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Lorg na Leabhar: a Festschrift for Pádraig A. Breatnach. Edited by Caoimhín Breatnach, Meidhbhín Ní Úrdail and Gordon Ó Riain. National University of Ireland, Dublin, 2019. xiv + 520pp. 65€. ISBN 978-0-901510-77-8.

This substantial volume contains some 22 articles (one in German, five in Irish, and the remainder in English) arranged broadly in chronological order of subject treated. Only a brief summary of the contents can be attempted here.

After some preliminaries and Alexandre Guilarte's list of the honorand's publications, the Festschrift proper begins with Jürgen Uhlich's paper '*Loch nEchach n-án: Nasalierungsübertragung in den altirischen Glossen und späteren Quellen*' (pp. 13–38). Uhlich examines Old and Middle Irish examples like *dliged rechto nDáe* 'of the rules of the law of God' and the *Loch nEchach n-án* of the paper's title, in which a noun or adjective modifying a headword is nasalised not by the immediately preceding word but by the headword of the noun-phrase: the nasalisation of *Dáe* is caused not by gen. sg. *rechto* but by gen. pl. *dliged*; *án* is nasalised not by gen. sg. *Echach* but by neuter *Loch*. Uhlich argues that this is not the result of a sort of chain-reaction in which the regular nasalisation of *Echach* is simply duplicated on the next element in a connected string of words (this would leave unexplained examples like *dliged rechto nDáe*, where *rechto* is neither phonologically nor orthographically marked as nasalised). Instead he proposes that the unexpected mutation is a product of the well-attested rightward shift of stress in noun-phrases in Irish, a shift which means that the second element of bipartite names like *Máel Rúanaid*, for example, is more fully stressed than the headword. The nasalisation in *dliged rechto nDáe* is thus similar to the nasalisation seen after *a nda n-athair* 'their two fathers', where the mutation caused by the 3 pl. possessive pronoun is found both on the permanently unstressed numeral and the fully stressed word to which *da* is proclitic, or *a da nduma* 'their two mounds', where the mutation bypasses the unstressed element altogether and affects only the stressed element.

Uáitéar Mac Gearailt's densely argued paper concerns the transmission of *Mesca Ulad* (pp. 39–73). This Early Irish tale survives in two versions: the Middle Irish Version B is found in LL and lacks the ending; the fragmentary 'largely Old Irish' Version A is found in LU and covers the conclusion of the story. B and A are found stitched together as a single text in the Yellow Book of Lecan proper (specifically NLI G4, labelled 'Y') and in NLS 72.1.40 (designated 'E'). Through linguistic and textual analysis, Mac Gearailt comes to the conclusion that the texts of Y and E are not as close as has sometimes been claimed. He suggests that E may even preserve older readings of the B text than LL. A comparison of E and LL is, of course, only possible for the B-part of the tale. The possibility is mooted, however, that the LL text might originally have concluded with the A version as well; in that scenario, the common ancestor of E and LL was a partial Middle Irish redaction of the earlier text underlying both B and A. The other possibility explored by Mac Gearailt is that E does indeed descend, as normally assumed, from a composite text formed from LL and a text like LU, but that the LL-derived text was subjected to sensitive, expert editing and revision at an early point in transmission (perhaps the late twelfth or early thirteenth centuries).

Máirín Ní Dhonnchadha clarifies the setting of the eighth-century poem attributed to Suibne found in the St Paul Codex, which begins *M'airiuclán i Túaim Inbir* (pp. 75–94). Ní Dhonnchadha argues that the *airiuclán* of the title is indeed a kind of prayer-house and not a metaphorical tree-top abode and that the Suibne Geilt of the poem is a pious hermit now in the care of Mo-Ling having recovered from his famous *geltacht*. The discussion of ecclesiastical management of woodland and the use of hollow trees makes for interesting reading.

In 'St Abbán's Charm' (pp. 95–111), Pádraig P. Ó Néill discusses an Irish verse in an Anglo-Norman hand and Middle English spelling and accompanied by Latin glosses found in a manuscript (now part of Cambridge Corpus Christi 405) written by a member of the Knights Hospitallers of St John of Jerusalem with connections to Waterford and Wexford between 1325 and 1327. The Irish charm to protect travellers by sea is also found in the *Vita Abbani* and is shown to be part of a wider effort to develop the cult of Abbán as a marine saint who would appeal to the Anglo-Normans. Anyone not reading this volume from cover to cover may wish to note that the relevant manuscript page is reproduced on the verso after the end of Ó Néill's article.

Neil Buttimer's 'The Book of Leinster and the Book of the O'Byrnes' (pp. 113–38) suggests that the author of the late-sixteenth century poem *Mór cóir cháich ar chrích Laighean* (Fearghal Óg Mac an Bhaird or Niall Ó Ruanadha), which formed part of the O'Bryne poem-book, may have drawn on some texts now preserved in LL in composing his poem, perhaps even by direct consultation of that manuscript. There is discussion also of intertextuality within the *Leabhar Branach*. The florid style of this paper will not appeal to every reader.

In 'A praise-poem from eleventh-century Armagh' (pp. 139–48), Máire Herbert offers a close reading of a poem composed in the 1040s for the bishop Áed Úa Forréid, rightly insisting that it be taken on its own terms rather than compared teleologically to later bardic panegyric. This is followed by Tomás Ó Cathasaigh's detailed quatrain-by-quatrain analysis of Dubthach Dóel Ulad's prophetic *laíd* in Recension I of *TBC* (pp. 149–65). Ó Cathasaigh explicates the poem's allusions and narrative function and suggests some improvements to Cecile O'Rahilly's text and translation.

The evidence for dance in Early Christian Ireland is surveyed by Fergus Kelly (pp. 167–73). This includes a discussion of the activities of the *fuirsiú/fuirseóir*, *braitgetóir* and *crosán*.

Róisín McLaughlin edits a Latin-Irish commentary on Psalm 68.10 found in RIA 3 B 23 (Cat. 227, 'The Tallaght Codex'). Though most of the text is in late Middle Irish (the Latin may once have been more extensive), there are several citations from the Bible, Bede, Jerome and another unidentified source or sources.

Caoimhín Breatnach examines manuscripts of the earlier recension of *Acallam na Senórach*, highlighting deficiencies in Stokes's edition of 1900 and raising questions about the date and formation of the text (pp. 197–219). Stokes consulted four manuscripts for his

edition in *Irische Texte* (Laud 610, the Book of Lismore, UCD-OFM A4 and Rawlinson B 487) but gave priority to Laud and supplied passages missing in that manuscript from the Book of Lismore. Breatnach's analysis of the first three of these manuscripts (Rawlinson is not discussed in depth on this occasion) reveals that Lismore presents a more laconic text, and, while Laud and A4 are similar, the latter has material not found in any other witness. Either Lismore represents a pared back text or the other witnesses show later accretions. Breatnach also confirms that a fifth copy of the text, UCD-OFM A40, which was not used by Stokes, is a copy of UCD-OFM A4. The paper concludes with some observations on linguistic dating; the possibility is noted that the *Acallam* may have been composed at a point later than the accepted date on the threshold of the Middle/Early Modern Irish periods.

There follow three editions of Classical Modern Irish verse, all with translations into English. In 'Apalóg ón bhFiannaíocht' (pp. 221–33), Cathal Ó Háinle edits part of Eochaidh Ó hEódhasa's poem *Cathaigh réd mheanma, a mheic Bhriain*, viz. the fifteen quatrains devoted to the tale of the division of the kingship of Ireland between the two sons of Fearadhach Fachtnach after his death. Margo Griffin-Wilson edits and offers a literary analysis of *Ná tréig, a Thomáis, mheise*, a poem in which Fear Feasa Ó'n Cháinte seeks reconciliation with an estranged patron (pp. 235–69). In 'Dán le Tadhg Dall Ó hUiginn' (pp. 271–86), Pádraig Ó Macháin re-visits an acephalous poem (probably beginning with the word *Fuigheall*) found in NLS Adv. 71.1.44. The Classical Modern Irish theme continues with Gordon Ó Riain's detail-rich article 'Aistí meadarachta in *Irish Grammatical Tracts V*' (pp. 287–329), in which he surveys the metres attested in that fascinating treatise (many of which are rare) and compares the distribution to *Mittelirische Verslehren* and to contemporary corpora (including prosimetra).

Froinsias Ó Maolmhuaidh's *Lucerna Fidelium/Lóchrann na gCreidmheach*, published in Rome in 1676, is the subject of an essay by the late Richard Sharpe (pp. 331–42). *Lucerna Fidelium* has 'the distinction', to quote Colm Ó Lochlainn, 'of having remained in print for 234 years in its first edition'. By examining the information to be gleaned from marks of ownership, particularly in nine of the thirteen copies of the book formerly held in the Franciscan House of Studies at Killiney and now secure in UCD Special Collections, Sharpe sheds light on the distribution and circulation of this book among Irish Franciscans in the decades after it was printed and the effect of the discovery of hundreds of unsold copies in Rome in 1842. Sharpe's article is also an unsettling reminder that the future of some important collections of Irish-language early printed books, such as that which remains in Killiney, is uncertain. Happily, the four UCD-OFM volumes that were unaccounted for at the time of writing have since been found safe and sound by Eugene Roche of UCD Special Collections, who, together with his colleague Evelyn Flanagan, did so much to facilitate Prof. Sharpe's research in recent years. Those not reading this book from cover to cover should note that the reproduction of one of the relevant title-pages is found on the verso after this paper rather than on the blank facing page at the beginning of the article.

There follow two editions of seventeenth-century verse. In '*Fuaras fríth is misde mhé: aisling ghrá*' (pp. 343–60), Síle Ní Mhurchú edits and translates a love poem of alternating syllabic and accentual stanzas, which she tentatively dates no later than the first half of the

seventeenth century because the syllabic verse fulfils the requirements of *dán díreach*. The introduction includes a discussion of the metrical feature *conchlann*. Liam P. Ó Murchú (*‘Is tórmach ceatha: Dáibhí Ó Bruadair a chum, 1693’*, pp. 361–80) edits and translates a poem of welcome for Eóin Mac Sleighne after his appointment as Roman Catholic bishop of Cork and Cloyne in 1693 (pp. 361–80). The unique copy of the poem is in Boston College Gaelic Manuscript 5, which also contains nine other items on Bishop Sleyne.

Meidhbhín Ní Úrdail (*‘An t-ár agus an t-ocras: a Clare scribe’s response to the Great Famine’*, pp. 381–409) tells the moving story of the poet and scholar Mícheál Ó Raghallaigh (1785/6–1856). Through an examination of his manuscripts and poetry, Ní Úrdail reveals how Ó Raghallaigh responded to the trauma of the Famine and the decline of the Irish language and native learning to which he was witness. As well as the subject’s comments on the Famine and other notable events, Ní Úrdail prints and translates his bitter criticism in verse of the Roman Catholic clergy and an elegy he composed with Séamas Mac Cruitín on Peadar Mór Ó Lochlainn, last prince of the Burren. This paper also touches upon the coming to Ireland in the nineteenth century of Irish manuscripts written on the European mainland in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.

Proinsias Ó Drisceoil makes use of a wide range of sources – from scholarly literature, newspapers and census data to the reminiscences of the writer Francis MacManus and the testimony of Dónall Mac Amhlaigh’s satirical novel *Schnitzer Ó Sé* (1974) – to recover something of the extent of Irish spoken in part of the barony of Gowran, Co. Kilkenny in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries (pp. 411–33). This is followed by Seán Ua Súilleabháin’s clarification of the historical circumstances of an incident memorialised in the folklore of Baile Mhuirne, viz. the arson-attack in October 1791 on a house in Baile Mhic Íre where soldiers sent to collect the hearth tax were staying (*‘Scéal an Tí Dhóite’*, pp. 435–45).

The final two contributions to the volume bring in a wider Gaelic dimension. In ‘A pan-Gaelic perspective on the oral lament’ (pp. 447–80), Sorcha Nic Lochlainn surveys the evidence for the oral lament in Gaelic Ireland, Scotland and even the Isle of Man (though the evidence for the last-mentioned is scarce). Nic Lochlainn explores the social and psychological functions of the lament as well as its connection with panegyric and brings out both the subversive and conservative aspects of this remarkable female-dominated genre. Finally, Seosamh Watson’s wide-ranging ‘Boats, bibles and boyans: Gaelic language and lore in Easter Ross’ (pp. 481–520) presents information on the economic and social life, belief and customs, history and language of the Seaboard Villages acquired over three decades of fieldwork (begun in 1967 as ‘rescue dialectology’).

Details of works cited are found either in footnotes or in bibliographies at the end of the individual papers; there is no combined bibliography nor are there any indexes. The outline of contents above will no doubt have whetted scholarly appetites.

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