *neimed* (www.dil.ie/33032) cites this gloss under the meaning ‘sacredness; privileges or insignia (belonging to a profession, rank etc.), status, dignity’ and the meaning could also pertain to a person. Thus, *nemíath* could perhaps be translated as ‘*nemed* person’ or ‘privileged person’ with *nemíath* being an Isidorian’ etymology (see pp. 49–52) of *nemed*. eDIL s.v. *neimed* translates the rest of the line as ‘property of a person who is not niggardly towards the church’, thus analysing *crode* as ‘property’ instead of ‘destruction’ and *nemiath* as ‘church’. eDIL’s translation is not followed here, as when *mórgnám* is included in the translation, it does not fit the context.

- 32.2** **N:** *madh cose slan día do chimbaibh cuan ngonfiach ngeirfiach \no iat/*
H: *mad cosei slan día dicimbaibh cuan ngonfhiach ngeríath.*
R: *mad cose slan día di chimbaib cuán ngonfiach geriath.*

Normalised text:

Mad co sé slán Día di chimbaib cúan ngonfiach ngéiríath.⁶⁵

Translation:

If it is until now that God is immune from imported silver, bringing wounding penalties of sharp honour.

N’s *madh cose*, H’s *mad cosei* and R’s *mad cose* consists of the conj. *ma^L* ‘if’ with the pres. subj. 3sg. of the copula, the prep. *co^H* ‘with’ and the substantival stressed demonstrative pronoun *sé*. The phrase has the meaning ‘if hitherto, if it is up to this’ but is better translated as ‘if it is until now’.

N’s *chimbaibh*, H’s *cimbaibh* and R’s *chimbaib* is analysed as the dat. pl. of *cim* ‘silver, tribute’. eDIL s.v. 1 *cim* (www.dil.ie/9086) lists attestations of *cim* as *cimb* which is the form seen in

⁶⁵ In *Tochmarc Lúaine ocus Aided Athairne*, the following similar line appears: *Ba saí sláin dia dochmaib/cuna guinfiach glanta di dibgud* (Breatnach 1980: 17). This line is not found in Stokes’ (1903) edition of the same text.

this line. Griffith (2023) comments that *chimbaid* could be for *chimbidaib*, the dat. pl. of *cimmid* ‘captive, prisoner, condemned person’. It is difficult to determine which is correct as the meaning of the sentence is unclear but the initial explanation is used in the normalised text.

eDIL s.v. 1 *cúan* (www.dil.ie/13334) lists the primary meaning of the word as ‘litter (of pups or young animals) or ‘pack (of dogs, wolves)’ but it can also have the meaning ‘family; band, company’ or in this instance, ‘warrior-band’ would be a better translation. There is also eDIL s.v. 2 *cúan* (www.dil.ie/13335) ‘haven, harbour, bay, gulf (?)’ expanse or stretch of water, sea, river, waters’. As a phrase occurring with *cim*, it could have the meaning ‘imported silver’. However, the meaning of this phrase within the context of the sentence is unclear.

The analysis of N’s and R’s *ngonfiach* and H’s *ngonfhiach* is uncertain. There is eDIL s.v. *gonfiach* (www.dil.ie/26390), which lists this line as the only attestation and gives the suggestion it may be ‘*gon-fiach*’. The word could be a compound of *guin* ‘act of wounding or slaying by wounding; a wound’ and *fíach* ‘an obligation, a payment due debt, also legal due, fine, penalty’, therefore the meaning ‘wounding-fine’.

Similarly, the analysis of N’s *ngeirfiach* \no *iat*/, H’s *ngeríath* and R’s *geriath* is unclear too. eDIL s.v. ? *geirfiath* (www.dil.ie/25551) lists this line as the only attestation. N’s *ngeirfiach* could be the compound *gér* ‘keen, sharp’, but also with the abstract meaning ‘keen, intense’, with *fíach* ‘fine, penalty’ and has the meaning ‘sharp penalty’, although this does not make any sense in the current context. H’s *ngeríath* and R’s *geriath*, as well as N’s alternative reading of *iat*, may be a compound of the previously mentioned *gér* and *íath* ‘land, country; territory, estate’. What this word means and how it fits in the context is also unclear, however. There is also eDIL s.v. ? 3 *íath* (www.dil.ie/27117), which has the meaning ‘fame, honour’ but it is not well attested; however, ‘sharp honour’ may perhaps fit the context better. None of the suggestions are satisfactory but no other explanations can be proposed, as a result, it is translated as ‘sharp honour’.

32.3 N: glanaim de dibgud dofemat ferba fuach filid felsuí forai ce oldaman do dligi dian daghnoisech di bunadh bae

H: glanaim de dibgud defemet ferbu fuach filed felsui foracai oldomain de dligid dian dagnaisic do bunad bae

R:

Normalised text:

Glanaim dé díbdud do·femat ferba fúach filed, felsuí for·aci ollamain de dligid dían dagnoísech; di bunad báe.

Translation:

I purge destruction from him, blisters defend a poet's word, a sage who is equivalent in value to an *ollam* by swift, very-distinguished, right; forever of benefit.

N's and H's line is missing in R.

N's *dofemat* has the correct pres. 3pl. conj. *-at* ending for *do-eim* 'protects, defends' in contrast to H's palatalised *-et* ending. H's ending may be another scribal attempt at hypercorrection. N's and H's *-f-* is prosthetic *f* that can sometimes be found before a stressed vowel in deuterotonic verbs (McCone 1994: 199).

The possible meanings of *ferb* have already been discussed at pp. 17–18 and the word has been translated as 'blisters' in this line.

N's *filid* should be *filed* as the gen. sg. of *fili* 'poet' is expected, therefore, H's *fil-* is expanded to *filed*.

N's *felsuí* and H's *felsui* is not well attested in eDIL s.v. *felsuí* (www.dil.ie/21576) 'a sage, a man of science', which along with this line cites only one other example. The entry suggests it is likely a 'poetic invention' that is a compound of *fel* 'poetry, science' and *suí* 'man of learning, scholar, wise man, sage'.

N's *foraice* and H's *foracai* is analysed as the pres. rel. 3sg. of *for-aicci* 'overlooks, surveys'. N's form may be a mechanical modernisation of an archetype reading **-aci*. The form *for-aci* is used in the normalised text. eDIL s. v. *for-aicci* (www.dil.ie/23286) states that the verb can be used as a legal term and suggests the meaning 'of equivalent value'. The meaning of the line remains unclear.

N's *oldaman* is the gen. sg. or pl. of *ollam* 'the highest grade of a *fili*'; however, an acc. sg. would be expected which would have the form *ollamain* or *ollam*. N may have analysed *foraice* as the prep. *for* 'upon, on' with either the acc. or dat. sg. of *aicce* 'nearness, proximity' which would then mean a genitive noun would follow. It is difficult to know how to expand H's *oldom̄* since it commonly has the same forms as N, but the scribe may also have intended the expansion to be *oldomain*. It has been decided then to expand the form to acc. sg. *ollomain*.

N's *daghnoisech* and H's *dagnaisic* is a compound of *dag* 'good, noble, very' and *noísech* 'distinguished, famous' and is translated as 'very distinguished'.

When the prep. *do^L* 'to/for' is found with *bunad* 'origin, basis, source' it has the meaning 'always, perpetually, forever'.

N's and R's *bae* is the gen. sg. of *báe* 'something, anything of consequence, value; profit' whose gen. sg. form is *bái* but as none of the manuscripts have *-i* ending, the *-e* ending is maintained in the normalised text. It should be noted, however, that *báe* and *bái* would have been pronounced the same.

- 32.4** **N:** Brethaighim do di sectaib *cumal. comlethet aighthi* dor arabibal.
H: Brethaigim do di sechtaib *cumal Comlethet aighthe* dor arabibal.
R: Brethaigim do di .uii.aib *cumal. Comleithet a aighthi* dór arabibal.

Normalised text:

Brethaigim dó di sechtaib cumal, comleithet a aigthe d'ór ara bibal.

Translation:

I decree for him twice seven cumals, gold that is equal in breadth to his face on account of ...

N's, H's and R's *di* should have the form *díb*, which is dat. du. of *dá* 'two' and which qualifies the dat. pl. *sechtaib* 'seven'. However, in Midlr., the dat. could be replaced by the acc. (McCone 2005: 149) thus, the acc. du. f. *di* is found in all manuscripts.

N's *aighthi*, H's *aighthe*, and R's *aighthi* is the gen. sg. of *agad* which could mean either 'face' or 'honour' and it is the former that is used in the translation. eDIL s.v. *comleithet* (www.dil.ie/11427) cites a similar use of this word in a phrase with *comleithet* and it is from *Táin Bó Cúailgne: comlethet t'aighthi do dergór* 'the breadth of your face' (O'Rahilly 1967: 41).

The analysis of N's, H's and R's *bibal* is uncertain. eDIL s.v. ? *bibal* (www.dil.ie/5846) cites this line as the only attestation of the word. The form could be from *bibla* 'bible', but this would be a late loan word and one would expect *canoín* instead. It could possibly be **fíbal*, the lenited form of *síbal* 'fibula', although the meaning of the word in the sentence is unclear. Since the meaning of *bibal* is uncertain, it is difficult to analyse N's, H's and R's *ara*. It seems to be the prep. *ar^N* 'on account of, because, before' with either the poss. pron. 3sg. m./n. *a^L* or 3pl *a^N* but it cannot be determined which is intended, therefore, the phrase is left untranslated. The sentence may be describing a form of compensation. Stacey (2018: 102) writes the following concerning an old legal tradition found in medieval Welsh literature: 'The king is the only person in these texts who is depicted as being in possession of an entire human body, at least as symbolized by the payments necessary to compensate for it in case of injury or death. The golden plate (or bowl cover) paid to the king measures the width of his face; the rod of gold or silver that accompanies it is as thick as his finger and spans the fullness of his height ...' Therefore, the meaning of *ara bibal* may have something to do with a plate or bowl.

- 32.5 N:** *Preth righbaird regair cota sein slán enech emnaighter ildiri i norduiph ilgraduiph cidh aon afoghatar fo breathai bith bo cacha cind comfuataigh cip aitt acocarar diatoghla teacht*
- H:** *breth rigbaird regair godo sein slán enech emnaighter ildiri inordoib ilgradoib cid aen ifogha\ph\tar fobretha bith *bo cech cind comfuataig cip att acocartar dia togla techt**⁶⁶
- R:** *Breth rigbaird regair cota sein slán enech emnaighther ildíri in ordaib ilgrado*⁶⁷ *cid oen afogabar fobretha bith bó cach cinn comfuataig cip ait hicocurar diatogla techt.*

Normalised text:

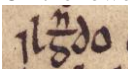
Breth rígbaird regair cota·sein slán enech, emnaigter ildíri i n-ordaib ilgrádaib. cid óen i-fogabtar fo bretha bíth bó cach cinn chomfúataig cip áitt i-cocurar dia togla techt.⁶⁸

Translation:

The judgement of a royal-poet is being extended until payment of honour-price befalls them (?). Many fines are doubled in many distinguished orders. Even though it be one in which they are found under the judgements of a cow of each chief of joint plundering, though it may be a place where they are conspiring to attack properties.

The analysis of N's *cotasein*, H's *godosein* and R's *cotasein* is uncertain. It potentially could be the adverb *cotá* 'as far as, till', which is the conj. *co*^N 'so that' with a form of *at-tá* 'to be' (GOI §775) and the substantival stressed demonstrative *-sin*, later *sein*. Another possible explanation is that it is the gen sg. of *cuit* 'share, part, portion; property, possession, means' with the demonstrative *-sin*; however, it does not make sense for a gen. to occur after a verb. Alternatively, eDIL does have an entry for *con-seinn* (www.dil.ie/12303) 'plays (music) in harmony' which is derived from *seinnid* (www.dil.ie/36944) 'plays (a musical instrument), sounds'. This meaning does not fit the context. There is also eDIL s.v. 2 *seinnid?* (www.dil.ie/36945) 'strikes' and this may be related to the previously discussed *seinnid*. Like the previously discussed 1 *seinnid*, this 2 *seinnid* could also potentially be the basis for *con-seinn*. The verb would then be found with the infixed pronoun class B 3sg. f. or 3pl. *-ta*. Although the translation 'befalls' perhaps fit the context better than 'strikes' and if the infixed pronoun refers to the plunderers, then it can be interpreted as meaning that the plunderers

⁶⁶ On the lower margins of the page.

⁶⁷  Schoen (2015: 96) has *ilgreto*.

⁶⁸ In *Tochmarc Lúaine ocus Aided Athairne*, the following similar line appears *Ba breth ruc/ co tasén slán enech./ Ecmaing i n-ildírib/ i n-ordaib ilgrád écsi* (Breatnach 1980: 17). This line is not found in Stokes' (1903) edition of the same text. The line could be translated as 'It is a judgement that passes, compensation of honour has befallen them. It strikes poets in many fines in many distinguished orders'.

are required to give compensation to Máel Milscothach. It is this last analysis that is tentatively used in the normalised text.

N's *emnaighter* is the pres. pass. 3pl. while R's *emnaighther* is the pres. pass. 3sg. of *emnaigid* 'doubles'. H's form is ambiguous due to the suspension stroke above the *t*, which could be expanded to the 3sg. or 3pl. Since the subject is nom. pl. of the compound *il* 'many' with *díre* 'honour-price, penalty', the 3pl. verb is required, thus H's form is expanded with the 3pl. *-ter* ending. R's 3sg. pres. pass. form may be an example of the MidIr. feature of using a 3sg. verb with a plural noun. (see pp. 83–4).

N's *inorduiph ilgraduiph*, H's *inordoib ilgradoib* has two consecutive dat. pl. forms. The first is the dat. pl. of *ord* 'order, degree, rank' and the latter is the compound *il* 'many' with the dat. pl. of *grád* 'grade, order'. However, *grád* may also have an adjectival sense of 'distinguished' from *grádach* 'having grades; official, prescribed; distinguished'. R's *inordaib ilgrado* could also be viewed as two consecutive dat. pl. with the loss of the dat. pl. *-ib* marker. The two consecutive dat. pl. forms are an example of case attraction. Breatnach (1981: 75–6) points out that when this happens, the pattern is usually prep. + preposed gen. + head-noun and he gives the example *a dúilib ndemrib* from 'The Caldron of Poesy', where he amends the line to *a dúile ndemrib*. He also comments that the alteration of a preposed gen. to a dat. was a 'common scribal alteration' although this itself is difficult to determine. Thus, N's, H's and R's phrase could be viewed as another example of this pattern, with *ordaib* to be viewed as the gen. sg. It has been decided to not emend *ordaib* to gen. sg. as it is not found in any of the manuscripts.

R's *oen* is the indefinite pronoun 'one, an individual' and it has its later form in N's *aon* and H's *aen*.

N's *a foghabtar* and H's *ifoghaphtar* and R's *afogabar* is analysed as the prep. rel. *i^N* with the pres. pass. 3pl. of *fo-gaib* 'find; gets, gains, obtains, procures'. R's form is the 3sg. of the same verb. Although the prototonic stem *-fag-* would be expected, eDIL s.v. *fo-gaib*, *fo-geib* (www.dil.ie/22696) does cite examples with *-fog-* and this may be hypercorrection.

N's, H's and R's *bith* is the vn. of *benaid* with the meaning 'act of striking; wounding' and is MidIr. gen. sg. for OIr. *bítho/a*. When it occurs with prep. *fo^L* 'under', the phrase has the literal meaning 'under striking' but can function as a preposition with the meaning 'because of, on account of, for the sake of'. In this line, the phrase is separated by N's *breathai*, R's and H's *bretha* which is a preposed gen. pl. of *breth* 'judgement'. However, an issue with this analysis is that the gen. sg. of *breth* is *breithe* and all manuscripts have *-a* ending of either the nom. or acc. pl. This ending may

reflect the process of MidIr. final unstressed vowels becoming schwas /ə/. The *-a* ending is maintained in the normalised text.

H's and R's *cach* has its later form in N's *cacha* (cf. 29.22).

N's *acocarar*, H's *acocartar* and R's *hicocurar* is the prep. rel. *i*^N with the pres. pass. 3sg. or 3pl. of *cocraid* 'resolves, determines, conspires', which is a weak verb. Alternatively, it could be a form of *con-cuirethar* 'composes', but inflected as a non-deponent verb, however, the first explanation fits the context better. N's and R's form is the 3sg. while H has the 3pl. N's and R's form has used the pres. pass. 3sg. *-ar* ending of strong verbs, unlike H's pres. pass. 3pl. of weak verbs. Either N or R hypercorrected to a strong verb ending, or H hypercorrected it but got the verbal ending wrong. Regardless, the 3sg. ending makes the most sense and is used in the normalised text. The literal translation is 'in which it is being conspired'.

- 32.6** **N:** Taisced án umaid~~he~~ la *cach* mboin aboinine fodela deol
 H: Tascad an umaide lagech mboin mbonine fodelai deol
 R: Taisced ana humaide la *cach* mboin boinine fo dela deol

Normalised text:

Taisced án umaide la *cach* mboin mboiníne fo dela déol.

Translation:

Let him keep a copper drinking-vessel with every cow that has a calf sucking under teats.

N's *án* and H's *an* is in contrast to R's *ana*. N and H have the MidIr. broad acc. sg. ending of *án* 'cup, drinking-vessel' instead of the palatalised acc. sg. ending of the *ā*-stem feminine (Breatnach 1994: 243). However, the nasalisation caused by the acc. sg. on the following word is not seen in N nor H. Since *án* already ends in a nasal, it is possible that the nasalisation has been absorbed into the preceding *n*. R has the acc. pl. of *án*. It is uncertain how R obtained its form as the acc. sg. would make the most sense, as one would expect one vessel to be found with each cow rather than multiple vessels. Thus, N and H are followed in the normalised text. Neither of the manuscripts have the expected acc. sg. f. of *umaide* 'bronze, brazen, copper', which would be *umaidi*, and as such, the *-e* ending is retained in the normalised text.

N's *la cach mboin a boinine* is in contrast to H's *la gech mboin mboinine* and R's *la cach mboin boinine*. The phrase is borrowed from King Diarmait Mac Cerbaill's judgement on St Colum Cille's illegal copying of St Finnén's book, where the similar phrase *la cach mboin a boinín* 'to every cow her calf' is found. St Colum Cille was then required to give up his work to Finnén. A version of this text can be found in the AFM, which states: & *beos imon c-claoin-bhreith rucc Diarmait ar*

Colom Cille im liubar Findén ro scríobh Colom Cille gan rathughadh d'Findén, d'ia n-deachsat I réir n-Diarmata go ro coiccertaidh Diarmait an m-breth n-oirrdheirc, la gach boin a boinín, ‘and also on account of the false sentence which Diarmaid passed against Colum Cille about a book of Finnen, which Colum had transcribed without knowledge of Finnen, when they left it to award of Diarmaid, who pronounced the celebrated decision, “To every cow belongs its calf” (O’Donovan 1856: 192–5). Similarly, in the story of Noidhiu Nae-mBreathach in the Yellow Book of Lecan, Noidhiu pronounces nine Judgements immediately after his birth to his mother and one of them is: *Acc, a mathair, la cach mboin a boinin. Leic a lloegan le,* ‘No, mother; to every cow her calf. Leave her calfling with her’ (Dobbs 1933: 50–1). N copied the phrase exactly; however, H and R has reworked the phrase, leaving out the poss. pron. 3sg. f. *a^H*. Only H shows the nasalisation caused by acc. sg. *boin* ‘cow’ on *boinine*. Since the reading in H and R represents different branches of the stemma, H’s and R’s phrase is used in the normalised text.

eDIL s.v. *dela* (www.dil.ie/15310) states that *dela* is apparently the pl. form of sg. *deil* ‘teat, dug’. If *dela* is analysed as the acc. pl., since the prep. *fo* ‘under’ takes the acc., then *déol* ‘sucking’ would need to be in the gen. sg. or pl. The gen. sg. form would have a palatalised ending such as *déoil*, thus *déol* in the line must be a gen. pl. form; however, this does not make sense in terms of meaning. Instead, *dela* could be analysed as the gen. pl. and *déol* as the acc. sg. that goes with the prep. *fo*, thus giving a preposed genitive. This would then give the translation ‘under sucking teats’.

- 32.7** **N:** *dlighid comdiri cuma fria righ roamrai fonibarr bis.*
H: *dligid comdiri cumme fri righ roamhrae foindbarr bios*
R: *dligid comdíre cumne fri⁶⁹ rí ro amrai fonidbair bís.*

Normalised text:

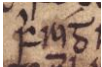
Dligid comdíre cummae fri rí ro-amrae fo·n-idbarr bís.

Translation:

He is entitled to equal honour-price that is the same as the very wonderful king under whom it is being granted ... (?)

The term *comdíre* can mean either ‘equal *díre* fine’ or ‘equal honour-price’.

There is disagreement between N’s *cuma* and H’s *cumme* and R’s *cumne*. N could be the gen. sg. of *cummae*, which has many meanings such as ‘cutting, carving, hacking, destroying, butchering’ and ‘act of shaping, fashioning, composing’. When used in a copula construction with the prep. *fri^H*

⁶⁹  Schoen (2015: 96) has *for* instead of *fri*.

‘towards, against’, however, it has the meaning ‘... is like, the same as...’. It is this last meaning that is intended in this line in order to express the idea that the honour-price of an *ollam* is equal to that of the king of Tara. The lack of a preceding copula may be due to the desire for alliteration. R seems to have confused the word with *cuimne* ‘faculty of memory; remembrance, memorial’, a meaning that does not make sense in the current context.

N’s *fonibarr*, H’s *fonidbarr* and R’s *fonidbair* is analysed as the prep. rel. *fo*^N ‘under’ with the pres. pass. 3sg. *ad·opair* ‘offers, grants, bequeaths’. R’s palatalised ending could be MidIr. confusion between non-palatal *-r* in the conjunct and palatal *-r* in the absolute and this itself may have been influenced by the confusion between non-palatal and palatal relative endings (McCone 1997: 228). N’s missing *d* is due to the simplification of the consonant cluster.

There is an issue of how N’s *bis*, H’s *bíos* and R’s *bis* fits in the sentence. It seems to be the consuetudinal pres. 3sg. rel. of *at-tá* ‘to be’; however, this does not semantically fit as one would not expect the substantive verb immediately after another verb. The verb could potentially belong to the next sentence, although in all three manuscripts there is a full-stop after the word. It is uncertain what to do with the form but as it is found in all manuscripts it is kept in the normalised text without translation.

- 32.8** **N:** *Fotheinm laodha lanfocail lantoinnseim soillsighis sruthlinn mbarr mbuais.*
 buadhchu dó dichetal do chollaib cend
- H:** *Fo tenm laeid lanfocail. lantuindseim soillsiges sruthlind mbairr buais buadchu do*
 diollcetal di collaib cend
- R:** *Fo tenm laid lanfocail. lantoinnsem soillsigiss sruthlinn mbuais mbairr mbuadchai do*
 dichetal do chollaib cend.

Normalised text:

Fó teinm láeda lánfocail lántuinseim soillsiges sruthlinn mbairr búais, búadchu dó díchetal do chollaib cenn.

Translation:

Good divinatory incantation of full speech [and] of full impact, which illuminates streaming liquid of supremacy of inspiration, most preeminent for him [is] *díchetal do chollaib cenn*.

N’s *laodha* is the gen. sg. of *láed* ‘pith, marrow’. It is uncertain what declensional class *láed* is, but H’s *laeid* and R’s *laid* form could be an indication of a change in declension class with a gen. sg. that is palatalised. For example, this could be seen with *u*-stems, which obtained *o*-stem endings as already discussed at p. 77.

N's *lantoinnseim*, H's *lantuindseim* and R's *lantoinnsem* is a compound of *lán* 'full' and the gen. sg. of *tuinsem* 'trampling on, crushing under foot; impact, shock, onslaught'. eDIL s.v. *tuinsem* (www.dil.ie/42364) notes that it was originally a *u*-stem noun that later became an *o*-stem noun and in this line, it is found as an *o*-stem due to the palatalised ending in N and H. It is uncertain why R has the *-sem* ending.

H's *soillsiges* has the correct pres. rel. 3sg. *-es* active ending of *soillsigidir* 'makes bright, lights, illuminates', which is found as *-is* in N's *soillsighis* and R's *soillsigiss*. However, as *soillsigidir* is a deponent verb, the expected form would have been *soillsigedar* but deponent verbs eventually have their endings replaced by active endings.

N's *mbarr mbuais* and H's *mbairr buais* is in contrast to R's *mbuais mbairr*. The gen. sg. of *barr* is required and this is seen in H's and R's readings, whereas N has the gen. pl. form. It is uncertain why N has the gen. pl.; perhaps it is a mistake with the minims of the two *rs*. All manuscripts have the required gen. sg. of *búas* 'flow, stream, gush (of water)', which can also figuratively mean 'art, knowledge' and it is the latter that is used in the translation. N's and R's nasalisation on *buais* and *bairr*, respectively, is incorrect as the previous gen. sg. does not causal nasalisation. This may be the result of dittography with the previous *mb*.

N's *buadhchua*, H's *buadchu* and R's *mbuadchai* is analysed as the MidIr. superlative of *búadach* 'victorious, triumphant, triumphal, prevailing; preeminent, having many outstanding qualities gifted' with an unexpressed copula.

The phrase *díchetal do chollaib cenn* has the literal translation of 'incantation from the necks of heads' and is a variation of the more common *díchetal de chennaib*. H's *diollcetal*, which is unlike N's and R's *dichetal*, may be a copying error with the following *dichollaib*.

32.9 **N:** *Glanogh eneclainn iarsin eicsi uird*
 H: *Glanog aeneclainn iarsen eigsí uird*
 R: *Glanog aenclainn iarsen exi urd.*

Normalised text:

Glanóg a eneclainn íarsin éicsi uird.

Translation:

His compensation is pure and complete after the wisdom of the procedure.

Byrne (1908: 75) has expanded N's *en-* as *eneclainne*; similarly, Schoen (2015: 86) has expanded R's *en-* as *eneclainne*, thus the gen. sg. However, N's *en-*, H's *enecl-* and R's *encl-* have

been expanded to the nom. sg. and it functions as the subject of an suppressed copula with the predicate *glanóg* ‘completely pure’.

N’s *eicsi*, H’s *eigsi* and R’s *exi* is the dat. sg. of *éicse* and can have many meanings such as ‘divination, the faculty of divination; wisdom, the profession of a seer’ but also ‘poetic art or skill; the poetic profession, the bardic order, poets’. It is the first meaning that is used in the translation.

N’s and H’s *uird* is the gen. sg. of *ord* ‘order, degree, rank; rank, dignity’. R’s *urd* seems to be the dat. sg. but a gen. sg. is expected.

32.10 **N:** *meisir ai aimseraimbreatha breth.*
 H: *mesair aóí aimsera mbretha brath*
 R: *mesir ai aimsera mbretha breth.*

Normalised text:

Mesair aí aimsera i mbretha breth.

Translation:

A metrical composition may be judged according to the stages in which a legal ruling was passed.

N’s *meisir*, H’s *mesair* and R’s *mesir* is taken as the pres. subj. pass. 3sg. of *midithir* ‘judges’. H has the correct form with *-air* ending, N has a MidIr. form with a palatised *r* and R’s form is ambiguous as to whether the *r* is palatal or non-palatal.

N’s, Hs and R’s *aimsera* is the adverbial use the of *aimser* ‘point of time’ but can also have the meaning ‘term, stage’ and it is the latter definition that is used in the translation.

The *m* in N’s *imbreatha* and H’s and R’s *mbretha* is analysed as nasalisation caused by the prep. rel. *i^N* with the 3sg. pret. pass. of *beirid* ‘carry; judge’. The prep. rel. *i^N* may potentially be seen in N’s *imbretha* but H’s and R’s lack of *i* may be due to confusion of minims with the *m* or the previous *aimsera*, which ends in a vowel.

H’s *brath* is the nom. or acc. sg. of *bráth* ‘Judgement, esp. the last Judgement, Doom, Doomsday; a legal precept’. N and R have *br-* and this could be expanded to *brath*, however, Byrne (1908: 75) has expanded N to *breith* and likewise Schoen (2015: 97) has transcribed R as *breith* the acc. sg. of *breth* ‘judgement, legal ruling’. Byrne’s and Schoen’s expansion to acc. sg. leaves the preceding verb without a subject. Therefore, this thesis has expanded N’s and R’s form to the nom. sg. of *breth* ‘judging, deciding, judgment, legal ruling’ and it functions as the subject of the preceding verb.

- 32.11** **N:** *bidh cech ndan techtaidhe di*
 H: *bidh cachndan tectaide di*
 R: **Bid cach ndán techtaidi di**

Normalised text:

Bid cach ndán téchtaide dí.

Translation:

Every poem will be due from it.

The nasalisation on N’s and H’s *ndan* and R’s *ndán* is a later feature. The nom. sg. m. *cach*, *cech* ‘each, every’ should not cause nasalisation, but later the nasalisation that is found after the neuter *cach*, *cech*, and in particular after the acc. sg. form, spreads to other cases and gender.

N’s, H’s and R’s *di* is analysed as the prep. *di*^L ‘from’ with the 3sg. fem. pron. and it could be referring to *breth* in the previous line and perhaps lending support to *breth*, as opposed to *brath* ‘judgment day’ which is a masculine noun in 32.10.

- 32.12** **N:** *romarb righ righmiain mail milscothaigh madom diatol*
 H: *romarb righ rigmaeini maeil milscothaig maddom diatol*
 R: *romarb rig rigmaini mael milscothaig rodam dia tol.*

Normalised text:

Romarb rí g rí gmaíni Maíl Milscothaig ro·dam dia tol.

Translation:

Máel Milscothach had amortised the royal treasures of the king, he submitted to their will.

N’s, H’s and R’s *romarb* is the aug. pret. of *marbaid* ‘kills slays’ but it can also have the legal meaning ‘alienates (property) in mortmain, amortises’. It is this latter definition that is used in the translation. N’s and H’s *righ* and R’s *rig* could be analysed as MidIr. nom. sg. of *rí* ‘king’, however, it would not make sense for the king to alienate the royal treasures of Máel Milscothach. Instead, Griffith (2023) has suggested taking N’s, H’s and R’s form as a preposed gen. with Máel Milscothach as the subject of the sentence. An argument against this analysis is that N’s *mail* may suggest that the scribe understood the word to be a genitive. However, as Griffith’s suggestion results in a translation that fits the context, it is adopted in this thesis.

N’s *righmiain*, H’s *rigmaeini* and R’s *rigmaine* is the compound *ríg-* ‘king’ with *maín*, *moín*, *muín*, *maen* ‘a gift, a benefit; a valuable article or possession, a treasure, in pl. treasures, possessions,

wealth'. H has the acc. pl. ending. N's form seems to be the acc. sg. R's *rigmat*[̄] could either be expanded to N's or R's form. The acc. pl. would make the most sense in this context and as such R has been expanded to H's form. It is uncertain why N has the acc. sg. instead.

The 3pl. poss. pron. *a*^N 'their' refers to the judges and historians previously mentioned and the line is interpreted as the king has submitted to the their request.

N's *madom*, H's *mad dom* and R *rodam* show disagreement. N's *madom* H's *maddom* could be the conj. *ma* 'if' with the pres. subj. 1sg. of the copula, although the expected form would be *-dam*. eDIL s.v. 3 *má, ma* (www.dil.ie/31164) cites only MidIr. sources for the aforementioned forms. H also shows EModIr. hypercorrection of *d /ð/*. R may be the MidIr. pret. of *daimid* 'submits to a judgement, submits'. R makes the most sense in the context as it would be unusual for the verbal number to suddenly switch from the third to first person, but evidently there must have been some sort of corruption as it is difficult to see how N and H could have turned *ro-dam* into the form found in R.

- 33.1** **N:** *Dorata tra do maol milscothach cech ni robrethaighset nasuithi sin etir ecnaighi 7 filidha 7 brethemhna la taob ogaisic da chreith.*
- H:** *Doratadh tra do moel milscothach cech ní robrethaighset na suide sin itir ecnaide 7 filedae 7 brethemnae latoeb ogasic dácreich*
- R:** *Doratath tra do mael milscothach iartain cech ni dobrethaigsid suide sin etir ecnaide 7 fileda 7 brethemna la taeb ogaisic a crech*

Normalised text:

Do-ratad trá do Máel Milscóthach cech ní ro-brethaigset na suide-sin etir ecnaidí 7 fileda 7 brethemna la tóeb ógaisic dá chreich.

Translation:

Therefore, each thing that those wise men, including scholars and poets and judges, had judged was given to Máel Milscóthach, in addition to complete restoration for the plundering.

N's and H's *cech* 'each, every' is missing in R. Since R could have easily left out *cech*, it is retained in the normalised text.

R's *iar tain* is missing in N and H and it consists of the prep. *iar*^N 'after' + *tan, tain* (ā,f) 'time', which forms the adverb 'afterwards, then'. This could have easily been added or removed later. Since it does not add anything meaningful to the line, especially when the adverb *trá* is already found, it is omitted in the normalised text.

N's and H's *na* is missing in R. R could have easily left out *na* and as such it is kept in the normalised text. The OIr. gen. pl. n. art. is usually *inna* or *na*, but in MidIr. this is simplified to *na* (Breatnach 1994: 256).

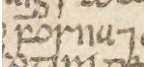
N's *la taob*, H's *la toeb* and R's *la taeb* is the prep. *la*^H 'besides, along by, with' with the acc. sg. of *taeb* 'side' and when used together, the phrase has the adverbial meaning 'as well as, in addition to, besides'; it is this latter definition that is used in the translation.

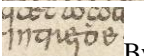
N's and H's *da* is in contrast to R's *a*. N's and H's form is MidIr. prep. *da* for OIr. *do*^L 'to/for', although lenition is not seen on the dat. sg. *creich* of *crech* 'plunder, booty, plundering'. R's *a* seems to be the 3pl. poss. pron. *a*^N 'their' prep. Alternatively, it could be the prep. *a*^H 'out of, from' but it is not followed by the expected dat.sg. *creich*, but rather the acc. sg. *crech*. Another possible explanation is that R's *a* could be the prep. *i*^N 'in/into' with the acc. sg. *crech*. The prep. *i*^N can also have the abstract meaning of 'in the matter of, in respect to, in regard to; instead of, in compensation' and this definition may have been intended in R. Out of the three analyses, R's *a* is more likely to be the 3pl. poss. pron. However, as *da* is found in two of the three manuscripts, it is used in the normalised text.

- 33.2 N:** 7 isamlaid sin roordaighset do tabairt *da* cach ollamain na einech. 7 na tsarugad
cobrath *acht* cotisa de iomus forosna⁷⁰ 7 dicetal do chollaib cenn 7 teinm laoga
coimeneclann fri righ temra do *acht* cotisa de intreidhe⁷¹ sin finit
- H:** Et is amlaid sin doordaighsit do tabairt dicacholdomain naenech 7 na sarghadh
gobrath *acht* gotised de imhus forosnad 7 dicetol docholdoib cend 7 teinm laedei .i.
com eneclann fririg temrai do *acht* cotisadh de antredae sin de denamh
- R:** 7 is amlaid sin roordagset do tabairt da cach ollamain ina einech 7 inasarugad *acht*
co tissad de imus forosnad 7 dichetal do chollaib cend 7 tenmlaida .i. com enclann fri
rig temrach do acht co ti de intreide sin **FINIT**.

Normalised text:

Et is amlaid-sin ro-ordagset do thabairt da cach ollamain ina enech 7 ina sárugud co bráth
acht co-tísed dé imbas for-osnai 7 díchetal do chollaib cenn 7 teinm láeda .i. com-eneclann fri
ríg Temra dó acht co-tí dé in tréide-sin. Fínit.

⁷⁰  Byrne (1908: 76) has *forasna*.

⁷¹  Byrne (1908: 76) has *treide*.

Translation:

And it is on account of this that they ordained to give [the following] until Doomsday to each *ollam* in compensation for his honour-price and for his violation, provided that he deliver *imbas for-osnai 7 dichetal do chollaib cenn 7 teinm láeda*, .i. honour-price equal to the king of Tara for him, provided that he may know these three things. *Finit*.

N's and R's *da* is the MidIr. form of OIr. preps. *do*^L 'to/for' or *di*^L 'from, of'. MidIr. *da* is commonly used before *cach* as it is found in this line. H's *di* is the common confusion with prep. *do*^L 'to/for' due to the unstressed nature of the prepositions.

N's and H's *na* is a younger form of R's *ina*. R's *ina* is the prep. *i*^N 'in/into' with the poss. pron. 3sg. m. and this is seen in its reduced form in N's and H's *na*.

N's *co brath* and H's *go brath* is missing in R. It consists of the prep. *co*^H 'to, till' with the acc. sg. of *bráth* 'judgement' and has the meaning 'till Doomsday, forever'. It is difficult to know if the archetype had *co bráth* as it is not necessary for the meaning of the sentence, but it is retained in the text due to being found in two of the three manuscripts.

There is confusion between N's *cotisa*, H's *gotised* and R's *cotissad* as well as N's *cotisa*, H's *cotisadh* and R's *coti*. In the first instance, H's *gotised* is the past subj. 3sg. *-ed* of *do-icc* 'comes' compared to N's *cotisa* and R's *co tissad* which has the ending *-ad*. N's lack of *d* could be EModIr. silent *d* /ð/ not being written. In the second instance, N's *cotisa*, H's *cotisadh* and R's *coti* do not agree with each other. It is possible that N's *cotisa* also has EModIr. silent *d* /ð/ not being written, which would make it have the same form as H's *cotisadh*. R's form may be due to scribal error, i.e. forgetting to copy the rest of the word as it occurs at the end of the line. Evidently, there is confusion between the manuscripts. A possible solution to the issue is that, in the first instance, the original text may have had the expected pres. subj. 3sg. *co-tíssed*, and in the second instance, the pres. subj. 3sg. *co-tí* and these other forms became corrupted during transmission through various analogies. When *do-icc* is found with the conj. prep. 3sg. m. *dé* 'from, of him', the phrase has the meaning 'he is able to...'. The phrase more literally has the translation 'they should come from him'.

N's *iomus forosna*, H's *imhus forosnad* and R's *imus forosnad* consists of acc. sg. of *imbas*, *imbus* 'great knowledge; poetic talent, inspiration; for-knowledge; magic lore' and the pres. 3sg. rel. *for-osnai* 'lights up, illumines' and has the literal translation 'knowledge which illuminates'.

N's *dicetal do chollaib cenn*, H's *dicetol docholdoib cend* and R's *dichetal do chollaib cend* see pp. 26–28.

N's *teinm loaga*, H's *teinm laedei* and R's *tenm laida* is left untranslated in the edition but it has the meaning 'gnawing of the marrow', see pp. 26–28..

Conclusion

The aim of this thesis is to produce a critical edition of the poems and the *rosca* found in the Middle Irish tale *Airec Menman Uraird maic Coisse* and examine some of the literary themes found in the tale. One of the major contributions this thesis has made to scholarship is providing a partial edition and translation of a text that has yet to be fully studied and edited. This work complements Schoen's Masters' dissertation, which also only analysed part of the text, with emphasis on the first part of the in-tale *Orcain catrach Máel Milscothaig*. The critical edition in the present thesis uses the Lachmannian method, which aims to recreate what the archetype may have looked like based on the three manuscripts the text is found in, that is, Royal Irish Academy MS 23 N 10, Bodleian Library MS Rawlinson B.512 and British Library MS Harleian 5280. The study of the features of the manuscript witnesses reveals that 23 N 10 contains more modern orthography as well as more Middle Irish features when compared with the other two manuscripts. Both the orthography and linguistic features of Harleian 5280 are similar to those of 23 N 10. Rawl. B. 512 largely adheres to Old Irish orthography and also retains many Old Irish linguistic features. As a result of these features, the stemma that is tentatively suggested saw 23 N 10 and Harl. 5280 form a sub-branch against Rawl. B. 512 which then helps determine which forms to use or retain in the normalised text. This can be illustrated, for example, by 23.2 (N: *faight boi aca*, H: *fath*, R: *faith bai oca*) and by 23.5 (N: *docernus*, H: *dothcernsa*, R: *dochernais*). In the former, the forms attested in N and R are used in the normalised text, while in the latter, the forms attested in H and R are used, as these are found in both branches of the stemma.

Many editions of Middle Irish texts, as well as Old Irish texts (cf. Arbuthnot 2006; Breatnach 1980; Herbert 1988), commonly utilise the Bédierist methodology, which selects the best manuscript on which to base the edition and provides variations in the footnotes. In some instances, the Bédierist method is the only viable method; for example, in the Middle Irish poem *Saltair na Rann* 'The Psalter of Verses' (Stokes 1883; Greene 2007), out of the three manuscripts the text is found in, only one of the manuscripts has the complete text; and in *Aislinge Meic Con Glinne* 'Mac Con Glinne's Dream Vision' (Jackson 1990), the two manuscripts the text is found in have such vastly different versions of the story that recreating the archetype would be difficult. Indeed, Byrne's (1908) edition of *Airec Menman* follows the aforementioned methodology and was based on 23 N 10 with variations from Harl. 5280 and Rawl. B 512 placed in the footnotes. However, the Lachmannian method is viewed as suitable for *Airec Menman* because there are no major differences between the three manuscripts and therefore it may be possible to recreate the archetype.

Since the Lachmannian method is not commonly employed for Middle Irish texts, a commonly accepted editorial policy does not exist for Middle Irish texts, which has resulted in some difficulties in producing a normalised text. One of the main issues this thesis has encountered during the process concerns when to retain a Middle Irish feature. For example, if all three manuscripts have

written a Middle Irish unstressed final vowel schwa /ə/ with the same letter, then this letter is retained in the normalised text. This can be seen in 29.10 (N: *gcennaighi*, H: *cendaigi*, R: *cendaigi* for OIr. *cennaige*), where in the normalised text *cennaigi* is used. However, it is possible that the agreement between all three manuscripts is coincidental. At the same time, if all three manuscripts have written a Middle Irish unstressed final vowel schwa /ə/ with different letters from one another, it is a likely chance that one of the forms happen to coincide with OIr. spelling. Another example of when the Middle Irish form is not retained can be seen when an expected lenition is not found in the manuscripts but is introduced in the normalised text. This is seen in 22.10 (N: *fo cress*, H: *fo craess*, R: *fo cres* for *fo chres*) and in 26.2 (N: *do tuathuib*, H: *a tuathaib*, R: *di túathaib* for *di thúathaib*). An advantage of adopting the Old Irish form is that it increases the overall readability of the normalised text for the audience.

Similarly, some suspension strokes were difficult to expand. For example, this can be seen in 29.20, N: *laochr̄*, H: *laechr̄*, R: *laecraid*. R has the Middle Irish form, but N and H have been expanded to the Old Irish form *láechrad*. Some expansions are not ambiguous, for example, in 30.6 N: *breth*, H: *br7* and R: *br7*. In both H and R, the *et* compendium is found and the forms have been expanded to *breth*. In all instances, the manuscripts have the Middle Irish form as syntactically the acc. sg. *breith* would be expected. Likewise, the difficulty with expansions can be seen with *eter/iter* or its Middle Irish form *etir/itir*. Both forms are used by all three manuscripts but there are also instances when *it̄/ et̄* are found. In such instances, it is difficult to determine which form the scribes have intended. Therefore, the issue of deciding when a Middle Irish form is to be retained or removed can be complicated, and the resulting normalised text may contain more Old Irish features than the archetype may have had.

Another difficulty this thesis has encountered is in regard to the issue of dating the text. On the basis of the historical evidence examined, it is argued that the current tendency to date the text to roughly 1000 AD can be sustained, but that a more precise dating of the text is needed. This aim can be achieved by a closer examination of the linguistic features of the text. This thesis has collected and analysed the linguistic features of the poems and the *rosc* and this data can be used in future research to compare it with other Middle Irish texts. This data can also assist in the future mapping of the chronology of development of when certain linguistic features first occur, which will in turn allow for a better dating of Middle Irish texts. Overall, this thesis has contributed to the debate on how to edit Middle Irish texts and has provided data that can be used by other scholars in order to theoretically reflect on the inherent problems.

In addition, the thesis has contributed to a better literary understanding of the judgement that is found at the end of the text which states that an *ollam* is to be paid the same honour-price as the king of Tara. It was seen that this judgement advances the status of an *ollam*, as instead of his honour-price being dependent on the king that appoints him, it is now equivalent to the king of Tara. The connection between law and poetry can be seen in these poems as well as the *rosc*, which suggests

that there is a functional difference between the two types of medium. The syllabic verses were used for pleading and arguing but the *rosc* was used to make the final legal ruling.

The current literary discussion of *Airec Menman* is mostly concerned with the Tale-List that is found in the tale, and while this thesis has touched upon the development and role of the Tale-List, it has also examined other themes in the text that have not previously been explored in relation to this narrative. These themes include the role and status of the medieval Irish poet, inhospitality, allegory and etymology. The section on the role and status of the poet reveals how the poems found in *Airec Menman* contained ideas or imagery that are commonly found elsewhere in medieval Irish literature, such as the notion that satire was a blade that could metaphorically damage a person's honour as well as physically cause three blisters to appear on the victim's face. The concept of 'three colours of poetry', that is satire, *trefoical* and praise can be argued to represent the different stages of obtaining compensation. The *trefoical*, which was a procedure involving a mixture of praise and satire, represents a warning of an upcoming satire; if the defendant fails to respond appropriately, then a satire is made. If the defendant responds, then a praise poem could be recited instead. This thesis argues that the poems in *Airec Menman* could be viewed as a *trefoical* that warns king Domnall of the imminent danger he is in. Its performative aspects can be seen in the question-and-answer format of the poems and its effectiveness resulted in Urard's compensation.

In the section on hospitality, it was seen that Máel's mistreatment by both the plunderers and the king is another example of a poet not being shown generosity. This theme features heavily in Poem Two, the purpose of which, as previously mentioned, is to warn the king and the plunderers of Máel's power to bring dishonour and shame to them, just like those mentioned in the literary examples. The injustice is further emphasised by the fact that Máel is an *ollam* and, as such, the consequences are even more dire for the offenders.

Finally, in the section concerning allegory and etymology, it is argued that *Airec Menman's* allegorical message also included moral lessons. The narrator seeks to inform the audience that a tale is not only for entertainment purposes, but can offer lessons on how one is to live their life. More specifically, the in-tale *Orcaín Cathrach Máil Milscothaig* teaches the audience about the proper conduct for a king and how a poet should be treated. At the same time, *Airec Menman* has used religious imagery through the use of an angel to confirm the identity of Máel Milscothach as Urard mac Coisse, thus lending support to Urard's case. In other words, Domnall and the plunderers have wronged a Christian man who has committed no crime and therefore does not deserve his mistreatment. These allegorical messages are conveyed through the etymologising of the names Máel Milscothach, Domnall, and the plunderers. The etymologising of the plunderers tends to be negative and functions as a contrast to Máel's positive explanation. Máel is also given a positive creative etymology that associates him with the 'Holy Spirit', therefore further supporting his good character.

The examination of *Airec Menmen* reveals Urard mac Coisse's brilliance as a poet who is able to compose an in-tale with creativity. The in-tale never outrightly accuses the king's relatives of the crime, but the poet nevertheless successfully achieves his goal of obtaining compensation for the wrong done to him. The poems and the *rosc* as a whole can be interpreted on a meta-level as a *tréfocal* itself in the pursuit of Urard's own case. The tale displays his skilful command of the Early Irish language, and the skills he would have obtained during his educational training. It is thus unsurprising that Urard achieved the status of an *ollam*. Although this thesis has sought to shed further light on the text, much more work still needs to be done. It is hoped that in the future, a complete critical edition of *Airec Menman* can be done, as this important text can provide much more insight into medieval Irish literary culture.

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