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author, title, awarding institution and date of the thesis must be given.
The *Bórama*: the poetry and the hagiography in the Book of Leinster

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M.A., M.Litt.

Submitted in fulfillment of the requirements for the Degree of Ph.D.
Abstract

This thesis is the first attempt at analysing the *Bórama* with a detailed analysis of the poetry read alongside the prose, as well as a detailed discussion on the hagiographical material found at the core of the text.

Chapter 1 examines the text, with particular attention on issues of composition, chronological order or disorder and other temporal anomalies, as well as the connection with other texts, especially those situated within the Book of Leinster (*LL*) manuscript. This is to address the issue of what the purpose of the text is, to support the argument that this is a compiled text, possibly by a single author or compiler, drawing on an extensive knowledge of literary works. It examines what the central focus of the text is and also illustrates Moling as the central character of the text, and crucial to the text in whole. In addition it will discuss the issue of classification, something that scholars have contended with for many years.

The poetry of the *Bórama* serves as the focal point of Chapter 2. There I demonstrate the various metres represented in the poetry, and cover a broad discussion on the issues the poems raise in the debate on the *Bórama*. It illustrates that the poems are an integral part of the text, and that without them the understanding of the text has been severely affected.

The following chapter, Chapter 3, is devoted to the numerous saints who occur in the poetry of the *Bórama*. In the poems, interspersed throughout the text of the *Bórama*, there is a great number of saints mentioned at various instances with varying purposes. The purpose of their inclusion as well as in which situation they are represented in the text is discussed extensively. Their locality and affiliations will, as far as possible, be explored in terms of their connection to Leinster or Moling.

Chapter 4 will be dedicated to the discussion of Moling, the central character of the text. It will explore how he is represented in the text of the *Bórama*, as compared to other texts where he is also a key figure. It will be shown that the *Bórama*, in *LL*, is a central text to his hagiographical corpus. Material concerned with Moling will also be looked at in terms of what they contribute to his legend. It will draw together the traits Moling exhibits in the extant sources and how his literary persona develops. The chapter will then conclude with the suggestion that *LL* was invaluable to the development of the legend of Moling.
In the final final section of the thesis I will draw together the main issues of each chapter in order to provide a conclusion and iron out any remaining issues. I will also highlight the numerous issues this thesis has raised during the course of the research undertaken and which would serve as future projects centred on the text.
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¹ fedba in fer cen scis ‘excellent the man without tiredness’.
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In memory of my grandmother who missed seeing me come home.
Declaration of Originality

This thesis is the result of my own research and all the material presented is my own work except where otherwise stated.

I have fully referenced the works consulted during the process of research.

All errors and unintentional omissions are my own and will be corrected.
## Abbreviations and Conventions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AFM</td>
<td>Annals of the Four Masters</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AI</td>
<td>Annals of Innisfallen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AS</td>
<td>Acallam na Senórach</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AT</td>
<td>Annals of Tigernach</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AU</td>
<td>Annals of Ulster</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BS</td>
<td>Buile Suibhne</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CA</td>
<td>Cán Adomnáin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CBDB</td>
<td>Cath Belaig Dúin Bolc episode in the Bórama</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CGSH</td>
<td>Corpus Genealogiarum Sanctorum Hiberniae</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CJIS</td>
<td>Canadian Journal of Irish Studies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CMCS</td>
<td>Cambridge Medieval Celtic Studies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CnC</td>
<td>Comram na Clóenfherta</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DIL</td>
<td>Dictionary of the Irish Language</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DIS</td>
<td>Dictionary of Irish Saints</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ÉC</td>
<td>Études Celtiques</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FA</td>
<td>Fragmentary annals of Ireland</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FÓ</td>
<td>Féilire Óengusso</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GMB</td>
<td>Genemain Moling ocus a Bethu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HTR</td>
<td>The Harvard Theological Review</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JIS</td>
<td>Journal of the Ivernian Society</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JRSAI</td>
<td>The Journal of the Royal Society of Antiquaries of Ireland</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lec</td>
<td>The Book of Lecan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LL</td>
<td>The Book of Leinster</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MD</td>
<td>Martyrology of Donegal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MG</td>
<td>Martyrology of Gorman</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MT</td>
<td>Martyrology of Tallaght</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OG</td>
<td>Onomasticon Goedelicum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PBA</td>
<td>Proceedings of the British Academy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PHCC</td>
<td>Proceedings of the Harvard Celtic Colloquium</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PRIA</td>
<td>Proceedings of the Royal Irish Academy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RC</td>
<td>Revue Celtique</td>
</tr>
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<td>RIA</td>
<td>Royal Irish Academy</td>
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<td>SCF</td>
<td>Studia Celtica Fennica</td>
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<td>SGS</td>
<td>Scottish Gaelic Studies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SH</td>
<td>Studia Hibernica</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Translations of the poetry, as well as texts, are my own unless otherwise indicated. Orthography and punctuation is reproduced in citations of editions conferred with, keeping in line with the editors’ work except that the *punctum delens* is omitted. Personal names will be given in standardised forms or in English; such as Finn mac Cumaill instead of Find mac Cumaill. In terms of place-names, initially the Irish standardised form is given based on *OG*, followed by the English, as in Ross mBruicc (Brocccross), and the English form from then on.

*Bórama, bórama or bórama Laigen*

The word *bórama* will occur regularly in the discussion, often in different contexts. When referring to the text of the tale within *LL* I will use *Bórama*. When referring to the actual ‘cattle-tribute’ inflicted on the province of Leinster I will use *bórama*. At rare occasion reference will be given to *bórama Laigen*, this is to indicate any and all versions of the story of the ‘cattle-tribute’ represented in a variety of sources, such as; *Bórama, Cómram na Clóenfherta* and *Genemain Moling ocus a Bethu* for example.

*The Bórama, the text*

The text has been divided into three sections within this thesis. This is to make the discussion more focused and less confusing to the reader as this is a long text. Section one will cover the beginning of the text, the fate of the daughters of Tuathal Techtmar and the involvement of Finn mac Cumaill in the events. This is because these two episodes are especially linked, through the poems and other extant texts in discussion. Section two will cover the episode which is normally referred to as the *Cath Belaig Dúin Bolg* section, as it also survives as a separate tale in *YBL*. The third section of the text will cover the remainder of the *Bórama*, in which Moling features as the main protagonist.
General Introduction

In scél iar n-urd inso sís.²

The *Bórama* is a twelfth-century text and is preserved on ff. 294ᵇ – 308ᵇ in the Book of Leinster (*LL*). It is a text of considerable length which covers the ‘cattle-tribute’ imposed on the province of Leinster at a time in Irish prehistory which would calibrate to the first or second century AD supposedly and spans at least six centuries. As a literary text it has in some ways fallen between the cracks in the scholarly discussion of early Irish literature. Two editions and translations of the text were published separately in 1892 by W. Stokes and S. H. O’Grady, and neither editor included an edition or translation of the poetry.³ Aside from one major unpublished study on the text in 1983, no further extensive research has been performed on the text of the *Bórama*.⁴ If the *Bórama* has been brought to the attention of a reader of early Irish literature it is usually at a passing glance or by few commentary remarks benefitting the discussion at hand but without engaging further with the text. The text spans centuries detailing the strife between the Leinstermen and the kings of the northern half of Ireland and as such the text has generally been seen to belong among the kingship cycle tales.⁵ Since the text pertains to kings and their behaviour, this aspect has primarily occupied the attention of scholars and because of that other aspects of the story have been neglected, in this case the hagiography. As we will see, Moling will feature quite heavily in the present analysis of the *Bórama* and attention should be paid to him almost from the start of the text.

The term *bórama* is used to describe the éraitc (‘compensation’ or ‘fine’) which was demanded of the Leinstermen in the tale. Stokes in his edition of the text discusses the etymology of the word and identifies *bórama* as a fem. iā-stem: gen. sg. *na boroma, na borroma*, meaning ‘tribute’ or specifically ‘cattle-tribute’ as a compound

² ‘The story in order here below.’
of the words **bó** and **rím** which effectively means ‘cattle-counting’. G.S. Mac Eoin comments that although the term **bórama** is used in relation to other tributes, it is not always possible to fully realise what is being referred to. Although there are instances of this word appearing elsewhere, such as the epithet of Brian Boru, king of Ireland, it is generally specifically identified as the tribute imposed on the Leinstermen by the king of Tara, **Bóroma Laigen**.

As the text is lengthy and complex, it is prudent to divide the text into manageable sections, in this case three sections, so that when each section is being referred to the reader will be in no doubt as to what section of the text is meant. Therefore, in order for the reader to be able to follow the discussion with more ease, I have prepared a short summary of the events within each section of the **Bórama**. The text is interspersed with poems throughout, and as these poems make up the majority of the discussion to follow it is useful to know where in the text they are situated in relation to the sections. For easy identification of references to poems, as they are thirty-three in total, they will be italicised and numbered according to where in the list of poems they occur, hence **01** refers to the first poem of the text, followed by the initial line of the verse, presented thusly; **01 Fithir is Dáirine**. A selection of poems that occur in the **Bórama** will be found in Appendix B, as these poems will feature most heavily in the discussion throughout the thesis.

**Section one: the levyng of the bórama and Finn mac Cumaill**

At the start of the text Tuathal Techtmár, king of Tara, is introduced and the story of how he became the king of Ireland is provided in a short paragraph. It is suggested that it was at the time of the Feast of Tara that Eochu mac Eochu Domlén of Leinster took Fithir, the elder daughter of Tuathal Techtmár, as wife. When he brought her home to Leinster it was met by resentment of the people of Leinster, saying that Tuathal Techtmár’s younger daughter Dáirine had been preferable. Therefore he goes...

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back to Tuathal Techtmar, where he lies about the demise of his first wife and requests the younger daughter in her place. Tuathal Techtmar agrees and Eochu brings Dáirine home to Leinster with him. When they arrive, the deception is over as Fithir is there alive and well until she sees what her husband has done. Upon seeing her younger sister, she immediately dies of shame and seeing this Dáirine dies of grief. When Tuathal Techtmar hears what fate has become his daughters he recites poem *01 Fithir is Dáirine*. After a war waged by the kings of Tara, Ulster and Connacht against the Leinstermen because of the deaths of the two women, where Eochu the king of Leinster fell, the Leinstermen agree to pay an *éraic* ‘compensation’. This *éraic* consists of a vast list of items and livestock that the Leinstermen agree to pay to the king of Tara. This *éraic* was then imposed on the province of Leinster each year after that. Poem *02 Tuathal Techtmar techta in talman* occurs here (with no specific speaker indicated).

Some years later Tuathal Techtmar dies [AD 106 AFM] and the text then enumerates those that came after him and levied the *bórama*. Some time later the king of Ireland, at this time Cairpre Lifechair, intends to levy the *bórama*. Hearing of this Bressal Bélach, king of Leinster, asks the Leinstermen what they should do, and he recites poem *03 Dénaid dún bar comairlí*. The Leinstermen suggest that Finn mac Cumaill be sent for and Bressal Bélach himself goes to seek him. When he reaches Finn he relates the woes of Leinster to him and recites poem *04 A Find in n-érgi ri báig*. Finn hearing of their plight sets forth towards Leinster to aid them. On the way he camps at Broccross, where he has a vision regarding the place and the arrival of Moling (the seventh-century saint). Finn meets up with a namesake of Moling who recites poem *05 Mo Lling Lúath Cellach Bróen bil*, and he continues conversing with Finn and recites poem *06 Rot fiasu i mBrocccross*. Finn and his men continue on their way, still around the site of Broccross, and he recites poem *07 Ross mBrocc indiu is conair chúain*. At Brocccross one of Finn’s companions has a vision related in poem *08 Ross mBruicc bale buredach*. Once Finn and his men reach the site where Fithir and Dáirine died Finn recites poem *09 Mor in gním daringned sund.*

10 When Finn joins the king of Leinster they advance against the king of Tara and his men and it is indicated that the *bórama* was not levied.

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Time now passes, where many battles ensue between the kings of Tara and the province of Leinster over the bórama, prompting at one time the reciting of poem 10 *In cath ac Cnámros ni chelam* (with no particular speaker indicated). At one point it seems as if the bórama has been rescinded when the Leinstermen capture Loegaire mac Néill, the then king of Tara [AD 458 AU], in battle and get a promise from him that he will not demand the bórama. He goes back on his word and as a result is punished by the elements upon which he swore he would not claim the bórama, and dies thereof. Poem 11 *Atbath Loegaire mac Neil* reiterates these events (with no speaker indicated). The story continues enumerating the many battles fought over the bórama, where at times the Leinstermen were successful in withstanding the onslaught from the north.

**Section two: the ‘Cath Belaig Dúin Bolg’ episode (or CBDB)**

It is now mid sixth century and Áed mac Ainmerech is king of Ireland [AD 568 AFM]. This section starts with one of his sons, Cummascach proclaiming his wish of going on a sáerchuaírt ‘free circuit’ of Ireland, where the wife of every king in Ireland was to spend one night with him. At that time, the king of Leinster was Brandub mac Echach, and he was not inclined to agree to share his wife. Máedóc Ua Dúnlainge comes to see Brandub presenting him with gifts and two poems, 12 *Failet sund aisceda ríg* and 13 *M’aél trébend torcbálach*. Brandub dons a disguise and sets a trap for Cummascach, while his wife escapes the advances of Cummascach. Brandub sets fire to the house where Cummascach and his satirist Glasdám were. Through trickery of his own, Cummascach escapes in the guise of Glasdám while Glasdám dies in his stead in the burning building. Cummascach does not live long after this though as he is killed as he flees Leinster [AD 593 AFM].

Bishop Aedán of Glendalough (Co. Wicklow, Leinster) enters the tale at his point. He is the half-brother (uterine brother) of Áed mac Ainmerech, king of Ireland. Although he is related to the king of Tara, he is loyal to the Leinstermen through his mother’s side. It is here that poems (14) *Guidim Comdid cumachtach* and 15 *Tiagat*...
General Introduction

He brings the news to Aed that his son has been killed. Aed goes to battle against Leinster for the death of his son, when he comes with his troops to Belach Dúin Bolg, ‘the Pass of the Fort of Sacks’, Bishop Aedán prophesises the outcome of the battle.

Ulster had until this point been amongst the provinces that were against Leinster as well. However, Brandub captured young warriors from Ulster, among them the son of the king, and used him to negotiate a truce between Leinster and Ulster. During this exchange, poems 17 Atchonnarc aslinghi n-ingnad and 18 Dénaid dún ar cotach occur in the text, both uttered by the king of Ulster. After that the Ulstermen leave at the behest of Brandub and Bishop Aedán prophesises on the fate of Áed mac Ainmerech, in poem 19 Lussán Aeda meic Ainmerech. Áed mac Ainmerech had forgotten a cowl that had been presented to him by Colum Cille, and as he realised this he knew that he would die, as Colum Cille’s cowl protected him from harm. Brandub, using trickery and disguise, gets his men into Áed mac Ainmerech’s camp where battle ensues and Aed is killed [AD 594 AFM]. Following this section there is a short enumeration of the kings that came after Áed mac Ainmerech and tried to levy the bórama with mixed results. The final poem of this section is poem 20 Dénaid dúin bar comairle, this time spoken by the succeeding king of the Uí Néill, Sechnasach mac Blaithmaic.

Section three: Moling and the remission of the bórama

It is here that Moling first appears in the Bórama. By the time Moling enters the tale, in the late seventh century, the king of Leinster is now Bran mac Conaill. A messenger is sent to Moling where he resides at Broccross and Moling recites poem 21 Cuce seo ro dalus on this occasion. Then Moling journeys to the place where the Leinstermen are gathered, where poem 22 Inmain tríar a Christ grind glúair is recited by him. After a short debate the Leinstermen agree to send Moling to the king of Ireland, who at this time is Finnachta Fledach mac Dúnhada [king of Ireland in AD 675 AU], to ask that the bórama be rescinded. Poems 23 Turchan duin a

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12 Poem (14) Guidim Comdid cumachtach is situated much earlier in the LL manuscript, though it is indicated in the Bórama that it should occur here. Cf. LL ll. 6882-6961. I have placed poem (14) Guidim Comdid cumachtach within brackets as a reminder that it is situated elsewhere in the LL.

Thuathail and 24 Érig a Mo Lling occur here (and are conversation poems with two to three speakers).  

Moling sets out on his journey and brings with him the poet Tollchenn as part of his retinue, with poem 25 In-anuum na Trinóiti, uttered by Moling. The reason for bringing the poet with him was that Tollchenn was supposed to recite a poem Moling composed for Fínnachta. On the way Tollchenn abandons the company of Moling and goes to Fínnachta on his own and recites Moling’s poem. En route to Fínnachta, Moling and his retinue get pelted by stones thrown by young boys, including the son of Fínnachta. When Moling finally arrives at Fínnachta’s place no one rises up to greet him, which was a sign of insult. In a hunting accident and through a curse of Moling for aggravating him with the pelting of the stones, Fínnachta’s son Donngilla dies. Fínnachta pleads with Moling to restore his son, which Moling agrees to do, if Fínnachta will give respite for the bórama until luán ‘Monday’, along with him gifting Fínnachta with a poem, poem 26 Fínnachta a Huíb Néill. When Moling has recited his poem Fínnachta accuses him of passing of another’s poem, Tollchenn’s, as his own. Moling then instructs Tollchenn to recite the poem he is supposed to have composed, but Tollchenn utters nothing but gibberish, poem 27 Dríbor drábor, thus proving that he spoke falsely. Finnactha asks Moling to forgive him and promises him whatever he asks. Again Moling asks for a respite of the bórama till luán ‘Monday’ and Fínnachta accepts, so Moling revives the boy by reciting poem 28 Crist conic mo chrí.

After the bórama has been rescinded, by Fínnachta’s promise to Moling, Adomnán requests that Fínnachta come see him, as he is displeased with what the king has done. Fínnachta does not heed the words of the messenger and it takes some doing until he agrees to see Adomnán. When he finally does, Adomnán tells him that the luán ‘Monday’ that Moling asked for was in fact Doomsday and that he had been tricked into remitting the bórama forever and recites poem 29 Andiu cia chenglaid chuaca. He urges Fínnachta to go after Moling, who flees from them, and it is here that poems 30 A mo Chomdiu cumachtach, 31 Corbar cairrge ar dairge donna, 32 Suidem sund suide n-ága occur, are uttered by Moling during his escape. When Moling arrives at Kilcullen (?) he prays for the protection of Brigit, through poem 33 A Brigit bennach ar sét. This is where the text of LL version ends. The folios

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14 These poems will be discussed further in Chapter 2: The Poetry. Cf. Appendix B.
following are missing from the LL manuscript and thus it is not certain if this is the actual end to the Bórama or if there was more to it.  

The Bórama in Manuscripts

The Bórama tract is found in two manuscripts, LL and the Book of Lecan (Lec). In addition the episode Cath Belaig Dúin Bolg, which corresponds to the second section of the Bórama, is found in the Yellow Book of Lecan (YBL). A text which is generally considered to be the sequel to the Bórama is Cath Almaine, also found in YBL. These texts and a few other significant sources will be discussed here below, while discussion of other texts and sources will feature where they best serve purpose within the thesis.

The Book of Leinster (LL)

The manuscript of LL (H 2.18, 1339) is preserved in the library of Trinity College Dublin and was formerly referred to as Lebor na Nuachongbála. It contains 187 leaves, where ten leaves thereof have, through the course of time, been separated from the original manuscript and were for a time stored in the Franciscan Library in Killiney. These leaves, which contain among them the Martyrology of Tallaght (MT), are now housed at University College Dublin. In size it is circa 13” x 9”, ‘with an uncommonly complicated palaeography.’ It is among the earliest Irish manuscripts written entirely in the vernacular, compiled in the late twelfth century. In his introduction to the diplomatic edition of LL, Best argues that the manuscript is the work of a single scribe, Aed mac Crimthainn, because of the note found on f. 313a, ‘Aed mac meic Crimthaind ro scrib in leborso 7 ra thinoil a llebraib imdaib.’ It has however been noted by O’Sullivan that there are in fact six distinct hands.

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15 Stokes, ‘The Boroma’, pp. 116-17. The difference between the YBL version and LL is such that it is not possible to rely on YBL to give the ending for the LL version of the Bórama. Cf. in this thesis Variants in the Book of Lecan, pp. 20-1.


18 O'Sullivan, ‘Notes’, p. 6. O'Sullivan noted that the arrangement of the manuscript had gone through changes, some as early as the fourteenth century. The result is that O'Sullivan’s observations often do not correspond with the arrangement and foliation of the diplomatic edition.

responsible for the manuscript. O’Sullivan identifies the scribe of the *Bórama* as scribe S, ‘for the scribe employed by Aed to copy ff. ccvii – ccxvi at Bishop Find’s request’, according to O’Sullivan’s arrangement of the manuscript.21

*LL* was edited and published over a course of years, the first volume being published in 1954 and the sixth volume appearing in 1983, completing the work.22 This work has been of immense aid to my work, best expressed through the words of U. Mac Gearailt, ‘All those who have struggled with the manuscript itself, which is often almost entirely illegible, will readily appreciate the enormous value of such work. Scholars can now study with ease all the contents of this great book, the most extensive of our three twelfth-century *bibliothecae*.’23 The experience of working with this primary text has also been heightened by the now possible access to the manuscript online, through the Irish Script on Screen project.24

*LL* contains a great number of about three-hundred and fifteen texts: tales, poems, genealogies, religious material and other various texts and fragments. Among its most prominent contents, are texts such as: *Lebor Gabála Érenn*, *Táin Bó Cúailgne*, and the earliest version of the metrical *Dindsenchas*.25 The *Bórama* begins on f. 294b and reaches until f. 308b. In terms of the present research there are numerous texts found within *LL* that demonstrate what seems to be a complex inter-textual relationship between the texts of the manuscript, in some instances particularly with the *Bórama* tract. Some of the textual relationships were highlighted in C. Buttimer’s thesis (‘The Bórama: literature, history and political propaganda in early medieval Leinster’, 1983) and the present thesis will continue to explore and add to these relationships in the hope of illustrating how intricate the work of the *LL* manuscript was and still is.26 The *LL* contains a grand mixture of both historical/pseudo-historical and literary material, the history of the province is used to give credence to

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the events the text refers to. This is among the attractions the LL has in terms of its content.

**The Book of Lecan (Lec)**

No complete edition of the Lec manuscript has been published, unlike that of LL. It has been made accessible through the work done by K. Mulchrone, in publishing a facsimile of the manuscript in 1937 and it is now available through the Irish Script on Screen project. The Great Book of Lecan (Leabhar Mór Mhic Fhir Bhisigh Leacain) MS 23 P 2, usually referred to as the Book of Lecan (Lec) and not to be confused with the Yellow Book of Lecan (Leabhar Buidhe Lecain), commonly referred to as YBL, is now preserved in the Royal Irish Academy (RIA). The manuscript was written before the year 1418 and there are three principal scribes of the manuscript which can all be identified, Gilla Ísu Mac Fir Bhisigh, and two of his pupils, Adhamh Ó Cuinnín and Murchadh Riabhach Ó Cuindlis, working at the family seat in the north Connaught province. In addition to these scribes, there are some ‘manuscript headings, additions, and unimportant marginal jottings’, in the manuscript by later hands, which are unknown. The manuscript itself is relatively large, measuring just over 30 x 21 cm and contains three-hundred and eleven leaves, though originally it would have contained more leaves. Nine leaves are preserved separately in Trinity College Dublin as manuscript 1319 (H 2.17).

Within Lec there are a great number of other manuscripts mentioned as sources by the scribes, such as: Lebor Glinne Dá Locha, Lebor na Nuachongbála (LL), Lebor Dúine Dá Leathglas, the books of Flann Mainistrech, Saltair Caisil, Lebor Oileáín Inse Duin, Lebor Sochair Lothra, Lebor Lothra Ruadáin, Cín Dromma Snechta, Lebor Dairi, Lebor Dúine Geimín, Lebor Sabaill Padraig, Lebor Sochair Flatha O Fiachrach. K. Jackson in his review of the facsimile remarks that:

> The Book of Lecan itself is a compilation made from many such sources, some of them mentioned by name, dealing with legends of the origin and early history of Ireland, and including a particular text

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30. Ibid, pp. x-xi.

of the *Book of Invasions*, the *Metrical Dinnshenchas*, and a great deal of important genealogical material.\(^{32}\)

Many of the texts that are found in Lec are also found in the manuscript of *LL*, such as those mentioned by Jackson, possibly indicating that the manuscript of *LL* influenced the compilation of Lec, in some significant way. The accounts of the *Bórama* within Lec occur in the last two gatherings of the manuscript on ff. 304\(^a\) – 310\(^b\), two further texts that contain references to the *bóroma Laigen* are found on f. 295\(^a\) (*Tanic tra Tuathal tar muir Tartain* and continues with *Fider ocus Dáirine*), which corresponds to the first poem in the *LL* text of the *Bórama*: *01 Fithir is Dáirine* and f. 297\(^b\) (*Tuathal Techtmar techta in talman*).\(^{33}\)

**Variants in the Book of Lecan**

Lec contains the text of the *Bórama*, although its shape and form is somewhat different. Unlike the *Bórama* of *LL*, which is introduced with a title *incipit Bórama*, the text in Lec consists of a collection of episodes which correspond with the chronological order of the *Bórama*. As the Lec text has yet to be edited, I am relying mainly on Stokes’ treatment of the text within his edition of the *Bórama*, along with the facsimile of Lec to give me further insight into the text. Stokes used Lec alongside *LL* when editing and translating the *Bórama*, sometimes supplementing the text of the *LL* with additional material from Lec.\(^{34}\) In terms of the poetry in the Lec manuscript he completely ignores it, except on one occasion when he includes two short quatrains; *A mBuach* and *Badar inmain na tri taib*.\(^{35}\) These two quatrains are also found in the *Cath Belaig Dúin Bolg* text of YBL.\(^{36}\) There are also further texts within Lec which refer to the *bórama*, which Stokes does not refer to at all in his edition. There are a great many things that have yet to be explored in terms of Lec and the *Bórama* that are however beyond the scope of this thesis at present as the focus is on the *Bórama* tract in *LL*. While the *Bórama* in *LL* breaks off after poem 33 *A Brigit bennach ar sét*, where a folio is missing, Lec provides a continuation.\(^{37}\) The extended passage from Lec contains the fate of Fínnachta, and a subsequent short conversation, in the forms of poems being exchanged between Moling and Adomnán.

\(^{33}\) *The Book of Lecan*, pp. 295, 297 and 304-310, according to facsimile foliation.
\(^{34}\) Cf. Stokes, ‘The Boroma’, pp. 96-99, including the footnotes especially for examples of this.
\(^{35}\) Ibid, pp. 94-5, §120.
\(^{37}\) Poem 33 *A Brigit bennach ar sét* is not included in Lec, along with eight other poems of the *LL* text.
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regarding Fínnachta’s fate. The text then ends with the comment conad he f. forcenn na Boroma. Due to the variation in the treatment of the text it is not possible to rely on Lec providing the precise same ending to the Bórama. Lec demonstrates that the Bórama tract is part of a much wider range of historical texts, while the LL text is more literary orientated. As such it is more likely to demonstrate such interest in the inclusion of material while ignoring some of the poems which feature so prominently in LL version of the Bórama.

The Yellow Book of Lecan (YBL)

YBL, Leabhar Buidhe Leacain, otherwise known as MS TCD H 2.16, or 1318, is housed at Trinity College, Dublin. It dates from around late fourteenth century to early fifteenth century. This manuscript (cols. 573 – 958) originates from the same school as Lec, produced under the administration of Gilla Ísa Mac Donnchaid Mhóir Mhic Fhir Bhisigh, a poet and historian. Originally the manuscript of YBL did not exist in the form we now know it by. In 1699 – 1700 Edward Lhuyd collected individual manuscripts and had them bound together. In 1896 Robert Atkinson edited the photographic facsimile, and placed first the section inscribed ‘by Ciothruadh mac Taidhg Ruaidh [Mac Fhirbhisigh] naming the book to which it had belonged as the Yellow Book of Lecan.’ Atkinson had ‘planned to give the title to his facsimile and it has consequently now been transferred to the manuscript itself.’ It has now been made more readily available by the Irish Script on Screen Project.

The YBL contains in addition two texts which are relevant to the Bórama, Cath Belaig Diúin Bolg, ff. 207b – 209a (cols. 942 – 945) and Cath Almaine, which is considered to be the sequel to the Bórama and is situated just before Cath Belaig

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39 Ibid. ‘So that is the end of the Bórama.’
42 Ibid.
45 O’Sullivan, ‘Ciothruadh’s Yellow Book of Lecan’, p. 177.
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Dúin Bolg, on ff. 206\textsuperscript{a} – 207\textsuperscript{b} (cols. 939 – 942).\textsuperscript{47} These will be considered in their wider context below.

Texts relating to the Bórama tract

There are a great number of texts which relate to the Bórama in one way or another. The majority of these texts will be introduced in due course, since their number is extensive and it would be confusing to introduce them all here, out of context of the discussion. However, there are two texts in particular which need to be introduced in particular in relation to the Bórama tract; Cath Belaig Dúin Bolg and Cath Almaine, based on their relationship in the manuscripts detailed previously.

Cath Belaig Dúin Bolg

The text of the Cath Belaig Dúin Bolg is found as a free-standing text in two manuscripts, in the Yellow Book of Lecan (introduced above) and in MS D iv 2 (992), ff. 86\textsuperscript{a} – 87\textsuperscript{b}, a vellum manuscript of the fifteenth century, preserved in Royal Irish Academy in Dublin.\textsuperscript{48} A. Maniet used the YBL text primarily for his edition and translation of the Cath Belaig Dúin Bolg in 1955.\textsuperscript{49} The text covers the battle fought between Áed mac Ainmerech, king of Ireland, against Brandub mac Echach, king of Leinster, over the levying of the bórama. Reference to this text will appear frequently in the discussion of the Bórama, as this text makes up the second section of the Bórama tract in my thesis. This text is quite important to the discussion of the textual relationship the Bórama tract has with other texts as well as the structure of the Bórama itself and this will be explored in due course.


\textsuperscript{49} Maniet, ‘Cath Belaig Duin Bolc’, pp. 95-111.


Cath Almaine

The text of Cath Almaine is generally considered to be the sequel to the Bórama tract. Although the Bórama ends with Moling having succeeded in securing the remission of the bórama forever, the bórama continues to be a matter of contention between the kings of Ireland and the province of Leinster. It is preserved in four manuscripts, among them the YBL MS 1318 (H. 2.16), pp. 206\textsuperscript{a} – 207\textsuperscript{b} (facsimile), where it is followed by the Cath Belaig Dún Bolg text.\textsuperscript{50} It is also preserved in MS Div 2 (992), ff. 87\textsuperscript{a} – 87\textsuperscript{a}, where it follows on from the Cath Belaig Dún Bolg text.\textsuperscript{51} The other two manuscripts which preserve the text are RIA MS 23 E 29, commonly referred to as the Book of Fermoy, pp. 128b – 130b, which dates somewhere around 14th – 15th centuries and Brussels MS 5301 – 5320, pp. 8 – 12, a part of the Fragmentary Annals of Ireland (FA), a seventeenth-century manuscript.\textsuperscript{52} The text of Cath Almaine was originally edited and translated by Stokes in 1903, in 1978 P. Ó Riain produced a new edition of the text and in 1999 P. K. Ford published a translation of Cath Almaine in his book The Celtic Poets.\textsuperscript{53} This particular text will not feature extensively in the discussion of this thesis, although it will be mentioned in relation to the Cath Belaig Dún Bolg section and the textual relationship between these three texts in the following chapter, and it will be important to that particular discussion.\textsuperscript{54}

The martyrologies

We have seen the manuscript sources and relationships of our main text, the Bórama, and several related texts. It is worth briefly discussing one further, and perhaps unexpected, set of texts which, as our examination of the tale progresses, we will increasingly need to have recourse to.

The martyrologies feature mainly in the discussion of chapters three and four and due to their role as a primary source for the many saints in the discussion of the Bórama

\textsuperscript{50} Van Hamel Wiki <http://www.vanhamel.nl/wiki/Cath_Almaine> [accessed 22 April 2012].

\textsuperscript{51} Ibid.


\textsuperscript{54} Cf. in particular Chapter 1: The Bórama.
they warrant this introduction. There are four martyrologies that are pertinent to my discussion on the saints; three of them are from the early Irish period while the fourth is a later compilation. These are the Martyrology of Tallaght (MT), Félire Óengusso (FÓ), the Martyrology of Gorman (MG) and the Martyrology of Donegal (MD).

The oldest of the martyrologies is MT. It survives in two manuscripts: LL which is its principal witness and which also contains the text of the Bórama and in Brussels MS 5100-4 from the seventeenth century. The MT is contemporary with the Martyrology of Óengus (Félire Óengusso Céli Dé) (FÓ), and while Ó Riain argues that both MT and particularly FÓ date from between 828 and 833, D. Dumville is somewhat more reserved when it comes to these particular dates. Dumville argues that:

The sources of O [FÓ] included a lost version of T [MT]. The author of O completed his work not earlier than 797 [...] But when T was first composed – that is, when that remarkable text first assumed its distinctive shape – is still quite unknown. The text transmitted to us is a derivative version of a tenth-century date in a twelfth-century copy.

The MT contains both a calendar of Roman saints as well as Irish, where the Irish entries follow the Roman. MT as it exists in LL is incomplete, as it is missing the folios which contained entries for January 30 to March 11, May 20 to July 31, the entire month of November and December 1 – 16. The folios which contain the MT, although identified as belonging to LL and had at some point been separated from the manuscript of LL it is uncertain what became of them before they ended up in the care of Mícheál Ó Cléirigh, the noted scholar of Irish antiquity, around 1630. Brussels 5100 – 4, ff.209 – 224, is a paper manuscript, dated between 1625 and 1630. In 1931, the MT was published, edited by R.I. Best and H.J. Lawlor out of

58 Dumville, ‘Félire’, p. 46. On p. 47, he gives a suggestion of a revised stemma for MT and FÓ. Ó Riain in his book Feastsdays of the Saints, reproduces to some extent his own previous works on the discussion of the martyrologies, sadly although he cites Dumville’s article in his bibliography he does not engage with his discussion.
59 MT, p. xiii.
60 Ibid, p. xiv.
these two main manuscripts. The MT in the Brussels manuscript is not an exact copy; it is an abstract of MT where the Roman calendar has been omitted entirely.

The MT is generally associated with Máel Rúain of Tallaght, and FÓ, is also associated with Tallaght and a contemporary of Máel Rúain, Óengus of the céli Dé. FÓ differs slightly from that of MT. It does not include the names of as many saints as in MT, due to the fact that it is composed as a metrical abridgement in rinnard style, where a single quatrain represents a single day. FÓ is also found in Brussels 5100 – 4, on ff. 94a – 119b, the same manuscript which contains MT and MG. It is also found in nine other manuscripts, which Stokes lists and discusses in great detail in his copy of the Martyrology of Óengus the Culdee.

The third martyrology to be noted here is the MG. Its full text only survives in a single manuscript, Brussels 5100 – 4, ff. 124a – 197b, along with MT and FÓ. The compiler of MG is Máel Muire Ua Gormáin, who was abbot of Knock Abbey in Louth. The date of the martyrology is traditionally viewed as being somewhere between 1166 and 1174. The MG, like FÓ, is made up of stanzas, commemorating saints for each day of the year. MG and FÓ were both edited and translated by Stokes, in 1895 and 1905 respectively.

The fourth martyrology used in order to try to determine who the numerous saints mentioned in the Bórama are, is MD. It was compiled by Micheál Ó Cléirigh, in collaboration with his cousin Cú Choigcríche, in 1630 at the Franciscan Convent of Donegal. The work being a compilation of extant sources available to him; MT, FÓ, MG, the Calendar of Cashel (now lost along with a variety of other sources), the

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62 MT, p. xix.
64 Ibid, p. xxi.
65 The Martyrology of Óengus (FÓ) was edited by Whitley Stokes for the Henry Bradshaw Society and published in 1905, see footnote 66 below.
67 Ó Riain, Feastdays, p. 147.
68 Ibid, p. 149.
69 Martyrology of Gorman, W. Stokes ed., (London, 1895). FÓ. Stokes’ edition of 1895 of FÓ is considered chiefly by Ó Riain to provide the best basis for scholarly research of the text as it contains the commentary found in Leabhar Breac, the earliest manuscript witness to FÓ, compiled shortly after 1400. Stokes excluded the commentary of Leabh Ó Riain, ‘The Tallaght Martyrologies, redated’, p. 23.
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Book of Hymns, poems and Lives of Saints.\textsuperscript{71} This martyrology was edited by Todd and William Reeves in 1864, under the name of Martyrology of Donegal, which was first assigned to it by John Colgan, originally having been entitled \textit{Felire na Naomh nErennach: Martyrologium Sanctorum Hiberniae}.\textsuperscript{72}

The creation and compilation of the three oldest martyrologies, MT, \textit{FÓ} and MG are certainly intertwined. It is universally acknowledged that MT is the oldest, and that both \textit{FÓ} and MG had access to either the original or a copy of MT.

\textit{...the martyrology of Máel Muire Ó Gormáin [...] which drew its Irish saints almost entirely and, as far as can be judged, faithfully from an independent, no longer extant, copy of T [MT]...}

\textit{The fact, however, that O [FÓ], which survives in its entirety, also used T in its original form, very probably as its only sources...}\textsuperscript{73}

By using and augmenting the wealth of information these three martyrologies contain, it is, suggested by Ó Riain, possible to stitch together a complete picture of the content of the original MT, and thus fill in for the dates missing from MT in \textit{LL}.\textsuperscript{74} Ó Riain also suggests that ‘While clearly drawing for the most part on T [MT], G [MG] did not have L [LL] as an exemplar,’ which emphasises Ó Riain’s suggestion that MG provided the missing dates for MT.\textsuperscript{75}

The earlier martyrologies have been invaluable sources for contextualising the saints of the \textit{Bórama}, and their Leinster composition and preservation has been particularly helpful. As we shall see, there are good reasons to read the \textit{LL} text of the \textit{Bórama} alongside MT which was also present in \textit{LL}. However, the relationship between the \textit{Bórama} and the Martyrologies extends back to the early modern period at least, when the \textit{Bórama} became a source for interpretation of Martyrology entries. Ó Riain notes that in terms of MD, the \textit{Bórama} served as a source, where Ó Cléirigh added commentary to the entries of the saints.\textsuperscript{76} Therefore when researching the possible candidates for the saints contained in the \textit{Bórama}, caution had to be shown if the only reference to a possible saint was found in MD as there was little or no evidence to base Ó Cléirigh’s suggestions on.

\textsuperscript{71} MD, pp. xiii-xx.

\textsuperscript{72} Ó Riain, \textit{Feastdays}, p. xxiv, fn.

\textsuperscript{73} Ó Riain, ‘The Tallaght Martyrologies, redated’, p. 22

\textsuperscript{74} Ó Riain, \textit{Feastdays}, p. 156.

\textsuperscript{75} Ó Riain, ‘The Tallaght Martyrologies, redated’, p. 22, fn.

\textsuperscript{76} Ó Riain, \textit{Feastdays}, p. 306.
On the whole the martyrologies provided invaluable information for the research of the saints of the Bórama, with main emphasis on MT, as it was originally part of the LL manuscript. The information contained within the martyrologies varies in detail, as has been mentioned, and as such identification was often hindered by the lack of comments and details. However, some of the martyrologies also contain a wealth of commentaries and anecdotes, although many added later, relating to the saints, particularly FÓ. A number of commentaries and anecdotes found in FÓ relate in one way or another to the Bórama. The research of the saints was well supported and supplemented through the works of Ó Riain; the Corpus Genealogiarum Sanctorum Hiberniae and his most recent work A Dictionary of Irish Saints.

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77 FÓ, pp. 150-157.
Previous Scholarship

As stated in the General Introduction, until recently the scholarship of the *Bórama* has been rather limited, with only one significant piece of critical research done on the text. In 1983 Cornelius Buttmer undertook as his Ph.D. thesis to examine and analyse the ‘constituent elements of the work’ to ‘suggest what may have been the stages of its development and the background from which it emerged’ as well as for which purpose it was conceived.\(^79\) His work focused on analysing the tale in terms of the political conflict between the Úi Néill and Leinster. His aim was to show that the *Bórama* was a work of political propaganda on behalf of the people of Leinster directed towards the Úi Néill and the political turmoil they were embroiled in.\(^80\) His study was both necessary and significant and opened up the discussion on the *Bórama*. However, there are many issues that still need exploring. Buttmer divides the discussion of the *Bórama* into five sections devoted to Úi Néill kings, without explaining successfully why he has chosen to do so. This critique is mainly based on the fact that some of the kings discussed, while being the subjects of other extant texts, often play a rather minor role in the *Bórama*. As a case in point, Buttmer devotes a whole chapter on Loegaire mac Néill and while he is an interesting character who belongs to a large corpus of texts revolving around his promise to the elements, which is represented in the text, he is not a major character in the *Bórama*.\(^81\) The same could be said for the mention of Cormac mac Art. Although his role is not major in the *Bórama*, the tradition he belongs to is the subject of many texts, still Buttmer does not cover his material. His attention is focused on discussing the numerous texts which he finds bring an added dimension to the political environment of Leinster at the time the *Bórama* tract was included in *LL*. Throughout his thesis Buttmer’s attention on the *Bórama* is more external than internal, and as a result his focus on the *Bórama* tract is often blurry. In addition, although Buttmer recognises the increasing ‘ecclesiastical influence on this section of the *Bórama*’ in what I have termed as the second section of the *Bórama*, he completely fails to identify the importance Moling seems to have on the overall text of the *Bórama*.\(^82\)

\(^{79}\) Buttmer, ‘The *Bórama*’, pp. i, 128.


\(^{81}\) Buttmer, ‘The *Bórama*’, pp. 208-33.

\(^{82}\) Ibid, pp. 255-6.
Before Buttimer, however, there was a short article by L. Ó Buachalla published in 1961 titled ‘The Leinster tribute feud’. In it Ó Buachalla discussed the historical veracity of the *Bórama* based on the battle-scenes by comparing it with entries found in the annals and ‘Leinster battle poems’. It is perhaps possible to hypothesise that this article may in some small way have influenced Buttimer’s own work on the *Bórama* although their approach varies immensely. Buttimer himself does not engage with Ó Buachalla’s discussion and dismisses it early on in his thesis.

Aside from this in terms of scholarship preceding and succeeding Buttimer’s work, the *Bórama* has usually been referred to in terms of belonging to the ‘historical cycle’ or ‘cycles of the kings’, or as ‘a kingship tale’ and Buttimer’s view of the tale reflects this thinking. M. Dillon in his *The Cycles of the Kings* first published in 1946, includes the *Bórama* in his enumeration of the kingship cycle tales, as it is a ‘historical cycle’ tale connected with kings. He writes: ‘these ‘historical’ tales may be grouped into cycles around the names of the kings who appear in them,’ although he concedes that this ‘one remarkable story [...] cannot properly be assigned to a particular cycle, as it extends through a long period of time’. He also stated that the *Bórama*’s ‘literary merit is offset by its lack of form, for it consists of a succession of episodes loosely strung together.’ Primarily scholars have tended to focus on the kingship aspect of the *Bórama* or at least on discussions involving the issue of kingship. Following Dillon, G. Murphy and E. Knott described the *Bórama* as one ‘of the origin tales in the King cycle’ which was yet another focus on the kings of the text.

In 1968 Mac Eoin published an article on Loegaire mac Néill and his mysterious death, a tale which has survived in numerous sources. This death tale features in the *Bórama*, in the short account of how Loegaire mac Néill broke his promise and died.

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85 Buttimer, ‘The *Bórama*’, p. 142.
86 Dillon, *Cycles*, pp. 2, 103.
as a result.\footnote{LL II. 38284-38294. Stokes, ‘The Boroma’, pp. 52-3, §40.} In his article Mac Eoin suggests that the \textit{Bórama} may be the Leinster answer to the \textit{Táin Bó Cuailgne}, as there are many features similar to a ‘cattle-raid’ tale.\footnote{Mac Eoin, ‘The mysterious death’, p. 30.} While generally well received this hypothesis has not been developed further.\footnote{Ó hUiginn, ‘The Literature of the Laigin’, pp. 8-9.} Mac Eoin was among the first to suggest that the \textit{Bórama} was the product of the tenth-century ecclesiastic Flann mac Máelmaedóc.\footnote{Mac Eoin, ‘The mysterious death’, p. 29} This discussion was continued by E. Bhreathnach in 1994 and in 2002 C. Doherty suggested that while Flann mac Máelmaedóc may have been primarily responsible for the outline of the \textit{Bórama}, it was during the eleventh century when the ‘final stage’ was reached with the inclusion of ‘the Leinster saints, Moling, Máedhóg and bishop Áedán of Glendalough’, which is a significant observation and will feature as part of the overall discussion of this thesis.\footnote{E. Bhreathnach, ‘Killeshin: An Irish Monastery Surveyed’, CMCS 27 (1994), pp. 33-47, 39. C. Doherty, ‘The transmission of the cult of St. Máedhóg’, in \textit{Ireland and Europe in the Early Middle Ages: texts and transmission}, P. Ní Chatháin and M. Richter eds., (Dublin, 2002), pp. 268-283; 271.}

The thesis I develop here from a close reading of the text, that the tale should be considered from a hagiographical perspective, has found some brief comments over the years, though this aspect of criticism has never been fully explored. Breaking from this tradition slightly is F. J. Byrne who gave an overview of the \textit{Bórama} in his \textit{Irish Kings and High Kings}, published in 1973, where he identifies that ‘the chief protagonist of the \textit{Bórama} tract itself is St. Mo-Ling, and many of the poems interspersed in the text are in praise of his church at St. Mullins.’\footnote{F. J. Byrne, \textit{Irish Kings and High Kings}, (Dublin, 2001), p. 144.} Doherty, is among the few who have given the \textit{Bórama} a cursory overview, and does notice the ‘strong hagiographical flavour’ it presents.\footnote{C. Doherty, ‘The Irish hagiographer: resources, aims, results’, in \textit{The Writer as Witness}, T. Dunne ed., (Cork, 1987), pp. 10-22; 19.} Doherty states that ‘In origin this was a tribute due to the king of Tara from the Leinstermen’ indicating that he views the \textit{Bórama} as being in a state of development and that the ‘redactor’ gives the material a ‘pro-Laigen slant’.\footnote{Doherty, ‘The Irish hagiographer’, pp. 18-19. C. Doherty, ‘Was Sulien at Glendalough?’, in \textit{Glendalough: City of God}, C. Doherty, L. Doran and M. Kelly eds., (Dublin, 2011), pp. 261-271; 265-6.} It is safe to say that Doherty was the first to identify the apparent insertion of the hagiographical material into the \textit{Bórama} text, and while others had
observed the hagiographical material utilised no one had actively hypothesised that the hagiographical material was being utilised for a reason other than literary embellishment. This was later noted by A. Mac Shamhráin as well, although he did not pursue the matter further.\footnote{A. Mac Shamhráin, Church and Polity in Pre-Norman Ireland, (Maynooth, 1996), p. 13. In Bart Jaski’s Early Irish kingship and succession the Bórama features but does not form the basis of in-depth discussion. B. Jaski, Early Irish Kingship and succession, (Dublin, 2000). Cf. Chapter 7: Dynastic Kingship; Chapter 8: The heir-apparent.}

In 1996 an article ‘Kings and clerics in some Leinster sagas’, by M. T. Davies was published, and the Bórama featured prominently in a discussion regarding the relationship between king and cleric. Although parts of his article indicated that his approach to the Bórama was from the ‘kingship tale’ point of view or even more as a ‘heroic cycle tale’, it becomes clearer towards the end that he finds the ecclesiastical material of the tale to have greater weight and emphasis within the text over the secular kingship material. He writes:

The saints of Leinster are, it seems, “more powerful”, or perhaps more cunning, than those of the Uí Néill – at least in the retrospective and idealized world of a saga as thoroughly rooted in the ecclesiastical culture of Leinster as the Bórama.\footnote{M.T. Davies, ‘Kings and clerics in some Leinster sagas’, Ériu 47 (1996), pp. 45-66; 65.}

So it seems in recent years, that the view on the Bórama has begun to change, and that in future scholarship the ecclesiastical aspect of the text will be subject to a more favourable view. There are still tendencies to regard the Bórama as a text firmly rooted in the ‘kingship’ cycle, such as the view expressed in Davies’ article no one else has focused on the ecclesiastical side of the Bórama. Although I am not challenging the notion that it is a kingship tale, as it incorporates many of the elements required for it to be regarded so, I would challenge that it is ‘just’ a ‘kingship’ tale, and rather that it is much more complicated than that.

The second foray into the literary world of the Bórama was undertaken in D. Goverts’ unpublished MA thesis, where she discusses the origin of the bórama tribute; ‘The origin of the bórama tribute’ and she also produced an edition and translation of one of the poems of the Bórama (09 Mor in gním daringned sund).\footnote{D. Goverts, ‘The origin of the bórama tribute’, unpublished MA thesis, (Utrecht, 2009). Goverts, ‘Mór in gním’.}

Her work is quite comprehensive, as it brings together the sources where the bórama tribute features as well as the tale of the fate of the two sisters, Fithir and Dáirine and a detailed discussion on the issues of the bórama. Goverts’ work is a great start
which opens up the discussion on other aspects of the *Bórama* tribute tale. Hopefully this thesis will, along with her work and the work of Buttmer, add to the scholarly debate and open up the possibility for further attention to be given to the *Bórama* which it richly deserves.
1. The Bórama: textual considerations and temporal anomalies

The Bórama does not exist without context; it is one of a great number of texts contained in the manuscript of LL, ranging from (pseudo-) historical texts, genealogies, king lists, poems and a varying number of literary narratives. It is in the literary narratives that the interest lies within this chapter, in terms of the Bórama tract and related texts. As was touched upon in the introduction, the issue of classification has been of particular interest to twentieth-century scholars and it is with this issue the discussion begins. The classification of the early medieval Irish tales into cycles has gone through stages of development, starting in the late nineteenth century and possibly reaching its culmination in the works of Dillon in the mid-twentieth century. Dillon viewed that ‘king-ship’ tales belonged in what he termed the ‘historical cycle’, ‘grouped into cycles around the names of the kings who appear in them, and the boundary between legend and history cannot be fixed.’ E. Poppe later described the idea of classification as:

> It is used as a generic classification of groups of texts and is based on a set of parameters of intratextual cohesion, namely their setting at a particular time and the overlap of their narrative personnel and geographical focus.

Recent scholars in their discussions concerning early medieval literature have generally assigned the Bórama to the class of ‘king-ship cycle tales’ mainly because of the numerous kings present in the tale and possibly also influenced by Dillon’s work, since he published his The Cycles of the Kings in 1946, where he included the Bórama.

Since Dillon’s architecture appeared, his classification has not been addressed in detail until recently. This changed when in 2008 Poppe questioned the generally accepted classification of early Irish texts and he suggested a new way of looking at the classification of the tales. He proposed a different concept of a cycle, the ‘immanent cycle’ and the ‘cycles-by-transmission’.

The idea of the ‘immanent cycle’ is that, there can be a collection of texts representing a ‘...“whole” epic’

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102 Dillon, Cycles, p. 2.


104 Dillon, Cycles, pp. 103-114.

although never being performed or presented as a whole, the audience will recognise it as such.\textsuperscript{106} In terms of the ‘cycle-by-transmission’, the understanding is that the texts demonstrate an ‘association as a physical sequence in at least one manuscript’ and as such fulfil the ‘main unifying criterion’; the texts, as such, are defined by having an actual written transmission.\textsuperscript{107} In terms of the Bórama these suggested classifications will be considered in due course.

In his discussion on the kingship cycle tales based presumably on Dillon’s criteria, D. M. Wiley stated that ‘While it is true that sagas like Scéla Conchobair meic Nessa belong as much to the corpus of king tales as they do to the Ulster Cycle, […] it seemed advisable to reserve the limited space here for the examination of texts that belong to no other narrative category.’\textsuperscript{108} Here he states that many texts can be assigned multiple roles within cycles, depending on the criteria for including or excluding them, such as in the case of Scéla Conchobair meic Nessa, since it could be classed either as a kingship tale or an Ulster cycle tale. The tales which, according to Wiley, can be said to belong to more than one such cycle have apparently been left out of his discussion. Among the tales he does discuss is the Bórama, thereby tacitly classifying the tale as a kingship tale that does ‘belong to no other narrative category.’\textsuperscript{109} However, these terms and terminology used to categorise the early Irish texts are a modern invention and certainly not something that occupied the minds of the medieval scholar, at least not to the same extent as it does today:\textsuperscript{110}

‘Cycle’, in the two senses discussed above, is a modern concept. Medieval Irish literary critics and scribes did not use it. Their critical discourse on intertextual cohesion included comments on the relation of the texts of immanent cycles as well as the concept of categories of the tale-lists, but also the notions of remscél [foretale, prefatory tale] and scélshenchas [narrative lore] ...\textsuperscript{111}

Aside from the remscél and the scélshenchas the medieval Irish scribes were also thinking of tales in the form of prímscél or ‘chief tale’, and in LL there is a list (List A) of the tale types which were considered to represent these ‘chief tales’:\textsuperscript{112}

\textsuperscript{106} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{107} Ibid, p. 15.
\textsuperscript{109} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{110} Poppe, ‘Of Cycles’, p. 10.
\textsuperscript{111} Ibid, p. 39.
\textsuperscript{112} P. Mac Cana, \textit{The Learned Tales of Medieval Ireland}, (Dublin, 1980), pp. 33, 41. There are two lists; List A is contained in LL and List B is found in three manuscripts dating between fifteenth
Under the heading of these tale types comes an enumeration of a list of tales. These tales do not necessarily all fall under the same ‘modern’ classification of cycles, nor do they represent kingship tales but do represent various numbers of subject matters found in the early Irish tales. Noticeable is the absence of the *Bórama* from this list, and it does not appear in the later list (List B) which also recites various ‘chief tales of Ireland’.\(^{114}\)

However, within List A there are a few tales that are significant to the discussion of this chapter and those will be mentioned in due course. D. Schlüter words it ‘Thus, these lists, as other lists in the manuscript as well, have a clear purpose: they are works of reference but they serve memorial purposes as well.’\(^{115}\) This apparent use of lists, such as the list of chief tales as well as genealogies (of kings and saints alike) in the compilation of the *Bórama*, is also argued for by P. Ó Riain and seems to be a universal understanding of scholars in their discussion on the *Bórama*.\(^{116}\) In H.L.C. Tristram’s article ‘Early Modes of Insular Expression’, she discussed the development of the early Irish narrative and the transmission of oral texts into the written medium. There she states that:

> The early tales are short, commonly covering only one narrative episode, conflict or task. Some of the early narratives seem to consist, however, of two or more originally different tales, as in *Immram Brian*, *Echtra Nerai*, *Táin bó Fraích* or *Tochmarc Émire*. I take these as an editor’s attempt to create extended narratives by means of assembling more than one narrative episode concerning a central figure (hero).\(^{117}\)

Tristram argued that the Irish texts also demonstrated, that ‘From the tenth century onwards, Irish narratives assumed greater length by conjoining larger numbers of...’

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113 *LL* ll. 24920-24922. ‘And these are the major tales, viz. destruction, cattle-raids, wooing, battles, terrors, voyages, death-tales, feasts, sieges, adventures, elopements, and plunderings.’ Mac Cana, *Learned Tales*, p 41.


115 Schlüter, *History or Fable?*, p. 217.


episodes into macroforms.\textsuperscript{118} Weighing up the possibility of the episodes forming the \textit{Bórama} as macroform, it brings attention to the author or compiler of the text, as it is preserved in \textit{LL}, and A. Burnyeat discussed such matters in her recent article ‘\textit{Córugud and Compilatio} in Some Manuscripts of \textit{Táin Bó Cúailnge}’:

Medieval theoretical discussions of the nature of compilations demonstrate an academic interest in the status of the compiler as opposed to the \textit{auctor}; where an \textit{auctor} is responsible for both content and form, the \textit{compilator} is only responsible for the form which he imposes upon his \textit{auctoritates}, that is the text or texts with which he works.\textsuperscript{119}

In addition to that we should:

... re-examine our attitudes to medieval text production, and [...] view individual copies of medieval texts not just as versions of the \textit{Urtext} itself, but rather as artefacts presenting us with scribal, authorial, and indeed compilatorial attitudes to the text, hand in hand with the text itself.\textsuperscript{120}

As Burnyeat shows, the impact of the author or compiler of the text can be determined by specific instances where their interference in or manipulation of the text can be identified. This can be presented in a number of different ways, such as; the implication of various versions often qualified with \textit{iarsin t-slicht sa} ‘according to this version’ or \textit{immorro augtair \\& dogníat libair aile córugud aile} ‘other authors and books give a different account’, as well as drawing on a distinction between one version or another of a particular episode.\textsuperscript{121} Episodes can also be integrated into a text without specific indications, but may be identified by their conclusion in the larger body, such as by \textit{conid Cath Dúin Bolg sin for borama} ‘So that is the Battle of the Dún Bolg on the Bórama’ found in the text of the \textit{Bórama}.\textsuperscript{122} Burnyeat in her discussion of the \textit{Táin} mentioned the various ways in which a compiler may impart his own intervention in the text. In respect of the \textit{Bórama}, there is possibly only a single instance where such an overt intervention is displayed, and that is at the inclusion of poem (14) \textit{Guidim Comdid cumachtach}, where the Latin sentence \textit{alibi in hoc libro scripsimus} ‘we have written (this poem) elsewhere in this book’ is inserted.\textsuperscript{123} These instances will be explored further in the context where they occur

\textsuperscript{118} Ibid, p. 438.
\textsuperscript{119} A. Burnyeat, ‘\textit{Córugud and Compilatio} in Some Manuscripts of \textit{Táin Bó Cúailgne}’, \textit{Ulidia} 2 (2009), pp. 356-367; 357.
\textsuperscript{120} Ibid, p. 359.
\textsuperscript{121} Ibid, pp. 360-1.
\textsuperscript{122} \textit{LL} l. 38718. Stokes, ‘The Boroma’, pp. 94-5, §119.
Chapter 1. The Bórama

and a conclusion will be drawn from the entire text of the Bórama, whether it is possible to show that the Bórama is compiled from a number of episodes, and whether the compilation of the Bórama was for a specific purpose.

The fact that the tale of the Bórama incorporates most of the “genre” classifications present in the tale-lists of chief tales, such as destruction, cattle-raid, wooings (marriages), battles, death-tales, feasts, sieges and plunderings, demonstrates the incredible creativeness of the text. However, it still does not explain what the Bórama is, its purpose in the LL or even its complex relationship with many of the texts within LL. In addition to this, the question of why the Bórama was included among the texts in LL will be explored, particularly in terms of the varied contents of LL. This chapter will also try to explore some of the texts that lie behind the hypothetical creation of the Bórama and a particular internal thread that seems to present itself all through the LL manuscript.

Textual consideration: the stories behind the Bórama

The Bórama shows various signs of having been compiled from multiple texts. This section aims to explore the episodes that show indications of either having a separate literary tradition of their own and/or having been included in the Bórama. This is not meant to be an exhaustive list of the multiple texts that can be connected to the Bórama tale, and therefore, the focus will mainly be on those texts found in LL or where textual relationship between texts in other extant sources is obvious.

The terms ‘tale’, ‘story’ and ‘text’ will appear frequently throughout the thesis. Where I use the term ‘text’ I am referring to the physical copy of the text as it is in the manuscript of LL. The term ‘story’ is used in discussion of a hypothetical tale or tales in general while the term ‘tale’ represents the texts of which there are surviving copies, preserved as texts in manuscripts.

The terms ‘author’ and ‘compiler’ are frequently referred to in the thesis. When I refer to the author of a text, I mean the person or persons responsible for a particular parent copy (however far removed) of the Bórama as it is presented to us in the LL manuscript. That does not mean that the ‘finished product’, i.e. the extant manuscript text , is the direct result of the author. Rather, the ‘finished product’ can reflect the

124 Mac Cana, Learned Tales, p. 41.
influence of multiple versions of a work. The ‘finished product’ is the work of the compiler. The compiler can, like the author, be a single person or, what is more likely, multiple persons, who contribute to the process of producing works such as LL. The compiler of the Bórama, scribe S, is responsible for the reproduction of the text from an original source into the ‘finished product’ of the LL version of the Bórama. The compiler is also often credited with certain ‘authorial’ innovations in the texts, which demonstrate how the texts continued to evolve.

Section one: the levying of the bórama and Finn mac Cumaill

The episode of how the tribute came about is an amalgam of multiple issues that are bound in the complexities of the prehistoric period of Ireland. C. Buttimer was the first to take a specific look at the Bórama and various other texts which demonstrated possible textual relationships among them. Then Goverts, in her unpublished MA thesis, explored the origin of the tribute tale which is of great aid to the understanding of this first section of the Bórama. Reference to, or the inclusion of, the tale of how the bórama came about is found in a number of sources, most which seem to date from the eleventh and twelfth-centuries. It is possible to divide Goverts’ discussion on the origin of the bórama into two parts; sources that deal with Tuathal Techtmar but do generally not refer to the fate of his two daughters, Fithir and Dáirine, although they may refer to Tuathal as the one who first imposed the bórama on the Leinstermen, and then there are the sources that refer to the fates of Fithir and Dáirine and the imposition of the bórama. There are indications that the story of the fate of Fithir and Dáirine was self-contained, and that the fate of the girls was the central focus in other extant sources, rather than the focus being solely on Tuathal Techtmar. In the genealogies of both LL and the twelfth-century Rawlinson B. 502, Tuathal Techtmar is mentioned but no reference is given to his two

125 The possibility that the there was a, now lost, parent copy of the Bórama, before the text’s inclusion in LL will be explored further on in this thesis. The process of compiling the LL manuscript was laborious and lengthy and in the hands of a number of scribes. O’Sullivan, ‘Notes’, pp. 6-7. Schlüter, History or Fable?, pp. 226-243.
127 Buttimer, ‘The Bórama’. For this particular section see Chapter 2: The Poetry.
129 Ibid. p. 46.
Among the literary texts that we have that include the tale of the fate of the two sisters are the **Bórama, Comram na Cloenfherta (CnC)** and **Acallam na Senórch (AS)**.\(^{132}\) AS, which is a later text than the **Bórama**, reflects the story of the fate of the girls much as it is reflected in the **Bórama**, with only a slight difference.\(^{133}\) CnC tells of the deception of the king of Leinster which results in the death of the two sisters. Following that the text tells of how Dúnlang, king of Leinster refused to pay the bórama, which in turn sent Cormac mac Airt into Leinster to levy the bórama. In retaliation Dúnlang, along with an army, went to Tara where he killed the maidens of Tara. Both in CnC and AS it is the tale of the girls’ marriages and subsequent deaths that is the focus, not Tuathal Techtmar. CnC uses the tale of the girls’ deaths and the éraic, or tribute, demanded for their deaths as an explanation for the events at the heart of the text, **mortlaid ban Temra in sin**.\(^{134}\) In a poem contained in LL, Lecht

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131 A number of texts contained in LL are situated early on in the manuscript and deal with Tuathal Techtmar, some of which have to do with his life before he became king of Ireland. A few paragraphs deal with Tuathal Techtmar and his daughters in the text called Do Flathiusaib Hérend, found on ff. 23\(^{b}\), the others are **Túathal Techtmar ba ríg Temrach** ff. 35\(^{b}\)-36\(^{b}\), **[Túathal Techtmar]** ff. 51\(^{a}\)-51\(^{b}\).

G. Mac Eoin suggests that a Flann mac Máelmáedóc was the author of **Túathal Techtmar ba ríg Temrach** who was the *airchinnech* of Killeshin (Glenn Uissen, Co.Laois) and Edel Bhreathnach puts forth the hypothesis of whether ‘Flann was also one of the early redactors of the **Bórama** saga?’ Bhreathnach, ‘Killeshin’, p. 39. Mac Eoin, ‘The mysterious death’, p. 29. C. Doherty also suggests that the **Bórama** may have been the product of Flann mac Máelmáedóc, in the tenth century. Doherty, ‘The transmission of the cult of St. Máedhóg’, p. 271.

**Do Flathiusaib Hérend** revolves around the pre-Christian kings of Ireland until the time of Tuathal Techtmar. There is a brief description of how the bórama was imposed and how Moling, the seventh-century saint, got the bórama remitted. It gives the initial beginning of two poems found in the **Bórama**, poems 26 *Finnachta a Huib Néill* and 29 *Andiú cia chenglaid chuaca*. W.R. Owen. ‘Bórama Lagen’ *JIS* 7 (1914 – 1915), pp. 211-219. Schlüter notes that ‘The names of the kings and the manner in which they exact the bórama display a striking similarity to the king-list **Do Flathiusaib Hérend**,’ and ‘Generally, one or more persons are found in genealogies or king-lists: This is an indication that the compilers perceived these tales as *historia* and *scélsenchas* and that their main function in the manuscript is a historical one.’ Schlüter, History or Fable?, p. 82. Cf. also Buttimer, ‘The **Bórama**’, chapter 1.


133 Detailing the difference between AS and **Bórama**, AS gives Eochu Doimlén as the King of Leinster rather than his son, and he was first given Dáirine as wife, while it was Fithir in the **Bórama**. He kept her with him for a year before he returned to Tuathal Techtmar asking for her sister instead, claiming that Dáirine had died, while keeping her sequestered in a hut in the forest. Tuathal gives Eochu Doimlén his second daughter Fithir who, when they arrive in Leinster, sees her sister and perishes of shame while Dáirine, seeing her sister die thusly, dies from grief. Afterwards their bodies are washed at the place called Garthananach. A. Dooley and H. Roe, *Tales of the Elders of Ireland*, (Oxford, 1999), pp. 122-123.

134 ‘That is the death of the women of Tara.’ Ó Cuív, ‘Comram na Cloenfherta’, pp. 171-173.
Cormaic meic Culennain, edited and translated by M. E. Dobbs, there is a reference to the events described in <i>CnC</i> and of the <i>bórama</i>:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{Lecht in trichait rígingen} \\
\text{ar thrí milib mod n-aimnech} \\
\text{ba hí in chomrama Chloenferta} \\
\text{dia mbaí in bórama Laignech.}
\end{align*}
\]

This seems to indicate that the <i>Bórama</i> was well known, and was widely used in literary creation.

The details are subject to a certain degree of variation in most cases but the pieces of evidence gathered together suggest that the tale of Túathal’s daughters and the origin of the <i>bórama</i> was a relatively well-known part of Ireland’s early history at this time.\(^\text{136}\)

The story of the two sisters also features in a short passage in <i>AS</i>, where unlike the <i>CnC</i> it is not the event as such that is highlighted but rather <i>AS</i> utilises the fate of the girls to explain the origin of the place-name Garbthanach. It is Patrick who wishes to know the reason for the place-name of Garbthanach, and thus provides Caille an appreciation of this structure is aided by comparison of this episode from <i>AS</i> with the same episode in <i>BL</i> [the <i>Bórama</i>].

Therein, the episode concludes with an onomastic statement which is very close to that of <i>AS</i> [...] However, it is not prefaced by any reference to the toponym. Secondly, although in contrast to <i>Findtulach, Garbthanach</i> is thought to be a real place-name, we see here another example of an apparently pre-existing tale being incorporated into <i>AS</i> by means of an onomastic formula.\(^\text{159}\)

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\(^{135}\) <i>LL</i>. ll. 6223-6226. ‘The graves of the three thousand and thirty princesses – a hostile deed – that was the combat of the “Cloen-Ferta” which caused the Bórama of Leinster.’ M. E. Dobbs, ‘On the Graves of Leinster men’, <i>ZCP</i> 24 (1953 – 4), pp.139-153; 146.


\(^{138}\) Stokes, ‘Acallamh’, p. 43. ‘After that they then went to the Cairn of the Heroes, which is now called the Rough Washing among the Lands of Muiredach. ‘Tell us, dear Caille,’ said Patrick, “why this place is named the Rough Washing?” Dooley and Roe, <i>Tales</i>, p. 122.

This would suggest that the tale of Fithir and Dáirine was indeed a recognised literary creation that was a part of the various representations of the origin tale of the bórama. In CnC the tale of Fithir and Dáirine is the reason for the bórama and the killing of the maidens is a direct result of the imposing of the bórama, while in the poem Lecht Cormaic meic Culennain, the death of the maidens is given as the reason for the bórama. In AS the tale of Fithir and Dáirine is used in a formulaic way to express the meaning of a place-name, which is echoed in the Bórama, conid aire ráter Garb-thanach.

Among the problems faced when looking at the tale of Fithir and Dáirine is the conflicting account of which sister was older, which one married the king of Leinster first and which one was the first to die. Buttimer focused his research on the identity of the king of Leinster, as there are inconsistencies in this regard as well, rather than on the sequence of which daughter was married or died first and of which affliction. Goverts spends considerable time on the issue of the two daughters in her thesis and in her conclusion to that chapter she states that: ‘... rather than taking the LL Bórama as the basis and terming all deviations from it ‘errors’, it may be more sensible to allow the variant traditions to exist in their own right.’ This is quite a significant observation, since quite often unless it is clearly expressed, scholars seem to be of the understanding that the variant versions in existence stem in large part from the tale as it is presented in the Bórama. While Buttimer barely considers the significance the two daughters present in the Bórama, both Parsons and Goverts have suggested that the tale of Fithir and Dáirine must have at some point existed in its own right. This is in fact possibly supported by the tale lists contained in both LL and the sixteenth-century H.3.17 manuscript. Within the tale list of tochmarca or ‘wooing’ tales, in tale List A, the tale of Fithir and Dáirine is included: Tochmarc Fithirne 7 Darine da ingen Tuathail. So, here we have a strong indication that the tale of Fithir and Dáirine was quite possibly a text that existed on its own at some point in time, although it is no longer extant as an independent tale with this title. Goverts’ observation that the story of Fithir and Dáirine as it stands in the Bórama is not in fact the original source for the tale is convincing and supports the suggestion

143 Mac Cana, Learned tales, p. 42.
144 Ibid. ‘The Wooing of Fithir and Dáirine: the two daughters of Tuathal.’
that the Bórama in LL is a compilation of many texts, skilfully crafted into a coherent narrative. It is also clear that the tale of the sisters was a useful theme for the compiler of the Bórama to utilise and it adhered well with the enmity between the province of Leinster and the Uí Néill.

When Finn appears in the Bórama, the tale of how the bórama came to be imposed on the province of Leinster is introduced to him. Finn is generally considered to be connected with the tradition of Moling and Suibne and the battle of Mag Rath, rather than the bórama.\(^{145}\) Finn mac Cumaill is also closely linked to the text of AS. AS tells how after the battle of Mag Rath, Finn mac Cumaill and his company came to the river Barrow where Finn experienced a prophecy regarding Moling and he recited a poem which seems to be a variant version of poem 07 Ross mBrocc indiu is conair chúain of the Bórama, both expounding on the virtues of Brocccross, the place where Moling will establish his monastery.\(^{146}\) Buttimer observed that ‘A number of reasons therefore suggest that both Ros mBrocc indiu is conair chuain poems in the Bórama and the Acallam may derive from an original which has in different ways been modified in each case.’\(^{147}\) The manuscripts which contain the AS are all from the fifteenth century onwards and the AS tradition itself possibly dates from around mid-twelfth century to the beginning of the thirteenth century, and was possibly influenced by the Bórama.\(^{148}\) The episode of Finn mac Cumaill prophesising the arrival of Moling at the river Barrow is prevalent enough to be included in AS. During the episode in AS, where Finn features, the battle of Mag Rath is prophesised and generally the text is closely tied to the Suibne material much more so than to the bórama legend. This episode in the AS may then be said to represent criss-crossing connections between Moling, Suibne and Finn, where the bórama legend ties Moling and Finn together. This may well have something to do with the provenance of the text rather than the chronological development of the tradition, with AS being a text with strong northern ties, much the same as the Buile Suibhne (BS) text.\(^{149}\) Parsons observes in regards to the flíanaigecht material and the suggestions of K. McCone and others that:


\(^{146}\) Stokes, ‘Acallamh’, p. 75. This poem will be discussed in more detail in Chapter 2: The Poetry.

\(^{147}\) Buttimer, ‘The Bórama’, p. 189.


\(^{149}\) Cf. Chapter 4: Moling, for further discussion on Buile Suibhne.
Although Kim McCone has argued that AS at least was aimed at an elite culture, the consensus appears to be that fíanaigecht was for a time the tradition of less powerful groups in Irish society. Hence, it has been argued, fíanaigecht was kept out of the written record because it was a property of those who did not control, or could not afford to participate in, the enterprise of writing.\(^{150}\)

The possibility is then that the Bórama is among the earlier sources of fíanaigecht material. Within LL there are also a number of texts relating to Finn.\(^{155}\) However, while the Finn episode in the Bórama is quite extensive, there is little to suggest that the Bórama was ever considered a part of the fíanaigecht material, particularly if the Bórama should be regarded as an early source. Buttimer recognises that the ‘creator’ of the Bórama was aware of the increasing interest in the Finn material;

It shows the wish of the creator of the Bórama to incorporate a number of significant features associated with Find from what seems to have been, even in the early Irish period, a large body of Fianaíocht material.\(^{152}\)

Based on poem 06 Rot fiasu i mBroccross, which lists men of the fían-band, there seems to be little correlation with those listed there and with those associated with Finn in later material or the Finn material in the LL. This may be an indication that Finn’s association with the bórama material may be a divergent development concerning his legend. In addition Buttimer observed that:

The Cairpre text [the section in the Bórama which covers Cairpre Lifechair’s involvement in the text] explicitly states that, though Find will struggle against Leth Cuid on this occasion on behalf of Leinster in the matter of the bórama, it is not the Fianna who will win remission of the tribute but the future saint Mo Ling. The fact that this note is absent from the Acallam composition suggests that the Bórama copy witnesses some innovation at this point.\(^{153}\)

This explicitly identifies that these two traditions, the AS and the Bórama; while utilising the same material, were adhering to their own agendas, which unsurprisingly gets represented in their different emphasis on the characters.

It seems clear that the tale of Fithir and Dáirine did at some point exist as a separate tale, recognised as such and seen in the inclusion of it in the chief-tale list in LL of Tochmarc Fithirne γ Darine da ingen Tuathail.\(^{154}\) Its already recognised tradition

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\(^{150}\) Parsons, ‘A Reading’, p. 111.

\(^{151}\) LL ll. 28620-29430.

\(^{152}\) Buttimer, ‘The Bórama’, p. 175.

\(^{153}\) Ibid, pp. 190-1.

\(^{154}\) Mac Cana, Learned Tales, p. 42.
provided the platform on which to base the tale of the *Bórama*, as it appears in *LL*. The fact that Finn mac Cumaill does appear in the *Bórama* and then the same episode is mirrored later in *AS* would indicate that his legend had already been growing and gaining popularity by the time the *Bórama* was compiled, as there are a number of Finn related texts found in *LL*. It therefore seems highly likely that both the tradition of the girls’ fate and of Finn mac Cumaill were used in the creation of the legend of the *Bórama*. It seems almost certain, from what both episodes of Finn mac Cumaill in the *Bórama* and in the *AS* portray, that Finn mac Cumaill was early on connected to material concerning a prophecy of Moling. In this particular instance the author of the *Bórama* utilised pre-existing literary creations to construct the *Bórama*.

**Section two: the ‘Cath Belaig Dúin Bolg’ episode (or CBDB)**

This episode of the *Bórama* portrays the strongest signs of being incorporated into this compilation as a complete text. This is supported in part by the extant version of *Cath Belaig Dúin Bolg* in *YBL*. Maniet translated the text of *Cath Belaig Dúin Bolg* from *YBL*, into French in 1955. Between these two versions there are a number of differences that are important for the textual considerations of *LL* text. The different agenda of the two versions is quite clear. The table below illustrates what each version contains and how they differ.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>LL</strong></th>
<th><strong>YBL</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Áed mac Ainmerech is now king of Ireland. Brandub mac Echach is king of Leinster. Cummascach son of Áed mac Ainmerech goes on a circuit of Ireland, demands that the wife of each king sleep with him. Cummascach comes to Leinster. Máedoc Úa Dúnlainge comes to Brandub and presents him with gifts. &lt;br&gt;12 Faielt sund aisceda rig &lt;br&gt;13 M’æl trèbend torcbálach</td>
<td>Áed mac Ainmerech is now king of Ireland. Brandub mac Echach is king of Leinster. Cummascach, son of Áed mac Ainmerech is sent by his father on a circuit to the southern Úí Néill and to Leinster. He is advised by his father to avoid any disgraceful act. Still, Cummascach demands to sleep with the wife of each of his hosts. Brandub is not there to greet Cummascach. Brandub’s wife gets the household to keep quiet about her presence and he does not find her. Because of Cummascach’s conduct Brandub and the chiefs of Leinster</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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155 A number of poems relating to the Finn material is contained in *LL*, ff. 204a-205b, 206b-208a, too few names correspond with the poem in the *Bórama* to yield any concrete conclusion regarding this matter.


157 Maniet, ‘Cath Belaig Duin Bolc’.
satirist, suspects the slave is more than he seems. Brandub sets fire to the house Cummascach and Glasdám are in. Cummascach disguises himself as Glasdám and escapes from the fire. Cummascach meets up with the unnamed *erénaig* of Kilranelagh who kills him. Bishop Aedán of Glendalough comes to Brandub. He is uterine brother of Áed mac Aínmerech.

(14) *Guidim Comdid cumachtach*  
Bishop Aedán advises Brandub to send messengers to Áed mac Aínmerech to tell of his son’s death. Brandub recites a poem:

15 *Tiagat techta úain co hAileach*  
The messengers tell Áed mac Aínmerech of the death of his son. Áed marches to Leinster for battle. Bishop Aedán goes to meet Áed. Áed insults Bishop Aedán. Áed continues towards Brandub with his forces and comes to Belach Dún Bolg. Bishop Aedán prophesises for Áed the outcome of the battle. Bishop Aedán goes from Áed mac Aínmerech to Brandub. Advises him on how to prepare for Áed and his forces.

Bishop Aedán accompanies Brandub when they go to spy on the enemy.

16 *Itchúsna na mèrggi*  
Bishop Aedán leaves. Brandub catches the son of Áed Rón, the king of Ulster and he uses him to negotiate peace with the Ulstermen. Conchobar mac Nessa had a vision that is reported in the text:

17 *Achomnare aslinghi n-ingnad*  
The Ulstermen and the Leinstermen make a pact. The king of Ulster recites a poem:

18 *Dénaid dún ar cotach*  
Brandub asks that the Ulstermen separate themselves from the men of Ireland. Bishop Aedán comes again to Brandub.

19 *Lusán Áeda maic Ainmerech*  
Again Bishop Aedán leaves Brandub. The king of Ireland and his men advance on Leinster. Brandub sends Rón Cerr disguised as a leper in to spy on them. Áed mac Aínmerech prepares to face the
Leinstermen, asks for his cowl which had been given to him by Columba. The cowl had been left behind, which was a bad omen.

A short anecdote of how Áed mac Ainmerech received the cowl from Columba.

Brandub has devised a way to get into the camps of the enemy, and with the aid of Rón Cerr still in disguise of a leper eases their way in, where the Leinstermen bring provisions to the camps. When they are among the men of Ireland the Leinstermen surge out from their hiding and a battle commences. Rónn Cerr produces the severed head of Áed mac Ainmerech to Brandub.

This was the battle of the Pass of Dún Bolg where Áed mac Ainmerech was killed.

Maniet compares and contrasts the main differences between these two texts in his introduction to the tale, classifying the differences in three categories; first are the main differences between YBL and LL, second is what the narrator of the YBL text assumes that the reader/audience would know of the tale and is covered in LL but not in YBL, the third and last is what is covered in YBL but does not appear in LL. Much of the material that has to do with the exchange between Áed mac Ainmerech and Bishop Aedán is covered in more detail in LL, as well as Áed mac Ainmerech’s demise. The most notable difference is what the YBL version contains that the LL does not, the exchange between the messenger and Cóemgen of Glendalough, which is perhaps not a significant point to make but an interesting one, in the course of a

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160 Ibid, pp. 95-98.
hagiographical discussion. Maniet noticed that while the two versions share common characteristics there is nothing to indicate that the two versions derive from the same parent source:

> Si LL en fut le modèle, il faut supposer chez l'auteur la connaissance d'autres versions, écrites ou non, qui lui auraient fourni les détails absents de LL; si c'est d'une version connexe que s'est inspiré l'auteur, peut-être y a-t-il trouvé directement ces détails complémentaires. Je n'ai pas relevé, en tous cas dans LBL [YBL] de détails d'expression propres a renforcer l'hypothèse d'une parenté directe avec LL, dont la langue est manifestement plus ancienne.161

There are enough discrepancies between the two versions to suggest that while based on the same material they were most definitely sourced from different directions, possibly indicating that a common source was at least one (or more) generations removed. For both texts demonstrate that there are, on few occasions, emissions that occur in LL, which YBL is able to supply, that otherwise would make little or no sense to the tale and this is recognized by Stokes and is also noted in the diplomatic edition.162 The same can be said in regards to poem 19 Lussán Aeda meic Ainmerech, which will be discussed in a subsequent chapter.163

Among the things described in YBL but not in LL is the burial of Áed mac Ainmerech. YBL states clearly that: Ruc Aedan esp. les corp Aeda meic Ainmerech 7 adhnaiced aici he ina chill fen, uair i inand mathair doib ar aen.164 The reference of ina chill fen ‘in his own church’, must be referring to the church of Glendalough, the church which he is generally associated with, such as in the Bórama, but this association is never specified in YBL in Cath Bélaig Dúin Bolg. That it is not stated clearly which church Bishop Aedán belongs to in Cath Bélaig Dúin Bolg could be, as Maniet suggests, an indication that the story was already well recognized, possibly from the LL version, and that this would explain why the association of Bishop

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161 ‘If LL was the model, it must be supposed that the author knew of other versions, written or not, which should have furnished the details absent in LL; if it is from a connected version that the author was inspired by, then maybe the complimentary details were supplemented from there. I haven’t noticed, in any case, in LBL [YBL] any details of expression which would strive to reinforce the hypothesis of a single/direct parent version with LL, the language of which is clearly older.’ Ibid, p. 99. Thanks go to Claire Musikas and Grégory Cattaneo for their assistance with the translation.


164 ‘Bishop Aedan gathered the body of Áed mac Ainmerech and buried him in his own church, as they both had the same mother.’ Maniet, ‘Cath Bélaig Duin Bolc’, p. 106.
Aedan with Glendalough had been omitted. On the other hand, in LL the metrical tract, *Lecht Cormaicc meic Cullenain*, it says in quatrain fourteen:

\[\textit{Lecht Aeda meic Ainnmerech}\\ \textit{ac Cill Rannairech randgil,}\]

This is at odds with what *Cath Belaig Dúin Bolg* in YBL tells, which states that Aed was buried at Bishop Aedán’s church, which according to the Bórama of LL was Glendalough. This is, however, quite interesting from an internal political point of view in terms of ecclesiastical matters, and also in terms of the intricate compilation of LL. Cummascach, the son of Áed mac Ainnmerech was killed by the *erenagh* of Cill Rannairech [Kilranelagh, Co. Wicklow]. Both versions agree on this, although YBL is the only source to name the *erenagh*. For the killing of Cummascach in LL, it is said that *conid aire sin doratad sáire do chill Rannairech* from the king of Leinster. L. Price in his work on the place-names in the county of Wicklow discusses Kilranelagh to some extent, especially from the point of view of the Bórama, where he speculates:

The saga says that as a reward for killing Cummascach the *erenagh* obtained for the church (or monastery) of Kilranelagh freedom (*sáire*), i.e., exemption from tribute. Professor Eoin MacNeill, in a letter to the present writer, suggested that the story of the beheading of Cummascach by the *erenagh* might be merely an echo of the story of the killing of Brandubh by the *erenagh* of Templeshanbo (AU. 605). If that were so, the story that it was the *erenagh* who killed Cummascach might have been invented in order to account for an exemption from tribute already existing at the time when the saga was composed. ...[On the Dun Bolg saga] But it seems to embody a historical tradition in placing the battle of Dun Bolg in this locality; the poem in Ll. 43, reciting the graves of kings in Leinster, says that Aed mac Ainnmerech was buried at Cell Rannairech. The topographical details of the saga cannot be taken literally: the story teller was not aiming at topographical accuracy, but at dramatic effect.

This is singularly interesting if, as the poem *Lecht Cormaic meic Cullenán* recounts, Áed mac Ainnmerech was interred at Kilranelagh and not at Glendalough, mainly on the basis of internal political and geographical issues of both the LL manuscript and

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165 Ibid, pp. 96-97.
169 L. Price, *The Place-Names of Co. Wicklow*, vol. 3, (Dublin, 1945), p. 120.
the Bórama. It also strengthens the view that Maniet expressed that the YBL version of Cath Belaig Duín Bolg may have been aware of the LL version to some extent, and if that was the case it is not implausible to think that the scribe of the YBL version of Cath Belaig Duín Bolg was familiar with the poem Lecht Cormaic meic Culennáin as well. It should also not be forgotten that the saint with whom the Leinstermen confer in the YBL version is Cóemgen of Glendalough and therefore that position is already filled, thus Bishop Aedán could not have shared this ecclesiastical affiliation. There may be cause to suggest that Bishop Aedán, who in the Bórama is generally referred to as being of Glendalough may have originally been associated with Kilranelagh instead as suggested by the poem Lecht Cormaic meic Culennáin. This hypothesis however is somewhat compromised by YBL identifying the abbot of Kilranelagh as Conal Ua Lonáin of whom little is known.

Why the compiler of the Bórama chose to use Cath Belaig Duín Bolg as a central chapter to his text is unclear. Buttimer, in his observation of the CBDB section of the Bórama, stated that:

I believe that a general study of the Bórama tract in the Book of Leinster and the Book of Lecan reveals that the compiler of this composition refurbished pre-existing traditions to suit his own purposes and propagandistic aims.

He also states in his discussion on the CBDB section of the Bórama, that ‘The argument has been made that the story most likely never had any original connection with the tribute doctrine.’ The YBL version does not mention the connection to the bórama at all. If the YBL text is younger than the text in LL, as Maniet suggests, then that could indicate that the LL text went through a stage of innovation while the YBL was more conservative. In what P. Mac Cana refers to as List B, (as opposed to List A which contained Tochmarc Fithirne 7 Darine da ingen Tuathail,) of the learned tales of Ireland preserved in fifteenth and sixteenth-century manuscripts, there is under the categorization of orgain ‘destruction’ tales a mention of Orgain Duin Bolc. In his article G. Toner discusses at length these two tale lists, List A

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172 Ibid, pp. 100-1.
176 Mac Cana, Learned Tales, pp. 33, and esp. 63.
and List B, which ‘are thought to be derived from a single parent, but considerable differences between the two have suggested substantial reworking of the parent list’. Therefore, it is difficult to read too much into these lists in terms of what can be specifically termed as a chief-tale, no less so when trying to assign a value to the texts mentioned in the lists as definitive. Therefore it is not possible to know whether the tale *Orgain Duín Bolc* refers to the *Cath Belaig Dúin Bolg* text of YBL. Toner in his discussion continues;

> Even this parent list, it is contended, is expanded from an earlier form. Thus the lists are viewed as being in a constant state of growth and change, and the inability to establish the contents of earlier forms has led to some distrust of their significance as an index of medieval Irish literature.\(^{178}\)

*Cath Belaig Dúin Bolg* does not appear in the *LL* tale list (List A) under *catha* ‘battles’ and the list does not contain *orgain* ‘destruction’ tales at all.\(^{179}\) List B however does include *catha* ‘battles’ but does not list all of those mentioned in List A. In addition to this, List B includes a list of *orgain* ‘destruction’ tales.\(^{180}\) Since List B is a much later representation of the chief-tales of Ireland, it is not possible to know whether *Cath Belaig Dúin Bolg* was ever included in a parent version of the list(s). Toner remarks on the lists: ‘The very absence of these titles [*airgne (orgain)* ‘destruction’] from List A suggests that they were unconnected with X [the parent version].’\(^{181}\) Hence it is not possible to argue convincingly that the reason *Cath Belaig Dúin Bolg* was included in the list was the same as for the tale of Fithir and Dáirine. Since their tale was possibly well known, indicated by its inclusion in List A of *LL* as a chief-tale, it is not possible to suggest that the same applies to *Cath Belaig Dúin Bolg* as evidence for that is lacking. The strongest possibility for the inclusion of the text in the *Bórama* may be because it fits well within the kind of conflict between the two provinces within the *Bórama*.

Something which has not been discussed in relation to this section of the *Bórama* is the ecclesiastical material of the text, particularly in terms of Moling. The significance of Moling will become more and more apparent as the discussion

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\(^{177}\) Toner, ‘Reconstructing’, p. 89.

\(^{178}\) Ibid, p. 88.


\(^{180}\) There is a mention of *Feiss Dun Bolg* in the tale list of *LL*, however, there is nothing to indicate if this is a reference to the same event/tale as contained in the *Cath Belaig Dúin Bolg*. Cf. *LL* l. 24957.

\(^{181}\) Toner, ‘Reconstructing’, p. 95.
progresses, however it is quite important to highlight this fact from the start. Unlike the previous section, the episode of Finn mac Cumaill, this section is singularly void of mention of Moling, aside from one mention that occurs in poem *18 Dénaid dún ar cotach*, (and there is no mention of Moling in YBL at all).\(^{182}\) On the other hand, Cóemgen of Glendalough appears in YBL but does not receive the same treatment in *LL* as he does in YBL. I would like to tentatively suggest a hypothesis for why this is, Cóemgen of Glendalough is said to have died at the exalted age of 120 in 618/622 [AU], which may be overly enthusiastic.\(^{183}\) Thus hypothetically it could be understood that Bishop Aedán (of Kilranelagh?) had succeeded him at Glendalough at the time of the battle of the Dún Bolg, as it is reported in the *Bórama*. The tradition of the battle preserved in YBL may be a reflection of Cóemgen’s suggested seniority rather than a logical chronology. The YBL text was possibly originally intended to be associated with Cóemgen of Glendalough and his tradition. Another plausible suggestion is that Cóemgen of Glendalough was ‘edited out’ of the *Bórama*, as not to provide too strong a counterpart to Moling, which should be strongly considered.

There is strong possibility that where Moling is mentioned in this section in the *Bórama in LL* it was a deliberate inclusion.\(^{184}\) Since it does not have any impact on the events, the ‘tampering’ with the text is at a minimum, supporting Buttimer’s hypothesis that the *CBDB* episode originally was not considered part of the *bórama* tradition. Moling had no direct influence on the events of the battle as this occurs before his time but still the *LL* smuggles in a reference of him at this particular point in time. The alliance made between Ulster and Leinster later on in the section gives the author of the *Bórama* the scope needed to insert Conchobar mac Nessa into the text in the role of a prophet, which also allows poem *18 Dénaid dún ar cotach* to be included, a necessary literary tool to bring Moling back into the text, and this was seemingly the only way to do that, without compromising the tale of *CBDB*. With the kind of climate needed to be expressed in the *Bórama*, the animosity between the two provinces, *Cath Belaig Dún Bolg* fits very well within the textual outlay.

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\(^{182}\) Cf. discussion on Moling and poem *18 Dénaid dún ar cotach* in Chapter 4: Moling.


\(^{184}\) This will be discussed in detail in connection with poem *18 Dénaid dún ar cotach* in subsequent chapters.
Within the Bórama text there is a poem, (14) Guidim Comdid cumachtach, which interestingly enough is written elsewhere in LL and this is so noted in the Bórama; alibi in hoc libro scripsimus, and only the first two lines of the poem given. It is situated quite early on in the LL and just preceding it are a few additional poems that are also of interest to the scholarship of the Bórama. In particular are the poems; A chóicid chóem Chairpri chrúaid and the previously discussed poem, Lecht Cormaic meic Culennán. The poem A chóicid chóem Chairpri chrúaid, touches on a number of episodes represented in the Bórama, such as the deaths of the maidens of Tara (CnC), the battle at Cnámross, as well as the battle of Dún Bolg (CBDB) and others not discussed in this chapter (such as the episode of Loegaire mac Neill’s promise of not levying the bórama and his punishment by the elements when he broke his promise), while the latter of the poems is about those that have fallen in skirmishes with the Leinstermen as well as Leinstermen who have fallen in battles. O’Sullivan argues that these poems as well as the poem, (14) Guidim Comdid cumachtach of the Bórama, are written by the same hand, scribe A, while the Bórama was by scribe S. There was apparent co-operation going on at the time of the compilation of LL, and the scribes that were involved in its creation were well versed and familiar with the material that was included in it as well as a multitude of other material, as the composition of the Bórama text shows.

Section three: Moling and the remission of the bórama

The third and last section of the Bórama deals with Moling and his attempt at having the bórama rescinded for good on behalf of the Leinstermen. LL is among the earliest manuscripts we have which contains material relating to Moling, aside from the ninth-century Codex S. Pauli. Aside from containing the tale of the Bórama, LL contains a cluster of six short anecdotes all centred around Moling as its main character, situated on ff. 283b – 285b just before the Bórama (which begins on f.

186 LL ll. 6067-6157, 6158-6382.
188 Schlüter, History or Fable?, pp. 228, 243.
190 Cf. discussion in Chapter 4: Moling.
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294), in addition there is a short poem, initial line *Rochuala* found on f. 149.\(^{191}\) In addition there are in existence a number of texts, contained in later manuscripts, which feature anecdotes and texts relating to Moling, including a Latin and an Irish Life.\(^{192}\) These texts will feature in the discussion of chapter four on Moling. Hence, the same detailed discussion on the textual relationship this section shares with other extant sources, as was done in relation to the two previous sections, will not be undertaken at present. There are however certain issues that can be explored here, and although not every question they raise can be answered presently they will provide a platform for future discussion.

Byrne was the first to remark in relation to the *Bórama* that: ‘it is notable how in Leinster tradition the saints function as Homeric gods, striving with fierce loyalty and vindictive piety for the fortunes of the peoples whose patrons they are.’\(^{193}\) This last section of the *Bórama* demonstrates that best. There are in all seventy saints who appear in the remaining passages of the *Bórama*, both in prose and poetry. The majority appear in the poetry, and their purpose and provenance will be explored accordingly in chapter three. Moling, however, is the primary protagonist of the third section. While Buttimer recognises that Moling becomes a central figure in the last episode of the *Bórama*, he does not fully explore Moling’s corpus of texts. Instead he focuses on the *Bórama*, the saint’s Irish and Latin ‘Lives’ and an account found in FA.\(^{194}\) As we have seen, Buttimer’s focus was on the political aspect of the tale, and so the Uí Néill king, Fínnachta, claims his attention in this section. As a result, though understandably, I would argue that Buttimer overlooks some of the key issues of the text.

Among the issues to be discussed in the following chapters is the relationship between saints and the kings of the text. To some extent this issue has been raised in the discussion on the different emphasis the CBDB episode demonstrates in the


\(^{193}\) Byrne, *Irish Kings and High Kings*, p. 144.

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*Bórama*, with Bishop Aedán of Glendalough and Brandub mac Echach. In this same section there is a short anecdote of how Áed mac Ainmerech received a special cowl from Colum Cille which was supposed to protect him from harm as Colum Cille was unable to promise Aed that he would attain Heaven after his death.\(^{195}\) A similar episode occurs in relation to Adomnán and Fínnachta in the third section of the *Bórama*, where Adomnán threatens to prevent Fínnachta from attaining Heaven.\(^{196}\) Buttimer states that the minor episode of Loegaire mac Néill hinted at a similar connection in terms of Patrick:

> In Patrick we have a third saint also identified with the Northern Half who is represented in the tradition as having been on unfriendly terms with yet another Uí Néill figure, Loegaire mac Néill. There is thus the distinct possibility that not only does the compiler of the *Bórama* press Leinster hagiographical data into service on behalf of the interest of the province, but that he also distinctly uses information from other backgrounds to the same ends.\(^{197}\)

While Buttimer identifies that the relationship between king and saint is emphasised in all three encounters, his understanding is such that the ecclesiastical element of the text, in the form of the saints and their relationship with the kings is an intrusive element and not important to the overall text itself. This is among the many issues I wish to address in the following chapters. M.T. Davies is yet another scholar who has remarked on the relationship of king and cleric in the *Bórama*, without sufficiently exploring the full extent of the ecclesiastical undertones of the *Bórama*;

> None of these aspects of clerical relations with kings is in itself unusual or exceptional; all of them recur in one form or another in a wide variety of texts, and they have their basis in both literary convention and the historical reality of practical politics. But I know of no other text – certainly no other text outside the saints’ Lives – that brings them together with such concentrated and concerted force. Clerical involvement in Brandub’s dealings with the Uí Néill aggressor is pervasive and decisive; indeed, Brandub himself is in danger of becoming a secondary character.\(^{198}\)

That is the crux of the matter. Stage by stage there is a conscious effort made to escalate the presence of ecclesiastical influence in the *Bórama* tract as well as the relationship demonstrated between the king and the saint in the text is commonly attested in saints’ Lives. Moling is the primary character of the text and the primary reason for the creation of the text as we have it in *LL*, I would argue and I will


\(^{197}\) Buttimer, ‘The Bórama’, pp. 311-312.

continue to explore this hypothesis through the remainder of my thesis. In addition I will argue a case that the *LL Bórama* should be considered a crucial part of the hagiographical material relating to Moling.

**Cath Almaine**

As stated previously, the tale of the battle of Allen is commonly referred to as the sequel to the *Bórama*, and often accompanies *Cath Belaig Dúin Bolg* in the manuscripts.\(^{199}\) The battle was said to have taken place in December 722 [AU]. While most of the extant sources refer to the *bórama*, it is only in the seventeenth-century manuscript, Brussels MS 5301 – 5320, which forms part of FA, that the tale of Moling’s involvement in the remittance of the tribute from Fínnahtacht is included.\(^{200}\)

In terms of arrangement in the manuscripts I would hypothesise that the YBL manuscript distinguished between these two tales as two separate tales, linked thematically rather than historically, based on the fact that *Cath Almaine* preceeds the *Cath Belaig Dúin Bolg* text in the manuscript. There is also the fact that there are no references in the *Cath Belaig Dúin Bolg* text in the YBL to the *bórama* legend or Moling. Hence it is quite likely that the compilers of YBL did not consider these two texts connected thematically.

### Temporal anomalies

There are at least three occasions where temporal anomalies possibly occur in the text, that is, where sections and characters are out of place.\(^{201}\) These occurrences do not affect the text of the *Bórama* adversely in terms of content. In fact, they demonstrate the inter-textual relationship between texts and manuscripts as well as suggesting that either the specific texts being worked with in each section were

\(^{199}\) Found in YBL where *Cath Almaine* preceeds *Cath Belaig Dúin Bolg* and in MS D iv 2 where it follows on from *Cath Belaig Duin Bolg*.

\(^{200}\) FA, pp. 66-7.

\(^{201}\) It should be noted that these temporal anomalies have been identified by other scholars as well, mainly Stokes in his commentary on the *Bórama* and Ó Cuív in his discussion on *CnC*. Buttmer also suggests that there is a temporal anomaly found in the third section of the text, where a Bran Ardchenn is identified as the speaker of poem 24 *Érig a Mo Lling*. Cf. Buttmer, ‘The Bórama’, p. 328. This may possibly be a reference to Bran Ardchenn mac Muiredaig (†795 Al) of the Ui Dúnlainge, king of Leinster, who is a much later historical figure. At this time, during the mid seventh century, Bran mac Conaill was king of Leinster, and it is therefore quite possible to suggest that the Bran mentioned is a reference to Bran mac Conaill and that the epithet may have either accidentally been included, as Bran Archenn was a well-known figure at the time. Hence there is no reason to overly concern ourselves with this possible mistaken identity, particularly as there is only one instance of this occurring and no further identification regarding Bran Ardchenn is given. \textit{LL} i. 38886. Stokes, ‘The Boroma’, pp. 102-3, §130.
copied from other versions, or that the text of the *Bórama* as a whole was based on a now non-extant primary copy of the tale. There are sufficient indications as to consider the text of the *Bórama* to be based on a primary copy as certain authorial innovations noticeable in the *LL* text show strong indications for this, something which a scribal interference alone cannot explain adequately.

The first two such temporal anomalies appear together within the *Bórama* text within the first section. The first of these appears in the form of the poem *10 In cath ac Cnámros ni chelam*. This occurs at the time when Cairpre Lifechair was king of Ireland and the poem is meant to represent a battle and those that fell in it. The prose text in *LL* begins with:

*Is and im bátarside oc Cnamross. Ro cuired cáth crúaid combágach comramach eturru leth for leth. Araísin níro fulangair do Leith Cuínd co roemid forru. γ coro marbait noi mile díb im thrí maccu Cairpri Liphecair...*\(^{202}\)

The poem, which follows the prose, gives:

*In cath ac Cnámros ni chelam
coscrad side.*
*Im thrí rigu docerddatar and*  
*tri trí mile.*\(^{203}\)

This is a nice example of how the prose text can mirror what the poem reiterates. Stokes notes in his edition of the text that there seems to be some confusion going on here:

> The only battle of Cnamross mentioned in the Annals is entered at A.M. 2859. Can Cnamross here be a mistake for Gabhra (now Gowra in Meath), where a battle in which Carpre Lifechair was slain, is said to have been fought A.D. 284?\(^{204}\)

Both these events and dates are found in the Annals of the Four Masters (AFM), which Stokes, bases his observation on.\(^{205}\) This poem does not appear anywhere else as far as I can tell. This battle which is referred to in AFM is also in the text of *Lebor Gabála Érenn*:

\(^{202}\) *LL* ll. 38260-38263. ‘They were at Cnámross. A battle hard, warlike, full of trophies, was fought between them side on side. Nevertheless Conn’s Half endured it not, so that they were routed, and nine thousand of them were slain including Carpre Lifechar’s three sons...’ Stokes, ‘The Boroma’, p. 50-1, §36.

\(^{203}\) *LL* ll. 38265-38266. ‘The battle at Cnámross we conceal not, / a destruction of peace! / Including three kings, there fell / thrice three thousands.’ Stokes, ‘The Boroma’, p. 50-1, §36.

\(^{204}\) Ibid, p. 51 fn.

\(^{205}\) *Annals of the Kingdom of Ireland by the Four Masters*, J. O’Donovan ed. and trans., (1848 – 51, repr. 1990), pp. 11, 121.
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**Ro bris [Nemed] tri catha for Fomóre i. loingsig na fairgge i. Cath Badbigna la Connachta. Cath Cnamrois la Laigniu. Cath Murbolg i nDal Riatai.**

It is hence difficult to gauge whether the inclusion of this part in the *Bórama* is due to confusion on the part of the compiler or whether he is incorporating this part into the text from another source, although this might also be a show of how intricate the development, compilation and composition of both *LL* and the *Bórama* are. Preceeding the poem *Lecht Cormaic meic Culeannáin*, is the poem, *A chóicid chóem Chairpri chráaid*, although it is incomplete in *LL*. This poem touches on a number of events in the history of Leinster. In M. O’Daly’s edition and translation verse fourteen gives:

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Cath cruaid Cnamrois rind
ria mac Fiachach co ngliu duind
tri rí gnoi mile mór dremm
focerar and de chlaind Chuind.
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The first twelve verses are missing from *LL*, but luckily this verse is present in the manuscript and this may explain to some extent the reference to a battle at Cnámross. The battle being described in the *Bórama*, may not be the battle at Gabra as suggested by Stokes and where Cairpre Lifechair fell, as Cairpre Lifechaire is not said to have died in this battle, only his sons along with many others. Whatever the case may be, the possibility is that there was another battle associated with the place-name Cnámross that has not survived except through these few scanty references and should not be considered erroneous. Whether or not this poem provided the author of the *Bórama* with his point of reference, there must have at some point been a tradition that associated Bresal Bélach with a battle that took place at Cnámross.

Succeeding this episode the *Bórama* includes a short anecdote relating the story of the death of the maidens of Tara, preserved as a free-standing text in Rawlinson B. 502 (contemporary to *LL*), and commonly referred to as *Comram na Cloenfherta* (*CnC*). This text has been a part of some discussion among scholars as to its

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207 *LL* ll. 6067-6157. O’ Daly, ‘A chóicid’, pp. 177-197, the poem is incomplete in *LL*.

208 *LL* ll. 6070-6073. ‘The stern battle of Cnámros [where] spears were burnished (i.e. by constant use), won by the son of Fiachu (sc. Bresal) with a great war-band; three kings, nine thousand [warriors] – great the multitude that fell there of the descendants of Conn.’ O’Daly, ‘A chóicid’, p. 184.


position within the *Bórama*. According to Dillon, in order to preserve the timeline this tale should have been placed within the *Bórama* quite early on in the text, (or more accurately between *Rosfuc Cormac mac Airt* (*LL* l. 37830) and *Iar sain gabais Corpre Liphechair* ... (*LL* l. 37831)).²¹¹ B. Ó Cuív in his edition and translation of the text of *CnC* notes that:

Professor Dillon pointed out that the compiler of the *Bóraime* had gone astray in placing the incident after the time of Cairpre Lifechair (Cycles p. 106 n.), but it must be noted that this is a feature of the *LL* text of the *Bóraime* which is not shared by that in the Book of Lecan which is still unpublished.²¹²

The text of *CnC* relates events which were supposed to have occurred during the time that Cormac mac Airt was king of Ireland and Dúnlang was king of Leinster, according to Dillon and Ó Cuív. Thus it states:

> 7 luid Cormac cona slogai b hi Laigniu, ar Samuin int sainrud. 7 luid Dúnlang inna thimchell cona sluag co Temruig. Et marbait .xxx.ait ingen do ingenaib arddrig hErenn, 7 cet la cach n-oeningin rig dib im deich n-ingenaib Cormaic fo-deisin.²¹³

Neither Dillon nor Ó Cuív seems to spot the temporal irregularities between these two men, quite possibly because there is no indication of who this Dúnlang is supposed to be, and no familial connection is given. The *Bórama* on the other hand is quite certain that this is Dúnlang mac Óenna. According to traditional synchronisms Cormac mac Airt was alive around the end of the third century while Dúnlang mac Óenna was alive at the beginning of the fifth century. It is also more likely that a ‘famous’ literary character like Cormac mac Airt would get attracted out of his time period rather than the other way round. Ó Cuív notes on Dillon’s observation regarding the placement of the text in the *Bórama* that Dillon, most likely, was aware of the existence of the *CnC* text in the Rawlinson B. 502 manuscript, although he does not refer to it in his discussion of the *Bórama*.²¹⁴ Ó Cuív also does not realise the inconsistency between these two characters and as a result does not call attention to this. He accepts Dillon’s take on the tale and in his introduction presents the text thus:

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²¹² Ó Cuív, ‘*Comram na Cloenfherta*’, p. 168.

²¹³ ‘And Cormac went with his hosts into Leinster exactly at Samain. And Dúnlang went around him with his host to Tara. And they killed thirty of the daughters of the noble kings of Ireland and a hundred maidens with every single king’s daughter of them, comprised of the ten daughters of Cormac himself.’ Ibid, pp. 171-2.

...the slaying of a number of maidens in Tara by Dúnlang, king of Leinster, in the time of Cormac mac Airt, an incident which forms part of the Middle Irish story of Bóraime Laigen.\textsuperscript{215}

The problem here is that both Dillon and Ó Cuív take Cormac mac Airt’s mention in \textit{CnC} as the indication of when the events occurred, rather than focusing on Dúnlang, who is the main protagonist in the events in both texts. If this is the case, then the \textit{CnC} part is placed correctly within the \textit{Bórama}. Going on what Dillon says about this section ‘but it must be noted that this is a feature of the LL text of the Bóraime which is not shared by that in the Book of Lecan’ it is possible to assume that the scribe of Lec was in error, not the other way around as Dillon suggests. Hence, if Lec does not, as is indicated by Dillon, follow the \textit{Bórama} text on where this part is situated in the text, then there are two possibilities. One is that the scribe was using another source for the \textit{Bórama} text than the LL version, or another, and what is probably a more likely scenario is that the compiler of the Lec version was familiar with the \textit{CnC} text, quite possibly from the Rawlinson B. 502 manuscript, and similar to Dillon’s mistake, either did not spot the temporal irregularities between the two protagonists in the tale or decided to ignore this discrepancy. Such fallacy is not unlikely as this event is also repeated in the seventeenth-century AFM where it is stated that the massacre of the maidens occurred in AD 241 where Dúnlang mac Énna Nia is clearly identified as the perpetrator without taking into account that his existence is dated much later by all accounts.\textsuperscript{216}

Another such temporal anomaly occurs in section two (the ‘\textit{Cath Belaig Duin Bolg}’ episode (or \textit{CBDB})), when Brandub encountered Diarmait, son of Áed Rón who was king of the Ulstermen. In the \textit{CBDB} section Brandub’s dealings with Áed mac Ainmerech and the Ulstermen occur at the end of the sixth century, while Áed Rón is somewhat later, his death recorded at 735 [AU].\textsuperscript{217} Buttmer observed that ‘an Uí Fhailge ruler called Áed Rón dies in 604 [AU, AI, AT], some six years after the battle of Dún Bolg,’ leading him to speculate whether:

\[\ldots\text{there has been confusion here in the matter of the tribes involved rather than in the issue of the specific individuals. One is hesitant, however, to substitute the Uí Fhailge for the Ulaid in order to solve this crux, as there is a persistent tradition of Ulster hostility towards}\]

\textsuperscript{215} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{216} AFM, pp. 214-215.

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the northern Uí Néill at this time which lends an air of credibility to the character of the events represented in the narrative.\textsuperscript{218}

This is a small discrepancy and does not in any way impede the progression of the tale. It is significant however to see these kinds of possible slip-ups in the text, especially since the text as a whole demonstrates vast knowledge and appears to be skilfully constructed. It is interesting to note that the inclusion of Áed Rón is mirrored in the YBL version of \textit{Cath Belaig Dúin Bolg}.\textsuperscript{219} This lends some support for the hypothesis that section two of the \textit{Bórama} (which covers the \textit{Cath Belaig Dúin Bolg} episode) in \textit{LL} and the YBL version of \textit{Cath Belaig Dúin Bolg} originated from a not too distant hypothetical parent source, where the same mistake was copied into both versions.

What these temporal anomalies do is again establish the complex issue of textual relationship the \textit{Bórama} seems to share with a number of texts, and while Buttmer in his thesis and now I with this present research have identified and discussed to some extent a variety of these texts, there are undoubtedly many more texts which have yet to be explored or identified as sharing textual connection with the \textit{Bórama}. In this chapter the question was raised whether the \textit{Bórama} was a composite product, a text made from many other texts to form a ‘whole’ narrative, or as some may even refer to it, a further developed macroform. The evidence strongly supports such a conclusion. On the whole the skilful development of the text that the author shows is proven again and again in his careful consideration of everything that he needs to be aware of. The CnC text in Rawlinson B. 502, which is contemporary with \textit{LL}, shows that whether or not the compiler of the \textit{Bórama} was aware of this text (it does not reflect in his composition), his knowledge of the events (as well as when they were supposed to have occurred) was excellent. The apparent range and scope of the author’s historical and literary knowledge is superb, which is on multiple occasions demonstrated throughout the text, through episodes such as the tale of Fithir and Dáirine, the Finn and \textit{fíanaigecht} material, \textit{Cath Belaig Dúin Bolg} to name a few, and there are further such occasions which have not been demonstrated here, such as the episode of Loegaire mac Neill and his punishment by the elements.\textsuperscript{220}

\begin{footnotesize}
\begin{enumerate}[\textsuperscript{218}]
\item Buttmer, ‘The Bórama’, pp. 272-3.
\item Maniet, ‘Cath Belaig Duin Bolc’, pp. 104-5.
\end{enumerate}
\end{footnotesize}
Chapter 1. The Bórama

Conclusion

This chapter has sought to demonstrate the level of the inter-textual relationship the Bórama shares with other early Irish literary narratives, in particular with other texts of LL. While the Bórama is not to be considered a cycle in itself, due to its apparent relationship with Cath Almaine there is cause to consider it deserving of such discussion. At the beginning of this chapter the idea of the cycle which the early Irish tales exhibit (and inhabit) was considered, particularly whether the Bórama could possibly be considered to suit as belonging among the recently suggested classification by Poppe as an ‘immanent cycle’ and/or the ‘cycle-by-transmission’. There may be a case made to suggest that the Bórama exhibits traits indicative of both, though to what extent may prove problematic. It is difficult to determine if the Bórama was ever considered as part of a ‘whole epic’ (epic history of the Laigin) imagined or not.\(^{221}\) In terms of the text clearly showing evidence of development and continuation, in terms of Cath Almaine (and Cath Belaig Dúin Bolg), there are also clear suggestions to assume that in many ways the Bórama was a peculiar text which did not demonstrate the same level of relationship as perhaps best demonstrated in the literary trilogy of Cath Maige Rath, Fled Dún na nGéid and Buile Suibhne (BS).\(^{222}\)

The varying inter-textual relationships explored in this chapter has demonstrated more the ability of manipulating the extant sources to form a new creation, one which possibly existed before being included in LL, rather than consciously being a part of a hypothetical ‘whole epic’. This is based on the fact that there are obvious indications that a hypothetical parent version of Cath Belaig Dúin Bolg was used to bridge a gap in the narrative, between the tale of the two sisters, the prophecy of Finn mac Cumáill of Moling and the arrival of the saint himself.

In terms of Poppe’s second suggestion of literary cycles the ‘cycle-by-transmission’, he states that ‘their [the texts’] association as a physical sequence in at least one manuscript is the main unifying criterion’, and this causes again some problems in regards to the Bórama and related texts, Cath Belaig Duin Bolg and Cath Almaine.\(^{223}\)

The Bórama, in its form in LL does not appear anywhere else as a discrete whole, even in Lec. However, considering the make-up of LL, the texts which have been shown to have particular connection with the Bórama in terms of literary content all

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\(^{222}\) Cf. discussion on Buile Suibhne in Chapter 4: Moling.

\(^{223}\) Poppe, ‘Of Cycles’, p. 15.
Chapter 1. The Bórama

precede it in the manuscript and in terms of Lec the texts which represent the Bórama therein do occur sequentially.\(^{224}\) The events of the Bórama in Lec take their place in a longer sequence of historical events and so are subsumed into ‘history’. We are fortunate to have the text of the Bórama represented in two manuscripts. As such it is possible to suggest that here are two representations of Poppe’s suggestion of a ‘cycle-by-transmission’, one being closely related to the idea of the ‘immanent cycle’ with the preceeding texts connected but not part of the Bórama, serving as the hypothetical ‘whole’ and the other where the texts which represent the Bórama are produced sequentially, although with minor additions, in Lec.\(^{225}\) As Poppe phrases it:

> It may also become necessary to allow under this criterion ['cycle-by-transmission'] coherent annalistic sequences of generations or dynasties, if one wishes to describe some larger historical compilations as cyclic which exhibit other core characteristics of cycles, such as linear sequence and formal signals of cohesion and cyclification.\(^{226}\)

He also states that:

> ...immanent cycles and cycles-by-transmission have at least two features in common, namely that they consist of more than one text and share a common, fixed focus of reference. The central differentiating feature is the sequential transmission in one manuscript; cyclic signals in the form of cross-references may also occur in texts belonging to immanent cycles...\(^{227}\)

Thus the idea that the Bórama demonstrates to an extent one or both cyclical criteria which Poppe suggested is not unexpected. It is when considering both Cath Belaig Duín Bolg and Cath Almaine within the same criterion that the issue becomes somewhat problematic again. On at least two occasions these two texts appear together, side by side, in a manuscript. In YBL they occur in the wrong chronological order (if considered from the point of view of the Bórama) with Cath Almaine preceeding Cath Belaig Duín Bolg while in MS D iv 2 they appear in the correct chronological order. This essentially illustrates the possible problems faced when trying to think of these specific texts in terms of Poppe’s suggestion of literary

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\(^{224}\) The argument being regarding the Book of Leinster, that poem 14 Guidim Comdúd cumachtach, preceeds the Bórama, as well as several anecdotes involving Finn mac Cumaill and Moling, giving the impression that the texts belong to the ‘immanent cycle’ concept of ‘a whole epic’, within the manuscript.


\(^{227}\) Ibid, p. 22.
cycles, namely ‘cycle-by-transmission’ as one of the manuscripts breaks the sequential order of the texts, namely YBL. The implications is that in terms of redefining the idea of a literary cycle, problems will present themselves, the same as with previous scholars’ attempts to assign the Bórama to the kingship cycle tales.\(^{228}\)

There are numerous indicators that point to the fact that the Cath Belaig Duín Bolg was not always (or originally) considered to be a part of the bórama tradition, particularly the text of YBL, which would explain the reason for the texts not to appear in chronological order and this reason is also an important factor in determining whether a text belongs to Poppe’s re-imagination of the literary cycles. It must also be borne in mind that even though texts relate to each other, they may not have been considered inherently connected due to different viewpoints. Although as I note above both Cath Belaig Duín Bolg and Cath Almaine have strong thematic resemblances, as well as Uí Néill – Leinster antagonism. The fact is that the Bórama and the other extant texts discussed here, particularly Cath Belaig Duín Bolg and Cath Almaine in YBL, did not belong to the same tradition while sharing certain aspects. In view of this I am reluctant to assign the Bórama to a particular cycle, whether to the traditional suggestion of a kingship cycle or Poppe’s modern concept of ‘immanent cycle’. Instead I wish to focus on what the text itself tells us, its content and its focus.

Throughout this chapter I have tried to highlight the various sections which showcase best the great care and knowledge it took to effectively produce a text of the calibre of the Bórama. The depth of knowledge demonstrated and skilfully used in the compilation of this complex text was tremendous and the thought that went into the construction of the text was no less successful. The purpose of the Bórama seems to a great extent be to synthesise the history of the province of Leinster. This was based on the framework of material already available and present in the LL.\(^{229}\) Not only does the text demonstrate all this but it does to the same effect show the inter-relationship of the texts within LL as well. With this foundation presented, an analysis of the poetry that follows will permit a more holistic understanding of the text.

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\(^{229}\) Such as poems A chóicid chōem Chairpri chríaid and Lecht Cormaic meic Cúlennáin and others mentioned.
2. The Poetry: composition and content

Within the text of the *Bórama* there are thirty-three poems, all of varying metres and lengths. Neither Stokes nor O’Grady included an edition or translation of the poetry when they published their works. Some of the poems were included and some were not, and neither editor gave an explanation as to what ruled their decision to include an edition and translation of a poem or not. The closest we can get to an understanding of why the poetry was not included in Stokes’ edition is through his own words. In his introduction to the text he explains:

...most of the verses with which the tale is interspersed have been omitted. They merely repeat what has already been told in prose, and they are, as poetry, quite as worthless as the bulk of the metrical compositions in the Irish manuscripts.\(^{230}\)

Stokes usually gives the first quatrains of the poem, and very seldom more than that. Hence, if the poem is only a single quatrains then it is included. Only on four occasions does Stokes give an entire poem consisting of more than one stanza; 17 *Athconarc aslingthi n-ingnad*, 18 *Dénaid dúin ar cotach*, 19 *Lussán Aeda meic Ainmerech* and 20 *Dénaid dúin bar comairle*.\(^{231}\) On two further occasions Stokes includes more than the first quatrains, but not the entire poem; in regards to poem 06 *Rot fiasu i mBroccross* Stokes gives the first six verses out of thirty-one in total, and for poem 23 *Turchan duin a Tuathail* he gives the first and the ninth verse out of fifteen.\(^{232}\) In the case of O’Grady’s edition he only ever gives the first two lines of a poem, except in the case of poem 17 *Athconarc aslingthi n-ingnad* for which he gives a complete edition and translation.\(^{233}\) The reason why O’Grady chose not to include the poetry of the text in his translation is unclear, while Stokes states it clearly as to why that is (as noted above). It is difficult to understand what was behind Stokes’ reason in those instances where he included the entire poem; possibly he recognised them as adding more to the prose than merely being a repetition of it. Whatever may be the case as to why Stokes and O’Grady produced the text as they did, the overall effect is certain. While scholars have been able to access the whole text as it appears in *LL* through the diplomatic edition, the main editions and

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\(^{230}\) Stokes, ‘The Boroma’, p. 32.

\(^{231}\) Ibid, pp. 72-77, §76, 96-97, §122. Poem *19 Lussán Aeda meic Ainmerech* is somewhat problematic and will be discussed in due course.

\(^{232}\) Ibid, pp. 46-7, §24, 100-103, §129.

\(^{233}\) O’Grady, *Silva Gadelica*, vol. 2, p. 413. This is a practice which he follows fairly consistently throughout *Silva Gadelica*. 
translations through which readers have accessed the text over the years are, in essence, partial texts, robbed of a very significant amount of the original and the chance to assess its place in the text. Hence when the poetry is read back into the text, the full progression of the tale becomes more readily appreciable, in particular the central role of saints and Moling.

It is particularly noticeable by comparing the overall prose of section three with a selection of poems from the first section of the Bórama. If poems 05 Mo Lìng Lúath Cellach Bróen bil, 06 Rot fiasu i mBroccross, 07 Ross mBrocc indiu is conair chúain and 08 Ross mBruicc bale buredach were to be excluded from the reading of the Bórama, Moling’s importance to the overall tale is easily overlooked, as indeed it has been. It is also the reason why scholars, particularly Dillon and Mac Cana, have termed the Bórama to be a tale consisting of episodes loosely strung together. Without these poems there is nothing to tie the ‘sections’ together. A similar argument can be made for the second section of the text, during the course of events when poems 17 Atchonnarc aslingthi n-ingnad and 18 Dénaid dún ar cotach occur. What appears to be the unexpected appearance of Conchobar mac Nessa in the prose text cannot be adequately explained without taking notice of what the poems relate. Both poems are significant to the underlying hagiographical resonance of the Bórama and this cannot be fully realised if the poems and Conchobar mac Nessa’s purpose in the text are not read together and understood. The exclusion of the poems prevents the reader from fully comprehending the objective of the text. It is therefore necessary to analyse their content in order to be able to discuss the Bórama in a comprehensive way.

This chapter will thus focus on the poems of the text in detail in terms of their situation within the Bórama. This chapter will also include a discussion on the metre of the poems, other matters regarding their composition and their situation in the LL manuscript as well as their content. For clarification, as stated before, each poem is numbered to indicate where among the poems in the text it is placed, so that poem 17 Atchonnarc aslingthi n-ingnad, for example, is the seventeenth poem of the text. A table of the poetic metres for each of the thirty-three poems is found in Appendix A. A selection of poems that feature most frequently in the discussion throughout the thesis is presented in Appendix B.
Chapter 2. The Poetry

Poetic metres and arrangements

There are thirty-three poems in the Bórama in LL and they range from a single quatrain to over thirty verses in length. Alongside this, the sheer variety and number of metres is extraordinary in a composition of this length and a feature worth considering in its own right. There are in all eighteen identifiable metres and five poems which I have not been able to specify what named metre they belong to (cf. Appendix A). I have used G. Murphy’s Early Irish Metrics as the basis of the analysis of the metrics of the poetry.\(^{234}\) It is the aim of this chapter to give an overview of all the poems, although (as we will see) not all of the poems are relevant to the main discussion of this thesis. Therefore not every poem will receive equal attention but only those that have something specific to lend to the discussion of this thesis either by content or arrangement. A few poems have been selected to be represented in an appendix (cf. Appendix B), chosen because they will feature throughout the discussion in the thesis.\(^{235}\) The layout will be the same as of previous chapter, where each section of the Bórama is discussed separately. This is done in order to best evaluate what emphasis each section presents and to provide a point for comparison between the sections.

Section one: the levying of the bórama and Finn mac Cumail\(^{236}\)

There are eleven poems in the first section of the Bórama. Four poems detail in some way the fate of Tuathal Techtmar’s two daughters, Fithir and Dáirine as well as the imposing of the bórama: 01 *Fithir is Dáirine*, 02 Tuathal Techtmar techta in talman, 06 Rot fiasu i mBroccross and 09 Mor in gním daringned sund.\(^{237}\) The first poem, 01 *Fithir is Dáirine*, is six stanzas seemingly in the aí freisligi metre, however Goverts noted that ‘the lack of rhyme between lines a and c’ would suggest a form of ‘rannagecht bec, called rannagecht fota recomarcach by Murphy’.\(^{238}\) It is essentially a battle cry of a father who has lost his daughters. The first verse identifies the two girls, Fithir and Dáirine as the daughters of Tuathal Techtmar and how they died, Fithir of shame and Dáirine of grief. The second verse explains about

\(^{234}\) G. Murphy, Early Irish Metrics, (Dublin, 1961).

\(^{235}\) Cf Appendix B.


the wrongdoing that led to their deaths. The third verse indicates that they were twins and because of this they were destined to die together.

\[
\begin{align*}
D’oënlámnad ructhasom \\
Da ingin Tuathail trétaig \\
At tréna na tuicthena \\
In n-úair aile la hécaib. \quad & \text{239}
\end{align*}
\]

Verses four and five deal with the marriages and the deaths of the girls and the final verse, is Tuathal Techtmar vowing vengeance on the Leinstermen for causing their deaths. This poem is also in Lec, where it is fourteen stanzas rather than six. \quad \text{240}

The second poem, \textit{02 Tuathal Tecthmar techta in talman}, is twenty-two verses and is in the \textit{sétnd mór} metre. \quad \text{241} This poem occurs straight after the recitation of the amount of the \textit{éraic} ‘compensation’ the Leinstermen are made to pay for the deaths of Fithir and Dáirine. \quad \text{242} The first two verses are in praise of Tuathal Techtmar and the next ten verses, verses three to twelve, detail again the fates of Fithir and Dáirine. Verses thirteen and fourteen give the story of how Tuathal Techtmar led a campaign against the Leinstermen and how he \textit{ruc héraic a ingenn ass}. \quad \text{243}

Verses fifteen through to twenty-one, detail the amount of the \textit{éraic} and the last verse discusses how this continued to be exacted from Leinster until the time of Fínnachta in the seventh century.

\[
\begin{align*}
O \text{ ré Thuathail dób cá toboch} \\
Co \text{ ré Fínnachta na forc.} \\
Da fichet ríg do chlaind Tuathail \\
Ros ben a bruachaidh Bríg Molt. \quad & \text{244}
\end{align*}
\]

This poem, with its final verse, has essentially given the time-frame of the tale. Forty kings from the time of Tuathal Techtmar until Fínnachta claimed the \textit{bórama} from Leinster. The poem \textit{02 Tuathal Tecthmar techta in talman} is also found in Lec. \quad \text{245}

\[\text{239} \quad \text{LL ll. 37686-37689. ‘From a single (act of) birth they were born / the two daughters of abounding Tuathal. / They were strong the fates / the other time concerning their deaths.’}\]

\[\text{240} \quad \text{Goverts, ‘Mór in gním’, pp. 50-55. Lec ff. 295}^{1}\text{b l. 31-295}^{9}\text{a l.13, 14qq. The first verse of LL corresponds to the second verse in Lec and the second to the fourth of Lec. Verse three and four in LL are not found in the Lec version, and verses five and six correspond to verses eleven and twelve of Lec. With verses three and four missing and the extra verses of the Lec version the content is somewhat different although it conveys the same events.}\]

\[\text{241} \quad \text{Murphy, \textit{Early Irish Metrics}, p. 49.}\]

\[\text{242} \quad \text{LL ll. 37731-37818.}\]

\[\text{243} \quad \text{LL l. 37786. ‘he took the fine of his girls from it [the province].’}\]

\[\text{244} \quad \text{LL ll. 37815-37818. ‘From the time of Tuathal to them at their levying / to the time of Fínnachta of the pronged spear. /Forty kings descendants of Tuathal / they struck it out from the borders of Brí Molt.’}\]

\[\text{245} \quad \text{Lec f. 297}^{9}\text{a l. 6, same number of quatrains as LL.}\]
Another poem in the *Bórama* tract mentions the deaths of the girls and the *éraic*, poem *09 Mor in gním daringned sund*. This poem occurs when Finn mac Cumaill has arrived and therefore, relatively far into the text considering where the previous two occurred. The tale of Fithir and Dáirine and the levying of the *bórama* is the reason why Finn mac Cumaill is called to Leinster. Poem *09 Mor in gním daringned sund* is thirty-one stanzas long and is in the *deibide scal†le fota* metre. The first eight verses are taken up with the story of the marriages of Tuathal Techtmar’s two daughters and their subsequent deaths, verses nine till twenty cover the mustering of the armies of the king of Ireland and his troops and their converging on Leinster. Verse twenty-one portrays the Leinstermen getting ready for battle as well:

*Cengait Lagin ina ndail.*  
*Fo chomrepind fo chombáig.*

From verse twenty-two through to verse twenty-eight there is a detailed description of how the battle is fought and who are killed. At the end of verse twenty-eight the *éraic* is brought to attention:

*Impáid rí Temrach fathúaid.*  
*Co riacht Temraig in trom slúag;*  
*Iar marbad in fichet ríg.*  
*Ruc leis éraic cen imsním.*

The following verse, verse twenty-nine, mentions the amount of the fine and verse thirty mentions how the fine was divided and the final verse states that after this the cáin ‘law’ was placed on the Leinstermen, the imposing of the *bórama*.

*Mór de rígaib tiar 7 tair.*  
*Ras teclaim co Temraig.*  
*In tsechtmad bliadain ba brón*  
*Is and berair in chain mór.*

Apart from the tale of the fate of the two sisters, Finn mac Cumaill plays a large role in the first section of the *Bórama*. Out of the eleven poems that make up the first section, six of the poems are in some way directly related to Finn mac Cumaill’s presence in the text.

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246 *LL* ll. 38133-38256. Goverts, ‘*Mór in gním*’, pp. 25-32. Goverts compared the two versions of this poem in *LL* and Lec together. Lec f. 301<sup>1</sup> l. 12-301<sup>1</sup> l. 32, 31qq.

247 Murphy, *Early Irish Metrics*, p. 65.

248 *LL* ll. 38213-38214. ‘The Leinstermen proceed to meet them / intent on destruction, intent on fighting.’

249 *LL* ll. 38241-38244. ‘The king of Tara returned to the north / until he reached Tara of the heavy host; / after the killing of the twenty kings / he brought with him a fine without trouble.’

250 *LL* ll. 38253-38256. ‘Many kings of west and east / he gathered to Temair / the seventh year – it was sorrow – / it is then the great law was brought.’ Goverts, ‘*Mór in gním*’, p. 32.
Poems 03 Dénaid dún bar comairli and 04 A Find in n-érgi ri báig occur just before Finn mac Cumaill makes his appearance in the text. 03 Dénaid dún bar comairli is a poem uttered by Bressal Bélach, when he is king of Leinster (ca. AD 268) and he is here seeking advice as to what to do about the continued onslaught by the men of Tara demanding the bórama. The poem is seven stanzas in the ai freisligi metre. This poem is a battle cry: fiss úait co Find inn ága and do tora Find Almaine / armslaide ár sain dena. Buttimer focuses on this part of the text from the perspective of the literary tradition involving Cairpre Lifechaire, who was king of Ireland at this time and notices that very early on the text shows great adaptability, ‘namely that the enlargement of Bressal Bélach’s role in the Cairpre section indicates the capacity of the compiler of the Bórama to draw on well-established traditional structures for his own ends.’ Buttimer equates this poem as a ‘characteristic feature of the counsel device’ with the dénaid comairle ‘give counsel’ form. This form will appear on at least three occasions in total in the Bórama, this being the first.

Poem 04 A Find in n-érgi ri báig is six stanzas and is in the deibide scailte fota metre. Bressal Bélach himself utters this poem as he implores Finn mac Cumaill to come and aid the Leinstermen in their strife against the men of Tara, ma thici, erig, fer chath / ra primthuathaib na Temrach. This poem gives a much clearer view that Finn mac Cumaill is to give aid in battle but he is not given the task of having the bórama rescinded from the Leinstermen, gebid bar n-armu co grind / & éirgid a fian Find. This is the poem that spurs Finn into action and brings him into the province of Leinster and there he reaches the place of Broccross, the site where the following four poems occur.

Poem 05 Mo Lling Lúath Cellach Bróen bil takes place when Finn mac Cumaill has reached Broccross along with Moling Lúath ‘the Swift’, who is here as a precursor to

251 LL ll. 37837-37864. It is also found in Lec f. 299vb l. 32, 7qq.
252 Murphy, Early Irish Metrics, p. 62.
253 LL l. 37856. ‘send word to Finn of the battle,’ and ‘If Finn of Allen may come / let you do conflict of arms.’
256 The other two are poems 18 Dénaid dún ar cotach and 20 Dénaid dún bar comairle.
257 LL ll. 37874-37897. Murphy, Early Irish Metrics, p. 65. Also found in Lec f. 300v l. 10, 6qq.
258 LL ll. 37876-37877. ‘If you come, arise, give battle / against the chief peoples of Tara.’
259 LL ll. 37896-37897. ‘Take your weapons with intent / and arise, oh band of Finn.’
the appearance of Moling Lúachra, the saint, in the *Bórama*.

Moling Lúath is one of Finn mac Cumail’s *fían* warriors however he does not appear in any other *fíanaigecht* material aside from AS which here draws on the *Bórama*.

The poem in the *Bórama* is five stanzas in the *rannaigecht dialtach scáilte* metre. It is recited by Finn who foretells of Moling Lúachra coming to Broccross and about his monastery, *co ragba ra hanmain Find / tairngires Mo Lling sin ross.*

This poem provides the names of three of Finn’s companions, Moling Lúath, Cellach and Braen the Good:

*Mo Lling Lúath, Cellach, Bróen bil / tri meic Fiacha cosin neim.*

In *AS* these three companions have been reduced to two; Moling Lúath and Cellach Bráenbil or ‘the Bloody Hero’ and the text gives an account of the wonders of the place of Broccross similar in nature to the poems in the *Bórama*.

The blessing of the angels corresponds to the third stanza of the poem as well as part of the prose in the *Bórama*;

> *Atchonnaic sluag síreachtach semide ina mbuidnib súas docum nime 7 anuas.*

> *‘Cia sluag sút?’ bar in fían. ‘Angil sin’, bar Find, ‘.i. teglach Ríg nime 7 talman. Ocus talcind tífat ifus aít i failet na hangil út.*

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260 *LL* II. 37908-37927. Cf. Appendix B. This poem will also feature in the discussion in Chapter 3: The saints in the *Bórama*. This poem is also found in Lec f. 300*1* l. 36, Sqq.

261 He features in *AS* which covers the same episode as described here in the *Bórama*. Dooley and Roe, *Tales*, pp. 80-82. The events described in *AS* are slightly different from the *Bórama*.

262 Murphy, *Early Irish Metrics*, p. 52.

263 *LL* II. 37922-37923. ‘So that he may take up the great name of Finn / he who predicts Moling in the Ross.’

264 *LL* II. 37908-37909. ‘Swift Moling, Cellach, good Braen / three sons of Fiacha of malefic power.’

265 Dooley and Roe, *Tales*, p. 80.

266 Stokes, *Acallamh*, pp. 74-5. ‘We find the water of that place wondrous,’ said Finn, son of Fábarding, ‘its height and its flow down the cliff. This water heals every sickness it comes in contact with.’ ‘Do you know the cause of this, Finn, son of Fábarding?’ ‘I do not,’ said Finn. ‘Then I shall tell you the cause of that grace,’ said Caílte. ‘This is the first water in Ireland that the angels of God blessed and the last water in Ireland still to be blessed. *Tádú* is the name of the river.’ Dooley and Roe, *Tales*, p. 81.

267 *LL* II. 37900-37903. ‘He beheld a host melodious, floating, in bands ascending to heaven and descending. ‘What host is yon?’ say the Fian. ‘Those are angels,’ says Find, ‘even the household of the King of heaven and earth. And shavelings (sic) will come here in the place in which yon angels are.’ Stokes, *The Boroma*, pp. 44-5, §§25-6.
Many of the wonders and benefits that are described in the AS also correspond to what is illustrated in the subsequent three poems which all extol the marvels of Broccross and the *taídiu* ‘watercourse*.\(^{268}\) Poem *06 Rot fiasu i mBroccross*, is spoken by Moling Lúath, who extols the wonders of Broccross; and it spans thirty one verses in the *rinnard bec* metre.\(^{269}\) The first six verses list all the marvels Broccross provides: *mónaind na móna, dercain a dithruib, fulocht Chind Tíre, cnoi a Lettraig Faelchon, na hubla álli* and *suba a Sléib Bairchi* to name a few.\(^{270}\) This poem does not mention Moling, the saint, but it does mention the fate of Tuathal Techtmar’s two daughters, Fithir and Dáirine, in verse thirteen through to verse fifteen and from verse seventeen to nineteen Moling Lúath urges Finn to wield his band before the king of Tara on behalf of the Leinstermen. This poem, thus, manages to bridge the two literary traditions coming together here, the origin legend of the *bórama* (section one) without specifically mentioning the tribute and the tale of Moling as the saviour of Leinster (section three). This is a clear indication of the ingenious literary creation that was at work in the text of the *Bórama* and the way in which the poetry was concealed as a unifying feature. The rest of the poem is taken up by mentioning those that are supposed to represent Finn mac Cumaill’s *fían*-band, although they do not seem to appear in any other *fianaigecht* related material, at least not in the texts found in *LL*.\(^{271}\) Interestingly enough Buttimer does not develop further the possible suggestion that Moling Lúath was in any way an indicator or precursor of the saint Moling who will feature prominently later in the tale, even though he himself comments on Molings prominence in the *Bórama*.\(^{272}\) Even more telling is his observation that

> It is interesting to note that in the development of Fianaíocht literature generally, there is a tendency to make provision for a helper for Find. The treatment of Mo Ling [the Swift] in the *Cairpre* section may reflect this trend.\(^{273}\)

He also suggests that;

\(^{268}\) Dooley and Roe, *Tales*, pp. 80-82.

\(^{269}\) *LL*, ll. 37938-37999. Murphy, *Early Irish Metrics*, pp. 57, 65. This poem is also found in Lec f. 300\(^{th}\) l. 12, which only has thirty verses, one less than *LL*.

\(^{270}\) *LL*, ll. 37939, 37940, 37942, 37944, 37946, 37948. ‘Berries of the bog, acorns from the wilderness, a roast meat of Kintyre, nuts from Lettrach Faelchon, the beautiful apples’ and ‘strawberries from Sliab Bairchi.’

\(^{271}\) *LL*, ff. 204\(^{a}\)-205\(^{b}\), 206\(^{b}\)-208\(^{b}\).


\(^{273}\) Ibid, p. 190.
...the text Rot fiasu i mBrocross is a compilation original to the Bórama. This is also likely to be true of Énán na huaroibthe’s creation.274

His view is that this section of the Bórama is a reflection of a hypothetical ‘death-tale’ ‘concerning a Fianna warrior known as Mo Ling, and that he [the compiler] adapted this story to his own ends.’275 Buttimer argues that this was done so that the ‘Cairpre section poem Ros mBrocc indiu is conair chuain was intended, like its namesake in the Acallam, to end the original Mo Ling [the Swift] tale.’276 I find his argument somewhat unconvincing as there is little to support his hypothesis aside from a suggested hypothetical ‘death-tale’ for which there is no evidence. Also by taking into consideration the subject matter of the poems, both Broccross and Moling the saint who would later inhabit it, this episode can be viewed in a completely different light, something that will become apparent when the final section of the text is compared with the first section.

Poem 07 Ross mBrocc indiu is conair chúain is in the rannaigecht dialtach scalite metre and is seventeen verses.277 In the first five verses Finn describes the place of Broccross and how it will be in the future when Moling arrives; the rest of the poem is him describing Broccross, aside from verse nine. This verse returns to the saints who will be associated with Broccross:

Ille alle da cét náem
doria don ráen co Ross mBrocc
.lx. bliadan cethri cét
co torset in port.278

This early emphasis on saints will become more important as this thesis progresses. Poem 08 Ross mBruicc bale buredach is an ochtfochlach type of poem, in the cúicsrethaid metre and comprises of six verses.279 This poem carries with it the strongest resonance of the prophecy of Moling of all the poems that occur at this time in the text of the Bórama. This time it is not Finn mac Cumaill who recites the poem.

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274 Ibid.
275 Ibid, p. 189.
276 Ibid, p. 190.
277 LL II. 38003-38070. Murphy, Early Irish Metrics, p. 52. This poem also features in Lec f. 30018 l. 20, 17qq. A slightly altered version of this poem is found in AS. Cf. Stokes, ‘Acallamh’, pp. 75-77. Dooley and Roe, Tales, p. 82.
278 LL II. 38035-38038. ‘From this time two hundred saints / will reach the path to Broccross / four hundred and sixty years / until they may reach the place.’
279 LL II. 38083-38125. Cf. Appendix B. Murphy, Early Irish Metrics, p. 72. This poem is found in Lec also on f. 30018 l. 30, 6qq.
but one of his companions Énan na húarbothi ‘of the Chilly Booth’.\textsuperscript{280} The poem tells of a vision he had regarding Broccross and its future, emphasizing the fact that this occurs in the pre-Christian era by utilising the word tálcend ‘adze-heads’. The gap between this time and the time when Ireland has accepted Christianity is also emphasised in the use of the word tálcend or ‘adze-heads,’ a derogatory word pagans allegedly used to describe ecclesiastical persons, and often associated with the Patrician material. Here it is used to reflect the past;

\begin{quote}
\textit{Atchonnarc im súan
...}
\end{quote}

\begin{quote}
\textit{Mo Lling lúam na firinne
cid fota daría.}
\end{quote}

\begin{quote}
\textit{Cromcind ataconnacsa
cona crannaíb cromcenna.
Atchonnac na Talcenna
taidbsiu na náeb}.\textsuperscript{281}
\end{quote}

This poem gives a veiled reference to the legend of Suibne geilt; \textit{doraga fer foluannach / atúaid a mMaig Rath}.\textsuperscript{282} Buttimer noticed the inclusion of this reference to the Suibne legend and noted ‘There is possibly an inadvertent interpolation from the Suibne traditions into the \textit{Bórama} in this section.’\textsuperscript{283} Here I would have to disagree with Buttimer as there is good reason to suggest that the inclusion of this reference was in fact significant to the central character of the \textit{Bórama} (i.e. Moling) and that reason will be explored further in relation to the third section of the tale.\textsuperscript{284} There is also a mention of Doomsday and how he, Énan (and possibly the entire province of Leinster) is under Moling’s protection; \textit{misfe fora chomairge / co bráth o’ndiu immach}.\textsuperscript{285} The purpose for which the poem is used within this text could be construed as being twofold: one is to emphasize the coming of Moling Lúachra, and the second is to indicate why his coming is important to the text without giving away the ending. It can also be argued that the full significance of the contents of the poems in this section is not fully realised until the end of the tale. This could also be

\textsuperscript{280} Stokes, ‘\textit{Acallamh}’, pp. 48-9.

\textsuperscript{281} LL II. 38093, 38103-38104, 38108-38111. ‘I saw in my sleep / ... / Moling steersman of justice /
though it be long, he will arrive. / ... / bowed heads I saw / with their bent-headed stafs / I saw the
adze-heads / the apparition of the saints.’

\textsuperscript{282} LL II. 38118-38119. ‘a fluttering man will come / from the north out of Mag Rath.’

\textsuperscript{283} Buttimer, ‘The \textit{Bórama}’, p. 193.

\textsuperscript{284} Cf. in particular Chapter 4: Moling.

\textsuperscript{285} LL II. 38114-38115. ‘I am under his protection / till Doomsday from today henceforth.’
understood to be the reason why Finn is never portrayed as the one who rid the Leinstermen of the bórama. The poems are a justification for why such a warrior would be summoned to the aid of the province of Leinster while not managing to rescind the bórama. He defeated, along with the men of Leinster, the men of Tara (Leth Cuind) but the remission of the bórama is never mentioned as it was never his deed to perform. If the Bórama should be considered a hagiographical text, the ‘warrior’s might’ should not, in any case, be the triumphant power.

The final two poems of section one in the Bórama are poem 10 In cath ac Cnámros ni chelam, a single quatrain in the dechnad cummaisc metre, and poem 11 Atbath Loegaire mac Neil, which is likewise only a single quatrain in the rannaigecht dialtach scailte metre. Although poem 11 Atbath Loegaire mac Neil is only a quatrain it retells the fate of Loegaire mac Néill, king of Tara, (ca. AD 463) after he famously broke a promise he had made to the elements. The prose and poem which cover the episode of Loegaire mac Néill spans only eighteen lines in the Bórama, but has survived in other manuscripts as a separate tale, some of which are based on the account in the Bórama.

The first three poems discussed here (01 Fithir is Dáirine, 02 Tuathal Tecthmar techta in talman and 09 Mor in gním daringned sund) all have in common that they convey the ‘origin legend’ of the bórama Laigen, the great fine which was imposed on the province of Leinster for their crimes against Tuathal Techtmar and his two daughters. To some extent the first poem, 01 Fithir is Dáirine, is not as informative as the other two in regards to the bórama, such as the second poem with the lines ‘O ré Thuathail dóib cá toboch / co ré Fínnachta na forc’ and the third with ‘is and berair in chain mór’. They each emphasize different things but complement each other well and it may be interesting to think that poem 09 Mor in gním daringned sund which reiterates much of what is said in the second poem is due to the fact that they come possibly from different sources.

Although Finn mac Cumaill is apparently not the one destined to rescind the bórama his presence in the text is still quite important. This becomes more apparent when this discussion has progressed further in terms of all the poems contained in the

286 LL ll. 38265-38266, 38291 – 38294. Murphy, Early Irish Metrics, pp. 50, 52. Poem 10 In cath ac Cnámros ni chelam was briefly discussed in the previous chapter.


288 LL ll. 37815-37816 and 38256. ‘From the time of Tuathal to them at their levying / to the time of king Fínnachta of the pronged spear,’ and ‘it is then the great law was brought.’
Chapter 2. The Poetry

Bórama text, especially in relation to poems 17 Atchonnarc aslingthi n-ingnad and 18 Dénaid dún ar cotach, which occur in section two of the text. It is not certain whether Finn mac Cumaill was always a part of the Bórama legend or whether he was incorporated into it, although every indication is that the association of Finn with various elements of the Bórama occurred very early on. The two episodes described in this section, the fate of the two girls and Finn mac Cumaill demonstrate how integrated they are with each other.

Section two: the ‘Cath Belaig Dúin Bolg’ episode (or CBDB)289

This section of the Bórama contains nine poems of various lengths and metrical composition and they provide an interesting insight into the second section of the text. The first poem, 12 Failet sund aiseda ríg, which is nine verses long and in the deibide scaílte fota metre, occurs after Brandub mac Echach, king of Leinster, heard that Cummascach the son of Áed mac Ainmerech was on his royal circuit.290 Brandub had instructed his men to tell Cummascach that he was in Britain, although he had not left. It is then that Máedóc Ua Dúnlainge comes to Brandub bearing gifts. These gifts are the subject of poem 12 Failet sund aiseda ríg: a flesh-fork, a cauldron, a shield, and a sword (and a mantle, although that is not mentioned in the prose. It could be referring to a metaphorical mantle, that of Christianity or the position of bishop). Although the poem only states with certainty that Conlaed, Brigit of Kildare’s craftsman, made the flesh-fork, it is perhaps not completely far-fetched to think that he was responsible for making the other items as well.291 There is some possibility that, as with the tale of the two sisters and Finn, this episode is from another source which has not survived. It may not have been part of a bórama origin legend but it is quite likely that it belonged among tales involving Brandub mac Echach. This is a tentative hypothesis based on the fact that texts concerned with Brandub occur earlier on in LL and elsewhere, which seem to suggest that he was of some literary interest at the time.292

290 LL ll. 38333-38368. Murphy, Early Irish Metrics, p. 65. Cf. Appendix B. This poem is also found in Lec f. 306v 1. 7, 8qq, where it is eight quatrains while LL has nine quatrains, the eighth quatrain of the poem in LL is absent from the Lec version.
291 In Brigit’s hagiography Conlaed is Brigit’s bishop not craftsman. Cf. further discussion on the relationship between Brigit and Conlaed and Dubhtach in Chapter 3: The saints in the Bórama.
292 The text following poem (14) Guidim Comdid cumachtach in LL is Bémmend Branduib for Brega, LL 6962-6979. The text relating to Brandub’s birth survives in two manuscripts, in Rawlinson B. 502, and in YBL. Cf. R.I. Best, ‘The Birth of Brandub son of Eochaid and of Aedan son of
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Following is poem 13 M’aél trébend torcbálach, it is seven lines and this is the first poem which does not seem to fall within any specific category of metre. It is uttered by Máedóc Ua Dúnlainge after he has presented Brandub with the gifts as he leaves the scene. In it he recounts again two of the gifts he presented Brandub with, the flesh-fork and the cauldron while leaving the other items of poem 12 Failet sund aisceda ríg out. This is no coincidence as only the flesh-fork and the cauldron feature in the prose text and are part of the plot to bring down Cummascach. I would offer here my tentative suggestion that poem 13 M’aél trébend torcbálach was perhaps an original creation to the Bórama.

Poem (14) Guidim Comdid cumachtach is similarly interesting in terms of tales concerned with Brandub mac Echach. Only the two first lines of the poem are given in the Bórama, and then a Latin note indicates that it is written elsewhere in LL, alibi in hoc libro scripsimus. This seems to indicate that the compilation of LL was a well thought-out process, as is expressed by Schlüter in her book:

when we consider the fact that the poem is written at the beginning of the manuscript and the Bórama tract near the end – in O’Sullivan’s arrangement almost at the very end of the whole manuscript – this is then another proof for the assumption that the Book of Leinster, while still being in progress of compilation, was already considered by its scribes and compilers as an entity to the earlier pages of which they could refer.

It is, however, interesting to consider what reason prompted the scribes and compilers who showed such care with the construction of the LL to situate the poem where they did rather than incorporate it into the complete text of the Bórama. It is situated on fo. 48 followed by a text concerning Brandub mac Echach, Bémmend Branduib for Brega.

In addition it is preceded in the manuscript by other texts which are also relevant to the discussion of the overall textual relationship of the

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293 LL ll. 38371-38376. Cf. Appendix A.
294 This will be discussed further in due course as there are other poems in the Bórama which demonstrate the possibility of being specifically composed for the Bórama.
295 LL ll. 6882-6961.
296 ‘written elsewhere in this book’
297 Schlüter, History or Fable?, p. 83.
298 LL ll. 6962-6979. ‘Brandub’s blow over Leth Cuind (Conn’s Half).’
Chapter 2. The Poetry

*Bórama* and the *LL* manuscript as a whole.²⁹⁹ Poem (14) *Guidim Comdid cumachtach* is a rather lengthy poem, of twenty verses, composed in the *casbairdne* metre.³⁰⁰ It could doubtless be described as *casbairdne lánscaít* as the end-words of lines *a* and *c* do not consonate with the end-words of lines *b* and *d* nor is there *aicill* to be found in the poem. However, the rhyming at the end-word of *a* with that of *c* does lend the quatrain the same richness in rhyme as a regular *casbairdne* would.³⁰¹

In the first chapter the difference between this section and what the *Cath Belaig Dún Bolg* in YBL contains was illustrated. In *Cath Belaig Dún Bolg* of YBL there are five poems, two of which correspond to poems in the *Bórama* text; these are poems *a)* *Tiagaid techta (uadaib) co hAileach* and *b)* *Is itchi conaigim-sea*.³⁰² Poem *a)* corresponds with poem 15 *Tiagat techta úain co hAilech*, it is only three verses, and corresponds with the first verse and then the fourth and fifth (the last) verse of poem 15 *Tiagat techta úain co hAilech* in the *Bórama*. The first verse differentiates in line *c* with the word *ríg* ‘king’ in the *Bórama* and *flaith* ‘chief or lord’. The last verse displays similar differences in lines *b* and *d*, where in the *Bórama* text the words *dál* ‘meeting’ and *báig* ‘threat’ are substituted with the words *caingen* ‘message’ (or a ‘dispute’) and *dál* ‘meeting’. Poem *b)* on the other hand corresponds to poem (14) *Guidim Comdid cumachtach* in the *Bórama*, though only the first verse.³⁰³ There are only three verses in the YBL text compared with twenty verses represented in *LL* and it is not a part of the exact same circumstances as the YBL version is a much more condensed text, and the content of the poem is quite different. Comparing the three verses of the poem as it is in the *Cath Belaig Dún Bolg* version in YBL with the content of poem (14) *Guidim Comdid cumachtach* of the *LL* (cf. Appendix B), the only thing that they have in common is the first verse (although line *c* and *d* have been switched around and in return correspond more appropriately with one another in terms of metre) while the other two verses which come after are not represented in the *LL* version at all. The *Cath Belaig Dún Bolg* version has in a way condensed the prose text of *LL* which spans nearly sixty lines of the diplomatic edition into these


³⁰⁰ Murphy, *Early Irish Metrics*, p. 59.

³⁰¹ Ibid, pp. 59-60.


³⁰³ Ibid, p. 102.
three verses.\textsuperscript{304} This may have something to do with the fact that the YBL version does not portray the same level of sympathy with the province of Leinster nor does it portray the same amount of detail regarding events as the \textit{LL} version does.\textsuperscript{305}

Poem \textit{(14) Guidim Comdid cumachtach} occurs in the text after Cummascach has been killed. Bishop Aedán, who recites the poem, volunteers to go to Áed mac Ainmerech, who is his half-brother, and let him know the fate of his son while also asking him not to seek vengeance. The poem is Bishop Aedán’s prophecy regarding how Áed mac Ainmerech will react to the news of his son’s death \textit{rob é dígal Chummascaig / guin Aeda meic Ainmirech} and he foresees the battle where Áed mac Ainmerech will fall, \textit{atchiu bróen dar sárslegaib / atchiu Aed i n-úarilaid}.\textsuperscript{306} As it happens, envoys were sent to Áed mac Ainmerech at the behest of Bishop Aedán when he utters poem \textit{15 Tiagat techta úain co hAilech}, where he advised Brandub to send messengers to Áed mac Ainmerech to tell him of Cummascach’s death. It is a short poem, five verses in the \textit{dían midseng} metre.\textsuperscript{307} When Áed mac Ainmerech hears the news of his son’s demise he musters his army and goes against Leinster. When Brandub and Bishop Aedán go scouting for the camp of the king of Tara, Bishop Aedán utters poem \textit{16 Itchúusa na merggi}, which is in the \textit{rinnard dá n-ard} metre and is nine verses long.\textsuperscript{308} Similar to poem \textit{(14) Guidim Comdid cumachtach}, poem \textit{16 Itchúusa na merggi} is a prophecy on the fate of Áed mac Ainmerech; that he will die in the battle with the Leinstermen. When Bishop Aedán has finished his recitation he goes back to his church, according to the text. It is then that Brandub and his men capture young lads from Ulster, among them the son of the king of Ulster. Brandub uses this leverage to make peace with the Ulstermen who had sided with the king of Tara. It is at this point that poem \textit{17 Atchonnarc aslingthi n-ingnad} occurs in the text. It is five verses and is in the \textit{sétnad ngairit} metre.\textsuperscript{309} This poem is

\textsuperscript{304} \textit{LL} ll. 38423-38481. Poem \textit{(14) Guidim Comdid cumachtach}, it is a \textit{casbairdne} which is a type of \textit{dían} or \textit{rannaigecht} where lines b and d normally correspond. Cf. Appendix A. The lines c and d of this verse have been switched around in \textit{Cath Be laig Duin Bolg} to follow the \textit{casbairdne} metre while the \textit{LL} version does not.

\textsuperscript{305} Cf. Chapter 1: The \textit{Bórama}.

\textsuperscript{306} \textit{LL} ll. 6884-6885, 6944-6945. ‘That it may be vengeance for Cummascach / the wounding of Áed mac Ainmerech.’ and ‘I see drops across the great spears / I see Aed in a cold tomb.’

\textsuperscript{307} \textit{LL} ll. 38429-38447. Murphy, \textit{Early Irish Metrics}, p.48. This poem occurs in Lec on f. 306\textsuperscript{th} l. 34, 5qq.

\textsuperscript{308} \textit{LL} ll. 38519-38536. Murphy, \textit{Early Irish Metrics}, p. 64. This poem occurs in Lec on f. 306vb l. 32, 8qq, in this instance \textit{LL} has an additional quatrain.

\textsuperscript{309} \textit{LL} ll. 38549-38558. Cf. Appendix B. Murphy, \textit{Early Irish Metrics}, p. 50. This poem is also found in Lec on f. 307\textsuperscript{th} l. 13, 5qq.
exceedingly interesting as it is spoken by the king of Ulster but he is relaying a vision that Conchobar mac Nessa, the famous king of Ulster, had experienced. Conchobar is used here in a similar role as the Finn mac Cumaill episode earlier, prophesising the coming of Christianity (and indirectly Moling as well);

Atchonnarc aslingthi n-ıngnad
da mbá im súan.
In fitir nech úaib a fidrad
issin tSlúag.

Atchonnaccus dabaich nglaine
Co néim n-ıör;
....
Trían aile ba fín forclid
ıngnad lemm;
daíne cromcenna ros timchell
dar Muir Mend.

Atchondaire iarum Conchobar γ in n-aslingthe sin. Ocus is amlaid
atchonnaic Lagin γ Ulaid 'mán dabaig ıca hól.310

The vision that is relayed here in this poem is then explained by the king of Ulster, the wine is the body and blood of Christ, signifying that Conchobar prophesised Christianity.311 Following that is poem 18 Dénaid dön ar cotach; four verses in the rinnard ailech metre that re-affirms the peace agreement between Ulster and Leinster.312 This is also the second poem in the second section of the text where a cluster of names of saints occur, among them the name of Moling.313 These two poems (17 Atchonnarc aslingthi n-ıngnad and 18 Dénaid dön ar cotach) bring together the pre-Christian era with the Christian present, similar to the Finn mac Cumaill episode in section one. Here Conchobar is used in the same way as Finn was, as a proleptic proto-Christian, both experiencing Christian visions.

Bishop Aedán reappears and utters a single quatrain according to the Bórama text, poem 19 Lussán Aeda meic Ainmerech, although the next few prose lines, in all likelihood, at one time belonged to the poem, but they have gone through some severe alterations. The poem 19 Lussán Aeda meic Ainmerech is referred to in the

310 LL ll. 38549-38551, 38555-38556, 38549-38560. ‘I saw a strange vision / when I was asleep. / Does anyone of you, know its significance / in the host. / I saw a large vat of crystal / with a sheen of gold .. The other third was noble wine, / strange to me; / men with bowed heads going around it / across the Irish sea.’ ‘Then Conchobar beheld this vision. And thus he saw the Leinstermen and the Ulaid, around the vat drinking its contents.’ Stokes, ‘The Boroma’, pp. 74-5, §77.

311 Ibid.

312 LL ll. 38565-38572. Cf. Appendix B. Murphy, Early Irish Metrics, p. 64. This poem is in Lec on f. 307’31 l. 32, 4qq.

313 Cf. Chapter 3: The saints in the Bórama.
text of the *Bórama* as being only a quatrain, *ocus doringni in rand-sa.*\(^{314}\) R.I. Best and M.A. O’Brien lay out the text in their edition as if it should be regarded as one stanza. However, there are indications that this quatrain was originally a part of a longer poem, whose remains are represented in the prose text that follows the verse. I would argue that this should possibly be regarded as the corrupt remains of a poem of more than one stanza, whether it was part of the first quatrain or separate from it. Stokes does the same to some extent although his treatment of the text is different from Best and O’Brien. He decides to take it as part of the prose text and not treat it as a verse at all, although he does give the indication that this is a part of a speech, by using speech markers.\(^{315}\) O’Grady in his translation of the text gives the first line of the poem in accordance to the preceding prose text that this is a quatrain, and then he continues by giving the prose text following the quatrain:

... and he made this quatrain: –
“A fragment of Áed mac Ainmerech ...”
He continued: “upon Kilcullen’s green it shall fall ...”\(^{316}\)

It is however probable that the prose text which follows on from the *rann* of the text does belong to the poem:

*Lussán Aeda meic Ainmerech*  
*faisechtair ic Laignib in liagmair.*  
*Béraid fiach ciár ara úlind*  
*co Cill Culind siarímain.*

*Tuitfid ónád fiach é for faidche Chille Culind. & dogenat macrad Cilli Culind liathróit de. co cend .uii. mbliadan. Doroset scol Cille Dara 7 gétaid fer díb in liathróitsin. Dogenaside sprdéaire de 7 biaid aice co cend .uii. mbliadan aile. Doroset scol Chuana móir M’Aedóc co Cill Dara 7 gétaid fer dibside in spredairesin & ni faccime a dí o sein immach. In sliábo im i ndernad. in cotach. bud Sliab in Chotaig a ainn o sun[n] immach.*\(^{317}\)

It is even possible that the bit that comes after the little quatrain was a separate poem in itself. Áed mac Ainmerech is mentioned in the beginning but does not feature in

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\(^{314}\) LL. l. 38585. ‘And he made this quatrain / stave.’ Stokes, ‘The Boroma’, p. 79, §81.

\(^{315}\) Ibid, pp. 78-9, §81.


\(^{317}\) LL. ll. 38586-38596. ‘Áed’s *lussán* will be left with the Leinstermen of the *liagmair* (?) [possibly ‘great stones’]. A black raven will bear (it) by its corner to Kilcullen westward. It will fall from the raven on the green of Kilcullen, and the children of Kilcullen will make a ball thereof till the end of seven years. The school of Kildare will come, and one of them will take away that ball. He will make a sprinkler [aspergill] of it, and he shall have it to the end of another seven years. The school of Cluain móir Máedóc will come to Kildare and one of them will take away that sprinkler. And I see not its fate (?) thenceforward. But this brae whereon the covenant was made, Sliab in Chotaig – the Mountain of the Covenant – shall be its name henceforward.’ Stokes, ‘The Boroma’, pp. 78-9, §81.
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the text that follows and the only thing to tie the ‘two’ poems together is the reference to a *fiach* ‘raven’ and the place-name of Kilcullen. This is also the final poem connected to the time of Brandub mac Echach and Áed mac Ainmerech. What comes after is a description of Áed mac Ainmerech’s fate at the hands of the Leinstermen, intertwined with this is a short tale relating the relationship between Áed mac Ainmerech and Colum Cille of Iona and how Colum Cille’s cowl was supposed to protect Aed, but unfortunately it had been left behind, which sealed Áed mac Ainmerech’s doom.

The final poem of section two occurs after the *CBDB* episode, when Sechnasach son of Blathmac is king of Ireland and it is he that utters poem 20 *Dénaid dúin bar comairle*, which features him asking his men whether they should go against the Leinstermen and demand the *bórama*. It is three verses in the *aí freisligi* metre.318 The men of Tara did try to demand the *bórama* from the Leinstermen but were unsuccessful this time.

The poems found in the second section of the *Bórama* text are somewhat different in content and context to what was observed in the first section.319 None of the poems contain any reference to the *bórama* origin legend, nor to any extent the kind of prophetic poems of Finn mac Cumaill, aside from poems 17 *Atchonnarc aslingthi n-ingnad* and 18 *Dénaid dún ar cotach*. In terms of content the two poems which start...

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318 LL. 38726-38737. Murphy, *Early Irish Metrics*, p. 62. This poem is in Lec on f. 308v, 3qq.

319 This section gives a possible unexpected insight into Stokes’ literary critique. Stokes included only a completed edition and translation of few poems (that were longer than a quatrain). Those included poems 17 *Atchonnarc aslingthi n-ingnad*, 18 *Dénaid dún ar cotach*, (19 *Lussán Aeda meic Ainmerech*) and 20 *Dénaid dúin bar comairle*. The reason Stokes gave in his introduction to his translation was that he felt the poetry did not add anything to the text, that it was merely repeating what had already been said. It is quite possible that he felt these three poems did not reflect this. Poems 17 *Atchonnarc aslingthi n-ingnad* and 18 *Dénaid dún ar cotach* both refer to Conchobar mac Nessa in the prose, for him to be mentioned there could be what drew Stokes’ attention to the text, so much so, that he felt he needed to include the entirety of the poems surrounding this section of the text. The reason Stokes included a translation for poem 19 *Lussán Aeda meic Ainmerech* has already been discussed briefly, the reason being that there is something more going on in the surrounding prose text than a simple quatrain being included. As such it does not seem strange that Stokes would include a full translation for any of these poems, however does the same apply for poem 20 *Dénaid dúin bar comairle*? Poem 20 *Dénaid dúin bar comairle* occurs after the *CBDB* episode and is spoken by Sechnasach who became king of Ireland after Áed mac Ainmerech. In Stokes’ edition and translation this section of the text is heavily imbued with material from Lec. Preceding the part of Sechnasach is the demise of Áed mac Ainmerech according to Lec and then a short paragraph along with a quatrain on the fate of Sechnasach, cf. Stokes, ‘The Boroma’, pp. 95, 97 fns. The possible reason for Stokes to include the translation of poem 20 *Dénaid dúin bar comairle* is then self explanatory, as this entire section is a much longer episode in Lec. Stokes felt he needed to expand it in order to give a fuller account of the events taking place in this section due to the attention Lec gave it seemingly. In addition to this, it is also frustrating to note that Stokes includes two quatrains (poem e) *A mBuach*) from the *Cath Belaig Duin Bolg* text of YBL without stating that this is where they were taken from, while leaving the rest of the *Cath Belaig Duin Bolg* poems out of his edition.
off this section, poems 12 Failet sund aisceda ríg and 13 M’ael trébend torchálach are of some interest to this section. At this time in the text Christianity has taken root in Ireland and it is in poem 12 Failet sund aisceda ríg that we are presented with the saints; Brigit, Conlaed and Dubthach, who represent the saints of early Christian Leinster. The reason for mentioning these particular saints is because they all have strong ties to Leinster, and what I hope to show in the subsequent chapter is that the majority of saints mentioned within the Bórama text, show strong links to Leinster in one form or another. The reason they appear at this point in the text is to highlight how important the saints are to Leinster, the might of the Leinster saints against saints of other provinces and to illustrate the hagiographical nature of the Bórama.320

Section three: Moling and the remission of the bórama321

The final section of the Bórama text contains thirteen poems and the majority of them are spoken by the main protagonist of the section, Moling Lúachra. Section one and two have up to this point been preparing the audience/reader for the appearance of Moling, mainly through the poems and most strongly through the Finn mac Cumaill episode in section one. Moling’s presence is not predicted in section two in the same way as in section one, although with the inclusion of Máedóc Ua Dúnlainge and Bishop Aedán (as well as Colum Cille) the text had already started to assert its strong hagiographical nature, essentially through the poetry.

All of Leinster had been called together, etir læch 7 clerich ‘both layman and cleric’ except Moling had not answered the call. Therefore a messenger was sent after Moling and it is at that moment that Moling recites poem 21 Cuce seo ro dalus, which consists of four stanzas in the aí freisligi metre.322 This poem is, in my opinion, used to establish Moling’s key role in the text, cuce seo ro dalus ‘to this I was summoned’, possibly indirectly indicating the remission of the bórama, especially when considering the last two lines of the first verse;

 Ni scér rissin n-árusa
 Naco tí lathe brátha.323

322 LL ll. 38755-38770. Cf. Appendix B. Murphy, Early Irish Metrics, p. 62. Found in Lec on f. 308va, 5QQ, one more quatrain than LL has.
323 LL ll. 38757-38758. ‘I will not part from my abode / not until Judgement Day may come.’
Judgement Day (or Doomsday) would play a great part in the conclusion of the tale. Therefore, the reference to Judgement Day in this poem may be interpreted as an indicator to what is to come in the text, much in the same way as the early reference to Moling. The following poem, 22 *Inmain tríar a Christ grind glúair*, is tied to this one as it occurs when Moling prepares to go to the assembly of the king of Leinster. It is a short poem of four stanzas in the *deibide n-imrinn fota* metre.\(^{324}\) It is an interesting poem which will be discussed in further detail in the subsequent chapter on saints, as it contains the names of fifteen saints which are according to the text part of Moling’s retinue. These two poems mark, in my opinion, the grand opening (or entrance) to the final part of the text. This is to situate Moling at the forefront of things to come. He is given a voice in the text with poem 21 *Cuce seo ro dalus* almost before he makes a corporeal appearance in the text and before the messenger reaches him. The second poem is to establish that Moling was already a well respected religious man (or saint) with a large following, indicated by the number of names said to represent his retinue. This effort of establishing Moling as the important character of the text is continued to be represented with poem 23 *Turchan duin a Thuathail*, a poem of fifteen quatrains.\(^{325}\) At this time, Bran mac Conaill was king of Leinster and Tuathal mac Ailella was king of the Uí Muredaig in Leinster. It is Tuathal who is said to be reciting poem 23 *Turchan duin a Thuathail*, although it is more likely Bran who is addressing him, considering the start of the poem;

\begin{center}
*turchan duin a Thuathail \\
maic Ailella uathmair* \(^{326}\)
\end{center}

I would actually suggest that this poem is a conversation between Bran mac Conaill king of Leinster, Tuathal mac Ailella and Moling, and I agree with Buttimer’s observations on this poem.\(^{327}\) The first eight verses are Bran asking Tuathal which of the many saints numerated in the poem (twenty six names including Moling) would manage to rid them of the *bórama*, and in the next three verses it is Tuathal who answers Bran, praising Moling, then the poem shifts again to Bran who talks about the payment that Moling will receive and then the final two verses are probably uttered by Moling.\(^{328}\) The reason for suggesting that the last two verses actually

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\(^{324}\) *LL* ll. 38773-38788. Cf. Appendix B. Murphy, *Early Irish Metrics*, p. 69. Found in Lec on f. 308\(^{4b}\) l. 11, 4qq.

\(^{325}\) *LL* ll. 38797-38885. Cf Appendix B. This poem is also found in Lec on f. 308vb, l. 32, where it is only two quatrains as opposed to fifteen in *LL*.

\(^{326}\) *LL* ll. 38797-38798. ‘Prophesise to us, oh Tuathal / son of terrible Ailill’.


\(^{328}\) Cf. Appendix B.
belong to Moling is because of the following phrase in the poem, *ragaid missi ria* ‘I will go before him’ this seems to indicate the journey that Moling will take to confront Fínnachta, the king of Ireland, and the ‘him’ seems to be a reference to Fínnachta. *Coro gabor mo dúain* ‘that it may be a pleasure, my poem’, probably refers to the fact that among Moling’s plan to have the *bórama* rescinded is the gifting of a poem to Fínnachta, and the mention of the *bórama* in the next line all seem to indicate that it is Moling who is the speaker of the final two verses.

The poem that follows on from this, poem 24 *Érig a Mo Lling*, is similarly a conversation, this time between Bran mac Conaill, king of Leinster and Moling.\(^{329}\) It is eight verses, split between the first three and the last three verses being spoken by Bran, while verse four and five are spoken by Moling. In this poem Moling is adamant that the *bórama* will not be taken from Leinster and Bran encourages Moling on his journey *fathúaid* ‘northwards’.\(^{330}\)

The next five poems (25 *In-anmum na Trinóiti*, 26 *Fínnachta a Huíb Néill*, 27 *Dríbor drábor*, 28 *Crist conic mo chrí* and poem 30 *A mo Chomdiu cumachtach*) are all related to Moling’s journey to Fínnachta and his attempt (and success) at having the *bórama* rescinded. To some extent what occurs in the text at this point has been laid out in the Introduction for section three for easier reference. Moling is on his way to Fínnachta and among his retinue is the poet Tollchenn. On their way to Fínnachta Moling recites poem 25 *In-anmum na Trinóiti*, which is four stanzas in the *cró cummaisc etir casbairdni ocus lethrannaigecht [móir]* metre.\(^{331}\) This short poem seems to be, in some way, like with so many of the poems, indicative of what comes next, and also to heighten the drama of what is to come, culminating in the last verse:

\[
\begin{align*}
Leis commus ar mbethaigthe \\
Ra comsid na cland. \\
Leis commus ar marbthane \\
In tan tic in t-amm. \\
\end{align*}
\]

The ‘him’ of the poem is a reference to Jesus, who is the one who is being praised in this poem. It is a very emotive poem, especially this last verse, if what is to come in the text is taken into account, with the death of Fínnachta’s son and Moling’s restoration of him.

\(^{329}\) *LL* ll. 38887-38934. Cf. Appendix B. It does not seem to belong to a specific metre.

\(^{330}\) *LL* ll. 38890.

\(^{331}\) *LL* ll. 38939-38954. Murphy, *Early Irish Metrics*, p. 65. Found also in Lec, f. 309\(^{32}\), 4qq.

\(^{332}\) *LL* ll. 38951-38954. ‘With him is the power of our life / he arranged the children. / With him is the power of death / when the time comes.’
Poem 26 Fínnachta a Huíb Néill, seven verses, is best described as a panegyric poem, recited by Moling to Fínnachta.\textsuperscript{333} It occurs in the text after Moling has brought Donngilla, Fínnachta’s son, back from the dead and Fínnachta has already promised Moling that he has rescinded the bórama ‘forever’. It is similar to the part where Tuathal describes Moling in poem 23 Turchan duin a Thuathail, where it said about Moling: lassar daiged / tond línta na n-airer ‘a blaze of fire / a wave that fills the shores’, because in poem 26 Fínnachta a Huíb Néill Fínnachta is similarly described: amal gréin atrácht / is í in bárc úasin tuind / is í in tond úas tracht, he is ‘like a rising sun / he is the ship above the wave / he is the wave over the shore’.\textsuperscript{334} In the last verse Moling names three famous kings that were before Fínnachta, and finishes with the lines ciar gabsat Temair co tend / dar lem is ferr Fínnachta ‘although they took Tara strongly / according to me, Fínnachta is better’ thus emphasising how great Fínnachta has become in Moling’s opinion in comparison with the three kings who all in accordance to the Bórama tract exacted the bórama from Leinster.\textsuperscript{335}

Still, this poem conjures up questions of how fine a line there is between praise and satire, which should be kept in mind when discussing poem 29 Andiu cia chengláid chuaca. In between are poems 27 Dríbor drábor and 28 Crist conic mo chrí and they deserve due consideration before continuing on with the discussion on satire and praise. Poem 27 Dríbor drábor is in itself an interesting poem, the so-called ‘nonsense’ poem of the text. This poem is six stanzas in the rannaigecht bec bec metre, and it is recited by Tollchenn when Moling challenges him to prove that the poem he recited to Fínnachta was his own.\textsuperscript{336} When Tollchenn made to recite the poem he had previously claimed as his own, only the nonsense presented in poem 27 Dríbor drábor came out. The fourth verse mentions Moling:

\begin{verbatim}
Mo Lling lúamnech  
Lúam na fírbreth  
Feidm tend tréorach  
Ic deilb fírbreth.\textsuperscript{337}
\end{verbatim}

\textsuperscript{333} \textit{LL} ll. 38988-39015. Cf. Appendix B. This poem does not ascribe to any specific metre. In Lec on f. 309ra, 7 qq.
\textsuperscript{334} \textit{LL} ll. 38844-38845, 38989-38991.
\textsuperscript{335} \textit{LL} ll. 37825-37830.
\textsuperscript{336} \textit{LL} ll. 39018-39029. Murphy, \textit{Early Irish Metrics}, p. 58. This poem is also found in Lec, f. 309\textsuperscript{th} l. 20, 6qq.
\textsuperscript{337} \textit{LL} ll. 39024-39025. ‘Fluttering Moling / steersman of just judgement / strong energetic undertaking / by the figure of the just judgement.’
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This verse resonates somewhat with a couple of lines from poem 08 Ross mBruicc bale buredac: Mo Lling lúam na fírinne and doraga fer foluamnach although there is little else to tie them together.\(^{338}\) It is possible to imagine that this poem in a nonsensical way is drawing on the legend of Moling, especially when considering the earlier line buaidre céille ‘oh confusion of the mind’.\(^{339}\) Then, perhaps, it is not a coincidence that the last verse of the poem is a prophecy regarding the death of Tollchenn, a glimmer of lucidity within the nonsense of the poem like the part referring to Moling.

\[
\begin{align*}
Messe imbárách
c o m u i r m l a c h .
d ‘ E s s R ú a i d r a m a c h
i a r n - ú a i m t r í l e c h . \,! ^ { 3 4 0 } 
\end{align*}
\]

Afterwards Moling turns towards the deceased son of Fínnachta, and by reciting poem 28 Crist conic mo chrí brings him back to life. The poem is eight stanzas in the lethrrannaigecht mór metre.\(^{341}\) The poem ties together the restoration of Fínnachta’s son and the agreement Fínnachta made with Moling, not to demand the bórama until lúan ‘Monday’, and this is emphasised through verse two to five.\(^{342}\)

Poem 29 Andiu cia chenglaid chuaca occurs after Moling has departed from Fínnachta back to Leinster, and is spoken by Adomnán addressing Finnachta. It is thirteen stanzas in the rannaigecht fotara recomarach metre.\(^{343}\) Compared with poem 26 Fínnachta a Huíb Néill, which was a praise poem, this poem is more satirical in nature. Adomnán is literally admonishing Fínnachta for having rescinded the bórama and falling for Moling’s deception about luán ‘Monday’. This is emphasised particularly through verse three:

\[
\begin{align*}
Cach rí nach maithend a chís
Is fata bíth a scéla
Maírgh dorat in dáil dorat
Intí is lú is dó is méla . \,! ^ { 3 4 4 } 
\end{align*}
\]

\(^{338}\) *LL* ll. 38103, 38112, 38118. ‘Moling steersman of justice’ and ‘a fluttering man will come’.

\(^{339}\) *LL* l. 39021.

\(^{340}\) *LL* ll. 39028-39029. ‘I, tomorrow / towards the abounding sea. / To rowing Assaroe / after composing a poem (trilling).’

\(^{341}\) *LL* ll. 39038-39055. Murphy, *Early Irish Metrics*, p. 57. In Lec, f. 309\(^b\) l. 38, 7qq, while *LL* has 8qq for this poem.

\(^{342}\) Cf. Appendix B.

\(^{343}\) *LL* ll. 39098-39149. Cf. Appendix B. Murphy, *Early Irish Metrics*, p. 53. Also found in Lec, f. 309\(^v\)vb, 12qq, while *LL* has 13qq for this poem.

\(^{344}\) *LL* ll. 39106-39109. ‘Every king who does not remit his tax / his legend is long(-lived) / woe to him who made the agreement he has made / that one is weak and to him it is shameful (?)’.
Both poems 26 Fínnachta a Huib Néill and poem 29 Andiu cia chenglaid chuaca occur in the so-called Mionannála, in MS. Egerton 1782, among further stories regarding Fínnachta and also his relationship with Adomnán.345 The FA also includes stories relating to Fínnachta, although it does not include poem 26 Fínnachta a Huib Néill, only poem 29 Andiu cia chenglaid chuaca. These two poems portray this interesting contrast of the image of Fínnachta as king. One praises him cia gabsat Temair co tend / dar lem is ferr Fínnachta while the other rebukes him for being weak for remitting the bórama.346

The four remaining poems are all connected to Moling escaping from Fínnachta and his men after they give chase once Fínnachta has realised the implications of having remitted the bórama, which was shame. Poem 30 A mo Chomdiu cumachtach is Moling’s prayer to God and a curse on Fínnachta. The poem is comprised of six quatrains in the casbairdne metre.347 Again, this poem resonates with another poem that occurs early in the text, poem 02 Tuathal Tecthmar techta in talman especially with the last two lines of the last verse da fichet ríg do chlaind Tuathail / ros ben a bruachaidh Bríd Molt ‘forty kings descendants of Tuathal / they struck it out from the borders of Brí Molt’.348 In poem 30 A mo Chomdiu cumachtach this is again demonstrated; forty kings who were descendents of Tuathal Tecthmar took the bórama:

.x. ruc i mboroma
dá .xx. fingarta.
ó Tuathal Tecthmar na ndíne
nó co rige Fínnachta.349

The poem continues with, how Moling managed to have the bórama rescinded;

Messe ruc in mbórramaí
Do Lagnaib ca fulachtain
ó Uíb Néill can nert doilge
a mo Chomde cumachtach.350

345 MS Egerton 1782, ff. 56-64, contains Mionannála which contains much of the same contents as the Fragmentary Annals of Ireland, and has sometimes been confused with the Egerton manuscript. S.H. O’Grady edited and translated MS Egerton 1782 in Silva Gadelica vol. 1 – 2, where it follows on from his edition and translation of the Bórama. The poem 29 Andiu cia chenglaid chuaca is also included there but as with most of his work, he has not included the poetry in his translation. Cf. FA, pp. 20-33, with slight variations to the LL text.

346 LL. ll.39014-39015. ‘although they took Tara strongly / according to me, Fínnachta is better.’

347 LL. ll. 39153-39175. Murphy, Early Irish Metrics, p. 59. Found in Lec on f. 309vb, l. 34, 6qq.

348 LL. ll. 37817-37818.

349 LL. ll. 39169-39176. ‘Ten took the bórama / forty vineyards / since Tuathal Tecthmar of the generations / until the king of Fínnachta.’
Chapter 2. The Poetry

Although Moling addresses the poem to God rather than Fínnachta it is full of derisive remarks aimed towards Fínnachta. This poem is a counter-balance to the praise poem Moling recited earlier on and complements the satirical nature of the previous poem which was also aimed at Fínnachta.

Poem 31 Corbar cairrge ar dairge donna is in the forduan metre. It is only a single quatrain spoken by Moling as he flees from Fínnachta’s men. The following poem, 32 Suidem sund suide n-ága, occurs when Moling is still on the run. It is three verses in the rannaigecht flota recomarcach metre. There are a number of issues concerning this poem, both in terms of content and how it fits in the text here. The first verse seems to be resonating episodes from the second section of the text (CBDB), with the mention of Colum Cille and the pack of wolves;

\[\text{Cip é bess for greiss Colaim} \\
\text{Ní bía a choland fo chúana,}\]

As such this first verse does not seem to fit the text in which it occurs, for Moling to be saying that those who are under Colum Cille’s protection, who was and is considered more as a northern Irish saint and therefore not usually associated with Leinster, would not suffer an undignified death (to be a carcass for wolves) seems out of place. The second verse resonates strongly with poem 30 A mo Chomdiu cumachtach through the line where Moling is cursing Fínnachta mo mallacht is mallacht rig nemda / for ríg Temra, for Fínnachta ‘my curse and the curse of the heavenly king / on Tara’s king, on Fínnachta’. This line is duplicated in the second verse of poem 32 Suidem sund suide n-ága, although in a somewhat altered form, mo mallacht ar Fínnachta, γ mallacht Ríg nime, ‘my curse on Fínnachta and the curse of the King of the Heavens’. This second verse almost seems to belong more among the verses of poem 30 A mo Chomdiu cumachtach rather than in poem 32 Suidem sund suide n-ága. The final verse, verse three, of this poem is addressed to a number of saints and seems, when considered along with the other two verses of the poem, out of place, although ‘care’ has been taken so that the first line and the last line of

\[\text{LL ll. 39173-39176. ‘I took the bórama / for Leinster which endures / from Uí Néill without difficult strenght / oh my mighty Lord.’} \]

\[\text{LL ll. 39180-39183. Murphy,} \text{Early Irish Metrics, pp. 53-4.} \]

\[\text{LL ll. 398186-39197. Cf. Appendix B. Murphy,} \text{Early Irish Metrics, p. 53.} \]

\[\text{LL ll. 39186-39187. ‘whosoever be under Columba’s protection / his body will not be attacked by wolves.’} \]

\[\text{LL ll. 39159-39160.} \]

\[\text{LL ll. 39190-39191.} \]
the poem correspond with a dúnad ‘conclusion’; suidem sund suide n-ága and is let cech suide suidim.\textsuperscript{356} What I mean by ‘care’ here is one of the many questions that arise when considering the poems of the text. It has to do with the fact that further linguistic work needs to be undertaken in regards to this text, to see whether some of the poems have either been incorporated into the texts from somewhere else or if they have, in fact, been composed for the sake of the text. This question has arisen with other poems of the text, for instance, such as poem \textit{06 Rot fiasu i mBroccross} suggested by Buttmer and also poem \textit{13 M’aél trébend torcbáalach} which seems like it could have been composed for the benefit of the text, to tie in better poem \textit{12 Failet sund aisceda rig} with the prose.

The final poem, poem \textit{33 A Brigit bennach ar sét} is among the lengthiest poems of the text, consisting of twenty eight verses in the \textit{rannaigecht dialtach} metre.\textsuperscript{357} It is a very interesting poem, where thirty-one saints appear in the text.\textsuperscript{358} Again it is Moling who speaks, mainly addressing Brigit of Kildare, asking for her blessing and protection on his run from Finnachta and this is recited when he has reached Kildare on his escape, which is most appropriate. The first four verses are addressed to or refer to Brigit, followed by the next twenty-four verses filled with addresses to the numerous saints of the poem. My tentative conclusion regarding this poem is that it is as significant to the entire manuscript of \textit{LL} as the presence of Moling is to the text of the \textit{Bórama}. This is of course not a stand-alone suggestion, but should be taken into consideration with the argument in the previous chapter on the textual relationship among other texts within the \textit{LL} manuscript. Moling’s presence in the \textit{Bórama} provides the same cohesive link to the text of the \textit{Bórama} as it does to the surrounding material in \textit{LL}. In chapter four Moling is the main feature for discussion, and included in the discussion will be some of the key texts of the \textit{LL} manuscript which link directly to Moling. Considering how the tale started with little or no mention of saints at all, gradually starts to mention saints by name, with emphasis on Moling, it is quite possible that the author wanted to end the tale on a high note when Moling reaches Kildare and to finish with a poem that includes the names of more than thirty saints, saints that will all be shown to have strong links to either Moling or the province of Leinster or both (and possibly other texts within the \textit{LL} manuscript).

\textsuperscript{356} \textit{LL} ll. 39186, 39197. ‘Let us sit here, a seat of battle’ and ‘it is yours, every sitting which I sit.’

\textsuperscript{357} \textit{LL} ll. 39210-39321. Cf. Appendix B. Murphy, \textit{Early Irish Metrics}, p. 52.

\textsuperscript{358} Cf discussion on the saints in Chapter 3: The saints in the \textit{Bórama}.
The poems within the third section are to a great extent quite different from those in sections one and two. One thing that stands out is that almost the majority of the poems in this section mention saints, and in most cases more than one, although the focus is mainly on Moling as the main protagonist of the text in this section. The poems in this section have a different purpose than the poems of the previous sections. The poems in section one were there to give the origin legend of the bórama and prepare for the entrance of Moling into the text. Section two relates the tale of the battle of Dún Bolg; the episode bridges the previous section with the third section of the tale. Mainly they form part of the Cath Belaig Dún Bolg episode. However, two particular poems stand out in this regard, poem 12 Failet sund aisceda ríg and poem 18 Dénaid dúin ar cotach, which do not appear in the YBL text. It is possible to say that poem 12 Failet sund aisceda ríg is the first of the poems in the Bórama clearly to introduce the hagiographical material in the text, aside from the earlier mention of Moling. This is then emphasized again with poem 18 Dénaid dúin ar cotach with the high number of saints mentioned, including among them Moling. Poem 17 Aichonnarc aslingthi n-ingsnad also has a role to play in the text as a reported prophecy of the coming of Christianity by the pre-Christian character of Conchobar mac Nessa, or perhaps more appropriately a prophecy of the age of saints with poem 18 Dénaid dúin ar cotach. This was also represented in poem 12 Failet sund aisceda ríg. The question remaining then is why the emphasis on all the saints within the poetry; which is something that will remain unanswered at present, but will be addressed in the following chapter. At this point it can be noted that it should not be considered strange that the presence of saints should increase considerably by the third section as it is firmly placed within the age of saints.

**Conclusion**

The purpose of this chapter has been to illustrate the layout of the text in terms of the poems as well as their contents and how they interact with the prose. This is also to raise issues regarding the poems situation in the manuscript (particularly poem (14) Guidim Comdid cumachtach) and their relationship with other texts. When specifically looking towards the poems presented in section three and Moling, his dominant presence within the text can no longer be disregarded. His presence has been firmly established. What the majority of the poems of section one demonstrates is that they have two functions; one is to present the origin legend of the bórama and the fate of the girls, and two is to prophesise the arrival of Moling and to emphasise
his importance to the legend of the *bórama*. This is accomplished by including Finn mac Cumaill, one of the great Irish heroes, but not allowing him to be the one who manages to have the *bórama* rescinded. This I take as a good indicator that the poetry of the text is vital to the progression of the tale, serving a purpose that the prose cannot do on its own.

For section two I hope to have shown that the *Cath Belaig Dún Bolg* tale in the *Bórama* is drastically different from the *Cath Belaig Dún Bolg* tale in YBL, both in terms of prose and poetry. Already in section two there is greater presence of saints within the prose text, Máedóc Ua Dúnlainge, Bishop Aedán and even Colum Cille are mentioned, but only two poems refer to saints at all (and Moling is only mentioned once in passing). Among the great difference between *Cath Belaig Dún Bolg* in YBL and the *Bórama* are the saints present in the text. Bishop Aedán is present in both, but Máedóc Ua Dúnlainge only appears in the *Bórama* text and Cóemgen of Glendalough only appears in *Cath Belaig Dún Bolg* of YBL (although he does appear in the poetry of the *Bórama*, but does not participate in the events through the prose). Possibly the tale of Máedóc Ua Dúnlainge and the gifts he gave to Brandub may have existed in some form or another at some point before being included in the *Bórama*, although there is no extant evidence for this. Moling was never associated with *Cath Belaig Dún Bolg* and therefore the inclusion of his name in the second section is significant. Máedóc Ua Dúnlainge and Bishop Aedán serve as substitutes to Moling in section two hence there is no reference to Moling directly as it is also outside his time frame. Only through poem 18 *Dénaid dún ar cotach* is there an indirect mention of Moling and seems to be due to an innovation by the compiler of the *Bórama*.359 There is, then, perhaps no reason to believe that the *Bórama* did not exist in its current form before it was incorporated into the LL manuscript.360

Section three is the focal point of the text. The prose and poetry here work much more in unison with the progression of the text, rather than for instance in section one where some of the poems were used to highlight a character that was at that time

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359 An interesting note, which will be explored further in Chapter 4: Moling, is that in the same poem preserved in Lec, the name of Moling is absent. It is only in LL that he is mentioned.

360 The *Cath Belaig Dún Bolg* episode was seemingly incorporated into the *Bórama* as a hitherto unconnected text. Thus the Brandub mac Echach material earlier in LL (poem (14) *Gúidim Comdíd cumachtach* and *Béimend Branduib for Brega*) would have been regarded as unconnected with the *Bórama* as well, and therefore the poem could have been regarded as a stand-alone text in its own right and because of this only referred to in the *Bórama* but not included.
not yet present in the text. The poems in section three also carry with them a great increase in the reference to saints, from section two. Moling is now a fixture in the text and there is no need for indirect references to him as such, and only three poems mention his role in the remission of the bórama directly.361

The incredible variety of metres the poetry of the Bórama demonstrates is also testament to the ambitious creation that lay behind the text. The most common metre is aí freisligi and rannaigecht dialtach scailte where four poems fall under these metres, followed by deibide scailte fota which includes three poems.362 With eighteen different poetic metres and thirty-three poems, only four of these metres belong to the deibide metre. The deibide metre is usually considered to ‘echo the prose’ and each of the four deibide poems of the Bórama text demonstrate this.363 In fact, there are not many poems which can be said to completely echo the prose of the text, whether in the deibide metre or other. The rest of the poems are split between dían / rannaigecht or ochtfoclach type of metre. This incredible variety of poetic metre in the Bórama cannot be considered insignificant. By comparison, the BS contains thirty-one poems, which are mostly in the deibide metre.364 There is high probability that the variety of poetic metres the Bórama displays is yet another example of the ambitious creation the text is. The same metrical style only appears once side by side; otherwise it is a different metre running throughout the text.365 In a way, this text is very flamboyant in its display of poetic metres, a possible indication that the author wanted the text to be noticed for its affluence of style, not merely the content of the prose but also the style of the poetry. One must however, be aware, that as the first chapter highlighted, the text of the Bórama, owes much of its creation to various other texts. This will undoubtedly have influenced the metrical variety of the text, however, but does not diminish the value the various metres have to the overall text. Comparing the considerable length of the Bórama tract with other literary texts of the era, few if any display the same level of metrical variety as the Bórama. Hence, greater attention should be given to the poems which intersperse the text.366 It is also

361 Poems 24 Érig a Mo Lling and 28 Crist conic mo chrí and 30 A mo Chomdiu cumachtach.
362 Cf Appendix A.
364 Ibid.
365 Cf. Appendix A. On the occasion that the same poetic metre occurs twice in a row, for poems 20 Dénaid dúin bar comairle and 21 Cuce seo ro dalus, it is situated where I have placed the section division for the text, between section two and three.
impossible not to acknowledge the great importance the poetry has for the overall
text of the Bórama. This chapter has hopefully shed light on a great number of issues
which have until now been ignored or disregarded for the most part by scholars, and
because the poetry has not been easily accessible to the every-day reader of early
Irish texts in translation, the overall understanding of what the text conveys has
suffered.
3. The saints in the *Bórama*: purpose and provenance

The text of the *Bórama* offers an abundance of saints. Over all there are sixty-eight saints mentioned in the poetry, with two further saints, Bishop Aedán of Glendalough and Adomnán, who are not referred to in the poetry but are part of the prose text. Section one has the fewest mentions of saints, which is not unexpected as section one is placed in the pre-Christian era of Ireland. In fact it is perhaps surprising that any saints at all are mentioned in this section. In section two there is a visible increase in the mention of saints, and culminating in section three with the greatest number of saints. Of the thirty-three poems in the *Bórama*, there are sixteen poems which contain references to saints or a cluster of saints’ names. Nine of these poems refer mainly to Moling while seven poems include reference to saints other than Moling. The saints who feature in these seven poems will be the topic of discussion in this chapter. The purpose of this chapter is to take a close look at the saints; their situation in the poetry, and in the text, as well as to take a look at the surrounding material in the *LL* manuscript. It will also be interesting to note, in relation to both poetry and prose, the possible purpose of including these specific saints in the *Bórama* at certain points in the text.

An attempt will be made to identify the saints in the poetry, although that may not always prove successful. The main reason for an attempt at identifying them is to try to figure out their provenance and/or their connection to Leinster. As many of the saints mentioned are without any identifiable markers such as provenance or family name this may prove to be a particular challenge. For certain saints there are more than one candidate to choose from and in these cases I will try to identify the most likely saint(s) or give a reason for not doing so. In those cases where I have been unable to decide between likely saints, both will be included in the entry for that particular saint in the table in Appendix C. It is not the purpose of this chapter to give the biography of the saints, but to seek out ties with Moling or Leinster. Familial or parochial affiliation will be noted where possible and certain episodes of the saints’ lives will be mentioned. Neither is it the purpose of this chapter (or thesis) to argue a case for whether the saints in question are literary or historical characters. What is important is to keep in mind how the saint(s) would have been regarded at the time the *Bórama* was created and included in the *LL* manuscript, in order to see whether it is possible to understand why a particular saint was chosen.
Chapter 3. The saints in the Bórama

The layout will be as with other chapters, with each section being dealt with individually, and I will start by discussing the saints’ names found within the poems of each section. At the end of this chapter I will include a short discussion on those saints who occur in the prose text itself and their possible impact on the text, followed by a conclusion as to what the inclusion of these saints in the text of the Bórama may indicate. I will discuss in broad terms the extant material relating to the saints in so far as it illustrates their connection with Leinster (or other relevant provinces) and/or with Moling. Moling, as has been established, is the main protagonist of the text and will not be included in the discussion for this chapter. Instead, he will receive individual attention in the following chapter.

In order to try to identify the saints of the poetry, I have used the martyrologies and annals in order to sift through the numerous early Irish saints. The Martyrology of Tallaght (MT) is also found in LL and is the earliest of the martyrologies. MT is the martyrology which was first and foremost utilised in this research.\(^{367}\) The other martyrologies used are the Martyrology of Oengus more commonly referred to as Félire Óengusso (FÓ), the Martyrology of Gorman (MG) and the Martyrology of Donegal (MD).\(^{368}\) Since MT is also found in LL and as various scholars have hinted that the Bórama shows evidence of being under the influence of king-lists, genealogies and last but not least martyrologies, it was felt prudent to confer extensively with MT in order to see to what possible extent of influence. While MT is a major resource it does not solve all issues. Part of MT is missing and as such it was beneficial to compare entries with later martyrologies and in particular FÓ and MG. FÓ is considered to be a contemporary of MT and MG a contemporary of LL.\(^{369}\) All the saints who feature in the poetry are presented in a table in Appendix C for future reference.

At a late stage of researching this thesis, the timely publication of Pádraig Ó Riaín’s Dictionary of Irish saints occurred, much to the benefit of this chapter.\(^{370}\) While the majority of the work was already underway the research benefitted immensely from

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\(^{370}\) Ó Riaín, Dictionary of Irish Saints. (Dublin, 2011).
the work of Ó Riain (DIS and Corpus Genealogiarum Sanctorum Hiberniae (CGSH)) and helped in tracing the trail of the saints. There is generally no reason to invent the wheel more than once, but it can be improved upon and as such, while Ó Riain’s book has been of help, I do not always agree with him. In some cases it is clear that Ó Riain is basing his analysis to some extent on that of Mícheál Ó Cléirigh of MD, who also attempted to identify some of the saints that appear in the poems of the Bórama. While Ó Riain’s focus is on the saints themselves in a wider context, my focus is on the text of the Bórama and the saint’s relationship to those around him. Therefore Ó Riain’s assessment of the identity of the saint and mine may on occasion differ considerably.

The saints in the poems

Section one: the levying of the bórama and Finn mac Cumaill

The first and only poem in section one to contain a reference to a saint other than Moling is poem 05 Mo Lling Líagh Cellach Bróen bil. In the third stanza of the poem the names of two saints occur;

| Brénaind Birra, Brénaind fáid | níba tláith ticfait in ross. |

The first saint mentioned is Brendan of Birr (†565 or 572 AU) while the second is Brendan of Clonfert (†577 or 583 AU). Brendan of Birr, otherwise known as Brendan mac Nemain, was abbot at Birra (Birr, Co. Offaly) in Leinster. Because sections of MT are missing we do not have the entry for 29 November on which he was commemorated according to later martyrologies, however, he is commemorated in MT on 9 May. 9 May does not occur in any of the other martyrologies, while they all mention him in the entries for 29 November. Brendan of Clonfert has visible ties with both Brendan of Birr and Moling; these ties are highlighted in

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371 DIS, pp. 69, 174, 500. Cf. discussion on Milóc of poem 22 Inmain triar a Christ grind gláair further on in this chapter.


374 LL ll. 37916 – 37917, ‘Brendan of Birr, (and) Brendan the prophet / it isn’t feebly, that they will come to the Ross.’

375 Cf. Appendix C.


377 MT, pp. 41, 234.

somewhat later sources than *LL. Liber Flavus Fergussiorum*, a late fourteenth – early fifteenth-century vellum manuscript, contains a late version of *Navigatio Brendani*, the voyage tale of Brendan of Clonfert, which demonstrate in particular the relationship shared between Brendan of Clonfert and Brendan of Birr.\(^\text{379}\)

There have been cases where the boundaries between Brendan of Birr and Brendan of Clonfert are somewhat blurred. This could have something to do with the fact that while Brendan of Clonfert is well documented through his *Vita*, there is very little documentation about Brendan of Birr himself, at least from what has survived.\(^\text{380}\) In Adomnán’s *Vita Columbae* (*VC*), (dating from around the seventh century), both Brendan of Birr and Brendan of Clonfert feature in similar circumstances. Both are described as founders of monasteries and both receive / have a vision of Columba accompanied by a column of light.\(^\text{381}\) Adomnán’s *VC* seems to be among the earliest sources that ties these two saints together. It is also ‘clear from Adhamhnán’s account that Bréanainn of Birr was held in high esteem by the community on Iona, which credited him with the intervention at an assembly in Tailte that saved Colum Cille from excommunication.’\(^\text{382}\)

Neither MT nor *FÓ* refer to the voyage legend in relation to Brendan of Clonfert, and nor does *VC*.\(^\text{383}\) Furthermore, the earliest manuscript of the Brendan legend, the *Navigatio Brendani*, dates from around the tenth century.\(^\text{384}\) Although the manuscript tradition of *Navigatio Brendani* is bound to the continent of Europe it may be assumed, based on later Irish material, that the Brendan voyage legend was fairly widespread in Ireland by the tenth century and later. As such the legend of Brendan of Clonfert would have been highly regarded all over Ireland by the time the *Bórama* was included in *LL*. Taking into account how these two saints were regarded at the time of the compilation of the *LL* it is not untoward to suspect that the second Brendan of the poem could be referring to Brendan of Clonfert. In addition, Brendan


\(^{382}\) *DIS*, p. 114.


of Birr and Brendan of Clonfert were contemporaries which would make them an ideal pair to be included in the poem. In the last verse of poem 05 Mo Lling Lúath Cellach Bróen bil, there is mention of yet another Brendan, only referred to as Brenaind sin Druim, ‘Brendan in the Drum’. It is most likely that the drum is a reference to Drum Dubglass (Drum Dubhglais) mentioned earlier in the poem, rather than another Brendan altogether. Brendan of Birr is firmly situated within the boundaries of Leinster however Clonfert is within the Connacht territory. In this respect he does not fall within the province of Leinster, however at this stage it is possible that the tradition of associating Brendan of Birr with Brendan of Clonfert had developed which could have influenced the compiler of the Bórama.

Although little is known of Brendan of Birr, it does not mean that he was not greatly esteemed in Leinster, and in terms of the Bórama text, it can be argued that the place of Birr may have had particular interest. As has been illustrated through the general story line of the Bórama and previous discussion, two saints appear in the prose text of the Bórama who do not have specific affiliation with Leinster; these are Colum Cille of Iona and Adomnán.

In 697 Cáin Adomnáin (CA) ‘The Law of Innocents’ was passed at Birr:

However, St Brendan, the founder of Birr, was particularly revered by Adomnán. In his Vita Columbae, Adomnán tells us that while in Ireland, the saint was ‘excommunicated for some trivial and quite excusable offences by a synod that, as eventually became known, had acted wrongly.’ He was alienated by everyone apart from St Brendan, who showed him great reverence and made a statement defending him as innocent. ‘After this statement,’ Adomnán writes, ‘the elders dropped their charge, for they dared not continue with their excommunication.’

Adomnán must have taken some pleasure in returning the favour shown to Columba by Brendan to Brendan’s own successors at the monastery he founded.

Birr was also a very strategic location as it lies on the boundaries of north and south Ireland. These connections between Brendan of Birr, Colum Cille and later Adomnán are something to consider, as well as the fact that Moling was one of the

385 LL l. 37924.
386 LL l. 37910.
388 Sharpe, Adomnán: Life of St. Columba, p. 207, §3.
guarantors present at Birr when they passed the law. This is quite significant I would argue.\(^\text{391}\) If the Bórama is as significant to the material of Moling as I suspect, then Brendan of Birr would definitely deserve mention.

**Section two: the ‘Cath Belaig Dúín Bolg’ episode (or CBDB)**\(^\text{392}\)

Section two contains two poems which refer to saints, poems 12 *Failet sund aisceda ríg* and 18 *Dénaid dúin ar cotach*. Poem 12 *Failet sund aisceda ríg* gives the names of five saints, while poem 18 *Dénaid dúin ar cotach* contains a cluster of ten saints’ names. Each poem has its own purpose within the text and therefore the purpose of the saints featured there differ as well. Section two is also now placed firmly within the Christian period of Ireland, taking place in the late sixth century. Within poem 12 *Failet sund aisceda ríg* there are five saints mentioned, in the following order: Conlaed, Brigit, Dubthach, Fíac and Máedóc Uí Dúnlainge.\(^\text{393}\)

Brigit is perhaps the most important in the hagiography of Leinster. She is [one of] the chief saints of the province of Leinster, and ‘was second in rank only to Patrick in the Irish tradition.’\(^\text{394}\) Her feastday is 1 February, and the annals place her floruit ca 452 – 526.\(^\text{395}\) *Bethu Brigte*, the Irish version of her life, is contained in Rawlinson B. 512 a fifteenth- or early sixteenth-century manuscript.\(^\text{396}\) It contains a short account of a man called Dubthach moccu Lugair who had come to woo Brigit.\(^\text{397}\) This Dubthach is the same man as is mentioned in this poem. Dubthach himself was closely tied to Patrick and his arrival at Tara as well as his pupil Fíac.\(^\text{398}\) Fíac was chosen by Patrick to become bishop after Dubthach suggested to Patrick that Fíac

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\(^\text{393}\) Cf. Appendix B.


\(^\text{396}\) D. Ó hAodha, *Bethu Brigte*, (Dublin, 1978). B. Ó Cuív, *Catalogue of Irish language manuscripts in the Bodleian Library at Oxford and Oxford college libraries*, (Dublin, 2001), pp. 223-254. The manuscript contains both the Irish life of Brigit (f. 31v\(^\text{1}\)) and the Tripartite Life of Patrick (f.58v\(^\text{1}\)), as well as Cáin Adomnán (f.48v\(^\text{1}\)) and *FÓ* (f. 53v\(^\text{1}\)) A Latin life of Brigit is also found in *Codex Salmanticensis. VSHH*, pp. 1-37.


Chapter 3. The saints in the Bórama

was the one he was looking to fill the role of bishop. Fíac is also anachronistically accredited with a hymn in honour of Patrick. Dubthach is not commemorated in the martyrologies (aside from one entry in MD for 7 October) although he is traditionally considered a saint, mainly due to his association with Patrick and Brigit. Conlaed on the other hand was closely associated with Brigit as her bishop at Kildare. His feastday is 3 May and, like Dubthach and Fíac, he was a contemporary of Brigit. He is also recognised as being one of the chief artisans (cearda) in Ireland. All four saints demonstrate a close relationship between each other in one way or another and all are closely tied to the province of Leinster.

The fifth saint of the poem is the speaker himself, Máedóc Ua Dúnlainge; as such his purpose within the poem is different from the other four saints. His infamous ancestor, Dúnlang mac Énna Nia was involved in the events described in the CnC episode. According to the genealogy, he is also related to Moling himself, as well as many other prominent Leinster saints. Máedóc Ua Dúnlainge also appears in the poem Lecht Cormaic meic Culennáin found in LL f. 43b;

\[
\begin{align*}
&\text{Is cluain immar naem-relic} & \text{Aeda Find beib adfeidem} \\
&\text{inmain inad essergi} & \text{i fil martra naem nhErend.} \\
&\text{Noe fichit cruimthirech} & \text{coic mili mórdá ferta} \\
&\text{ac Moédóc hua nDunlainge} & \text{atat a ferta.}\end{align*}
\]

401 MD, pp. 268-9. DIS, pp. 275-6. MD associates Dubthach of poem 22 Inmain triar a Christ grind gliair as a reference to Dubthach moccu Lugair, and commemorates him on 7 October. This view is seconded by Pádraig Ó Riain in DIS. Cf discussion for poem 22 Inmain triar a Christ grind gliair further on in this chapter.
402 Kenney, Sources, pp. 356, 360. DIS, p. 223.
406 Cf. Appendix C.
407 LL ll. 6371-6378. ‘There is a meadow like the holy cemetery of Aed the fair, as we declare, the beloved place of resurrection where are the holy martyrs of Éire. / Nine times twenty priests, five thousand stately tombs are with Maedoc grandson of Donlang.’ Dobbs, ‘Graves’, pp. 144, 148.
Chapter 3. The saints in the Bórama

Máedóc Ua Dúnlainge, along with his church (Cluain-mór Maedóc, (Clonmore, Co. Carlow)), seems to have been regarded highly among the Leinster saints. That he is of the same family as Moling suits the purpose of this text as well as his other familial and textual relationship. His purpose within this poem it seems is, as a reciter, to bring together the pagan past with the now Christian present of the text. Along with the four saints there are four previous kings of Leinster mentioned, Dúnlang, Énna, Ailill and Crimthann († 483), and according to the chronology, these would represent the pagan past of Leinster.

Brigit, Conlaed, Dubthach and Fíac all represent the arrival of Christianity in Ireland, and possibly, as illustrated in Patrick’s Tripartite Life (VT), demonstrate the seemingly easy acceptance of Christianity by the Leinster saints. The main content of poem 12 Failet sund aiseda ríg, are the gifts; the sword, shield, cauldron and fleshfork. Máedóc Ua Dúnlainge presents these gifts to Brandub mac Echach, king of Leinster in his battle against the onslaught from Tara. The purpose of this poem, like poem 05 Mo Lling Lúath Cellach Bróen bil of section one, seems to be to demonstrate the strength of the saints of Leinster, not least in relation to saints of other provinces although that is perhaps not evident in the poem. The saints of Leinster were at the ready to defend the province of Leinster in their battles against others, and en masse as soon as they appear in the text it seems.

The second poem in section two, poem 18 Dénaid dún ar cotach, contains a cluster of saints with five names in the second verse and five names in the third verse; the poem itself is only four verses in length. The main subject of the poem is the peace agreement between the provinces of Leinster and Ulster. It occurs in the text after the vision of Conchobur mac Nessa, where he prophesises the coming of Christianity, which is important in itself to the overall subject of the Bórama. The five saints in the second verse all seem to show ties of one kind or another with Leinster and the five saints of the third verse of the poem seem to show similar ties with the province of Ulster. The prose text which follows the poem supports the thinking that the saints

408 CGSH, §249 and §285.
411 Cf. Appendix B.
412 Cf discussion on poem 17 Atechonnarc aslingthi n-ingnad in Chapter 2: The Poetry.
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do represent five saints from each of the two provinces: Dessetar naím Lagen ɣ Ulad ‘sin tsleib iar sain. & doniat a cotach cen taitheach tria bithu.413

The first five saints of the poem are Brigit, Máedóc from Dún Inne, Móling, Abbán and Cóemgen of Glenn Dá Locha (Glendalough, Co. Wicklow). Brigit and Móling are known and well connected with the province of Leinster, but the other three have yet to be discussed. Máedóc of Dún Inne is somewhat problematic.414 Reference to the place-name of Dún Inne is sparse.415 No saint linked to the place of Dún Inne is found in the martyrologies.416 It seems unlikely that within this poem, where such renowned saints as Brigit and Móling, not to mention Abbán and Cóemgen of Glendalough (who will follow shortly) are mentioned, there would appear such an obscure saint. It is quite likely that the Dún Inne may be a corrupt form of Dúnlainge, and therefore a reference to Máedóc Ua Dúnlainge, his life was later subsumed with that of Máedóc of Ferns. Máedóc of Dún Inne may be a reflection of the amalgamation of the two saints. Máedóc of Ferns demonstrates ties with Ulster. He was born, according to the sources, in Inis Breachmaighe, close to Drumlane, in south-west Ulster and was associated with many Ulster saints, such as Colmán of Dromore.417 Thus, the amalgamation of Máedóc Ua Dúnlainge and Máedóc of Ferns could be a worthy candidate for the seemingly unidentifiable Máedóc of Dún Inne. Whether this stems from the fact that the tradition of Máedóc of Ferns was still developing or that these are remnants of earlier material associated with Máedóc Ua Dúnlainge is impossible to determine.418 At the time of the compilation of LL the interest in Máedóc of Ferns was definitely increasing and by the twelfth century he would certainly have been regarded as a highly revered saint.419

413 LL ll. 38573-38574. ‘The saints of Leinster and of the Ulaid sat down on the brae, and make their covenant never to be broken.’ Stokes, ‘The Boroma’, pp. 76-7, §78.

414 In Lec he is identified as being of Dún Choindi, not Dún Inne, although that does not help as there are no references to Dún Choindi to be found either. Cf. OG, p. 380.


416 In OG there is a reference to a Inne Móir being in Leinster, possibly Co. Kildare, but it is uncertain if Dún Inne is a reference to this place. Cf. Ibid, p. 471.


419 DIS, p. 432.
manuscript containing the Life of Máedóc of Ferns seems to possibly date from around the beginning of the twelfth century.\textsuperscript{420}

Brandub mac Echach, king of Leinster, and Áed mac Ainmerech, king of Tara also feature frequently in the Latin Life of Máedóc.\textsuperscript{421} In ‘the expanded second vernacular Life’ of Máedóc, there was an attempt ‘to have his birth and subsequent greatness foretold not only by Patrick at Drumlane, but also by the mythical pre-Christian hero, Fionn son of Cumhall,’ which is also quite possibly something that the compilers of the later Lives, possibly developed from the \textit{Bórama} as an exemplar.\textsuperscript{422} This is similar to the way in which Moling was prophesised in the \textit{Bórama} tract by Finn mac Cumaill. Máedóc of Ferns is also linked to Moling, through Moling’s \\textit{Genemain Moling ocus a Bethu (GMB)} and through the Latin Lives of Máedóc, and later sources note that Moling was Máedóc’s successor at Ferns.\textsuperscript{423}

The final two saints of the second verse are fairly recognisable, mainly through close familial connection. Abbán moccu Cormaic is a Leinster saint, and according to the genealogies, was the nephew of Cöemgen of Glendalough.\textsuperscript{424} His two main churches are within the province of Leinster, Cell Abáin, (Killabban in Co. Laois) and Magh Arnaidhe, (Moyarney in Co. Wexford) and his feastday is celebrated on both 16 March and 27 October.\textsuperscript{425} Later sources (among them Brussels, MS 5100 – 4, mid seventeenth century) attribute a poem to Patrick, where he prophesises ‘the birth of three sons of Leinster “of eternal life”’, Abbán, Cöemgen of Glendalough and Moling.\textsuperscript{426} There is also some suggestion that the likely biographer of the Life of Abbán was a thirteenth-century prelate, Albinus Ua Maoil Mhuadh (†1223) who was

\textsuperscript{420} Ibid. C. Doherty, ‘The transmission of the Cult of St. Máedhóg’, p. 268.
\textsuperscript{421} \textit{VSH}, vol. 1, pp. 149 §24, 161 §55, 309 §54.
\textsuperscript{422} \textit{DIS}, p. 434. Although this could be a much later development, the text possibly being from as late as the sixteenth century.
bishop of Ferns from ca. 1186. Interestingly Magh Arnaidhe was later displaced by Ferns as the chief monastery of Leinster in the south.

Cóemgen (†618 or 622 AU) of Glenn Dá Locha (Glendalough, Co. Wicklow), is the final saint who appears in the second stanza of poem 18 Dénaid dún ar cotach. His feastday is celebrated on 3 June, although there are references to him being commemorated on 11 May and 16 October as well. Many of the sources we have for the saints are late, most from around the twelfth century, and very often little has been done by way of analysing the corpus for any particular saint, although things are starting to change. This issue has already arisen with Máedóc of Ferns and will continue although it should not be considered detrimental to the present discussion; at this time it is enough to be aware of it. Although the sources are later, the tradition of Cóemgen’s persona as saint may stem from as early as the eighth century and by the twelfth century he would have been well known and revered. These five saints are all characteristically Leinster saints, each having displayed a close connection with either each other, Moling or Leinster. To add to this each of these five saints of Leinster are also the subject of a Life.

The five remaining saints, those that appear in stanza three of this poem are: Bishop Sincheán, Mo Chalmóc of Caba [Caba(u)s] or possibly Coba, Mo Bhiu, Comgall and Colmán Elo. Bishop Sincheán has proven to be quite problematic as there are many candidates. The name Sincheán can include various indications of hypocoristic and/or diminutive forms. There may be a possibility to perhaps consider Sineall or Sincheall of Claoidhinis (Cleenish, Co. Fermanagh) as a possible candidate, who was ‘regarded as one of Ireland’s twelve apostles’ as being the bishop referred. Mo Chalmóc of Caba [Caba(u)s] is also problematic, as there are no references to this

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428 Kenny, Sources, p. 448.
431 For works pertaining particularly to Cóemgen cf. Glendalough: City of God, C. Doherty, L. Doran and M. Kelly eds., (Dublin, 2011), in particular chapters 1, 7, 8 and 9.
432 DIS, p. 149.
433 I place [Caba(u)s] in brackets, as this is only a variant suggestion on reading the manuscript, [caba:] as the [;] can often be an abbreviation for –(u)s.
434 Forms such as: Seanach, Seanán, Seanchán, Sinche, Sineach and Sineall/Sincheall. Neither are there entries in either the martyrologies or the annals which could give any indication as to who is being referred to in this verse.
435 DIS, p. 565.
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place. There may be cause to consider whether Caba should be read as Coba and that he may belong to the Uí Echach Coba sept in Ulster; the Uí Echach Coba were a branch of the Dál nAraide.\(^{436}\) Mo Chalmóc contains the affectionate prefix mo ‘my’, and the diminutiveóc ‘little’ suffixed at the end of the name Colmán.\(^{437}\) Putting the possible place-name of Caba aside for a second, one may suggest that the likeliest candidate would be Colmán of Druim Mór (Drumore, Co. Down).\(^{438}\) Dromore was situated at the boundary between Uí Echach Coba and Uí Echach Airgialla.\(^{439}\) His Life is preserved in the fourteenth-century manuscript, Codex Salmanticensis, and a short passage underlines the ‘good relations with the authorities in south Leinster’ when Colmán of Druim Mór receives aid from Máedóc of Ferns to revive Brandub, king of Leinster, so that he can receive the final sacrament.\(^{440}\) In his Life, Máedóc of Ferns features among numerous passages with Brandub mac Echach, king of Leinster, and he is also the main protagonist of the second section of the Bórama. This poem seems to be emphasising what is, in some cases, later presented in the Lives of these saints, the close relationship some of the saints seem to exhibit among themselves. There seems to be a pattern here, where traditional relationships between the saints seem to be working at a much deeper level than is clearly visible.

The third saint of the verse is only referred to as Mo Bíu / Mo Bhíu, who is most likely Bíthe of Inis Cúscraidh (Inch, Co. Down).\(^{441}\) His cult is firmly placed within the Ulster province, himself belonging to the Dál mBuain of Ulster.\(^{442}\) He is quite likely one of the three cearda ‘craftsmen’ associated with Patrick, among whom is also a man named Tasach whose church lies close to Inis Cúscraidh.\(^{443}\) Bíthe is


\(^{439}\) Ireland’s History in Maps <http://www.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~irlkik/ihm/ulster.htm#coba> [accessed 8 May 2012]

\(^{440}\) DIS, p. 188. VSHH, p. 359 §10.

\(^{441}\) DIS, p. 106.


\(^{443}\) LL 1. 48640. DIS, p. 106.
named among the guarantors of CA. In the Life of Mochua, there is a passage which possibly contains the story of Mo Bhú’s conception and birth:

Feact ann tainic ben aimrit dia atach-som dia soerad ar an aimrite. Is ann sin dorala dosum bheith oc cái iarna bualad dia oidi [Comgall of Bangor], 7 ni thuc freacra fauxiri. Is eadh doróini in ben, dochuir a bas foa dheoruib-sium cu tard ina beolu, co rothuisim focétoir, 7 co ruc mac. i. Dabiu mac esidhe iardain.

This passage will be further discussed shortly. The final two saints of the verse are Comgall and Colmán Elo. There can be little doubt as to who Comgall is supposed to refer to. It can hardly be other than Comgall (†601 - 2) of Bennchor (Bangor, Co. Down). Comgall of Bangor is among the highly revered saints of the north, and VT includes a passage where Patrick foretells of the greatness of three saints, Columba, Finnian and Comgall. Each of the fathers of these three saints was said to ‘have swallowed a tear caused by his cheek being touched by Patrick.’ These three saints, Columba, Finnian and Comgall, feature also in ‘a fragment of Old Irish prose touching on the rule attributed to Comgall.’ The Life of Comgall, which dates from no earlier than around the late twelfth century features some Leinster connections.

Here we are faced with a similar account of conception in relation to Columba and Comgall as for Mo Bhú, as well as the regional placement of Mo Bhú and Mo Chalmóc, along with Comgall and Sineall/Sincheall within the province of Ulster. Something that will become more and more apparent is that many of the churches the saints of the Bórama are associated with have connection in some form or another to Glendalough. Bangor is no exception; there seems to have been significant exchange between the monastery of Bangor in Ulster, and other Leinster

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445 ‘Once upon a time came a barren woman to entreat him to save her from her barrenness. At that time he happened to be crying after being beaten by his tutor [Comgall of Bangor], and he gave her no answer. This is what the woman did. She put her palm under his tears and poured them into her mouth, and at once she conceived, and she afterwards brought forth a son, even Da-Biu was that son.’ Stokes, Lives of Saints from the Book of Lismore, pp. 138, 282. The bracketed comment is supplied by me. DIS, p. 106.


450 Cf. refer in particular to Appendix C for clear reference of those churches that demonstrate affiliations with Glendalough.
monasteries, particularly Glendalough. The same can be said for Dísert Diarmata (Castledermot, Co. Kildare) where Comgall of Bangor was also patron.\footnote{Mac Shamhráin, Church and Polity, pp. 13, 122-4.}

Colmán Elo is the final saint of the poem \textit{18 Dénaid dún ar cotach}. Colmán Elo of Lann Ela (Lynally, Co. Offaly), is mainly associated with Ulster, although Colmán’s Latin Life, ignores this earlier tradition and associates him with a powerful Uí Néill clan.\footnote{\textit{DIS}, p. 204.} Lynally is in Leinster while another church associated with Colmán Elo is at Muckamore in Antrim in Ulster.\footnote{\textit{DIS}, pp. 203-4. \textit{VSH}, vol. 1, pp. 162-273, lv – lvi.} His Latin Life survives in the fourteenth-century \textit{Codex Salmanticensis}, although the text may be as early as eighth century, and there are also Irish Lives of Colmán Elo which have survived.\footnote{\textit{DIS}, pp. 203-4. \textit{VSH}, vol. 1, pp. 258-273. \textit{VSHH}, pp. 209-224. Kenney, Sources, pp. 399-400.} Colmán Elo brings to a close the discussion on poem \textit{18 Dénaid dún ar cotach}. The final five saints of the poem showcase the close relationship the saints of Ulster had with Leinster (both province and saints). What is particularly noteworthy is that the ten saints of the poem have all been the subject of a Life aside for Sineall/Sincheall as far as sources tell us. All of them seem to have been highly regarded in and around the twelfth century and even well before according to tentative dating of their Lives. The purpose of this poem is therefore clear. The subject of the poem is the covenant, the pact, made between Leinster and Ulster for there to be peace between them and the saints are called to witness this. The prose text of the \textit{Bórama} emphasises this with repeating: \textit{dessetar náim Lagen 7 Ulad ‘sin tsléib, ocus doniat a cotach cen taithmech tria bithu}.\footnote{‘The saints of Leinster and of the Ulaid sat down on the brae, and make (sic) their coventant never to be broken.’ Stokes, ‘The Boroma’, pp. 76-7, §78.} These five saints from Leinster and five saints from Ulster, are all renowned within their provinces and are all closely connected, both through the accounts of their lives as well as through familial relationship, which is preserved in their genealogies.

The two poems of section two, are both very important to the discussion at hand, each in their own way. Poem \textit{12 Failet sund aisceda ríg}, with its cluster of saints was aimed at highlighting the early acceptance of Christianity among the province of Leinster, while the second poem of section two of the \textit{Bórama}, poem \textit{18 Dénaid dún ar cotach}, presented ten names of highly regarded saints, five from each province, Ulster and Leinster. This it can be argued was done in order to emphasise the close
relationship the ecclesiastical sites of Leinster and Ulster demonstrate, particularly in the eleventh and twelfth centuries.\textsuperscript{457} This will be demonstrated further throughout this chapter.


\textbf{Section three: Moling and the remission of the bórama\textsuperscript{458}}

The final section of the \textit{Bórama} contains three poems, 22 \textit{Inmain tríar a Christ grind glúair}, 23 \textit{Turchan duin a Thuathail} and 33 \textit{A Brigit bennach ar sét}, which all feature a large number of saints’ names.\textsuperscript{459} The main feature of these poems is that they illustrate the purpose of both the poem within the \textit{Bórama} and the saints which are portrayed within them. In terms of identifying the saints, poem 22 \textit{Inmain tríar a Christ grind glúair} has proven to be most challenging. While the saints previously discussed have for the most part been reasonably well-known individuals, the saints who are contained within this poem are to some extent obscure and extremely difficult to identify accurately. Poem 23 \textit{Turchan duin a Thuathail} calls on the names of saints as possible answers to a question of who among the saints of Leinster (or Ireland) is worthy or powerful enough to rescind the bórama. The final poem, poem 33 \textit{A Brigit bennach ar sét}, is Moling calling on the various saints of Leinster, and Ireland, to protect him on his escape from Fínnachta of the Uí Néill after managing to have the bórama rescinded forever.

Poem 22 \textit{Inmain tríar a Christ grind glúair} contains the names of fifteen saints, said in the text to be Moling’s \textit{muntir} ‘community’, who accompanied him on his journey to Leinster after being summoned by the king, Bran mac Conaill.\textsuperscript{460} The poem is four stanzas long, each stanza containing a cluster of three to five saints. The first cluster contains the names of three; Forannán, Aed mac Senaig and Colmán of Cluain Credail (now Killeedy, Co. Limerick). Forannán is undoubtedly the abbot of Kildare, who died ca. 697-8 according to the annals.\textsuperscript{461} He was also among the guarantors for CA in 697.\textsuperscript{462} Hence, he is an excellent candidate for being considered to belong among Moling’s retinue. An entry for Aed mac Senach is found in MT on 22

\begin{footnotesize}
\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{457} Cf. Mac Shamhráin, \textit{Church and polity}, chapters 5 and 6 in particular.
\item \textsuperscript{458} LL ll. 38744-39321. Mac Shamhráin, \textit{Church and polity}, pp. 98-117, §§125-161.
\item \textsuperscript{459} Cf. Appendix B.
\item \textsuperscript{460} LL l. 38771. Stokes, ‘The Boroma’, pp. 100-1, §127.
\item \textsuperscript{461} AU 698.5, AT 698.3, AI 697.1, FA 698.
\end{itemize}
\end{footnotesize}
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September and he is also commemorated in MG and MD. \(^{463}\) It is therefore quite possible that Aed mac Senaig who features in this poem is the same as Aed mac Senach who is commemorated in MT. \(^{464}\) Nothing else is known about Aed mac Senach as he does not appear in the annals and no church or monastic foundation is associated with him.

Colmán of Cluain Credail (later Cell Íte, Killeedy, Co. Limerick) could possibly be a reference to Cummíne Fota of Clonfert. \(^{465}\) In the notes to FÓ a story is recorded that ‘when he was born he was brought to Cell Íte, and there he was left.’\(^{466}\) This being the case the poem may be indicating an early reference to the origin legend of the saint, based on the reference to Cluain Credail, which was another form for Cell Íte. Due to damage of MT, the leaf containing the entry for 12 November, his feast-day, is missing, which raises questions as to whether it may have contained similar information regarding the saint. While Cummín was a Munster saint this would not have prevented his inclusion among the saints affiliated with Leinster, as there seems to have been some ecclesiastical connections between Leinster churches and monastic foundations with Munster, as well as his connection to Brendan through Clonfert. \(^{467}\) Cummín features in a collection of early medieval tales along with the ‘fool’ Mac Dá Cherda, and his legend must have been well known by the time the poem of the Bórama was composed, for him to be included here.

Verse two contains the names of three saints; Dubthach, Dubán and Cuán of Cluain Mór. Dubthach may be problematic as there is no Dubthach commemorated in MT or elsewhere falls within the chronology of Moling, hence I have chosen Dubthach moccu Lugair (of poem 12 Failet sund aisceda ríg) to represent this saint. \(^{468}\) Dubán is most likely Dubán who was at Ros Glass, on the bank of the Barrow at Monsterevin.

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\(^{463}\) MT, p. 73. MG, pp. 182-3. MD, pp. 252-3.

\(^{464}\) Ó Riain seems uncertain as to the identity of this Aed, though there is no reason to. DIS, p. 69.


\(^{466}\) DIS, p. 244. FÓ, pp. 242-3. In LL ll. 36990-36997, there is a short account of Cummín Fota’s birth, although the text is incomplete due to lacuna in the manuscript.


\(^{468}\) Another possible candidate is Dubthach of Iona († 938). DIS, p. 275. However, I would argue that neither candidate is likely, if the aim was to find a saint within the same period as Moling.
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in Co. Kildare. 469 The possibility that this is the Dubán in question is strengthened by the fact that he is also the brother of Abbán and nephew to Cóemgen of Glendalough, a saint who has already featured in the discussion concerning poem 18 *Dénaid dún ar cotach* and who will appear again in poems 23 *Turchán duin a Thuathail* and 33 *A Brigit bennach ar sét* as well. 470 He is not commemorated on any particular date in the martyrologies. His only appearance is among a numeration of the many brothers of Damán of Feamore (Fid Mór, Co Carlow) along with Abbán. 471

Aside from the mention of Cuán of Cluain Mór in poem 22 *Inmain tríar a Christ grind glúair* of the *Bórama*, there is no mention of him elsewhere, except by Mícheál Ó Cléirigh in MD, who takes the Cuán mentioned on 15 October to be the Cuán referred to in the *Bórama* which is a tentative identification. 472 Cluain Mór or Cluain Mór Máedóc is situated within the province of Leinster in Co. Carlow. 473 In and around the eleventh-century Cluain Mór Máedóc was included among the properties of Glendalough. 474

The third stanza of the poem contains the names of five saints, *cóiciur* ‘a quintet’; Álgenach, Fulartach, Mo Menóc, Milóc and Findbarr. 475 These five saints along with the four saints of the following stanza, Elchomach, Aedán, Sárnatan and Colmnatan, have proven to be most troublesome in the course of identifying them. Among those that I have been unable to identify are Álgenach, Elchomach and Aedán, mainly because they either lack locative indicators or there are no records to be found concerning them.

Fulartach is most likely a reference to Fulartach mac Bricc of Dísert Fulartaig (Dysart, Co. Kildare), † 755. 476 In terms of the three remaining saints of the present stanza, there is more than one possible candidate for each of them although I have tried to narrow the possibilities to as few as possible. In the case of Mo Menóc and Milóc, it has to do with the hypocoristic and diminutive mutation of their names; Mo

469 Ibid.
470 Cf. Appendix C.
471 DIS, pp. 275, 256. FÓ, pp. 74-5.
472 MD, pp. 276-7.
473 OG, p. 268.
474 Mac Shamhráin, *Church and Polity*, pp. 94, 146-8.
475 LL l. 38781.
Menóc or Menóc being a mutated form of Ėnna and Milóc could be Sillán, Silóc or Sillé. In terms of Mo Menóc or Menóc, Menóc of Glenn Faidle (Glenealy, Co. Wicklow) and of Ros Muchnaig (Rossminogue, Co. Wexford) seems to be the most plausible candidate.\(^{477}\) Menóc of Glenealy and Rossminogue is by two different accounts always placed as the nephew (or great-nephew) of Cóemgen of Glendalough although the name of his mother differs.\(^{478}\) The site of Glenn Faidly was also considered to belong to Glendalough.\(^{479}\) He is also invoked along with other saints in the Litany of Irish Saints, representing the *familia Coemgeni* of Glendalough.\(^{480}\) He is commemorated on 29 December.\(^{481}\)

In MT there is an entry for 25 July of a Mosilóc (no location marker), where he is simply identified as being *i. dalta Moling* ‘i.e. fosterling of Moling’.\(^{482}\) As with so many of the early Irish saints and their hypocoristic and diminutive forms, it is nearly impossible to figure out who Mosilóc may be referring to. Thus the entry in MT must serve as the only plausible reference to the Mosilóc of this particular poem.

The problem of identifying the saints continues with Findbarr. There are in this case two possible candidates, those being Finnbarr of Cell Adair (Killegar, Co. Wicklow) or Finnbarr of Inis Doimle (now Little Island, Co. Waterford).\(^{483}\) Only in terms of Finnbarr of Little Island is there a feast-day to commemorate him recorded for 4 July.\(^{484}\) Both show similar connection with Leinster, in terms of churches within the province as well as through genealogy.\(^{485}\) In the case of Finnbarr of Killegar, his church would have been within the *paruchia* of Glendalough.\(^{486}\)

The final four names of the final stanza of the poem, present the same problems as experienced with some of the previous names discussed in relation to this poem. The saints’ names given are; Elchomach, Aedán, Sárnatan and Colmnatan, with no locative markers or any other information give little help in identifying them.

\(^{477}\) *DIS* p. 452.

\(^{478}\) *DIS*, p. 542. *CGSH* §722.72.102.

\(^{479}\) Mac Shamhráin, *Church and Polity*, pp. 175-8, 193.

\(^{480}\) Ibid, pp. 174-5. *LL* f. 373b.


\(^{482}\) MT, p. 58.

\(^{483}\) *DIS*, p. 335.


\(^{485}\) *DIS*, p. 335.

\(^{486}\) Ibid. Mac Shamhráin, *Church and Polity*, p. 212.
is no sign of any person within the martyrologies or within the annals by the name of Elchomach (or Aelchomach/Aelchumach), hence he remains unidentified. The problem with Aedán is multifarious. The need for taking into consideration the many saints bearing the name of Aed, along with the diminutive -án gives the possibilities of candidates in the excess of fifty names at least and to this we can add the many other hypocoristic or diminutive forms known to be connected with saints by the name of Aed/Aedán, such as Máedóc. This makes the identification in this instance, impossible, even if the search was limited only within the region of Leinster.

There are two (or three) possible candidates for Sárnat. She is either Sárnat daughter of Aed Gabalfata, who, though not a Leinster saint but a Connacht saint, shares affinity with Moling.\(^\text{487}\) According to a Classical Irish poem in manuscript RIA 23 L II sited by Ó Riain, Sárnat was called upon along with numerous other saints ‘to help in releasing Ireland’s southern half (Leth Mogha) from a bondage imposed on it by the northern half (Leth Chuinn).’\(^\text{488}\) It may be possible that at the time when the Bórama was compiled this tradition had developed in regards to Sárnat, and as such was included in the list of saints said to represent the community of Moling, possibly as a doubling of the saint. Another possible candidate is Sárnat of Cell Baimig (Barragh, Co. Carlow), who through family connection is tied to Kildare and Brigit.\(^\text{489}\) Although MD suggests that the Sárnat who accompanied Moling was Sárnat, daughter of Maelán, commemorated on 3 May, there is nothing to support this suggestion as there are no further indicators to assist in this hypothesis.\(^\text{490}\)

The final saint of the poem, Colmnatan (or Colmnatán), presents much the same problem as the previous ones. With no identifying markers of either family or locality, there is little to go on. The name looks to be a diminutive of the female name (already diminutive) Colmnat, same as for Sárnat. I would tentatively suggest that Colmnatán may be a reference to the nun Colmnat which Moling meets up with later in the text on his run from Fínnachta and his men, who may then also be named in the poem 33 A Brigit bennach ar sét.\(^\text{491}\)

\(^{488}\) Ibid, p. 549.
\(^{489}\) Ibid.
\(^{490}\) MD, pp. 118-9.
That so many of the saints have proven difficult to identify has raised a number of questions in relation to this particular poem. Many of those questions have to do with the purpose the poem serves as well as the language of the text. The language of the Bórama and its poems is Middle Irish, although a comprehensive study into the text has yet to be done. It would be interesting to see if such a study would shed some further light on the compilation and construction of the Bórama. The question regarding this is, whether some of the names presented here are archaic forms of names (although I find that to be unlikely), if they were included because they suited the metre the poem was composed in, and therefore, whether these names are supposed to represent specific saints or merely to represent well known saints names. The tentative conclusion is then that the obscure identity of the saints was done deliberately, i.e., that while the names presented in this poem were intended to represent saints of Moling’s community, the author of the poem meant to include obscure names and he could possibly have made some names more obscure than they were originally to suit his purpose. Among the material in LL are anecdotes of Moling, although none of them contains any clear references to saints associated with him, much of that comes later, through his Irish and Latin Lives. Aside from Forannán, who is mentioned first and was possibly associated with Moling early on because of Cán Adomnáin, many of the other saints are either completely obscure or present a tentative connection at best to Leinster in some form or another. In the second chapter of this thesis I discussed poem 22 Inmain tríar a Christ grind glúair briefly, where I argued the case that this poem, along with poem 21 Cuice seo ro dalus, presents an opening statement for Moling. The names of these fifteen saints emphasise the importance of Moling to the tale, that Moling is the head of a large community where there are many known or recognisable saints’ names. I would argue that the obscure identity of the saints would support the suggestion that it was a deliberate ‘work of fiction’ to include this list of Moling’s community within the text of the Bórama.

The next poem, poem 23 Turchan duin a Thuathail, also contains a large number of saints’ names, twenty-six names in all. A number of saints have already been identified and discussed, Brigit of Kildare, Fíac (of Sletty), Abbán, Máedóc of Ferns, Cóemgen of Glendalough and of course Moling, who will feature prominently in

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492 Work underway by Desirée Govers, Ph.D. candidate of Cambridge University, ‘A Linguistic and Stylistic Analysis of the Bórama’.

subsequent chapter.\(^{494}\) Poem 23 Turchan duin a Thuathail is fifteen verses in length, although the names of the saints only appear in verse two to seven. The purpose of this poem is quite different from the previous one. This poem is not necessarily restricted to saints associated only with Leinster, nonetheless most undoubtedly will demonstrate some connection to Leinster. The reason for this is that the purpose of this poem is to question which one of the many saints mentioned would most likely be successful in getting the bórama rescinded. Hence it would not be out of place if there would be powerful saints of other provinces mentioned.

The first verse which contains names of saints yields four names, Brigit (who has already been identified), Fintan, Máedóc and Mo Lasse.\(^{495}\) In the poem Fintan is described sluagmar ‘of the large company’, possibly here referring to the large community he is said to have headed and which is enumerated in MT.\(^{496}\) He is Fintan mac Tulchán, most often referred to as Munnu of Tech Mundu/Munnu (Taghmon, Co. Wexford and in Co. Westmeath)\(^{497}\) R. Butter has discussed the complex issue of Munnu and the spread of his cult, and has shown that the matter of Fintan/Munnu is anything but simple.\(^{498}\) Fintan, in his Latin Life, is shown to be of the Úí Néill, but he is usually associated with Leinster.\(^{499}\) In Adomnán’s Vita Columbae, it is reported that when Fintan came to Iona and wished to become a monk there, Baithéne, Colum Cille’s successor, sent him back to Ireland, to Leinster, to build a monastery there in line with Colum Cille’s prophecy.\(^{500}\) He is also linked to Cainnech, Brendan of Clonfert, Máedóc of Ferns, Abbán, Mo Lasse and Comgall of Bangor.\(^{501}\) It is perhaps not surprising that Fintan would be included in this poem, for his Latin Life tells of the instability of the Leinster septs, and the constant strife between the different dynasties for power and of Fintan’s disapproval of this.\(^{502}\)

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\(^{494}\) Cf. Appendix C and Chapter 4: Moling.

\(^{495}\) Cf. for Brigit, discussion on poem 12 Failet sund aisceda ríg earlier in this chapter.

\(^{496}\) MT, pp. 82, 121-3.


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Fintan was also among those who were mentioned among the saints who guaranteed CA.\(^{503}\)

The name Máedóc appears twice in poem 23 *Turchan duin a Thuathail*, the latter is given as Máedóc of Ferns, which suggests that the Máedóc mentioned here may be Máedóc Ua Dúnlainge. Máedóc Ua Dúnlainge was mentioned earlier in relation to poem 12 *Failet sund aisceda ríg*, where he appeared briefly.\(^{504}\) He is commemorated on 11 April in MT and others, and he was highly regarded as a Leinster saint, although he never became the subject of a Life.\(^{505}\) Later it seems as though his tradition later became confused with that of Máedóc of Ferns.\(^{506}\) The inclusion of Máedóc Ua Dúnlainge within the prose of the Bórama tract indicates that he was held in high regard. As such it would be unlikely that the Máedóc mentioned here would not be intended to indicate Ua Dúnlainge, especially as the poems of the Bórama seem to have it in common that they are numerating notable Leinster saints.

Molasse is likely to be Molasse of Lethglenn (Leighlin, Co. Carlow).\(^{507}\) His Life is preserved in the *Codex Salmanticensis*, a fourteenth-century manuscript.\(^{508}\) His Life gives him ties with both Ireland, especially Leinster, and Scotland, as his mother is said to have been Maithgem, the daughter of Aedán, king of Alba (Scotland).\(^{509}\) Along with his ties to Leinster he is said to have been educated at Taghmon by Fintan/Munnu.\(^{510}\) At a church at Lemduim (Lorum, Co. Tipperary), which was associated with Colum of Terryglass, there was a well dedicated to Molasse.\(^{511}\)

The third verse of poem 23 *Turchan duin a Thuathail*, contains six names; Brendan of Gabra, Cainnech, Lachtá, Fiac of Sletty (who has already been discussed and will be left out of the discussion here), Tigernach and Fiachra.\(^{512}\) There is no saint associated with the place of Gabra, aside from this single mention of a Brendan of


\(^{504}\) Cf. Discussion on poem 12 *Failet sund aisceda ríg*.

\(^{505}\) *DIS*, p. 431.

\(^{506}\) Ibid.


\(^{508}\) *VSHH*, pp. 340-3.

\(^{509}\) *MT*, p. 255.

\(^{510}\) *DIS*, p. 486.

\(^{511}\) Ibid, p. 487.

\(^{512}\) Cf. Discussion on Fiac of Sletty in relation to poem 12 *Failet sund aisceda ríg*. 
said place. There are numerous place-names bearing the name of Gabra, Hogan mentions at least two possible locations in Leinster. Thus the only course of action is then either to dismiss him as being an obscure Leinster saint or somehow a convoluted reference to Brendan of Birr, which I have chosen to do.

Cainnech is probably Cainnech of Achadh Bó (Aghaboe, Co. Laois), whose Latin Life, as in the case of Molasse, is preserved in *Codex Salmanticensis*. He is normally associated with a number of saints, including Fintan/Munnu of Taghmon, Colmán of Lynally and Cóemgen of Glendalough. Lachtán, the third saint mentioned in the verse, is possibly a reference to Lachtán of Achadh Úr (Freshford, Co. Kilkenny). In his Latin Life he is associated with Comgall of Bangor. Cainnech is probably Cainnech of Achadh Bó (Aghaboe, Co. Laois), whose Latin Life, as in the case of Molasse, is preserved in *Codex Salmanticensis*. He is normally associated with a number of saints, including Fintan/Munnu of Taghmon, Colmán of Lynally and Cóemgen of Glendalough. Lachtán, the third saint mentioned in the verse, is possibly a reference to Lachtán of Achadh Úr (Freshford, Co. Kilkenny). In his Latin Life he is associated with Comgall of Bangor.

Tigernach is most likely Tigernach of Cluain Eois (Clones, Co. Monaghan) of Ulster. Although his Latin Life is considered to be quite late (possibly fourteenth century) he is brought into contact with both Brigit and Conlaed at Kildare and later with Eogan of Ard Sratha. There may be a case here that the connection featured between Tigernach and Leinster demonstrated in the fourteenth-century source, could refer to an early tradition of Tigernach. Hence, although Tigernach is mainly an Ulster saint, he may have had some affiliation with Leinster. Fiachra, the final saint in the present verse, seems to correspond well with Fiachra of Sletty, the son of Fiac of Sletty, mentioned only two lines above. Very little is known about him, aside from a mention along with Fiac’s entry in MT; *Fiac et Fiachra eius filius cum eo i Sleibti*.

The following verse carries only four names, those of Dagán, Bishop Eogan, Abbán and Cóemgen (both Abbán and Cóemgen have already been discussed in relation to poem 18 *Dénaid dún ar cotach*). Dagán, seems to be referring to Dagán of Inber Doile (Ennereilly, Co. Wicklow). He belonged to the Dál Messin Corb in Leinster who were mainly associated with Wicklow and with Glendalough. He is also related

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513 *OG*, p. 433.
514 Cf. Appendix C.
516 *DIS*, p. 139.
520 MT, p. 79. ‘Fiac and Fiachra his son along with him in Sletty’.
521 *DIS*, pp. 251-2.
to Cóemgen of Glendalough through his mother who was Cóemgen’s sister, according to the genealogy. Bishop Eogan is seemingly Eogan of Ard Sratha (Ardstraw, Co. Tyrone) in Ulster, a site associated with Glendalough. Although his main monastery was located in Ulster, he founded his first church, Cell na Manach (Kilnamanagh) in Leinster, in the Dublin parish of Tallaght, according to his Life which is preserved in Codex Salmanticensis. He also comes in contact with Tigernach of Cluain Eois in his Life. His family tree is somewhat difficult to catalogue as one strand places him as the son of Erc of Sláne a descendant of Fergus mac Roich. Another strand places him within the family tree of Cóemgen of Glendalough and thus was favoured by his biographer, who included it in his Life, and he was also the brother of Menóc of Glenealy and Rossminogue. Because of his admittedly northern connection and possibly because his first church was founded in Leinster he seems to have been included among the saints in this poem. Cóemgen of Glendalough has already been discussed, but it is worth pointing out that quite a number of the saints present in this poem have shown strong links to him or Glendalough.

These are the saints of the first three verses, which leaves three verses and the names of twelve saints, although some have appeared in relation to previous poems and hence will not be discussed in relation again. Within the next verse to be discussed there are the names of four saints; Mo Chua of Clúaín Dolcán, Colum of Terryglass, Baethín and Máedóc of Ferns (who has already been discussed and will not feature here). Mo Chua of Clúaín Dolcán (Clondalkin, Co. Dublin) was a Leinster saint. Clúaín Dolcán was among the many sites to share close connection with Glendalough. In the Life of Cóemgen of Glendalough, Mo Chua is given the honour of having baptized Cóemgen, and according to an early Irish litany of saints,

\[522\] DIS, p. 251. CGSH §722.72.
\[523\] DIS, p. 295-6. Kenney, Sources, pp. 400-1. VSHH, pp. 400-404. Eogan of Ardstraw was also associated with ‘Cell [na] Manach nEscrach which was claimed by Glendalough and [...] was also linked to Ardstraw.’ Mac Shamhráin, Church and Polity, pp. 180-181.
\[524\] DIS, p. 295. VSHH, p. 401, §3.
\[525\] DIS, p. 295. VSHH, pp. 400-404.
\[526\] DIS, p. 295. CGSH §130.
\[527\] DIS, p. 295. CGSH §251.
\[528\] Cf, discussion on poem 18 Dénaid dún ar cotach.
\[529\] DIS, p. 233.
\[530\] Mac Shamhráin, Church and Polity, p. 36.
he is included there among the *familia Coemgeni*.

The close connection between Cóemgen of Glendalough and Mo Chua were also demonstrated by the ‘tour of the relics of Caemgein and of Mo-Chua moccu Lugedon’ taken in AD 790 according to *AU*. Following Mo Chua is Colum Tíre of Tír dá Glas (Terryglass, Co. Tipperary). Terryglass was considered to be affiliated with Glendalough. Mo Chua is descendant of the Uí Chrimthainn of Leinster and through his mother related to Cóemgen of Glendalough. Ó Riain has argued that there are strong indications that Colum of Terryglass is a localization of Colum Cille. This affinity between Colum Cille and Colum of Terryglass, did not interfere with the establishing the patron saint at Terryglass by the community, and the arrangement of having a Latin Life produced for the saint. Colum Cille with his ties to Leinster through his mother’s side as well as Colum’s connection to Cóemgen of Glendalough most likely influenced the veneration of Colum of Terryglass, and his high regard among the Leinster saints. It is therefore not surprising to see that he is followed in this verse by Baethín (Baethán/Baodán/Mo Baoi) of Cluain Annobhair (Cloney, Co. Kildare). Cloney was also considered belonging to the Glendalough *paruchia*. Ó Riain writes that just as Colum shared affinity with Colum Cille, so does Baethín of Cloney with Baethín mac Brénainn, Colum Cille’s first successor of Iona. Both Colum of Terryglass and Baethín were commemorated on 13 December; sadly the entry for this date is missing from MT. Baethín also appears along with Dagán of Ennereilly and Mo Chua of Clondalkin in a litany of Irish saints (mentioned earlier in connection with Mo Chua), which is said to represent the *familia Coemgeni* of Glendalough.

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535 *DIS*, p. 209.
539 *DIS*, p. 85.
540 *FÓ*, pp. 251, 258-261. MG, pp. 238-9. MD, pp. 334-337. The entry for 1 November to 16 December are missing from MT.
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The following verse contains the names of four saints; Gall, Itharnaisc, a bishop Colmán and Comgán. Gall of Lícach (Lullymore, Co. Kildare), died ca. †730. Gall does not appear in the martyrologies until MG, as the entries for the dates surrounding his feast-day, 2 November, are missing from MT and he is not mentioned in FÓ. He does seem to be a much later saint, compared with the saints that have been identified, being dated to the eighth century while the majority of the other saints have been no later than seventh century which would possibly also account for his inclusion in MG. Not much is known about Gall in general, nor about his family or any connection to other saints, aside from a mention in a poem, along with many other saints, said to have been uttered by Senán of Scattery Island. Itharnaisc is likewise a Leinster saint, located at Claenad (Clane, Co. Kildare). A poem preserved in LL, attributed to Colum Cille mentions Itharnaisc, along with his many brothers, who is also referred to in a genealogy found in LL. Considering that all of the saints so far identified within this poem have all been shown to be connected to Leinster in one form or another and it is unlikely that Bishop Colmán would be different. The name of Colmán, on its own, is a complex issue as there are a vast number of possible candidates. Hence, it is not possible to adequately identify him as anything other than a probable Leinster saint. Comgán, likely refers here to Comgán of Glenn Uissen (Killeshin, Co. Laois). His church may have been subject to a lot of attention and gained some importance in the early twelfth century with the production of Sex Aetates Mundi in Irish by Duibhlitir Ua hUathghaile of that monastery, hence not unlikely that both church and saint was well known and established at the time the Bórama was included in LL or some time before that.

The final verse of poem 23 Turchan duin a Thuathail that contains a cluster of saints carries the names of these four saints; Berchán, Emín, Mo Chua mac Lonán and Moling. Again it is worth reiterating that at this stage Moling will not feature in this

542 Cf. Appendix C.
543 AU 730.5, AFM 723.2.
544 The entry for 1 November to 16 December are missing from MT.
547 LL ll. 48882-48886, ll. 47763-47771. Below the numeration of the seven sons of Oengus, the first line of the poem attributed to Colum Cille is given.
548 DIS, p. 220.
discussion as the subsequent chapter will be devoted to his role within the \textit{Bórama}. There were two possible candidates for Berchán, one being Berchán of Cluain Sosta (Clonsast, Co. Offaly) and the other is Mobí of Glas Noeden (Glasnevin, Co. Dublin).\footnote{DIS, pp. 97-8, 457.} While Berchán of Clonsast (late eighth century) is perhaps the best known bearer of the name, he is a much later saint than Mobí of Glasnevin (†540 – 545).\footnote{Ibid. AU 545.1, AT 540.1, AI 544.1.} Hence, I have chosen to ignore Berchán of Clonsast and decided to place Mobí of Glasnevin among the table of saints in Appendix C. He is associated with Colum Cille in his Life as well as being among the guarantors invoked for the \textit{CA}.\footnote{DIS, p. 458. Mármur, \textit{Adomnán’s ‘Law of the Innocents’}, p. 13 §22.} Emín has been identified as possibly being Emí of Ros Glaisi (Monasterevin/Rosglas, Co. Kildare).\footnote{OG, p. 586. DIS, p. 291.} Among traditions that have developed surrounding Emín and his church is his \textit{cáin ‘law’}, which features an anecdote concerning the king of Leinster, Bran mac Conall, who is among the main protagonists in the third section of the \textit{Bórama} and one of the speakers of the current poem.\footnote{Ibid. C. Plummer, ‘Cáin Eimíne Báin’, \textit{Ériu} 4 (1910), pp. 39-46. E. Poppe, ‘A new edition of \textit{Cáin Éimíne Báin}’, \textit{Celtica} 18 (1986), pp. 35-52. E. Poppe, ‘The list of sureties in \textit{Cáin Éimíne}’, \textit{Celtica} 21 (1990), pp. 588-592. LL l. 50466 (cf. note 2). Kenney, \textit{Sources}, pp. 459-460.} The last saint of the poem to receive due attention is Mo Chua mac Lonán, of Tech Mochua (Timahoe, Co. Laois).\footnote{DIS, p. 468. Kenney, \textit{Sources}, pp. 455-6.} According to Ó Riain, ‘Mochua is attached to the Fothaird, and thus shares a line of descent with Brighid of Kildare which led to his receiving a place of honour among the first five pedigrees of saints recorded by the scribe of the Book of Leinster.’\footnote{DIS, pp. 468-9.} His name is a hypocoristic form of the name Crónán (but also of Cuán) and his date is commemorated on 24 December.\footnote{Ibid, p. 467. MT, p. 89. FÓ, pp. 254, 262-3. MG, pp. 246-7. MD, pp. 346-7.}

The final name to appear among the many names of saints is Moling, marking the culmination of the numeration. As discussed in the previous chapter on the poetry, this poem seems to be a conversation poem between three individuals, Bran mac Conall, king of Leinster, Tuathal mac Ailill, king of the Uí Muiredaig in Leinster, and Moling. The purpose was asking which of the saints recited would be able to champion the people of Leinster against the Uí Néill, and the answer was Moling. Every one of the saints identified show strong links to Leinster, which was to be
expected, but they also show internal relationship through their genealogy, although in some cases their mutual ancestor is far removed. However, these connections would have been foremost in the minds of the author of the poems, as was the ecclesiastical relationship, reflected in the close connection many of the saints, or at least their sites, show in particular towards Glendalough and Kildare.

The final poem of the *Bórama* tract which contains a cluster of names is poem 33 A *Brigit bennach ar sét*, which contains the names of thirty-five saints. The purpose of this poem is to function as a prayer. The first five verses of the poem are dedicated to Brigit, where Moling is asking for her aid on his journey, his journey being the escape from Fínnachta and his men. Following verses are taken up by enumerating various saints to come to his aid as well. The poem is twenty-eight verses and as there are a number of saints which have already appeared in other poems they will not be repeated. These saints are Brigit, Mo Chua of Clondalkin, Cóemgen of Glendalough, Moling, Comgán of Killeshin, Mo Lasse, Máedóc Ua Dúnlainge, Dagán, Menóc, Comgall of Bangor, Fintan/Munnu, Abbán, Máedóc of Ferns, which leaves twenty-two names to be discussed. I will address them in the order they appear in the poems and will, for the most part, leave out enumerating in what verse they appear in.\(^558\)

Mac Táil is the first name aside from Brigit to appear in the poem, which is fitting as he was a contemporary of hers and Patrick. Mac Táil of Cill Cuilinn (Old Kilcullen, Co. Kildare), appears in *VT*. Patrick goes to Leinster where he was said to have ‘founded churches and cloisters therein’, and where he left Mac Táil at Cill Cuilinn.\(^559\) In the Patrician material, it was suggested that he was possibly one of Patrick’s three smiths, however, he is not considered to be a northern saint, but rather attached to Brigit and other saints of Leinster.\(^560\) This is also supported by poem 32 *Suidem sund suide n-ága* which precedes this poem, and which I have not discussed in relation to the saints, but it contains a reference to both Brigit and Mac Táil.\(^561\) Cill

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\(^558\) Cf. Appendix C, for easier reference of saints.


\(^561\) Cf. Appendix B. This poem is uttered by Moling on his escape from Finnachta’s men, possibly when he has reached Kilcullen, the place of Mac Táil, as the poem may suggest rather than the site of Moling’s Cross as the prose suggests. There he hears the bells from the monastery of Cell Usaille (Killashee, Co. Kildare) and sees the roof of the monastery of Kildare. Stokes, ‘The Boroma’, pp. 114-5, §§157-160. This poem lends little to the overall discussion on the saints, he is firmly identified as a Leinster saint, and since Mac Táil also appears in poem 33 A *Brigit bennach ar sét*, it was seen as appropriate to include him in the discussion of this poem instead.
Cuilinn was among many other monastic sites that was counted among the later properties of Glendalough. Following him comes Máel Ruain, who is most likely Máel Ruain of Tamlacht (Tallaght, Co. Dublin), †792 [AU], and hence anachronistic for Moling to involve him. He is commonly associated with the later céli Dé monastic movement which was mainly associated with Tallaght and was influential in the early ninth century. Máel Ruain was of the same monastery which produced two martyrologies, the Martyrology of Tallaght, preserved in a later copy among the texts in LL, and the Martyrology of Oengus (Féileire Óengusso Céli Dé), in both of which Máel Ruain is commemorated. Little is known about him, although he is frequently mentioned in texts which are associated with Tallaght. Although he belongs to the eighth century there can be no doubt as to who is being alluded to because following his name is an invocation to a Míchil archargil úa ‘oh perfect archangel Michael’ and Máel Ruain had according to FÓ special devotion for the archangel.

Usaille (also Auxilius and Ausaille) of Cell Usaille (Killashee, Co. Kildare) appears next, and he is first mentioned in Muirchú’s seventh-century Life of Patrick, and the annals mention him as one of three bishops sent to Ireland to assist Patrick. He is also a saint who, along with Mac Táil, went with Patrick to Leinster. The indication is that this poem is reflecting what has echoed through poems 05 Mo Lling Lúath Cellach Bróen bil and 12 Fáilet sund aisceda ríg, i.e. the invoking of the early Christian past of Leinster. The presence of two saints, Mac Táil and Usaille, both connected with Patrick very early on, but both considered to be Leinster saints, seems to emphasise this connection to the powerful saints of Ireland, while focusing on Leinster. The church site Cell Usaille later belonged among the sites of Glendalough.

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562 Mac Shamhráin, Church and Polity, p. 148.
566 DIS, p. 446. Follett, Céli Dé, pp. 100-170.
569 Mac Shamhráin, Church and Polity, p. 198.
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The name Aed mac Eogan of Cluana Mór (Clonmore, Co. Carlow), appears in the poem, which is the name of Máedóc Ua Dúnlainge, who has already been discussed in relation to poem 12 Failet sund aisceda ríg. Dílgedach mac Cairpre is a saint that not much is known about except that he appears in this poem. He does not appear in any of the martyrologies nor is he present in the annals. Baethín of Inis Baithín (Ennisboyné, Co. Wicklow), is next on the list, and is suggested by Ó Riain in DIS as the saint referred to in this poem. While he is plausible, there is also the possibility that Baethín of Cloney may be the better candidate. Since there is nothing to support either as the definite, both are represented in the table of saints, and Baethín of Ennisboyné gets the honour of representing the saint of this poem. Bishop Ith of Áth Fadat (Aghade, Co. Carlow), is mentioned in the ninth-century Book of Armagh, in a tract referred to as the Additamenta, where Patrick appealed to the king of Leinster to allow a number of saints to return from exile. He is not included in the earlier martyrologies, but is present in MG and the MD; in addition there is no mention of him anywhere in the annals.

Cruad is, similar to Dílgedach, unknown, aside from being remembered on 26 October in MG and in MD, there is no reference to be found for him elsewhere. Ó Riain suggests that the saint Elcho may be a representation of one of the many names of Pupa of Inishmore (Co. Galway), who is also known by the names of Aelchú, Cálbe and Nem. His descent is of the Osraige, which places him among the Leinster saints. Mothareán is the brother of Itharnaisc of poem 23 Turchan duin a Thuathail. He was situated at Tulach Foirchirn (Tullow, Co. Carlow) in Leinster. He may also be the saint who is mentioned in the Bórama, as coming to

570 Cf. discussion on poem 12 Failet sund aisceda ríg.
571 Cf. Appendix C.
572 DIS, p. 88. Ennisboyné was also considered to be part of the Glendalough paruchiae. Mac Shamhráín, Church and Polity, p. 134.
573 Cf. Appendix C.
574 DIS, p. 383. VT, p. 198.
577 DIS, p. 532. CGSH § 379.3. Cf. Appendix C.
578 DIS, p. 532. CGSH § 379.3.
580 DIS, p. 501.
Moling’s assistance when he is fleeing from Fínachta.\textsuperscript{581} Crón ingen Sétna is slightly problematic, since aside from her name appearing in the listing of the saints of Ireland in \textit{LL}, nothing is known about her.\textsuperscript{582} Ó Riain suggests she may be a double for Crón of Cell ingen nAeda (Ardnahue, Co. Carlow), although that is uncertain.\textsuperscript{583} Within the same verse there is a mention of a \textit{caillech ón Cetharlocht} ‘a nun from Cetharlocht’.\textsuperscript{584} There may be cause to think that the nun of Cetharlocht and Crón were intended to be the same person, as it seems unlikely that such an obscure term would be used to invoke a saint, unless he/she was well known, which does not seem to be the case here.

Tacán of Corra Cluana (Curraclone, Co. Laois) appears as a follower of Patrick in \textit{VT}, who was left with Fiac of Sletty in Leinster.\textsuperscript{585} He was most likely commemorated on 9 September in the later martyrologies of MG and MD.\textsuperscript{586} Ó Riain suggests that he was identical with ‘Teagán son of Bearach whose family, allegedly of Oirghialla origin, is said to have settled in Ogenty (Tír Ua nGeintigh), a cantred in Ossory’.\textsuperscript{587} Various church sites in Leinster are dedicated to either him or a saint of the same name.\textsuperscript{588} Colum mac Cathbad, seems to refer to a Colum/Colmán of Midísel (Myshall, Co. Carlow), who was commemorated on 6 September and 22 September.\textsuperscript{589} There are no traces to be found of a Colum of Cluain Uail, on the other hand, neither in martyrologies nor in the annals. His church has been suggested to have been in Leinster, which would seem appropriate.\textsuperscript{590} Cellán, who appears in verse twenty-one of the poem, is most likely a reference to Cellán of Cill Daimchinn (possibly Kildavin, Co. Carlow) a Leinster saint.\textsuperscript{591} In the first line of verse twenty-two the name \textit{M’Aedóc mín} is given, which refers to

\begin{footnotesize}
\begin{enumerate}
\item \textit{LL} l. 51383.
\item \textit{VT}, pp. 190-1.
\item MG, pp. 172-3. MD, pp. 242-3.
\item \textit{DIS}, p. 569.
\item Ibid.
\item \textit{OG}, p. 271. \textit{DIS}, p. 208.
\end{enumerate}
\end{footnotesize}
Chapter 3. The saints in the Bórama

Máedóc of Ferms. Colum Cille of Iona in Scotland is the next saint to appear in the numeration. His loyalties lay mainly with the Uí Néill and especially with Áed mac Ainnmerech, king of the Uí Néill. His interference in the Bórama text, on behalf of Áed mac Ainnmerech though, is hindered because of his connection with Leinster through his mother’s side. It is undoubtedly this bond which earns him a place among the Leinster saints listed here. Athrachta demonstrates very little in terms of any connection with Leinster. She seems to be an early Connaught saint, mentioned in the VT by Tírechán. It is only through her genealogy that it is possible to connect her to Leinster, and then only through other notable Leinster saints, which have featured in the poems of the Bórama, whether that be the case for her inclusion is uncertain.

In the case of Colum of Slíab Messa, there is nothing known about Slíab Messa (possibly Slíab Mis, which is possibly in Co. Antrim), and there are no references to a Colum of such place to be found in either the martyrologies nor in the annals, hence he remains unidentified. Patrick of Armagh makes an appearance in the poem quite near the end. Patrick, although a northern Irish saint, has been shown to have a number of connections with the Leinster saints, present within the poems of the Bórama, not least with those that have featured in this poem. While unexpected, it is perhaps not strange that Patrick should be mentioned at least once in a poem, especially a poem where the one reciting it is calling out for divine assistance. Also many of the early saints which have appeared in the poem have demonstrated connection to Patrick as well as Leinster. There is still this emphasis on Leinster and the Leinster saints, and while Patrick is highly esteemed as an Irish saint, he does take a backseat in this poem to Brigit, who is invoked numerous times in this particular poem (which is possibly down to Moling being at or very near Kildare when he recites it).

592 Ó Riain suggests M’Aedóc mún is referring to Máedóc Ua Dúnlainge, however, that is unlikely as he was referred to earlier in the poem under the name of Aed mac Eogain. I find it highly unlikely that a saint would be referred to twice by two different names in the same poem. DIS, pp. 431-2. Cf. discussion on Aed mac Eogain in Appendix C.


596 DIS, pp. 81-2.

597 VT, p. 108.

598 OG, p. 610. Messa could also possibly be meis ‘evil, damage’ or ‘phantom, ghost’ cf. entry in DIL, p. 458.

Chapter 3. The saints in the Bórama

The final three saints of the poem are a mystery; Émnat, Fidnat and Colmnat. In the case of Fidnat, the likeliest candidate is a nun commemorated on 4 January, however there is nothing else known about her.\textsuperscript{600} Where Émnat and Colmnat are concerned, there is nothing to aid in the identification, and the added hindrance of either or both names showing hypocoristic features and other appellation of saints’ names prevents further analysis of these names. It may be possible that the Colmnat of the poem is the nun which Moling meets during his escape from Finnachta’s men. It is also possible that she is the saint Colmnatan, who was named in poem 22 \textit{Inmain triar a Christ grind glúair} as part of Moling’s retinue.\textsuperscript{601}

This poem has brought further interesting things to light. In case of the early saints, many illustrate connection with Patrick of Armagh. This is not surprising as he was the most influential saint at the time of the conversion. The possibility exists that this poem is continuing what some of the previous poems have been shown to do or at least attempt to demonstrate, that is, to highlight the early conversion of Leinster, not least through saints who were originally associated or were among the company of Patrick, but who were essentially Leinster saints. The majority of the saints portrayed in this poem have been shown to be connected to Leinster in one way or another, mainly through the sites of their churches and monasteries, but often also through familial ties. The poem is recited by Moling when he has reached Kildare and he is invoking the saints to come to his aid. The majority of the saints are well known, however there are a few that are lesser known or obscure. Whether that is a reflection of traditions lost is uncertain. However, there does not seem to be any correlation between how well known or how highly regarded a particular saint was for him/her to be included in the poem. What seems to have been most important was the saint’s relationship with Leinster or other Leinster saints.

Each poem contained in the Bórama has a specific function and it can be argued that each of the saints mentioned in the poems also has a specific function in the context they are being referred to. It was inevitable that not every saint would be definitively identified, however, it has been demonstrated that the majority of the saints show specific Leinster affiliations. The instances in which this is not the case, for example the five Ulster saints of poem 18 \textit{Dénaid dún ar cotach}, does not detract from this statement. Their inclusion is quite clearly stated as being Ulster saints and there for a

\textsuperscript{600} MT, p. 4. MG, pp. 8-9, MD, pp. 6-7.  
reason, to act as witnesses to the peace-agreement between Leinster and Ulster. In the other rare occasions where the saint’s affiliation lies beyond the borders of Leinster, there are usually some familial, ecclesiastical or textual connections (in the form of Lives, hymns and other extant sources) which tie them to either the province of Leinster or a specific monastic foundation or saint. Overall, this demonstrates that the author of the Bórama had an extensive knowledge in regards to regional saints and their traditions, many of which were still developing in the twelfth century. The environment in which the LL was created must have provided the author of the text access to extensive material in the forms of genealogical and regnal lists, as well as the early martyrologies (particularly MT), which in the end were preserved along with the Bórama in the LL manuscript. Beyond this we should recall the additional wealth of literary, historical and pseudo-historical tales and poems which the manuscript abounds with and have been shown, both by Buttimer and myself, to share textual relationship with the tale on a number of levels.

The saints of the prose text: Aedán of Glendalough and Adomnán

Aedán of Glendalough does not appear in many sources such as the martyrologies or the annals however, he features quite prominently in the Bórama, as one of the protagonists in the second section. Although he is the ‘uterine brother’ of Áed mac Ainmrech, his allegiance is to Leinster, as according to the genealogy his family ties lay there.602 He is not the only saint featured with this conflict of loyalties as Colum Cille is also in similar position due to his mother being from Leinster. While Aedán of Glendalough actively participates in the aid of the Leinstermen, Colum Cille is held more on the sidelines, only assisting Áed mac Ainmrech through the cowl he once presented him with and which Áed mac Ainmrech then ultimately leaves behind and so precipitates his demise.603 It is quite revealing that through the poetry and the prose text, that the kings of Tara and Úi Néill, seem only to have one saint who is on their side, through the entire tale, that being Adomnán.604

603 Ibid, pp. 60-95, §§56-119.
604 DIS, pp. 53-55.
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Adomnán does not show the same conflict of loyalty between the Uí Néill and Leinster. It is quite telling though that he does not interfere until after Moling has managed to trick Fínnachta into rescinding the bórama. Adomnán had threatened that Fínnachta would not attain Heaven if he did not answer his summons, although he was unable to do so as Moling had already promised Fínnachta Heaven for remitting the bórama and Adomnán could not break a promise effectively made by God. The reason that the Uí Néill in the end lost the entitlement to the bórama was because Leinster had divine assistance, while the Uí Néill either received no assistance or a rather feeble one. It is also hinted at that Fínnachta did not behave like a proper king when he remitted the bórama to Moling, in the admonishing he receives from Adomnán in poem 29 Andiu cia chenglaid chuaca.

Fínnachta and Adomnán are inextricably linked through various anecdotes, found in the anecdotes of FA and the Mionannála, which detail their relationship. This apparent relationship between Adomnán and Fínnachta must have at the time been already well known by the creator of the Bórama, which in turn shows why Adomnán was their champion in the tale. It is also possibly a reason as to why so many of the saints referred to in various poems through the text of the Bórama were shown to have been among the guarantors of CA, the Law of Innocents, presented at Birr in Leinster in 697. The law of CA was enacted at Birr in Leinster shortly after Fínnachta himself had died (†695 AU). Though the CA does not appear among the many texts LL, and only survives in later manuscripts dating from the fifteenth – sixteenth-century Rawlinson B. 512 and the seventeenth-century manuscript Brussels MS 2324 – 40, there is strong likelihood that the author must have possessed a copy of the CA, in some form or another.

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607 Cf. Appendix B. Cf. FA, pp. 31-33.
608 Cf. Ibid, pp. 22-33. MS Egerton 1782, ff. 56-64, contains Mionannála which contains much of the same contents as the Fragmentary Annals, and has sometimes been confused with it. S.H. O’Grady edited and translated MS Egerton 1782 in Silva Gadelica vol. 1 – 2, where it follows on from his edition and translation of the Bórama. The poem 29 Andiu cia chenglaid chuaca is also included there but like with most of his work has not included it in his translation.
Chapter 3. The saints in the Bórama

Comparison with the saints of Cath Belaig Dúin Bolg

This chapter on the saints of the poetry cannot be concluded without mentioning the saints of the Cath Belaig Dúin Bolg episode from YBL. As demonstrated in Chapter 1: The Bórama, the tale differs in various ways from the CBDB episode presented in the Bórama, specifically in regards to the saints mentioned in the text and the poetry. None of the poems within Cath Belaig Dúin Bolg contain references to saints, aside from Colum Cille. His mention though is only in reference to Áed mac Ainmerech having received a special cowl from Colum Cille and that cowl was left behind. Hence there are only three saints we need to mention in relation Cath Belaig Dúin Bolg, those are: Conall, abbot of Kilranelagh, Bishop Aedán (of Glendalough) and Cóemgen of Glendalough. Bishop Aedán has already featured in a short description on his part of the Bórama tract as well as featuring in a short discussion on the differences between Cath Belaig Dúin Bolg of YBL and the episode as it is presented in the Bórama tract. Turning the discussion to Conall, abbot of Kilranelagh, he appears briefly in the Bórama, although he is only referred to as the erenagh of Cell Rannairech (now Kilranelagh). There is no mention of this place-name in the martyrologies nor is there mention of a plausible candidate for Conall. The place-name of Cell Rannairech appears mainly in two poems, both found in LL, Lecht Cormaic meic Culennáin and poem (14) Guidim Comdid cumachtach of the Bórama. The likely reason is that this place-name was very early on associated with the events described; the beheading of Cummascach and the burial of Áed mac Ainmerech. Hence, possibly by the time of the compilation of LL, the place was already obsolete, as suggested by Price. There may be cause to suggest, as hinted at earlier, that the erenagh of Kilranelagh may have at some point been a reference to Bishop Aedán, and that his association with Glendalough in the Bórama may have been an amalgamation of him with Cóemgen of Glendalough who features in Cath Belaig Dúin Bolg of YBL.

The main difference between the Bórama and Cath Belaig Dúin Bolg of YBL revolves around Cóemgen of Glendalough. While Bishop Aedán is quite involved in the proceedings of events in the Bórama, he is barely present in Cath Belaig Dúin

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612 Cf. Chapter 1: The Bórama.

613 LL ll. 6158-6382 and 6882-6961.

614 Price, The Place-Names of Co. Wicklow, p. 120.
Bolg and Cóemgen of Glendalough seems to be the deciding factor in the progression of the tale. The little anecdote contained within Cath Belaig Dún Bolg about Cóemgen’s involvement is not included in his Latin Life or in his Irish Life, and is not found in the Bórama either. This seems to be a divergence between versions of Cath Belaig Dún Bolg that may demonstrate to some extent ecclesiastical or secular political reasons. There is also cause to suggest that the Cath Belaig Dún Bolg text is demonstrating similar hagiographical invention as the Bórama. Cóemgen’s involvement is not included in either of his Lives, nor does he feature in the Lec version of the Bórama related texts either, and he is said to have reached the exalted age of 120 when he died in 618/622 [AU]. Whether the YBL text was trying to counteract the Bórama text and the role of Bishop Aedán of Glendalough for the sake of Cóemgen and his legend is a curious hypothesis, one which will remain unexplored at this time.

Conclusion

Three things ultimately come to mind when looking at the whole picture the saints present. Firstly, the one point that cannot be emphasised enough is the connection the saints have to Leinster. This seems to be crucial both to the Bórama tract, and it could be argued, to the LL manuscript as a whole as well. In addition to the Leinster affiliation it is possible to highlight a significant relationship which various church sites share with Glendalough and between others as well. This is interesting when considering the significant variation between the Bórama with Bishop Aedán of Glendalough versus Cath Belaig Dún Bolg and Cóemgen of Glendalough, particularly as the Cath Belaig Dún Bolg text does not demonstrate the same amount of hagiographical material as the Bórama. It is also interesting when considering that two great monastic sites situated outside Leinster show this affiliation with Glendalough, Terryglass in Munster and Bangor in Ulster. Second, is the sheer number of saints on the side of Leinster versus the only one, Adomnán, on the Uí Néill side as demonstrated in poem 33 A Brigit bennach ar sét. Third is the purpose these saints have in the poems as demonstration of the might of the Leinster saints.


616 Also demonstrated when Colum Cille does not participate because of his allegiance to Leinster through his mother’s side.
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It is quite possible that the reason for this elaborate enumeration of saints is to illustrate how many Leinster saints there were which were held in high regard, particularly in the case of poem 23 Turchan duin a Thuathail, where the purpose of the poem is to enumerate the various saints meant to be powerful enough to rescind the bórama are called forth. These three issues tie in well with the purpose of Moling within the Bórama. As scholars have tended to view the Bórama as a kingship tale, his involvement, although recognised, seems to have been placed second to that of kings. The following chapter, will focus, primarily on Moling within his role in the Bórama, to establish what his involvement means to the overall tale. The chapter will also focus on other sources where Moling features, in order to argue the case for the Bórama to be considered quite influential in the development of the tradition of Moling.
4. Moling: the saint of the Bórama

The Bórama can, as we have seen, be considered a hagiographical text. It has been shown throughout the previous chapters that Moling is the central character of the text. He may not appear in the flesh, so to speak, until two thirds of the tale is over, however, his presence is noted nearly from the outset of the text. Because the poetry has been largely ignored in academic discussion on the Bórama, Moling’s importance to the text has not been readily apparent or recognised as such. The text seems to reflect a major part of Moling’s legend, other aspects of which also later became represented in his Irish life GMB, and to some extent in his twelfth-century Latin life, Vita Sancti Moling episcopi de Tech Moling, as well. The Bórama tract, as it is preserved in LL, as a result, displays certain characteristics prevalent to hagiographical texts and this chapter will explore these features further. The material concerned with Moling has never been fully explored, and with the Bórama being such a central text to the hagiographical material of Moling a closer look at other sources associated with him is necessary.

Another reason for the Bórama being important to the discussion of Moling’s legend is contained within LL itself. The Bórama tract starts on folio 294b, while situated shortly before the Bórama, on folios 283b – 285b, are six anecdotes featuring Moling. These six anecdotes, which show Moling in his dealings with both secular and religious concerns, portray someone clever and shrewd in all his encounters, but also show his tendency to encourage folly as well, something which Moling has generally been associated with. There are also further texts found in LL which concern Moling and they will also feature in the discussion. Material concerned with Moling is not contained exclusively in LL, but are also found in other extant sources, although most are of later date. In order to be able to paint a good picture of the sort of character Moling invariably displays, it is necessary to analyse to a degree the material he features prominently in. This chapter aims to accomplish a broad discussion on the sources and how they relate to the development of Moling’s legend and whether or how the Bórama text is influential in this development.

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618 LL ll. 36674-36873 (p. 1236-1242). Fechtas dòsum oc ernaigdhi ina eclais, Fechtas do M’ling is Tóidin co n-acca Mael Doborchon, Caillech dorat a mac do M’Ling, Fechtas aile do M’Ling is Tóidin, Drochchomaitheach ro baí i n-ocular do som .i. Grác, Mo Ling Luachra dalta do Maehóc Ferna.
Chapter 4. Moling

The first part of this chapter will deal with the *Bórama* tract and how Moling is portrayed therein; the focus will be on how his importance is reflected almost from the start of the text to when he finally arrives on the scene. The second part will be devoted to a discussion of other extant material concerning Moling; the sources mentioned above, as well as a number of poems, usually referred to as the ‘Anecdota poems’ from the modern collection in which they were published, which are attributed to Moling and any other sources which may include material relevant to Moling.\(^{619}\) For the conclusion the aim is to compare the character of Moling, as he is portrayed in the *Bórama*, with the various thematic roles the holy man inhabits in these texts and to see how the *Bórama* relates to the wider context of Moling’s legend.

**Moling of the Bórama**

The discussion will be presented here as it was in the previous chapters, divided into sections. As previous discussion has demonstrated, Moling, himself, does not become part of the text until the third section, though he is mentioned prior to this. Hence the two previous sections are quite important to this discussion as they best demonstrate the importance Moling has to the overall text of the *Bórama*. It is also the reason why the first two sections will be mainly referring to the poems as that is where mention of him occurs.

**Section one: the levying of the bórama and Finn mac Cumaill**\(^{620}\)

The first instance that Moling is mentioned in the *Bórama* is in poem 05 *Mo Lling Lúath Cellach Bróen bil*.\(^{621}\) This poem occurs quite early on in the *Bórama* and its speaker is Finn mac Cumaill of the *fían*-band. The poem is in the form of an address by Finn to his companion Moling Lúath ‘the Swift’, at Broccross, the place where Tech Moling or the seat of Moling’s monastery, would be situated in the future. Moling Lúath is not Moling Luachra of the *Bórama* text, but is here in the role of a precursor to the main character, and not the only one to feature as such as has been mentioned in relation to Finn mac Cumaill and Conchobar mac Nessa in previous

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621 *LL* ll. 37908-37927. Cf. discussion Chapter 2: The Poetry, Chapter 3: The saints in the *Bórama* and Appendix B.
Although Moling is, at this moment absent from the text, he is the main subject of the poem. This poem is a prophecy by Finn on his arrival to Broccross; *co ragba ra hanmain Find / tairngires Mo Lling sin ross*. This emphasises the importance of Finn as a great warrior and in turn emphasises the greatness of Moling, that a mention of him carries with it such recognition for the simple act of uttering his name. The inclusion of the Finn material must have occurred early on, something that the author of the *Bórama* tract in LL did not wish to ignore. As such the author amalgamated the early tradition of Finn and the tale of the fate of Tuathal Techtmar’s two daughters, with Moling’s tradition. Hence, Finn, as a warrior, was not slighted but recognised and at the same time Moling’s role in the text was emphasised and given credence by being placed in the mouth of Finn at the very first instance where he is mentioned. It also gives credence to Finn’s role of ‘anticipatory Christian’ as previously discussed.

Poem 05 *Mo Lling Lúath Cellach Bróen bil* along with poems 07 *Ross mBrocc indiu is conair chúain* and 08 *Ross mBruice bale buredach* succeed in linking together the pre-Christian part of the text to the advent of Christianity with the description of, what is considered to be a holy place, Broccross. As such, at this moment in time, it is not perhaps Moling who is the focal point of the poems but the place Broccross. It is nevertheless the name of Moling who is irrevocably linked to Broccross, which is the reason for this address and is aptly illustrated in these lines of poem 05 *Mo Lling Lúath Cellach Bróen bil; daraga na ndíaid don glind / Mo Lling fáid co cétaib cros*.

The following poem, 06 *Rot fiasu i mBroccross*, can be said to have two main foci, the first being on the place of Broccross, listing up all the wonderful food and other provisions the *fián*-band will receive once they arrive there and the second is Moling Lúath encouraging Finn mac Cumaill to summon his men to aid the Leinstermen. There are a few issues which concern this poem that are worth exploring further.

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622 It is interesting to note the consonate echo of the two epithets of Moling Lúath and Moling Luachra.

623 LL II. 37922-37923. ‘So that he may take up the great name of Finn / he who predicts Moling in the Ross.’

624 Cf. discussion on poem 18 *Dénaid dún ar cotach* in Chapter 2: The Poetry.

625 Cf. Appendix B.

626 LL II. 37918-37919. ‘He will come after them to the valley / the prophet Moling, with hundreds of crosses.’

627 Cf. Appendix B.
Chapter 4. Moling

First of all, this is the only poem that tentatively links together the tradition of Moling with the fateful deaths of Tuathal Techtmar’s two daughters, through a mention of the place-name Broccross. Second, the many names enumerated in the poem that are supposed to represent the fían-band of Finn, seem not to correspond to the men he is traditionally associated with in later sources. This may suggest that the Bórama tract developed alongside the AS tradition, seemingly without much contact between the two.

The poems in section one demonstrate a seamless flow from one to another. Poem 07 Ross mBrocc indiu is conair chiúin follows on nicely from the previous poem. This poem, much like the previous one, extols the marvels at Broccross, but it also brings the focus back to Moling. It is not until poem 08 Ross mBruicc bale buredach that Moling himself becomes the main subject of the poem, although being alluded to in the previous poems. In a way the poems preceding this one cleverly lead up to it, almost as a teaser trailer or an introduction to Moling. It starts off with a description of Broccross in its first two verses; after that it is Moling who is the focus of the poem. There is emphasis put on the fact that this poem occurs at a time before Christianity arrived in Ireland. Poem 08 Ross mBruicc bale buredach is spoken by Finn mac Cumaill’s companion, Énna na háarbothi ‘of the Chilly Booth,’ and it represents his vision of Broccross and the saints of the future, including Mo Lling lúam na fírinne / cid fota daría. The start of verse four catches the eye as well; atchuala na haiffrena / atchondarc na saltracha. Granted, this poem is a representation of a vision, i.e. something that has yet to occur, still, this indication that they already had knowledge of the Christian faith, that he had ‘heard’ and ‘seen’ the ‘offices of the Masses’ and the ‘Psalters’, is interesting. The strongest likelihood is that the author was, as has been noted in the discussion on the poems and saints of the Bórama, establishing a strong link between the pre-Christian section of the text (and even the very early history of Christianity in Ireland and Leinster) with the more

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628 The place-name itself is also one of the more interesting feature of the poem, the initial line of the poem gives the place-name as Broccross, ‘Rot fiasu i mBroccross,’ while in all other instances it is referred to as ‘Ross mBrocc’ or ‘Ross mBruicc’. Whether this may indicate that these poems have been composed at different times or what is more plausible, that it comes from a different source than the others and is, at present, uncertain. OG, p. 128.


630 Cf. previous discussion on poem 07 Ross mBrocc indiu is conair chiúin in Chapter 2: The Poetry.

631 LL ll. 38103-38104. ‘Moling, steersman of justice / though it be a long time till he arrives.’

632 LL ll. 38105-38106. ‘I heard of the sacrifices / I saw the Psalters.’
ecclesiastical and hagiographical nature of it through the use of such religious terminology. Continuing with the current poem, it is also reflective of Moling’s life;

_Mo Lling luam na firinne_
_Faíd Meic Maire mórglonnaig._
_Misse fora chomairge_
_Co bráth o ‘ndiu immach_
_Beit clerig na comnaide_
_Úas altorib anglide._
_Doraga fer foluamnach_
_Atúaid a mMaig Rath._

Along with the reference to the pre-Christian period, is the subtle reference to Suibne and the battle of Mag Rath (Moira, Co. Down) which occurred in 637[AU], _doraga fer foluamnach / atúaid a mMaig Rath_. This may be among the earliest references to what has come down to us in the later text of _BS_, the relationship between Suibne and Moling. Although the reference to Suibne is only this single reference and is easy to miss, it demonstrates the apparent textual relationship between the legend of Moling and Suibne. This may suggest that similar to the development of the Finn mac Cumail tradition, the tradition of Suibne and Moling must have been developing and according to tradition had been developing since the ninth century at least, contrary to what J. Carney says. Buttimer failed to recognise the significance of this and suggests that ‘There is possibly an inadvertent interpolation from the Suibne traditions into the _Bórama_ in this section.’ Instead this should be regarded as a deliberate mention and that the author was intentionally including material and references to other tales associated with Moling at the time when the _Bórama_ was created, to emphasise the hagiographical nature the _Bórama_ exhibits.

These four poems highlight the complexity of the _Bórama_ tract and how they seem to draw on various traditions, the _bórama_, Finn mac Cumail and to a lesser extent the tradition of Suibne, in order to emphasise the importance of Moling within the

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633 _LL_ 38112-38119. ‘Moling steersman of justice / the prophet of the son of Mary, of mighty deeds / I am under his protection / till Doomsday from today henceforth. / Clerics will be dwelling / over angelic altars. / A fluttering man will come / from the north out of Mag Rath.’ This is also reflected in his Irish life, cf. Stokes, _The Birth and Life_, pp. 18-23. This poem, although considerably altered, also features in Stokes’ edition of the _AS_, where the last two lines of this verse appears as well. Stokes, ‘_Acallamh_’, p. 76.

634 _LL_ II. 38118-38119. ‘a fluttering man will come / from the north out of Mag Rath.’

635 _Buile Suibhne_ will be discussed further later in this chapter. Aside perhaps from the earlier ‘Anecdota poems’ and the ninth-century _Codex S. Pauli_ which will be discussed later on, although it should be noted that the notes ascribing the poems to Moling and Suibne are in later hand.


overall text, while still remaining subtle about it. However, more importantly, it may demonstrate the influence the Bórama tract had on the development of these texts, or perhaps more plausibly, the increased interest of the other traditions, possibly in the case of Finn mac Cumaill and Suibne but most definitely in the case of Moling. The role of Moling becomes increasingly more and more emphasised as the dialogue of poems continues, and in each case, their purpose is to bridge the various traditions that make up the Bórama together with Moling.

Section two: the ‘Cath Belaig Dúin Bolg’ episode (or CBDB)\(^{638}\)

There is only a single poem which refers to Moling in section two; poem 18 Dénaid dún ar cotach.\(^{639}\) There is little indication of the importance this poem has to Moling’s inclusion in the text at first glance. It contains names of ten saints, seemingly in order to represent five saints from the province of Leinster and five saints from the province of Ulster respectively.\(^{640}\) The events it reports occur during the mid sixth century, at the time when Brandub mac Echach was king of Leinster and Leinster and Ulster had declared peace between them.\(^{641}\) It also occurs some time before Moling’s time in history. However, by being made part of this poem he is already participating in the events; ‘dessetar naím Lagen 7 Ulad ’sin ts liéib iar sin, & doniat a cotach cen taithmech tria bithu’ indicating the saint’s role in the poem.\(^{642}\)

The conclusion is that the saints of the poem are the saints that were to have witnessed this peace treaty between Ulster and Leinster. The majority of the saints seem to be contemporaneous with the present events, aside from Moling.\(^{643}\) If this is the case, it is possible to conjecture that Moling was included in the numeration of the Leinster saints on purpose. In addition to this, this same poem is found in Lec, where the name of Moling is completely absent.\(^{644}\) This is a very important observation as this emphasises the underlying argument of this thesis that a number


\(^{639}\) LL ll. 38565-38572. Cf Appendix B.

\(^{640}\) Cf discussion on poem 18 Dénaid dún ar cotach in Chapter 3: The saints in the Bórama.


\(^{642}\) LL ll. 38573-38574. ‘The saints of Leinster and of the Ulaid sat down on the brae, and make their covenant never to be broken.’ Stokes, ‘The Boroma’, pp. 76-7, §78.

\(^{643}\) Confer with Appendix C, to see dates for the saints. Brigit it perhaps the earliest saint mentioned in the poem, however the obits for the other saints range from †602 - †625, which would mean that they would possibly be contemporaneous with the events, Moling however †697 is somewhat a later saint.

\(^{644}\) Lec, f. 307v.
of texts were utilised in order to construct a tale of epic proportions with Moling as its central figure. This supports the hypothesis that the CBDB episode was inserted into the Bórama and that until that time CBDB was not considered a part of the bórama tradition.

With Moling’s inclusion among the saints of poem 18 Dénaid dún ar cotach, there is evidence enough to suggest that the reason for the difference between the Bórama and the YBL text has to do with the purpose of the two texts. The two versions, both the LL and the YBL text, have Glendalough saints intercede, in one way or another, on the behalf of the Leinstermen. There are indications to suggest that the text of the Bórama was constructed with the intention of creating a legend spanning centuries where Moling was the central character of the entire tale. It is therefore possible to surmise that the compiler of the Bórama drew on a large body of material in constructing the text from these sources. Through these sources the compiler wove into the fabric of the story the advent of Moling, so that none of the major sections of the text, which occur before Moling enters the tale, go without mention of him.

Section three: Moling and the remission of the bórama

The focus of the two previous sections was on Moling before his arrival in the text, the focus of this section will henceforth be on Moling, as an active character in the tale, as this is the section where his presence is at the forefront. It has hopefully been demonstrated that each mention of him in the previous sections was done deliberately, so that to prophesise his arrival as well as being an indicator of his involvement in the text. The focus of this section will be to highlight the character of Moling in the Bórama text, and to look specifically at the poems of this section and see what they contribute to the prose. Due to the nature of this discussion, references to other extant Moling sources will be made, while further discussion on these materials will feature later in this chapter.

Moling, is sent for, at his place in Broccross, supporting the prophecy of Finn mac Cumaill, and emphasised in both prose and poem 21 Cuce seo ro dalus; nocon fúair inad árais naco toracht co Ross mBruicc and Cuce seo ro dalus / is and dogén mo thrátha. After receiving the message it is reported that he assembled his

646 LL ll. 38752-38753, 38755-38756. ‘he found no place of residence until he came to Ross Bruicc.’ and ‘To this I was summoned / and there I will make my time [I will perform my offices].’ Stokes’ translation in brackets. Stokes, ‘The Boroma’, pp. 98-9, §125.
community which is represented in poem 22 *Inmain tríar a Christ grind glúair*, which seems to indicate the people associated with Moling who were part of his community.\(^{647}\) As I suggested previously, this poem seems to show a mostly fabricated community of Moling, most likely, I would argue, to establish him, in the *Bórama*, as someone who is important enough to have a large community around him. These first few lines of the text where Moling appears as a protagonist seem to be constructed in such a way as to establish him as a holy person, with presence and power enough to be able to rid the Leinstermen of the *bórama* once and for all. This is even further supported in the following poem 23 *Turchan duin a Thuathail*;

\[
\text{cia náem don dreim dagfer}
\text{dingbas dind in plaig.}\(^{648}\)
\]

Twenty five saints are mentioned in this particular poem before it mentions Moling at the end of verse seven, *l inn é Mo Lling*.\(^{649}\) The rest of the poem is taken up by extolling the virtue of Moling in a way very reflective of a panegyric poem; *Mo Lling lassar daiged / tond línta na n-airer, Is é in torc dar trétaib / is e in barr úas gécaib, Is é in sról dar slúagaib*.\(^{650}\) Moling’s role in the tale is again emphasised in verse ten with the words;

\[
\text{Retlu bruicc búada}
\text{atchlunim atchúala}
\text{béras úain in cís.}\(^{651}\)
\]

It is here that Moling’s purpose is again emphasised in the text. These three poems (21 *Cuče seo ro dalus*, 22 *Inmain tríar a Christ grind glúair* and 23 *Turchan duin a Thuathail*) and the events surrounding them have all played a part in establishing the importance Moling will have on the events to come, but it is in poem 24 *Érig a Mo Lling* that the events that came before and what is to come are linked together in a very telling way.\(^{652}\) Bran, king of Leinster and Moling converse together, where Bran encourages Moling in his quest to rid the Leinstermen of the *bórama*:

\[
\text{Derggfaide, bar rind}
\text{itbeir rib Mo Lling}
\]

\(^{647}\) This poem has been previously discussed in Chapter 2: The Poetry.

\(^{648}\) *LL* ll. 38803-38804. ‘Which saint of the number of good men / will ward off from us the plague.’ The ‘plague’ referred to meaning the onslaught of the men from the North bent on levying the *bórama* from the province of Leinster.

\(^{649}\) *LL* l. 38837. ‘or is it Moling.’

\(^{650}\) *LL* ll. 38845-38848, 38850. ‘Moling, blaze of fire / a wave that fills the shores’, ‘He is the boar over herds, / he is the treetop over branches’ and ‘He is the silk banner over the hosts.’

\(^{651}\) *LL* ll. 38853-38855. ‘The star of victorious Brocc(ross) / we will hear, I have heard / who will bear the tax from us.’

\(^{652}\) *LL* ll. 38887-38934. Cf. Appendix B.
Here the battle of the Dún Bolg and the fate of Áed mac Ainmerech are tied in with Moling being called to intervene on behalf of the province of Leinster. There Bran, the king of Leinster expresses the hope (or what could be understood to be a prophecy) that Fínnachta will meet the same fate of demise as Áed mac Ainmerech did.

These four poems demonstrate the kind of clever composition that was at work in connecting the previous sections together with the current section; that is, the prophecy of Finn mac Cumaill and the poems regarding Broccross, as well as the battle of the Dún Bolg. It also demonstrates quite aptly how early on the involvement of Moling is hinted at. These are all signs that indicate how powerful a saint he was, powerful enough to save the Leinstermen from the ‘plague’ of the bórama. What these four poems have in common is that they set the tone for the rest of the text, showing off the strength and power that Moling inhabits, which allow him to accomplish his task. Here Moling has been established as a powerful saint when he set out on his journey north to meet with Fínnachta. Accompanying him is Tollchenn of Cluain Ena (Clonanny, Co. Laois?) a fili ‘poet’ in order to recite Moling’s poem to Fínnachta. It is worth mentioning that Lec varies slightly in regards to the passage concerning the journey Moling is about to undertake. This passage does not occur in LL, however in Lec it says: Oir dotairrngiread co ticfad do Laignib næm dogebad in Boroma ar athchungid, 7 is cian roim Moling rotairrngairead sin. Similarly, in Moling’s Irish Life, GMB, a prophecy tells of a saint that will come and succeed in having the bórama lifted. This prophecy is not part of LL version, which could possibly mean that either the idea of a prophecy is a later invention than the text of LL, or they may be referring to poem 23 Turchan duin a Thuathail, and the line

\[ bid áigsech bar n-ord; \\
\text{Fínnachta ro fáeth} \\
\text{mar ra thuít Aed} \\
i mBelaig Dúin Bolg.\]

\[ LL \text{ l. 38917-38922. ‘Fierce cry, your keenness / Moling says to you / it will be terrifying your battle cry; / Fínnachta will fall / just as Aed fell / in the Battle of the Dún Bolg.’} \]

\[ LL \text{ l. 3879-38885. Cf. Appendix B.} \]

\[ OG, \text{ p. 262.} \]

\[ ‘For it had been foretold that of the Leinstermen would come a saint who would take away the Boroma by repeated asking; and long before Molling, that had been prophesied.’ Stokes, ‘The Boroma’, pp. 102-3, §131.} \]

\[ Stokes, The Birth and Life, pp. 46-7.} \]
béras úain in cís. This does, however, affect the way in which the reader (of the translation) would regard Moling’s role in the text. As it appears in the LL text, there is nothing to indicate that Moling will succeed in having the bórama rescinded. That is what we have come to expect from the LL text, that while great many things are hinted at, such as Moling’s presence and importance to the events, the plot is never fully given away.

It is suggested in the text by Cobthach mac Colmáin of the Uí Faeláin that the poet Tollchenn should not be keeping such pitiful company; a cleric and his retinue: “is bec linne” are siat, “beith duitsiu i cléir chlerig”. This is followed with the statement: ro gabsat rempo iarum co teg Fínnachta. Mar rancatar ro gab in fer dána dùain Mo Lling, atbert iss é doringne. Although there is nothing to support Stokes’ translation that Tollchenn claimed Moling’s eulogy for himself, atbert iss é doringne, merely stating that he ‘said that he composed it’, I would concur with Stokes’ understanding of the sentence, that Tollchenn was no longer accompanying Moling. The inserted addition from Lec adversely influences the text in Stokes’ translation. The main reason being that the prophecy referred to in the prose text mentions that ‘a saint’, naem (early Mid. Ir. nom. naem(h), O. Ir. nom. noíb), will lift the bórama away from the Leinster people. If this is disregarded it is easier to understand the reason for Tollchenn to abandon Moling and his retinue and deliver the poem to Fínnachta without their presence. This was because he sought the reward for the poem himself, and possibly wanted to be the one to rid the Leinstermen of the bórama. If the poet is portraying such a show of hubris it would definitely explain the fate suffered by the poet later on when he drowns himself.

Before that occurs though, there is a slight interlude before the anecdote of the poem is resolved. Moling having been abandoned by Tollchenn came to Lathrac Ua Muireadaich, on the border of Leinster and Meath, where a group of young men from

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658 LL l. 38855. ‘who will lift the tax from us’
660 LL ll. 38959-38960. ‘So they fared forward to Finnachta’s house. When they arrived the man of poetry repeated Molling’s eulogy and said that he, Tollchenn, had composed it.’ Stokes, ‘The Boroma’, pp. 102-3, §132.
the household of Fínnachta were. As these young men threw rocks at Moling and his retinue, so that they had to flee. In the end Moling reaches the house of Fínnachta and enters the house, where he receives no welcome; and . As a result of this slight to Moling, as well as the grievance of the pelting of the stones, Moling cursed the boys so that during hunting a boy, who turned out to be Fínnachta’s son Donngilla, received a fatal blow. After that Fínnachta pleads with Moling to bring his son back to life and that he would get whatever he asked of him; . At this point the poem Tollchenn absconded with becomes an important part again in the unfolding events. Moling offers Fínnachta that in return for bringing his son back to life and for the poem he had composed for him he will get Fínnachta to agree to not claim the bórama until ‘Monday’. This Fínnachta agrees to do, not realising that the ‘Monday’ that Moling is asking for is in fact Doomsday and thus meaning forever. Moling recites a panegyric poem for Fínnachta, poem 26 where he extols his many virtues, effectively saying that Fínnachta is a greater king than those that came before him.

When Fínnachta hears the poem he accuses Moling of trying to pass off another’s poem as his own, that is Tollchenn’s poem which he recited for the king earlier. Moling challenges the poet: and when Tollchenn makes to recite the poem accredited to him, nothing comes out of him except a nonsense poem, poem 27 Thus after being found out Tollchenn flees until he eventually ends up drowning himself as a result. Fínnachta asks that Moling forgive him for thinking that he had deceived him and to bring his son back to life, and promised again that Moling would receive anything that he asked of him. Moling prays to God that Fínnachta’s son be restored and he is then

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663 OG, p. 476.
664 LL ll. 38969-38970, 38970-38971. ‘And he found no uprising there,’ and ‘and he was ashamed at not getting uprising.’ Stokes, ‘The Boroma’, pp. 104-5, §134. Manuscript stained. Comergi is a respectful greeting, ‘to do homage’, also ‘act of rising up’, i.e. no one stood up to greet him. DIL, p. 138.
665 LL l. 38981. ‘and thou shalt have a reward therefore.’ Stokes, ‘The Boroma’, pp. 106-7, §137.
667 LL ll. 38988-39015. Cf. Appendix B.
successfully revived. With Fínnachta’s pledge in place and the boy restored, Moling returns to Leinster. With this Moling’s involvement with the bórama is concluded and what follows is the exchange between Fínnachta and Adomnán regarding Fínnachta’s promise of not seeking the bórama from the Leinstermen ever again. It takes some time for Fínnachta to come to Adomnán’s council where he is made to realise the extent of his promise to Moling. Having realised that he was effectively tricked by Moling into giving up the bórama, he gave chase after Moling. Moling flees and is given aid by a Leinster cleric who casts a mist over Fínnachta and his men when chasing after Moling. Moling eventually finds shelter in the monastery at Kildare, where he recites poem 33 A Brigit bennach ar sét, and manages to finally escape Fínnachta, bringing an end to the Bórama tract of LL.

The episode, in which Moling tricks Fínnachta into remitting the bórama to the Leinstermen forever, is also found in FA. The account presented there is somewhat different than the LL text. In and amongst the entries in FA are ‘long narratives [that] have been fitted into a framework of standard short annals entries’. Following the entry of 677, commemorating the battle between Fínnachta and Leinster at Loch Gabair, are anecdotes concerning Fínnachta, among which is the tale of the remission of the bórama. These anecdotes detail how Fínnachta became king of Tara and also his relationship with Adomnán, and how in one anecdote it is mentioned that he would remain in ‘great prosperity until he gives offense to Adamnán.’ Instead of Moling tricking Fínnachta with the request of remission till luán ‘Monday/Doomsday’ it is fria lá 7 aidche ‘for a day and night’ as úair ni ffuil ‘san aimsir acht ló 7 aidche ‘there is nothing in time but day and night’, hence forever. It is also made clear that Fínnachta knew that he had been tricked and he sent his followers after Moling, however, not with the intent of harming him, because Moling had promised him Heaven. Still Moling runs and they do not catch up with him. It is mentioned ‘by others’ that Moling gave Fínnachta the poem Fionnachta for Uibh

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674 Cf. Appendix B.
676 FA, p. 23.
677 Ibid, p. 25.
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*Neill* or poem 26 *Fínnachta a Huīb Néill* in the *Bórama* although it is not included in the FA text.679

The tale continues with Adomnán sending a messenger to bring Fínnachta to him. Fínnachta ignores this request until Adomnán threatens that he shall not enter Heaven.680 Since the reason that Fínnachta granted Moling the remittance of the *bórama* was so that he would attain heaven, he found Adomnán’s acts harsh. Fínnachta comes to Adomnán’s meeting finally, where Adomnán reproaches him for having remitted the *bórama* and recites the poem *Aniu ge chenglaid cuacha* or poem 29 *Andiu cia chenglaid chuaca* in the *Bórama*.681 After receiving this reproaching poem from Adomnán, Fínnachta performs penance and Adomnán forgives Fínnachta the remission of the *bórama* to Leinster.682

The FA text shows inherent interest in the affairs of the province of Connacht, the Uí Néill and of Ulster, showing particular interest in Iona and Adomnán as well as the affairs in the provinces of Leinster and Osraige.683 This is mirrored in the anecdotes of Fínnachta in FA, and it is therefore no surprise that Fínnachta’s benevolence and humility is emphasised in the text.

This is illustrated when Fínnachta refuses to see Adomnán on the first two instances he is asked to go see him. When Adomnán threatens that none of Fínnachta’s descendants shall become king of Ireland and that Fínnachta’s life should be shortened, Fínnachta does not react.684 It is only when he is threatened by not attaining heaven after his death that he answers Adomnán’s summons. This is done perhaps to illustrate that Fínnachta is a devout Christian who does not care for the worldly matters, himself being of humble beginnings according the anecdotes.685 In the *Bórama*, however, it is made quite clear that Adomnán was not able to retract Moling’s offer of Heaven after it had been given.686

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679 Ibid. Cf. Appendix B.
681 FA, pp. 30-3. Cf. Appendix B.
682 Ibid, pp. 32-3.
685 Ibid, pp. 22-29.
Chapter 4. Moling

The main characteristics Moling demonstrates in the *Bórama*, seems to correspond well to that of the holy fool (or trickster?). With something so simple as a play on words, Moling deceived Fínnachta with the term *lúan* ‘Monday’ or ‘Doomsday’ thus Moling displays this well known characteristic of early Irish holy men.\(^{687}\) It is also something that seems to be present in other extant sources relating to Moling, such as *Fechtas aile do M'Ling is Toídin* and to some extent BS.\(^{688}\) Buttimer makes an interesting observation in regards to the episode involving poem 27 *Dríbor drábor* ‘The point of greatest consequence in this episode is the issue of truth. Tollchend’s deception has cast doubt on Mo Lling’s honesty and thus on the veracity of his poetry and other words.’\(^{689}\) In light of Moling’s falsehood or trickery later in the text, the episode of Tollchenn must be viewed differently in terms of this. Buttimer recalls that the various versions of Moling’s remission of the *bórama* all have in common that he was denied the suspension on a number of occasions. This he calls a ‘manifestation of the rejection tradition’ and that the ‘whole account can only be read as a clever manipulation of the varied elements of the Irish poetic tradition, a tradition which in so many other respects furnished an abundance of colorful strands for the *Bórama* fabric.’\(^{690}\) Here we are presented with yet another of the many manifestations of parallel motifs found throughout the *Bórama* and early Irish literature in general. While Buttimer focuses on these particular aspects I would state that this episode is to be expected in terms of the Moling tradition, as yet another aspect of the holy fool. Moling’s veracity is at the forefront of this episode and can be seen as a crucial element for Moling’s request for a suspension of the *bórama* till *lúan* to work. Buttimer states that ‘This leads to Mo Lling’s standing being called into question,’ which presents Moling with the opportunity to both demonstrate his power (or holiness) by Tollchenn’s fate over his false claim of Moling’s poem and also so that Moling’s sincerity is not called into question when he asks for the respite of the *bórama*.\(^{691}\)

The idea of Moling being a holy fool will be developed further over the course of the discussion of this chapter as this is something that is prevalent in his material. What has hopefully been demonstrated is that the *Bórama* seems to exhibit indications that


\(^{688}\) Cf further discussion on these texts further on in this chapter.


\(^{690}\) Ibid.

\(^{691}\) Ibid.
it formed an early part of the development of the tradition of Moling. In the *Bórama* it is made clear that he was sent for by the Leinstermen, while as demonstrated, both *GMB* and Lec (based on Stokes’ edition of the text) state that it was the prophecy that played a great part in the reason for Moling’s involvement. The idea of the prophecy seems to have been a later addition to the *Bórama* tradition, as it was not included in *LL* version.

**The Book of Leinster: six anecdotes and other texts concerned with Moling**

*LL* contains along with the *Bórama*, six anecdotes concerning Moling on ff. 283b – 285b, and at least one poem ascribed to him is found on f. 149a, with the initial line beginning, *Rochuala*, edited and translated by K. Meyer in 1917. Schlüter points out in terms of the religious material contained in *LL* that ‘It contains various anecdotes about Irish saints, with particular emphasis on Mo-Ling.’ An analysis of these texts in terms of what they contain as well as how Moling is portrayed as a protagonist will be at the forefront of this section. It is the aim of this section to shed further light on the character portrayed by Moling and what the texts contained within the manuscript bring to the discussion on both Moling and *LL*. It should also be noted here that at least three of the *LL* anecdotes are also found in the notes to *FÓ* and will therefore be featured in the discussion alongside them. Other material relating to Moling found in *FÓ* and which is not part of *LL* material will feature later. Based on Schlüter’s argument that the compilation of *LL* manuscript was a well thought-out process of composition and preservation of texts, the arrangement of these texts in relation to the *Bórama* will also be explored in this section.

**The six anecdotes in LL**

Six anecdotes are found grouped together in *LL*, just before where the text of the *Bórama* is situated in the manuscript. These texts have been edited and translated

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693 Schlüter, *History or Fable?*, p. 192.
695 Cf. Schlüter, *History or Fable?*, chapter 1, especially p. 23.
696 *LL* ll. 36674-36873 (p. 1236-1242). *Fechtas do M’ling is Tóidin co n-accá Mael Doborchon, Drochchomaitheach ro bu i n-occus dosom i. Grác, Mo Ling Luachra dalta do Maehóc Ferna, Fechtas dósom oc earaigthi ina eclais, Caillech dorat a mac do M’Ling, Fechtas aile do M’Ling is Tóidín.*
by various scholars, but no one has taken a collective look at these anecdotes nor do the editors give any suggestions regarding the date of the texts they are editing or provide detailed commentary on the text. In *Fechtas dósum oc ernaigthi ina eclais* the devil tries to trick Moling into thinking that Christ has come to him by wearing a disguise of purple garments. Moling recognizes the devil for what he is and challenges him to reveal why he has come to him. The devil is seeking a blessing from Moling but he refuses to give it to him. In the end the devil attempts to attain a blessing by earning it, but still Moling refuses, prompting the devil to produce a praise poem for Moling. This poem is similar to the last seven verses of poem 23 *Turchan duin a Thuathail*, where Moling is likened to nature as well as Moling’s panegyric poem of Finnachta in 26 *Finnachta a Huib Néill*. The text of *Fechtas dósum oc ernaigthi ina eclais* is represented nearly verbatim in the notes to *FÓ*. The anecdote, *Fechtas do M’ling is Tóidin co n-acca Mael Doborchon*, is a short text detailing Moling’s encounter with Mael Dobarchon, as his soul-friend (confessor). This text is also found in the notes to *FÓ* and there Stokes has provided an edition and translation of the short quatrain which follows on from the tale, something which Meyer in his treatment and edition of the text does not include. The text illustrates the show of devotion of one of Moling’s followers and how Moling bestows the reward of Heaven on Mael Dobarchon for his actions, although the wisdom of his actions can be questioned. In this instance we see Moling associated with folly.

T.O. Clancy in his unpublished thesis on the image of the saint and the fool remarks:

>This saint himself [Moling] displays many of the attributes of holy folly, most particularly in his associations with lepers, madmen and the like and his unconditional love for them. In the stories of the

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699 Moling recognises that Christ would not appear before him in such garments, and notes that he normally appeared before him in the guise of the *nallobor γ naclam*, ‘the sick and the lepers’. Stokes, *Goidelica*, p. 179-180.
701 Cf. Appendix B.
702 *FÓ*, p.155-6. Aside from one phrase *do thecoscc* ‘to teach’, being added to the last sentence spoken by Moling, there is barely any difference to the text, save for the orthography.
705 Bergin et al., *Anecdota*, p. 188-190.
Devil’s visit, and the leper’s nose, we see him turning away from the fine appearances and espousing instead the humble action. We also see him become a patron of folly, in the story of Mael Dobarchon and of course in his friendship with Suibne.\(^{706}\)

Thus Moling demonstrates wisdom in the first anecdote, *Fechtas dósum oc ernaíghthi ina eclais*, where he refuses to be tricked by the devil, while in the second anecdote, *Fechtas do M’ling is Toidin co n-acca Mael Doborchon*, the role has reversed, and it is not possible to say that he behaved in the wisest manner in his dealings with Mael Dobarchon. Similar to this text is the anecdote *Caillech dorat a mac do M’Ling*,\(^{707}\) where Moling fosters a young boy.\(^{708}\) He gives advice to the young boy to never leave a monk in danger. It occurs that the young boy is being chased by brigands and he sees a leper that he must take with him on account of the promise he gave to Moling. He carries the leper with him on his back across the river Barrow, but is struck down by a spear and dies. The story takes a bizarre twist when the leper turns into a *draic tentide*, ‘a fiery dragon’, and strikes the boy’s head off on his way to heaven.\(^{709}\) It was Christ in the form of a leper who had arrived to save the boy from the *phianuib iffirn*, ‘the tortures of hell’, so that in the end the young man attained Heaven.\(^{710}\) Again there is a reversal of the roles that Moling presents here, one of wisdom rather than folly. The youth is in the middle of the river when he is struck down, and because he took the leper with him on his escape from the brigands, he is brought to Heaven by Christ himself in the form of a dragon.

Among the more entertaining anecdotes concerning Moling is *Fechtas aile do M’Ling is Toidin* where a group of brigands come across Moling and they demand a quatrain from him for each of them, and in the end his life is spared.\(^{711}\) There seems to be a correlation between this text and Moling’s meeting with the Spectre in *GMB*, as well as between the *Bórama* and this text, where Moling manages to get out of a sticky situation by reciting a poem.\(^{712}\) In the text of *Fechtas aile do M’Ling is Toidin*, it states that Moling *co n-acca nónbur dona dibergachaib cuci*, whereas in *GMB* it is related that Moling meets up with: *i. Fúath angeda féin γ a ben ocus a ghilla γ a chú*

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\(^{706}\) Clancy, *‘Saint and Fool’*, p. 58.

\(^{707}\) LL ll. 36801-36833.

\(^{708}\) Hull, *‘Two anecdotes’*, pp. 95-6.

\(^{709}\) Ibid, pp. 95-99.

\(^{710}\) Ibid.


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7 a nónbhar muintire.\textsuperscript{713} This exchange between the Spectre and Moling seems to mirror the exchange he has with the brigands in \textit{LL}. In the \textit{GMB} it says:

[S:] Dobērsa in gae-sae trit tōebhsa iarna innsmu.
[T:] Dar lāim m’aiti gēbatsa in mbachail in cenn-su.

[S:] Is asa lemsu do comland. inā feoil bruíthe.
[T:] Dar slūagh sāthe ragas do gruac for a cute.\textsuperscript{714}

Moling’s dealings with the brigands in the anecdote of \textit{Fechtas aile do M’ling is Tóidin} gives similar references:

\begin{quote}
\end{quote}

The reference here to the nine brigands and the rapping of spears (or staff) on heads could give the impression that this anecdote had a hand in the development of the legend of Moling that is presented to us in the \textit{GMB}.

The two remaining anecdotes are; \textit{Drochchomaithech ro baí i n-ocus dosom .i. Grác and Mo Ling Luachra dalta do Maehóc Ferna}\.\textsuperscript{716} The text of Moling’s dealings with Grác’s wife is somewhat difficult to understand. The ambiguity of the text is very often tied in with difficulties in translation, where prepositions with suffixed pronouns are the main cause of confusion, such as in the following case. This confusion can be found in the sentence; \textit{Dobert triana memmor co rragaib in lestar fris anís}.\textsuperscript{717} The question here is how to treat \textit{triana}. V. Hull, in his translation of the text, suggests ‘through his’ but questions whether ‘through hers’ could be more plausible, although it should be ‘through their’ (\textit{triana}; tre + poss. adj. pl).\textsuperscript{718} It is a rather crucial point in the text to understand this because it is otherwise easy to


\textsuperscript{714} ‘S: I will drive this spear through thy side, after setting it. T: By my fosterer’s hand, I will rap thy head with the staff. S: ‘Tis easier for me to fight thee than boiled flesh. T: By a host of thrusts thy hair will go on its hole(?)’. Stokes, \textit{The Birth and Life}, p. 16-17. T is here referring to Moling’s first name of Tairchell, his name before his meeting with the Spectre.

\textsuperscript{715} \textit{LL} ll. 36837-36839. ‘What is thy name? Mæl Gengraigi. Praise me and my lance. What is thy lance called? Etechar, and she enjoys the cracking of fellow’ pates when she trounces them.’ Meyer, ‘Anecdotes’, p. 190-192.


\textsuperscript{717} ‘He puts it through his member, so that he pierced the vessel below him.’ Hull, ‘Two anecdotes concerning St. Moling’, p. 92-3. ‘He puts it through her member, so that he took possession of (pierced?) the lestar below him.’ D. Edel, “Bodily matters” in early Irish narrative literature’, \textit{ZCP} 55 (2007), pp. 69-107; 93.

\textsuperscript{718} Hull, ‘Two anecdotes’, p. 93, fn. 4. \textit{DIL} see \textit{tre}. 149
misunderstand what is happening in the text. This text of Moling’s dealing with the wife of Grác is at times understood to be a ‘hagiographical grotesquerie’ as M.T. Davies refers to such episodes or a possible demonstration of misogyny, which, D. Edel suggests, was growing in popularity during the twelfth century. The matter seems to be somewhat more complex than that and reasons for this are explored here.

In his book, *Studies in Irish Literature and History*, Carney discusses the text in detail in his study on the material of Moling and Suibne Geilt. His outline of the anecdote goes as follows: Grác’s wife Crón tempts Moling but he does not succumb to her temptations, but prophesies that she will be ravished by robbers. This occurs as prophesied and Crón has a child. Grác tells Crón to take the child to Moling to be raised by him, indicating that the child was his. Grác is then slain, by Moling’s kinsmen, the Uí Dega of Ossory, seemingly as punishment for his accusation against Moling. Carney is of the opinion that the child is significant to the overall tale; ‘But the child cannot be disregarded, because it is obviously the pivot in this little tale.’ This episode has seemingly in the *GMB* been fleshed out and developed further than what we get in *LL* and the child no longer has the pivotal place in the tale. This anecdote, concerning the tradition of Grácc and Moling goes through even further developments in relation to *BS* as well, according to Carney’s observations. I would suggest that what is actually going on in this text is something more than misogynistic tendencies and it is obvious from Edel’s article that she is of the same opinion.

What Carney brings to the discussion is the idea that this anecdote portrays a known motif where a saint is presented with temptation in the form of a woman, and where a child results with further aggravation for the saint and his reputed chastity; as well as the recognised hagiographical motif where a saint is accused of fathering a child. Carney supports this argument and draws on the fact that this tale resembles a story

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720 Carney, *Studies*, p. 139.
722 Ibid, p. 139.
724 See in particular chapter 5 in James Carney, *Studies*.
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relating to Colum Cille and his dealings with a demon in female form, although this text appears in a sixteenth-century Life of Colum Cille compiled by Mánus O’Donnell. Thus it would seem to be apparent in regards to the other anecdotes found in LL is that during the course of time the tradition of the lore regarding Moling has undergone a radical development of where the ‘original’ theme (if such exists) of the text gave way for another agenda, according to Carney. Similarly the text of Mo Ling Luachra dalta do Maehóc Ferna is confusing in terms of interpretation. This short anecdote describes when Moling established his house by the Barrow River and the trenching of the taídiu or ‘millstream/pond’ at Tech Moling and this event is also described in his Latin Life.

Mo chobais or seseom is sám 7 is bind limsa in tan domberar in tilach darsin Garb aníar. Nom geib gráin in tan berair taris síari. Ba mór n-inníd rod mbaí oc cluidi na Toedini.

This same text is found in FÓ and was edited and translated by Stokes. In Stokes’ translation he struggles with the word tilach (tulach), which means ‘hill(ock)’ or ‘mound’ or quite possibly in this case ‘waves’. Because of the uncertain term the word tilach in this instance pertains to the understanding of the anecdote has been somewhat hindered.

B. Frykenberg discussed in depth the relationships between Suibhne and Moling on one hand and between Suibhne and water (taíden ‘watercourse’ or ‘mill-stream’ and the Garb, the river ‘Barrow’s tidal waters below Ros Bruic’) on the other. J. F. Nagy also focuses on the connection Moling seems to have with water (or liquid), not only the taídiu, but also with the milk Suibhne drowns in at his monastery. There are at least two other such instances described in the Latin life of Moling,

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727 LL ll. 36726-36740.


729 LL ll. 36729-36731. ‘My confession, says he, it is pleasant and it is harmonious to me when the waves come over the Garb from the west. Horror seizes me when it is brought over it (the Garb) from the east. It was great tribulation he had at digging the taídiu ‘watercourse’.’ Cf. FÓ, pp. 152-3.


731 LL l. 36730. FÓ, p. 152. DIL, p. 616.


where water is the crucial point of the text, as Nagy notes ‘Like, Suibne, the beneficiaries of miraculous power in these stories must pass through or across a body of water before they can be healed or accepted by the sacerdos.’\textsuperscript{736} In fact, there are numerous occasions when liquid plays a part in the exploits of Moling.\textsuperscript{737} It is also possible to infer from these circumstances two of the anecdotes found in LL; \textit{Fechtas do M’ling is Tóidin co n-acc a Mael Doborchon} and \textit{Caillech dorat a mac do M’Ling}. In the first anecdote Moling is said to be in the \textit{taidi ‘the millpond’} when he saw Mael Doborchon, Doborchu meaning ‘otter’ and in the second anecdote, the youth which Moling had advised to never leave a monk behind, had ‘reached the middle of the ford’ when a spear pierced him and caused his death.\textsuperscript{738}

\textit{Moling cecinit: Rochuala}

In \textit{LL} on f. 149a, there is a short poem, seven verses in length, beginning with the word \textit{Rochuala}.\textsuperscript{739} It was edited and translated by Meyer, and published in \textit{Miscellanea Hibernica} in 1917.\textsuperscript{740} This poem is a praise poem ascribed to Moling, where he is praising his contemporary Máenach, king of Cashel in Munster, for his ‘severe punishment of criminals.’\textsuperscript{741} It sits among numerous other advisory and panegyric poems and tracts.\textsuperscript{742} It corresponds quite well with the surrounding material and also with the type of material concerned with Moling.

\begin{quote}
\textit{Diambad rim contuased rí,}
\textit{ropad ní a chland dia éis.}\textsuperscript{743}
\end{quote}

There may be some resonance found within this poem and the way in which Moling deals with Finnachta in poem 26 \textit{Finnachta a Huíb Néill}.\textsuperscript{744} The praise poem


\textsuperscript{739} \textit{LL} ll. 19058-19086.

\textsuperscript{740} Meyer, \textit{Miscellanea Hibernica}, pp. 17-18.

\textsuperscript{741} Ibid.


\textsuperscript{743} \textit{LL} ll. 19079-19080. ‘If a king would listen to me / his offspring after him would amount to something.’ Meyer, \textit{Miscellanea Hibernica}, pp. 17-18.
Fínnachta receives from Moling is among the things that make him rescind the *bórama*. This also corresponds to the way Adomnán reacts when he hears what Fínnachta has done, when he tries to summon him.\(^{745}\) It emphasises how, in a way, it is important for a king to know when to listen and whom to listen to. It also echoes the sentiments of the anecdotes, of a man ‘who fights hard in order to impose his religious strictness on others and to keep his high religious standards.’\(^{746}\) It may be appropriate for him as well. Moling does not generally associate with kings aside from the episode in the *Bórama*. There are only two other instances, one is this particular poem and then later in *GMB*, where he met with Fíngen mac Aed, king of Cashel, and asked him for a site for his reiclés ‘oratory’, which he was given, only to be later shown by angels the site of Tech Moling.\(^{747}\) Máenach, who is the addressee of the poem *Rochuala* is the son of Fíngen in *GMB*.\(^{748}\) It is also not untoward to expect an advice poem to a king from a saint of Moling’s calibre, and thus it may be suggested that the poem, although attributed to him, is a later invention. A number of the texts contained within the *LL* which have been demonstrated to show particular connection with the *Bórama*, seem to consciously elevate the legend of Moling.

**Moling in other extant sources**

The previous discussion in this chapter focused on the portrayal of Moling in the *Bórama* as well as the other numerous texts he appears in, in *LL*. The corpus containing material concerning Moling is much more extensive. The remaining part of this chapter will examine some of these sources and how Moling is portrayed in them. Along with the many anecdotes that are contained in *LL* and were represented as well in *FÓ*, the natural progression is to begin the discussion on other extant sources; the remaining anecdotes of Moling which featured in the notes to *FÓ* and are not found in *LL*. Following that will be a discussion on both his Irish and Latin lives and a short anecdote which although from a later manuscript is also represented in Moling’s Irish life, concluding with a discussion on the intricacies of *BS* and the poems of *Codex S. Pauli* and the poems collectively referred to as the ‘Anecdota poems’.

\(^{744}\) *LL* ll. 38888-39015. Cf. Appendix B.


\(^{746}\) Schlüter, *History or Fable?*, p. 211.


\(^{748}\) Byrne, *Irish Kings and High Kings*, p. 292.
**Moling in the notes to Félire Óengusso (FÓ)**

Along with Moling’s entry for 17 June, there are a few anecdotes which feature him. Three of these have already been discussed in relation to the anecdotes found clustered together in LL. Of the remaining texts, the first concerns the way in which the saint received the name of Moling. Although the story is somewhat different it shares affinities with an account given in GMB. He is portrayed as traversing with an old woman, who thought he was going too fast for her, prompting her to say that he leaps, and thus he receives his name Moling. FÓ has a peculiar way of presenting this short tale; it begins by giving a short account of how Moling received his name from the old woman, then inserting a short quatrain which seemingly at first has little to do with the present tale, then bringing the focus back to the incident which results in him receiving the name Moling, by giving a longer version of the events. However, it could be argued that this is an ideal spot for the poem to be situated in the text. The curious little quatrain which is inserted into the tale is quite extraordinary and puzzling all at once:

*Tan bim eter mo tsruithe ’ am teist ergaire cluichi,*

*Tan bim eter in n-aes mer ’ dommuinet is mé a n-oisser.*

This poem is perhaps the clearest view into the character of Moling that we get in all of his tales. I take this poem to reflect, that when he so chooses he can represent either wisdom or folly depending on the company he keeps. This poem manages to describe Moling’s character in a single quatrain, more clearly than many of the texts we have been presented with yet. We can take this short text of FÓ to be a text in which Moling demonstrates folly. He behaves contrary to what he says in the poem; he leaps when he should not.

Following the anecdote of the woman and the little concise quatrain is a short text, a description of Colmán mac Luachan. This short text is possibly a reference to a quatrain attributed to Moling. Colmán is described as being: *congerait ríg balc i.*

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749 These anecdotes were: *Fechtas dósum oc ernaigthi ina eclais, Fechtas do M’ling is Tóidin co n- acca Mael Doborchon and Mo Ling Luachra dalta do Maehóc Ferna.*

750 FÓ, pp. 150-153.

751 ‘When I am among my elders I am a proof of the prohibition of sport; when I am among the mad (young) folk they think that I am the youngest of them.’ Ibid, 150-1.

752 In GMB, he himself describes his leaps, in his escape from the Spectre, as ’three steps of pilgrimage’ (to the King of heaven) and ’three steps of folly’. Stokes, *The Birth and Life,* pp. 16-17.
rádaib (sic) conid gerait Rig is brathair bailcc duinde.\footnote{A high champion of the king, strong, i.e., besides being a champion of the (heavenly) King he is a strong brother of ours’. \textit{FÓ}, pp. 152-3.} This text demonstrates the same panegyric tone as poem 26 \textit{Finnachta a Huíb Néill} in the \textit{Bórama}, although Moling is being particularly modest here; \textit{i.e.} Moling, congreit rig robo brathair dó imaille ri mMoling, 7 airechus do M[ö]ling dia reir sein.\footnote{\textit{i.e.} Moling, with a king’s champion who was a brother of his, together with Moling, and superiority to Moling according to that.’ Ibid, pp. 152-3. Colmán was commemorated on the same day as Moling in the MT on 17 June, he is not mentioned on this date in the \textit{FÓ}, but is again referred to on 17 June in MG as well as in MD.}

Collectively the texts preserved in the notes to \textit{FÓ} seem to represent the two sides Moling portrays best, folly and wisdom. While the tale of the old woman and the leaping may be classed as a story of folly, Moling’s description of Colmán mac Luachan is a demonstration of his wisdom, for recognising Colmán’s sanctity. Thus the tale \textit{Fechtas do M'ling is Tóidin co n-acca Mael Doborchon} demonstrates folly, and the tales \textit{Mo Ling Luachra delta do Maehóc Ferna} and \textit{Fechtas dósum oc ernaigthi ina eclais} show his wisdom. While demonstrating these elemental characteristics of Moling they also contain references to the two important aspects of Moling’s life: his receiving the name Moling and the relationship he has with the \textit{taidiu} (and the Garb) at his monastery of Tech Moling.

\textit{The Bórama in Genemain Moling ocus a Bethu (GMB) and the Latin \textit{Vita sancti Moling}}

\textit{GMB} is found in two manuscripts, Dublin RIA MS. 23 O 48\textsuperscript{a} commonly referred to as \textit{Liber Flavus Fergusiorum} (Part I, ff. 13\textsuperscript{a} – 15\textsuperscript{b}), dating from mid-fifteenth century and the other is the Brussels MS. 4190 – 4200 (ff. 43\textsuperscript{a} – 65\textsuperscript{b}) written by Mícheál Ó Cléirigh 1628 – 1629.\footnote{Stokes, \textit{The Birth and Life of St. Moling}, p. 3. Van Hamel Wiki, \url{http://www.vanhamel.nl/wiki/Dublin,_Royal_Irish_Academy,_MS_23_O_48a}, [accessed 3 April 2012].} These two manuscripts were utilised by Stokes in his edition of ‘The Birth and Life of St. Moling’ in \textit{RC} 27 in 1906 and which was later published again in 1907 with corrections. Stokes notes that Ó Cléirigh ‘transcribed the legend from a MS. which he calls Leabhar Tighe Molling, “the Book of Timulling,” now apparently lost.’\footnote{Stokes, \textit{The Birth and Life of St. Moling}, p. 3.} Sadly no one knows what this book contained or what became of it. It should also be noted here that true to form Stokes does not, on the whole, include editions or translations of the poems found in the text, except in a
few instances. The Irish life is among the central texts to the present discussion, as the bórama episode is the longest episode represented there. The Latin Vita sancti Moling also contains an account of the bórama and its portrayal of events is drastically different than that of GMB, but more importantly than that of the Bórama itself. The Latin life of Moling was edited by Charles Plummer in Vitae Sanctorum Hiberniae as well as by W.W. Heist in his Vitae Sanctorum Hiberniae. There are three manuscripts which contain the Latin life; Brussels, MS. 7672 – 7674, Codex Salmanticensis, from the late fourteenth century, MS Z 3.1.5 (formerly V. 3.4), Codex Kilkenniensis, (ff. 70va – 76va) a fifteenth-century manuscript, from Marsh’s Library in Dublin and the third is Brussels MS. 4190 – 4200 (ff. 59 – 68), which also contains the Irish life of Moling. The Latin life of Moling was translated in 1887 by P. O’Leary from the Codex Kilkenniensis manuscript.

The main focus of this section of the chapter will be on the varying versions of the bórama episode, and further issues that require attention. The bórama episode is contained in GMB in chapters: xviii – xx, although the content is somewhat the same as that of the Bórama tract, there are certain nuances which lend the tale different emphasis.

The tale goes like this; Moling hears of the plight of the Leinstermen and also of the prophecy which tells that the bórama would be remitted with the aid of a saint. Remarking that the prophecy may indeed refer to him, Moling sets off in order to accomplish this. When Moling reaches the Uí Néill and enters their house no one rises to greet him except a single man. Moling requests that the king remit the tribute. The men of the Uí Néill are reluctant at first, however when Moling asks for remittance of the tribute co luán ‘till Monday’, Fínnachta, the king of the Uí Néill...

757 Cf. for an example; Stokes, The Birth and Life, pp. 20-1, 28-9.
758 Ibid, pp. 46-51.
759 VSH, vol. 2, pp. 190-205. VSHH, pp. 353-356. Heist’s edition, however, is mainly rendered from the Codex Salmanticensis manuscript.
763 This undeniably bears resemblance to the time when Patrick arrives at the house of the king of Ireland. VT, pp. 52-3. A.B.E. Hood, St. Patrick: His writings and Muirchu’s Life, (London, 1978), p. 91. This part of the text is also included in the Bórama. Stokes, ‘The Boroma’, pp. 104-5, §134.
agrees. This should have been the matter resolved; still the course of having the bórama remitted is more complicated than it is presented in the Bórama text. The agreement Fínnachta made with Moling is also bound to one of the kings of Brega, Braen who was ill at the time and Moling was required to go to him to pray and restore him to full health. Having accomplished this, Moling returns to Tara but is not permitted to enter the king’s house as his son has died (although apparently not completely), it is then reported that Moling uttered the words that the son is ced dó a bith marbh masa ced ra Día. After this the boy dies immediately so that his death was blamed on Moling. Moling was brought to them and they promised that if he was successful in reviving the boy that they would grant him his wish. Thus Moling repeated again his request that the Leinstermen be free of the bórama till luán and he revived the boy. Again it was agreed that the wish be granted to Moling, and in this instance it was the promise of the men of the Úi Néill, rather than solely given by Fínnachta. It is also then that Moling reveals that the luán he requested the respite till, was in fact the Monday of Doomsday. Even though he has revealed his trickery, Fínnachta states that he will not go back on his word, ní meisi ticfa tairis. When this was all over and Moling had returned to his home, Adomnán approached Fínnachta and censured him for what he had done. Fínnachta then gave chase after Moling, in order to kill him. Moling, however, managed to evade him, praying to Brigit for protection.

There are four main differences between GMB and the Bórama noticeable from the summary. These differences are mainly in terms of the prophecy of who will manage to have the bórama rescinded. First is the involvement of the king of Brega, and then Moling has to ask for the remittance a second time, when he so does it is the entire province of the Úi Néill who give the remission rather than just Fínnachta, lastly it is very important to notice that Fínnachta knew that he had been tricked to remit the bórama forever. It seems to have been a conscious thought of the GMB to emphasise that the promise Moling received from Fínnachta, was given by the entire province of the Úi Néill, rather than only by the king of the province; is deimin, ar cách, is é

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765 ‘has leave to die if God permits it.’ Ibid, pp. 48-9.
766 Ibid.
767 ‘It is not I that will contravene it.’ Ibid, pp. 48-9.
768 Ibid, pp. 50-1. In the text he recites poem 33 A Brigit bennach ar sét.
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Molling ro marb in mac, 7 tabhar a ríar féin dó ar a thodúscadh.\(^{69}\) This may be regarded as a demonstration of the varying emphases these two texts show towards the remittance of the bórama and the different purpose these two texts serve. The provincial loyalties (and to a certain extent the political and ecclesiastical propaganda) demonstrated clearly through the entire text of the Bórama in LL, is not as palpable in the GMB.

Plummer, in Vitae Sanctorum Hiberniae (VSH), notes that between the two lives, the Irish and the Latin, there are some differences, ‘To some extent it covers the same ground; but even in these cases it gives a very different version of the incidents.’\(^{770}\) The Latin life does include, just as the Irish life does, a version of the events concerning the remittance of the bórama; however the reason for its collection and the way in which Moling acquires remittance of the tribute are very different.\(^{771}\) In the Latin text, the bórama, which the Leinstermen are required to pay to the king of Tara, is not represented as being anything but a tax owed to the king of Ireland every year. There is no mention of it being a fine or any other reference towards a compensation of a crime committed by the Leinstermen. It is only referred to as ‘... censum maximum uaccarum omni anno in debito regali per multum tempus.’\(^{772}\) The way in which Moling goes about having the tribute remitted in the Latin text is in this respect completely different from how it is portrayed in the Irish life or in the Bórama. Moling comes to the Uí Néill and asks for a truce in terms of the payment, which the king of the Uí Néill does not accede to. Moling then calls for a great rain upon them which interrupts their annual ludus ‘game’ or ‘sport’.\(^{773}\) They ask Moling to stop the rain which he agrees to do if they grant his wish of not collecting the tax. They agree to this and after Moling prays to God the rain stops. However, the men of the Uí Néill go back on their word of granting the truce regarding the tax. Moling manages to find an ally among the men of the Uí Néill and though his pleading with the men of the Uí Néill is without success, the king of the Uí Néill, Fínnachta descides to grant him his wish of not collecting the tax Da mihi saltim, O rex, in

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\(^{69}\) “‘Assuredly,’ says everyone, “it is Moling that killed the son; so let his own desire be given to him if he brings the boy (back) to life.” Ibid, pp. 48-9.

\(^{770}\) VSH, vol 1, p. lxxxii.


\(^{772}\) VSH, vol 2, p. 198 §xix, ‘a great tax of cows, owed every year as a royal debt over many years.’ O’Leary, The Ancient Life, p. 17.

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_Gesti_ is the source of the tale of Moling in the _VSH_. In this, the tale of the tax concludes with the fate of Fínnachta, king of the Úi Néill. In this, all three versions are in accordance, that Moling got the cessation of the tribute through trickery, asking that they not collect the tribute until Monday, and that the reason why Monday meant Doomsday is that it was believed that the world would end on a Sunday. Also, here, just as in _GMB_ the men of the Úi Néill are the ones that promise to cease the tax collection. It is not until later that the king realises that he has been tricked and he sends his men after Moling to kill him. Moling flees and on his way he prays to Brigit, just as is mentioned in his Irish life and the _Bórama_. In this text, the Leinstermen are portrayed as nothing more than tax evaders. If the Latin _Vita_ dates from around the middle of the twelfth century as Plummer suggests in his introduction to the _VSH_, it is possible to entertain the idea that this version of events influenced the work of the author/compiler of _GMB_ (as did the _Bórama_), as there are certain themes that give resonance from the _Vita_ through to _GMB_.

774 ‘Give to me at least, oh king, in honour of Christ a period of grace until Monday (Doomsday).’ _VSH_, vol 2, p. 198 §xix. O’Leary, _The Ancient Life_, p. 18.


779 _VSH_, vol 2, p. 198 §xix.

780 Ibid, pp. 197-199, §xix.

781 _VSH_, vol 1, pp. lxxi-lxxii.
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Since the Latin *Vita* contains the tale of the remittance of the *bórama*, although in a decidedly different way, it is obvious that the tale was considered among the miracles Moling performed.\(^{782}\) The fact that it is a completely different account, may say much about the *Bórama*. A fuller study of the texts relating to Moling is needed as there are many aspects of both his character and material that are worth further exploration. Throughout the discussion on the *Bórama*, there have been great many hints given to suggest that the *Bórama* was a text of ingenious creation, which relied on many early Irish texts to provide a platform, in order to compose a masterpiece of hagiographical lore.

**Further comments on GMB**

The *GMB* contains the tale of Moling’s life, from birth to death. Moling had what can only be described as a rather unfortunate beginning where because he had been conceived through adultery his mother tried to kill him after his birth, out of shame. Thankfully he is rescued, first by a dove protecting him from his mother and second by Brendan of Clonfert and his students, and he was given the name Tairchell. After his encounter with a spectre he receives the name Moling. It is at this encounter where the word *báes* ‘foolly’, is first associated with him, ‘*mo trī cēmend aïlithre do lēcen damh ar ammus Rīg nime ocus talman, ocus mo trī cēmenna bāisi bēus commad fatiti ūaim in t-ēcc.*’\(^{783}\) Thereafter the life contains anecdotes concerning Moling, such as his dealings with Fínnachta (which is described in more detail here below) and his meeting with Suibne.

Something to bear in mind when analysing the life of Moling are traits associated with him. Among them as Clancy notes aspects that are:

... common to all hero-stories: they concern the wondrous birth of the divine hero. His conception is unnatural (here by incest), his mother exiled and alone; the favour of God is displayed immediately at the boy’s birth by the angels, the sun which warms the snow-filled birthplace, and the dove which protects the boy from his mother. The function of such a story is to initiate us into Moling’s wondrous qualities.\(^{784}\)

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782 The Latin *Vita* does not refer to Moling’s early years in the same way as *GMB*, nor does it mention his earlier name of Tairchell. The Latin *Vita* is solely interested in miracles that are associated with Moling.

783 Stokes, *The Birth and Life*, pp. 16-17. ‘to let me have my three steps of pilgrimage towards the King of heaven and earth, and my three steps of folly also, so that death may be the further from me.’

784 Clancy, ‘Saint and Fool’, p. 70-1.
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This image of Moling displaying the qualities usually associated with the hero, such as Cú Chulainn, Brandub mac Ecach and Cormac mac Airt, is not that unlikely. Moling’s life displays many of the literary motifs found to represent the image of the hero and it is possible to review his success at getting rid of the bórama as what finally gets him realized as a hero-saint of Leinster. Although this image of him is never clearly developed, I would argue, it is possible to recognize it as being associated with him to a certain extent.

There is also a possibility that the anecdotes from LL as well as the Bórama tract itself may have influenced the production of GMB. This is strongly indicated by the fact that most of the anecdotes of LL seem to be represented in GMB in one form or another as well as the curious mention of Brendan’s hearth at Broccross.

7 déchais úaidh fodhes 7 atconnairc timthirecht angel i rRind Ruis Bruic ós sruithlinntibh na Berba, ocus ránic Moling in inadh sin, ocus fuair tellach mBrémaind annsin. This would signify a textual link between the sources at least, or it could possibly be argued that LL among other extant Moling material provided the basis from which the GMB was created.

Further comments on Moling’s Vita

Among the material the Latin Vita contains is a short account of Moling being conferred the bishop see of Cluain Mór Máedóc. This short account demonstrates an interesting correlation with a short section of the Bórama at the beginning of the third section. As has been discussed Moling was summoned to the assembly of the king of Leinster at the beginning of the third section. It is reported that at this time Moling recited poem 21 Cuce seo ro dalus. This poem it could be argued, in particular verses two and three, concentrates on Broccross and the concluding verse seems to focus on Moling’s attachment to Broccross in particular.

Tinoltair laiside Lagin co mbátar eter laech 7 clerech co hAlind. Ni thánic dano Mo Ling leo. & tiagair ara chend Mo Ling uadaib. 7 iss

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786 ‘and he looked southward, and beheld a service of angels at the Point of Ross Bruicc above the streampools of the Barrow. And Moling came to that place, and found Brénainn’s hearth therein.’ Stokes, The Birth and Life, pp. 26-7.
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and bóí Mo Ling in tansain ac Ross Bruicc risi n-abbar Teg Mo Ling in tanso.\footnote{LL II. 38748-38752. ‘By him the Leinstermen are mustered till they were, both laymen and cleric, at Alinn. (Saint) Molling, however, came not with them, so they sent a messenger to him, and he was then at Ross Bruicc which at present is called Teg Molling.’ Stokes, ‘The Boroma’, pp. 98-9, §§ 125-6.}

The Latin Vita gives an account of when Moling was summoned to a similar assembly.

\textit{Cum esset ciuitas sancti Aedani, qui vvlgo Moedhog uocatur, post obitum episcopi sui sine pastore, miserunt ciues illius cum rege Laginensium ex consilio principum provinchie ad sanctum Molyng, ut ipsum ad episcopatum supradicte ciuitatis, siue siue nollet, cuderent. Et adductus sanctus Molyng ad predictam ciuitatem, constitutus est ipse archiepiscopus in sede et in cathedra sancti Moedhog.}\footnote{VSH, vol 2, p. 193, §8. ‘When the city of Odan (Aidan) (sic), who is called Moedog by the common people, was without a pastor after the death of its (or their) bishop, its citizens, together with the King of Leinster, by the counsel of the chief men of the province, sent (a deputation) to St. Molyng to bring him, whether he was willing or unwilling to the episcopacy of the above mentioned city (Ferns). And St. Molyng being brought to the aforesaid city, was appointed archbishop in the See and chair of St. Moedog.’ P. O’Leary, \textit{The Ancient Life}, p. 8.}

As can be seen by comparing these two short paragraphs the parallel nature of them becomes apparent. There is cause to suggest that the textual relationship shared between the Latin text and the \textit{Bórama} may have been greater than has previously been thought, although it is difficult to imagine in which direction the supposed influence is seeping. At least it may be assumed that the two texts share a common source for this account, as it does seem quite likely that the section as it stands in the \textit{Bórama} was incorporated from somewhere else. This hypothesis is mainly based on the inclusion of poem 21 \textit{Cuce seo ro dalus} as it seems to be able to convey several different meanings.

\textbf{Moling and the Leper}

In a fifteenth-century manuscript, MS A9 (Franciscan collection), there is among other hagiographical material a short anecdote on Moling. This text was edited and translated into French, by P. Grosjean S.J., in 1937.\footnote{Grosjean, ‘Textes’, pp. 269-303.} This short text corresponds to chapter XII in the \textit{GMB}; although not verbatim the content is the same and it is also found in his Latin \textit{Vita}.\footnote{Stokes, \textit{The Birth and Life}, pp. 30-33. \textit{VSH}, vol 2, pp. 203-4, §xxix.} The story tells of the gruesome episode where Moling meets up with a leper who asks him to blow his nose.\footnote{Grosjean, ‘Textes’, pp. 286-288.} When Moling has rendered
the requested service the leper had vanished, and Moling realises that God must have visited him in a disguise. He vows not to eat or sleep until the Lord reappears before him in such a way that he would recognise him. An angel appears and asks what form the Lord should take so that Moling would recognise him, to which Moling replied: *i richt meic sheacht mbliadan*, sometime later the Lord appears in his lap and Moling showers him with affection till morning.\(^{792}\) It is a strange little anecdote which seems to have had some popularity, particularly among the material of which Davies describes as belonging among the ‘hagiographical grotesquerie’ as well belonging among tales of ‘folly’ and ‘discernment’.\(^{793}\) The motif of Christ appearing in the lap of the saint is not unknown and echoes of it are found in relation to other saint’s lives.\(^{794}\) It is situated in and among other hagiographical and religious texts, many of which are on the demonstration of piety. As such this text must have been regarded as a demonstration of the piety Moling showed towards God, particularly in his duty to the leper.

**Buile Suibhne**

The text and translation of *Buile Suibhne* or *The Frenzy of Suibhne* was first published in 1910, by J.G. O’Keeffe, and is found in three manuscripts from which his edition was produced from. The main manuscript which formed the basis of his edition is: RIA MS B IV I. ff. 82\(^a\) to 95\(^b\).\(^{795}\) It is a paper manuscript written by Daniel O’Duigenan between 1671 and 1674.\(^{796}\) The second manuscript used, which closely resembles the first one is: RIA MS 23 K 44, p. 131 – 180, and like the previous manuscript is also a paper manuscript, written by Tomaltach Mac Muirghfásas in 1721 – 1722.\(^{797}\) The main reason O’Keeffe gives for using MS B IV I. ff. 82\(^a\) to 95\(^b\) instead of MS 23 K 44, p. 131 – 180 is the absence of the poems in the latter

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\(^{792}\) ‘In the guise of a boy of seven years’. Stokes, *The Birth and Life*, pp. 30-1.

\(^{793}\) Davies ‘Kings and Clerics’, p. 46. Included among the texts is also a short account of how Brendan of Clonfert changed a girl foetus into a male foetus while still in the mother’s womb. Grosjean, ‘Textes’, pp. 278-280.


\(^{795}\) O’Keeffe, *Buile Suibhne*, p. xiii.

\(^{796}\) Ibid.

\(^{797}\) Ibid, pp. xiii-xiv.
manuscript.\footnote{Ibid, p. xiv.} The third manuscript used by O’Keeffe in his translation is Bibliothèque Royal, Brussels 3410, ff. 59$^a$ – 61$^b$.\footnote{Ibid, pp. xiii–xiv.}

Perhaps the motifs which have received the most diligent attention are that of the ‘Wild Man in the Woods’ and the ‘Three-fold death’; Jackson was the first to draw attention to these motifs where he draws together sections from *GMB* and the anecdotes found in *LL* with the legend of Suibne.\footnote{Jackson, ‘The Motif’, p. 541-2.} His deduction seems to indicate that the tale of Moling’s dealings with Grácc in *LL* is a corrupt form of the tale as it is presented to us in *GMB*. Along with this is the final part of the *GMB* where Suibne is finally referred to, and ‘what Jackson refers to as ‘an ill-assimilated appendix,’\footnote{Carney, *Studies*, p. 136.} He argues that the legend of Suibne Geilt is hinted at in the *GMB* but is otherwise not included. In the Latin life of Moling there is no mention of Suibne at all.\footnote{VSH, vol 2, pp. 190-205.} As such, the ‘character of Suibne bears the same relation to traditions of Molling as it does to the battle of Mag Roth, in other words, it is an intrusive element.’\footnote{Carney, *Studies*, p. 133.} Carney supposes, as well, that:

> The position, then, is that the surviving lives of Moling had best be regarded as based mainly on materials of earlier date than the appearance of the Molling-Suibne combination, in other words, on materials earlier than the ninth century.\footnote{Ibid, p. 136.}

If this is the case, it would stand to reason to suppose that the tale of the *Bórama* was also an early creation in the legend of Moling considering the role it plays in *GMB* (as it is the lengthiest episode in the Irish life) and in the Latin *Vita*, (then possibly predating the *Codex S. Pauli* poems and the ‘Anecdota poems’ of the ninth century according to Jackson and Carney).\footnote{Further discussion on the *Codex S. Pauli* and the ‘Anecdota pomes’ will follow on later in this chapter.} However, this is among the many issues yet to be addressed in terms of researching the material of Moling further. The majority of the evidence seems to indicate that the *Bórama*, among other texts was influential in the construction of the *GMB*.

The rest of Jackson’s article is taken up with exploring the origin of the legend of the Wild Man, and this he continues in a follow up article, ‘A further note on Suibhne Geilt and Merlin.’\footnote{Jackson, ‘A further note’, pp. 112-116.} This article is a response from him to an article written by James Carney, “Suibhne Geilt' and 'The children of Lír’, as a critique and further discussion on the Suibne material, or as Pádraig Ó Ríain remarked that Carney and
Jackson, ‘engaged in a lively and fruitful debate regarding the origin and literary association of the theme *geltacht*.’ Jackson’s earliest work was supplemented by the work of Chadwick, who brought together the ‘many scattered references to *gelta* and cognate persons in the literature,’ as well as a discussion on the ‘heathen old’ in terms of paganism and Christianity and also discussed the idea of shamanism in terms of Suibhne.\footnote{Ó Riaín, ‘A Study’, p. 179.} Mac Càna ‘broached the subject of the *geilt*’ and later, Mac Eoin furthered the discussion on these matters with his ‘tabulation of the characteristic features of the *geilt*.’\footnote{Ó Riaín, ‘A Study’, p. 179.} The discussion was then taken up again by Ó Riaín, in various articles, and to some extent by Frykenberg as well in his article, ‘Suibhne, Lailoken and the Taidiu’ and in his thesis *The Wild-Man in Celtic Ecclesiastical Legend and literary Tradition*, both published in 1984.\footnote{See in particular Ó Riaín, ‘A Study’, and Ó Riaín, ‘The Materials and Provenance’, also Frykenberg, ‘Suibhne, Lailoken, and the Taidiu’. Cf. Frykenberg, ‘The Wild Man’.
} Closely connected with the idea of the ‘Wild Man in the Woods’ and the ‘Three-fold death’ motif is the idea of the ‘Three sins of the warrior’ explored by D. Cohen in his article ‘Suibhne Geilt’.\footnote{Cohen, ‘Suibhne Geilt’, pp. 113-124.} Cohen’s approaches BS from a different angle than the others and his idea is somewhat underdeveloped in terms of early Irish tales. Cohen points out that ‘*Buile Suibhne* provides one of the clearest (and the only Celtic) illustrations of Dumézil’s proposed thematic structure [of the ‘three sins of the warrior motif’].\footnote{Ibid, p. 117.} Cohen identifies that the episodes involving Rónán’s cursing of Suibhne, his flight from battle and the Moling episode of the swineherd’s jealousy which causes Suibhne’s death to be the most crucial in the motif of the ‘three sins’ and the adultery he supposedly had committed being the third sin.\footnote{Ibid, p. 118.} Although he notes that the third sin is the ‘most equivocal of the three’, as Suibhne does not commit the adultery he is accused of, he also allows that ‘it does not seem significant enough in itself to discredit the interpretation as a whole’, which may seem to be a tenuous point to make for the argument.\footnote{Ibid, p. 117.} However, he does seem to have reconciled himself to the
fact that early Irish tales are never that cut and dry, and that the BS represents a fusion of the ‘Wild Man in the Woods’ motif with the ‘three sins’;

If we assume, however, the subordination of the theme of the three sins to that of the Wild Man, it would be only natural for these elements to be transformed to meet the exigencies of the latter.\footnote{Ibid, p. 119.}

Thus, ‘in the Christianized version, the penitent, almost saintly, Wild Man cannot actually commit adultery, but the motif is retained and adapted to the theme of the Threefold Death’.\footnote{Ibid, p. 120.} Cohen also manages to draw parallels between the ‘three sins’ motif with an episode described in the Bórama, when Áed mac Ainmirech in conversation with Colum Cille asking if any Irish kings had attained heaven.\footnote{Cf. Stokes, ‘The Boroma’, pp. 84-89, §§95-104.}

Cohen draws attention to this episode because as he says it illustrates ‘the clarity with which it delineates the theme of the three sins,’ although I must confess that the only parallel that can be viewed between this episode is if you are looking for it, and I think Cohen is grasping at straws here a little bit, emphasised by his statement ‘the good acts of the first two kings are strikingly similar in content to the first two sins of Suibhne,’ for the simple reason that each ‘good act’ or the parallel ‘sin’ is committed by three separate kings.\footnote{Cohen, ‘Suibhne Geilt’, p. 122.} Although the episode may remind one of the other, it is tenuous at best to draw too much correlation between the two and it must be taken into account that this analysis is based on a different school of analysis altogether.

Ó Riain explores further the Wild Man’s descent into madness and how his restoration comes about and supplements Mac Eoin’s work on the characteristic features of the mad man, to which he makes a clear argument that:

This condition emerges from the table [which presents the characteristic features of the geilt; the occasions of madness, the state of madness and the occasions of restoration to sanity] as a sequel to the infliction of madness, but taking it without reference to its causative factor, it is obviously susceptible of application to persons other than madmen since such separated persons are known to us from the literary remains. […] its validity depends on our being able to show in greater or lesser degree that the thematic pattern established in relation to the behavior of the madman was also applicable to the state of separated, but sane, persons in the literature.\footnote{Ó Riain, ‘A Study’, p. 182-184, quote see p. 184.}
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Clancy suggest that this paradigm may be improved upon, as he discusses in great detail the role of fools and madness in his thesis on Cummíne Fota and Mac Da Cherda, ‘to take into account a grouping within this class of Wild Men and fools who are indeed cursed into madness by a sacerdos but who are never returned to their former existence.’ Clancy, ‘Saint and Fool’, p. 114 821 This certainly applies to Suibne, because even though he reconciles ‘with his erstwhile tormentor, Christ’ his attainment of restoration to his former status is not seen. The idea of the Christian folly and the holy fool has not gone unnoticed, J. Saward in his book *Perfect Fools* discusses the Irish ‘wild-men’ and the wandering saints, comparing them with the equivalent motif of mainland and Eastern Europe. 822 Adding to the discussion on the holy folly is A. Bergholm’s paper on ‘Folly for Christ’s sake in early Irish literature’, where she explores the connection of the holy fool with East European motifs portraying the same image. 823

In both Byzantine and later Russian tradition, where holy fools are recognized as a hagiographic category in their own right, the figure’s eccentric conduct is marked most notably be the feigning of madness, but also by other characteristics such as wandering about naked, uttering riddles and prophecies, and making oneself a spectacle by publicly displaying disruptive behaviour and violating accepted norms. 824

It is perhaps, then, something for future scholars to consider further, that the early Irish representation of madness in their tales is an indication of a hagiographical text, rather than something else altogether. As Frykenberg noted, ‘Suibhne never acquired Myrddin’s degree of secularized exaltation. His triumph was seen in purely religious terms.’ Frykenberg, ‘The Wild Man’, p. 249. 825 This supports the idea that *BS* itself belongs within a hagiographical genre similar to that which the *Bórama* and other early Irish tales of where holy folly features belong, such as the tales of Cummíne Fota and Mac Dá Cherda. The hagiographical genre of the early Irish tales may be stretched then to include *BS* as being among them.

Nagy pays due attention to the relationship between saint and madman in his article ‘The Wisdom of the Geilt’. 826 Nagy continues in his new introduction to *BS* focus on

821 Clancy, ‘Saint and Fool’, p. 114
824 Ibid.
the state of madness, along with the causes of it, paying particular attention to the role of the women;

In light of all that powerful females do and undo in medieval Irish story, we can see why the supreme challenge to Suibhne’s authority and to the traditional course the events in the story of Suibhne should take, would be posed by a woman.827

This had previously been broached by Mac Cana in ‘Aspects of the Theme of King and Goddess in Irish Literature’, published in 1955.828 Invariably the discussion on the role of women in the cause of madness brings Moling to the attention in the discussion of Suibhne, in relation to his madness but also his poetry, prophecy and his saintly status. Moling has only a small role in this tale, but a significant one, at the conclusion of the tale. Similar to the two anecdotes from *LL; Fechtas do M’ling is Tóidín co n-acca Mael Doborchon and Caillech dorat a mac do M’lingi*, Suibne attains heaven through the benediction of Moling.829 After many years of fluttering about, Suibne arrives in Leinster, at Tech Moling (St. Mullins, co. Carlow) where Moling is. It is prophesised that Suibne will remain at Tech Moling until his death, which would come at the hand of Moling’s herdsman, Mongán.830 Suibne used to receive a drink of milk from Moling, which he had instructed his cook to provide for him.831 His cook was Muirghil, wife of Mongán Moling’s herdsman.832 Mongán, thinking that his wife had betrayed him with the man in the woods, overcome by jealousy threw a spear at Suibne, which pierced his side and mortally wounded him.833 It is Moling who gives Suibne his last sacrament and a death-swoon comes on Suibne.834 When Suibne rises out of the swoon he is brought to the church by Moling where he surrenders his spirit to Heaven.835 ‘Thus Suibne’s encounter with Moling is not, as Ó Riain suggests, disaster, but benediction, for Moling alone recognises the sanctity of Suibhne.’836

831 Ibid.
832 Ibid.
833 Ibid, pp. 143-145.
834 Ibid, p. 147.
835 Ibid, p. 159.
Moling is woven into the tradition of Suibne, according to Carney, although in a much more intricate way, where the tradition of the Wild Man in the Woods, along with the Moling material, plays a huge role in the amalgamation of the two traditions. Carney argues that the tale of Drochchomaithech ro baí i n-ocus dosom .i. Grác was incorporated into GMB and underwent great changes, so that the child that was the central point of the story is no longer present and neither is the temptation of Moling.\(^3^3^7\) He continues on to show that this same motif having been, along with the Wild Man in the Woods motif, adjusted to incorporate these elements into the BS text, where almost all of the characters have been altered in some way. Grác and Crón have evolved into Mongán and Muirghil respectively and the child is completely omitted. The main element of the Wild Man in the Woods tradition is that of two main characters; a king and a hermit-saint, the former is Suibne, but the latter is represented both by Suibne and Moling.\(^3^3^8\) The Wild Man tradition is split between king and saint, so that the role of Suibne as the hermit (-prophet), who in the British tradition is primarily a prophet, is altered and given to Moling instead.\(^3^3^9\) This leads to the realization of how much of Moling is mirrored in Suibne, which is due to the fact that the tradition of Moling has had a great deal to do in the development of the Suibne tradition in the BS text, according to Carney.\(^3^4^0\) This is again reflected in the fact that both are identified by their leaps and Carney suggest that ‘the jumping and levitation which is associated with Suibne, and which is not found in the traditions of his British counterparts [of the Wild Man motif], was originally an attribute of Moling and arose out of an early effort to explain his unusual and unintelligible name.’\(^3^4^1\) Carney even remarks on the resemblance of the event that leads to Moling acquiring his name and that of Suibne descending again into madness after the confrontation with the caillech that was guarding him.\(^3^4^2\) Aside from these two rather remarkable similarities in traditions, the one remaining point to make for the similarities between Suibne and Moling is the earlier reference to Drochchomaithech

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\(^3^3^7\) See Drochchomaithech ro baí i n-ocus dosom .i. Grác and compare to Stokes, Stokes, The Birth and Life, pp. 34 - 39. Carney, Studies, p. 139-140.

\(^3^3^8\) Ibid, p. 161.

\(^3^3^9\) Ibid, p. 140.

\(^3^4^0\) Cf. Carney, Studies, p. 143.

\(^3^4^1\) Ibid.

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ro baí i n-ocus dosom .i. Grác. That whereas Moling’s ‘chastity is called into question,’ it is Suibne who is unjustly accused in BS and as a result is killed.\footnote{Carney, Studies, p. 141.}

Thus we have here a very interesting specimen of literary biology in which a story of an attempt to discredit a well-known saint’s reputation for chastity is changed by assimilation of extraneous elements into a story of how the ‘Wild Man of the Woods’ came to die.\footnote{Ibid.}

This overview has not delved too far into the incredible intricacies that make up the tale on purpose, as Jackson and Carney took such great care of explaining their views on the issues, and as scholars following in their footsteps have expanded on their work. Carney makes a strong argument for the development of the Suibne Geilt legend and demonstrates quite convincingly the strong links between the traditions of Suibne and Moling. It is the ‘importance of St. Moling as a literary figure in his own right that is probably responsible for the fascination which his episode in “Buile Suibhne” has exerted on scholars such as Carney and Jackson, whose studies have shed considerable light on the Tech Moling version of the legend.’\footnote{Ó Riain, ‘The Materials and Provenance’, p. 175. When discussing the ‘Tech Moling tradition’, Ó Riain is referring to the Suibne material contained in the Irish life of Moling in GMB, and the ‘Anecdota poems’.}

When Suibne arrives at Tech Moling, he and Moling converse by reciting a poem. There Suibne foretells of his own destruction at the hands of Moling’s swineherd. With this, another prophecy is tied into the material which concerns Moling; although in this instance he is not the one that predicts the unfolding events. Moling’s role in this text is that of a biographer \textit{techt gacha hespurta chugum-sa go rosgriobhthar do sgéla lium}.\footnote{‘You will come to me each evening so that I may write your history’. O’Keeffe, \textit{Buile Suibhne}, p. 142-3.} Therefore in this respect the text is somewhat a-typical for his material, while at the same time corresponding with the texts of \textit{Fechtas do M’ling is Tóidin co n-acca Mael Doborchon} and \textit{Caillech dorat a mac do M’lingi} of the person in question attaining heaven after death. That in itself is not the only link BS has to the anecdotes. Much as in \textit{Fechtas do M’ling is Tóidin co n-acca Mael Doborchon} Moling shows himself to be a benefactor to a person of madness (although I am not going so far as to describe Mael Doborchon as being mad, merely foolish). This is nonetheless evidence of the holy folly Moling seems to be continually associated with.
Carney demonstrates that the three anecdotes found in *LL; Drochchomaithech ro baí i n-ocus dosom .i. Grác, Fechtas aile do M’Ling is Toídin* and *Mo Ling Luachra dalta do Maehóc Ferna* were likely to have influenced the development of that material into what is presented in the *GMB*.\(^{847}\) The same can possibly be said regarding how *Drochchomaithech ro baí i n-ocus dosom .i. Grác* and *Fechtas aile do M’Ling is Toídin* influence the development of the Suibne and Moling legend presented in this tract, according to his argument. Going through the development of the Suibne legend, as Carney explains it, and how it is represented in the text of *BS* it is possible in a very general way to describe the development in two stages. The first stage is the development of the protagonist himself and his involvement in the battle of Mag Rath and the second stage is the amalgamation of early Moling material with the ‘Wild Man in the Woods’ motif.

The present view on the historicity of Suibne, is that it is unlikely that a concrete conclusion will be established as to his identity, S.S. Sailer writes ‘Of the avenues open to us, then, none can establish Suibne’s historicity, whether through the battle of Magh Rath, the kingdom of Dal Araidhe, or the poems. From this point on when discussing Suibne, I designate as the only Suibne we can know the Suibne of supposition and legend.’\(^{848}\) The difference between Rónán and Moling shown in the text is quite striking, which gives credence to the suggestion that the text of *BS* may be a composite. First suggested by O’Keeffe, this has been commented on by various scholars who suggested the possibility that the Rónán and Moling episodes were later additions to the text, although every scholar recognises that the Moling material was very early on associated with Suibne (or vice versa).\(^{849}\) Rónán is another matter, take him out of the equation and the story retains its core themes and Suibne gets mad from the vision he sees during the battle which causes him to flee. Frykenberg’s view on this is that, due to the attention Ó Riain has given Rónán in his search for the provenance of the *BS* material, that ‘one might argue instead that on literary grounds Rónán is intrusive – a foil to Moling!’\(^{850}\) He continues with ‘and Rónán, who curses Subihne, is found wanting in charity and compassion in comparison with Moling, - who blesses and protects the madman. This contrast suggests that the BS author may

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\(^{848}\) Sailer, ‘*Suibne Geilt*’, p. 120.


\(^{850}\) Frykenberg, ‘*The Wild Man*’, p. 27.
have intended to condemn Rónán’s Christianity, subordinating it to that of Moling.\textsuperscript{851} It must be highlighted here that among the questions this present thesis invokes, is that there is much yet to be done in researching the ecclesiastical relationship of the texts in \textit{LL} with the ecclesiastical sites of Leinster. Although many have presented invaluable insight into the ecclesiastical world of twelfth-century Leinster, there is still more to be done.\textsuperscript{852} Buttimer with his focus on the political propaganda, started the dialogue, but there is more needed in terms of ecclesiastical propagandist work, which many of the texts of \textit{LL} seem to show strong indication of.\textsuperscript{853} The \textit{Bórama} with its numerous saints, who all seem to be included on purpose, must carry with them deeper ecclesiastical reason, one that may have something to do with the ecclesiastical milieu in which the tales were framed. Frykenberg’s suggestion that there may be something more going on in the ecclesiastical environment of the \textit{BS} text, along with Ó Riain’s view, that the text shows definite northern connection supports this hypothesis.

There is no overt relationship between the \textit{BS} and the \textit{Bórama}; however there are definite signs that show that \textit{BS} is caught up in the tradition surrounding Moling. Thankfully the \textit{BS} text has received much scholarly attention and while the main focus has been on Suibne the attention Moling does receive can only benefit the discussion at hand, particularly as the discussion highlights different aspects of Moling than are presented in the \textit{BS} compared with the \textit{Bórama}. While Moling is unarguably the central character of the \textit{Bórama}, he is relegated to a secondary character in the \textit{BS}. However, even though his role differs between these two texts the character of Moling remains the same, a patron of folly. While it is more apparent in terms of his relationship with Suibne, it is more subtle in terms of Fínnachta, although it is possible to state that in the case of Fínnachta he momentarily takes on the role of the witless or fool, when he is tricked by Moling.

\textsuperscript{851} Frykenberg, ‘The Wild Man’, p. 27, see footnote.

\textsuperscript{853} Buttimer, ‘The \textit{Bórama}’. 
Chapter 4. Moling

Codex S. Pauli and the ‘Anecdota poems’

One thing I have not spent too much powder on in the discussion on BS is the poetry and this was done deliberately. The discussion on the poetry of BS and the poems attributed to Moling in the ninth-century Codex S. Pauli and the ‘Anecdota poems’, is so dependent on each other that they deserved a separate attention to the BS and Moling material. Among the earliest references we have in regards to either Moling or Suibne are found in two poems contained in the Codex S. Pauli; ‘The association of Suibne and Molling was already established by the end of the ninth century; the evidence of this is that in the Codex S. Pauli there are two poems written together, the one ascribed to Molling, the other to Suibne, and the two characters were obviously associated in the mind of the scribe.’ The poem titled either Barr edin or Tuaim Inbír respectively, is attributed to Suibne in a superscript gloss (in later hand), and has caught the attention of few scholars of early Irish literature. The discussion it has garnered has mainly focused on the issue of how it should be regarded, whether it is a reflection of ‘nature’, ‘monastic’ or ‘hermit’ poetry.

Murphy strangely includes the poem among the secular poems in his collection in Early Irish Lyrics, and he seems rather bent on disregarding the ecclesiastical nature of the poem, a view he formed early on in his work on the early Irish nature poetry. Jackson is of the opinion that the little poem is a representation of hermit poetry while Carney and D. Ó Corráin disagree with his thinking, and argue that the poem does in fact belong among the ‘monastic literature’. Ó Corráin was perhaps the most critical in his observation on the idea of ‘hermit’ poetry:

Because of their uncertain date and lack of context, they can tell us nothing about the so called hermit movement of the late eighth and

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856 Carney, Studies, p. 134.


early ninth centuries, and only very little about the mentality of the early Irish churchmen.\textsuperscript{860}

Jackson was of the opinion that the poem *Barr eidin* should be assigned to Moling rather than be attributed to Suibne while Carney was of the opinion that ‘the authority of the ninth-century scribe and the consistency of the poem with other material in the Suibne cycle stand against Jackson’s view’.\textsuperscript{861} Ruth Lehman in her article ‘A study of the Buile Shuibhne’ comments eloquently on this conundrum in respect of the corpus of poetry in *Buile Suibhne*:

Any scribe familiar with Suibhne’s story who copied a poem on any of the familiar themes or containing any of the well-known phrases, could conclude that the poem must belong to the Suibhne cycle, and might append his name to it. We have no assurance that all the poems in the Buile Shuibhne belong to the story. Some may have been verses linking them to the story added on; others, because they seemed appropriate in theme, may have been assigned to Suibhne. But I think it fair to add that these poems ascribed to Suibhne that we find outside the Buile Shuibhne itself may be said to have equal claim to authenticity. Indeed, I am not sure what ‘authenticity’ would mean here.\textsuperscript{862}

The most scholars can agree on is that the legends of Suibne and Moling began to receive increased attention in the ninth century, present to us through the sparse reference to them in the ninth-century manuscript of *Codex S. Pauli*, culminating in the works we have access to through twelfth-century manuscripts and later. The second poem found in *Codex S. Pauli* is attributed to Moling and is only two verses. This poem forms part of the anecdote found in *LL, Fechtas dómúm oc ernaigthi ina eclais*, where it is the devil who recites this praise poem to Moling; the order they appear in has also been altered.\textsuperscript{863} Aside from a slight difference (cf. previous footnote) the two verses are nearly verbatim. Sadly no linguistic analysis has been conducted on these two sources, together or separate to provide further comment on the possible development or preservation of the texts of the *Codex S. Pauli*.

\textsuperscript{860} Ó Corráin, ‘Early Irish Hermit Poetry?’, p. 264.


\textsuperscript{863} *LL* ll. 36768-36775. Stokes, *Goidelica*, pp. 180-1. There is a slight difference in line three, verse one of the *LL* anecdote, *is angel is ecna nóeb*, and line three of verse two in the *Codex S. Pauli, is son is alaind is noeb*, otherwise it is verbatim.
The ‘Anecdota poems’, twenty-four in total, are found in the mid-seventeenth-century manuscript, Brussels MS 5100-4, in the hand of Mícheál Ó Cléirigh. The poems were edited by Whitley Stokes and published in 1908 and are collectively referred to as the ‘Anecdota poems’ a reference to the volume they were published in Anecdota from Irish Manuscripts. In 1951 Jackson translated the first ten quatrains of the third poem in the collection and later the entire poem was edited and translated by G. Murphy in 1956, Gáir na Gairbe. Murphy notes that the language of the poem indicates ‘the middle of the twelfth-century’. Numerous scholars have referred to the poems in their discussions on the material of the Suibne legend, but the entirety of the collection has never been fully translated. The poems often feature in a discussion as to whom they should be attributed to, Moling whom according to the manuscript they are, or to Suibne, ‘as Michael O’Clery himself points out in a scribal note at the end of the poem, the poem is clearly imagined as being spoken by Suibne Geilt.’ This poem corresponds very nicely with poem 07 Ross mBrocc indiu is conair chúain of the Bórama, both in terms of content and description of the Garb ‘the tidal waters of the Barrow’.

Gáir na Gairbe gláidbinne
gláides re tosach tuinne;
rátha aídble aíbinne
d’iasc co irsnám ‘na bruinne.’

As well as showing the strongest affinity with poem 07 Ross mBrocc indiu is conair chúain, there are also echoes of similarities found in poems 06 Rot fiasu i mBrocccross and 08 Ross mBruicc bale buredach as well. The striking thing to consider here is that these three poems occur in the first section of the Bórama, more importantly in the Finn mac Cumaill episode of the first section. This in a way encourages the thinking of R. Lehmann that the poems most commonly associated with the Suibne material have the ability to be adapted and claimed to suit the purpose of the scribe at their wish.

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867 Ibid.
869 ‘The cry of the tunefully-roaring Garb sounding against the sea’s first wave! Great lovely schools of fish swim about in its bosom.’ Ibid, p. 112-3.
870 Cf. Appendix B.
Ó Riain recognises that BS shares affinities with what he calls the ‘Tech Moling tradition, i.e. what is contained in the Irish Life of Moling and the ‘Anecdota poems’, in that it contains ‘all essential elements of the plot, apart from the motif of the threefold death.’ He also mentions that Carney suggested ‘that in Buile Suibhne we get a disguised version of that which we know from the ‘Anecdota poems’,’ although Carney did not delve deeper into the ‘question of derivation’. It is therefore worth asking, similar to what others have done in regards to the inclusion of Moling in the BS tradition, whether the motif of the threefold death may itself be a later development. There are obviously still many issues yet to be resolved in terms of the material of Moling and Suibhe, not least one that takes a closer look at the Moling side of the Suibhe material than has been done, hopefully this thesis provides a starting point for such a discussion.

_Moling and the céli Dé_

Something that has not been mentioned in the course of this thesis before is Moling’s putative connection to the céli Dé movement. There are a number of texts in LL which refer to Moling as one of them, even one of the anecdotes Fechtas dósum oc ernaigthi ina eclais, when the devil approaches him in purple garments. Another LL text which refers to Moling at the same instance as others of the céli Dé is the Oentú Feidlimidh text found at the very end of the manuscript. Within that text there is also mention of fellow céli Dé cleric, Máel Ruain, the founder of the monastery of Tallaght in the late eighth century and who was also numerated among the many saints in poem 33 A Brigit bennach ar sét. Máel Ruain is also associated with the Martyrology of Tallaght, which was later preserved in LL and which was undoubtedly, among other LL texts, utilised in the construction of the Bórama. Following the anecdotes of Moling in LL are further texts relating to saints many of which are also associated with the céli Dé movement, hence it is unsurprising to find them clustered together. D. Schlüter makes a convincing argument for the ecclesiastical background of the manuscript, stating that:

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872 Ibid.
875 Ibid, pp. 211-213.
Chapter 4. Moling

The clerical material is testimony to the turbulent fate of the *Book of Leinster* and its compilers. ... The inclusion of much material originating from the *Céili Dé* movement indicates that the manuscript was written in a church closely related to it, such as Terryglass or Clonenagh. ... But the *Céili Dé* material lets us also wonder whether this was not intended as an unreformed native counter of the twelfth-century church reform.\(^876\)

She continues:

... the manuscript was meant to be used can be gathered from the large number of lists and genealogies but also from the devotional documents within the manuscript. As the clerical material is transmitted in different parts of the manuscript, this must have meant that the adjacent material was intended to be used and read as well.\(^877\)

The historiography of the twelfth century is very present in the mind of the authors and compilers throughout the manuscript of the *LL* of that there can be no doubt. The texts reflect the surrounding ecclesiastical influences of the culture they were conceived in, which are presented throughout the manuscript and as a result is often easy to dismiss. The apparent relationship the *Bórama* shares with other texts in *LL* is testament to this, and the relationship demonstrated between the saints, almost hidden, in the poetry of the *Bórama* is also witness to this. These connections deserve better research and it is my hope that this thesis will provide a platform for which to base it on.

**Conclusion**

The majority of the material concerning Moling that has come down to us is twelfth century or later, aside from the *Codex S. Pauli* of the ninth century.\(^878\) The Moling material is quite extensive, ranging from nine tracts in *LL*, to two Lives, one in Irish one in Latin, a range of poems attributed to him, further anecdotes being preserved in the notes to *FÓ* as well as others, and also the lengthy tract of *BS*. Other characters from the early Irish literary world have sparked interest although their material come nowhere near the amount found on Moling. It is without a doubt that the material on Moling was considered interesting to the early medieval community, both in regards to content and probably its entertainment value. The affinity the text shares with *BS*, is extensive, and has been widely commented on, although usually from the view

\(^{876}\) Ibid, p. 213.

\(^{877}\) Ibid.

\(^{878}\) Either in manuscript or language, none of the material in question has been the subject of a rigorous linguistic analysis, although D. Goverts’ Ph.D. project at Cambridge University will result in one such analysis being completed for the *Bórama* tract.
point of the BS material and rarely from the aspect of the Moling material. The characteristic show of folly and wisdom in Moling’s dealings with the characters around him is one of the more persistent views than anything else we receive of him through the texts that have been preserved. The hagiographical nature of the Bórama is unquestionable in the light of the apparent intricacies of ecclesiastical relationship demonstrated through the poetry of the tract. The apparent relationship between Suibne and Moling, which seems to have been forged early on, emphasise as well the hagiographical nature of the BS material, which in turn can also be said to demonstrate the idea of wisdom and folly, the idea of madman and prophet and the fine line between both. This idea which has also been demonstrated in connection with Mac Dá Cherda and Cummíne Fota, suggest that the genre of hagiographical material of the twelfth century encompassed a wider sphere than just that of formulaic ecclesiastical Lives, the various anecdotes preserved in and among material of ecclesiastical importance, such as the FÓ.

It becomes more and more apparent when researching the material of Moling, how central the text of the Bórama is to the development and structure of his legend and tradition. Early Irish scholars (whether lay or ecclesiastical) along with the rest of the community (secular and ecclesiastical) regarded the legend of saints as more than just representations of miracles and divine life. The difference being that the Latin lives provided a formal ecclesiastical recognition, which Moling received, while the vernacular literature provided a link to the holy figure of the saint in a much more approachable way in a sense, and the Bórama was at the forefront in this.

The foregone analysis of the Bórama demonstrates that Moling’s legend was at this time reaching its pinnacle, where he features in two significant works of early Irish literature, the Bórama and BS. Just as with the Bórama, Moling appears at the pinnacle of Suibne’s tale where his role in the ultimate fate of Suibne is paramount, his attainment of Heaven after death. Similarly Moling’s role in the remission of the bórama is significant for the fate of Fínnachta, and through Moling’s benediction Adomnán cannot rescind Moling’s offer of Heaven. The Bórama and the rest of the material which concerns Moling and is found in LL, is testament to the fact that the tradition of the Moling legend was considered significant among the people of Leinster.

By looking at the wider context of Moling in all the extant sources he appears and not merely focusing on the Bórama, his literary persona becomes more fixed and as a
result it is possible to compare and contrast his impact in the *Bórama*. Moling’s literary character in the *Bórama* is what we have come to expect from him, he is wise in his dealings with Fínnachta while also demonstrating his propensity for being the patron of folly by tricking Fínnacha with a simple play on words. He is also a saviour, in the *Bórama* he is both the saviour of Leinster (by managing to get Fínnachta to rescind the *bórama*) and of Fínnachta (as Adomnán is unable to prevent Fínnachta from attaining Heaven as Moling had already promised him Heaven).

Then how does this all impact the remainder of Moling’s extant material? While it was among the issues explored in this thesis it was perhaps not the intent to provide an answer to this question. There are still certain aspects of the Moling material that need further scrutiny before answers can be given, though hopefully this thesis along with current work undergoing by Goverts may provide the necessary tools to do so.

In the interim, it is possible to speculate that the *Bórama* is unique in its relationship to the rest of the twelfth-century material concerned with Moling. In addition, it may be possible to hypothesise that there were four specific divergent traditions forming in the twelfth century. I have already suggested that the *Bórama* in LL must have existed in a now non-extant primary copy, which would suggest possibly a tenth or eleventh-century origin, which has already been suggested by Doherty and Bhreathnach. From then on the legend of Moling continued to develop and it is possible to assume that the entire corpus of Moling material of LL influenced the creation of what Moling’s Irish Life (*GMB*), which would be the ‘first’ tradition. It is perhaps also possible to attatch the Latin Vita to the development from the LL corpus although seemingly as a tradition developing along side it but not a part of it. While the Latin Vita mirrors to a certain extent episodes, that are found both in the LL corpus and the *GMB*, they are quite different and cannot be said to have influenced the *GMB*. Thus I tentatively suggest that the Latin Vita may be considered to represent a ‘second’ tradition developing. The ‘third’ tradition, a variant development, which may have developed from the LL corpus, is that of the notes to *FÓ*, which demonstrates a significant correlation of material to the anecdotes from LL. Possibly the notes of *FÓ* made their way into the martyrology from a not too distant parent (?) copy of the anecdotes. It is highly unlikely that the *Bórama* drew much on the ninth-century *Codex S. Pauli* material as there is no correlation between these two sources in content. It is, however, possible to hypothesise that the *Codex S.*
Pauli influenced in some form or another the creation of *Buile Suibhne*, whether it was among the primary texts from which the *Buile Suibhne* possibly developed or if it was later ascribed to it (the notes above the poems in the *Codex* are by a later hand). This would represent the ‘fourth’ and final tradition of the Moling legend seen to be developing during the twelfth century. While the *Buile Suibhne* material seems to be on the periphery of the development with what appears to be no apparent connection to the other sources Suibhne gets mentioned in both the *Bórama* and *GMB*. While this connection is minute it is evidence enough for the understanding that the legend of Moling could not possibly have been bound solely to the sources involved in this discussion. There must have been a much larger corpus of anecdotes concerned with Moling which have either not been preserved or are simply lost forever. This cursory outline of the development of the Moling tradition is mainly to illustrate that the *Bórama* was a text that was particularly involved in the development of the Moling legend.

By considering the extant material concerning Moling it is apparent that the *Bórama* is significant to the tradition and legend of Moling. Lack of attention to the poetry has hidden Moling’s prominence. Certainly some scholars have recognised that Moling served an important purpose in the final stretch of the tale though this was never fully explored. By including the poetry in the reading of the *Bórama*, there is a significant shift in emphasis discernible. This shift brings the focus from what has generally been considered to be episodes loosely strung together to a concise and intricate narrative. The main thread running through the entire tale is Moling and this was not apparent unless the poetry was read in conjunction with the prose. This is particularly true for section two where Moling’s presence, even in the poetry, is rather tenuous. The realisation of this is not that apparent either unless poem 18 *Dénaid dún ar cotach* is compared with the same poem contained in Lec, where Moling is absent. The study undertaken by this thesis has illustrated the fact that the key to fully comprehend the content of the *Bórama* is attained through the inclusion of the poetry and this led to the discovery of Moling’s significance to the text. Future scholarly research dedicated to the study of the present text must inherently take notice of Moling’s position in the text as well as the fact that the *Bórama* should also be considered an important early Irish hagiographical source.
Final Thoughts

The focus of this thesis has been on the text of the *Bórama* in *LL* and the role of Moling therein. In order to fully comprehend the significance of Moling for the text a detailed analysis of the poetry was necessary, although it was not the intent of this thesis to produce an edition or translation of the complete corpus of the poems. It has also been demonstrated that the *Bórama* is an example of an ambitious creation of an intricate text, which has proved a challenge to the scholars of early Irish literature. The challenges continue. While researching and analysing the poetry and the text itself a number of issues come to mind which may indeed prove a fruitful soil for future scholars to plough through.

It was over a century ago that two editions and translations of this text were published, and there is indeed a need for a new edition as well as a new translation which would include the poetry as well. There is cause to argue that the *Bórama* has suffered in terms of scholarly debate due to the neglect of not including the poetry alongside the prose in the current translations. The aim of this thesis has been an attempt to mitigate to some extent this neglect. Both Buttimer and I suggested the possibility that some of the poems included in the *Bórama* were original compositions for the text, while others may bear witness to a longer tradition.\(^880\) In addition to the need for a new edition and translation there is also a definite need for a detailed study on the language of the text, which would hopefully to some extent consider these issues as well and provide firmer dates for the text.\(^881\)

In addition to questions raised in terms of the text itself and the language, questions regarding the literary legacy of the *Bórama* has also been raised. This involves particularly the ongoing question of classification. It is intriguing to observe that the *Bórama* illustrates the majority of subject matters that the Irish found to be essential to a tale.\(^882\) I would suggest that while Poppe’s re-classification of a cycle is an interesting addition to the literary discussion it is perhaps not suited for the entire corpus of early Irish texts, including the *Bórama*. The question remaining therefore is perhaps not how the *Bórama* should be classified but rather how we as scholars of

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\(^880\) Cf. Buttimer, ‘The Bórama’, particularly chapters two, three and six as well as chapter one and two in this thesis.

\(^881\) Work currently underway by Desirée Goverts, cf. fn 497.

Final Thoughts

As I hope to have shown in the preceding chapters, the Bórama demonstrates strong affinities with hagiographical material, combined with elements of king-tales (and topographical lore). Though some scholars have identified the apparent hagiographical nature of the Bórama, none have adequately explored this. There is enough evidence to suggest that the Bórama, and other material related to Moling found in LL was instrumental in the development of Moling’s legend as a formidable Leinster saint, whether directly or indirectly. This is evidence for the Bórama to be regarded among the corpus of hagiographical lore, rather than (solely) a king-tale.

The Bórama demonstrates clear innovation in the inclusion of Moling as its central character of the text, incorporating him and external sources into a lengthy narrative which is, I would argue, seamlessly woven together by the poetry. The second section of the text is good testament to this practice as the tale of Cath Belaig Dúin Bolg was never considered original to the bórama tradition (nor was Moling ever associated with Cath Belaig Duin Bolg). The Bórama thus is a great demonstration of the incredibly complex process of forming a coherent narrative out of various literary strands. The textual relationship demonstrated in this thesis the overall conclusion must be that the Bórama was considered an important part of the literary (and/or historical) cultural memory of the Leinstermen. Thus the inclusion of the Bórama in the manuscript is demonstration of more than just haphazard collection of material favourable to Leinster.

It cannot be expressed adequately enough that the poetry is a great reflection of the cultural memory that is preserved in LL. For the context of cultural memory, see Schlüter.
Final Thoughts

poems. A number of the monastic sites the saints are affiliated with demonstrate (then and in later period) strong connection with the paruchiae of Kildare and particularly with Glendalough. There is also evidence of further relationship between the Uí Dunlainge of Leinster and Glendalough in particular in terms of Tallaght, and even Ferns.\footnote{Mac Shamhráin. \textit{Church and Polity}, pp. 135-6, 138.} Many of these connections stem from the tenth – eleventh century all the way through to the twelfth century, and this development would have been evolving during the time the \textit{Bórama} was created.\footnote{Ibid, pp. 111-215.}

It was not unexpected to find that the majority of the saints mentioned were contemporary with Moling. Those that pre-date Moling were in other respects important to the ecclesiastical history of Leinster and Ireland in many respects. Brigit, Conlaed, Dubthach and Fiac (as well as Patrick) are the most prominent saints of the early ecclesiastical history of Leinster and Ireland. Those that follow are for the most part recognised as influential saints contemporary with the era the events take place in, with few minor exceptions.\footnote{The exceptions being the name of Moling in poem \textit{18 Dénaid dún ar cotach} and Máel Rúain in poem \textit{33 A Brigit bennach ar sét}.} The few saints who have been recognised as later than the time the events of the text take place may be indications of textual development. Certain indications that the \textit{Bórama} must have existed in its current form before its inclusion in \textit{LL} may give credence to certain textual interference and innovation, particularly in terms of the saints. Doherty indicated that the inclusion of Moling was possibly an eleventh-century development from a pre-existing out-line of the text.\footnote{Doherty, ‘The transmission of the cult of St. Máedhóg’, p. 271.} It may also suggest that the scribes who came into contact with the text interceded on behalf of a certain saint, although those instances may be few.\footnote{These instances may include Máel Rúain of Tallaght and possibly Comgán of Killeshin (date not certain). In the case of Comgán of Killeshin, see Bhreathnach, ‘Killeshin’, pp. 36-7.}

While the poetry is the thread that runs through the fabric of the \textit{Bórama} tract linking each section together it is Moling who is the ornate stitch that upon closer look is the centrepiece of the text. By comparing the three sections of the \textit{Bórama} together and how they reflect Moling, it becomes apparent how they illustrate how central he is to the \textit{Bórama}. Previously Moling’s inclusion in the text had only been commented on, by scholars, from the perspective of the last section of the text, while earlier mention of him was either ignored or at the very least not given due consideration. There is
Final Thoughts

little about the text which cannot be considered to be a conscious decision on behalf of the author regarding the structure of the text. The inclusion of Moling’s name in poem 18 Dénaid dúin ar cotach is perhaps the most significant evidence of Moling’s central role in the Bórama. One thing that remains is that there is definite scope for further study into the material of Moling. This thesis has barely scratched the surface of his traditions.

Conad he finit forcenn na Boroma.889

889 Borrowed from Lec. f. 301ra. ‘So that is the end of the Bórama.’
Appendix A: Table of Metres

The poems of the *Bórama* are inconsistent in metre, and frequently vary from base metre. The poems themselves are often incomplete due to illegibility or damage to the manuscript. This table is merely for the purpose of giving an indication as to the metre they seem generally to adhere to. The first column gives the initial line of the poem (as well as the number I have assigned to it which indicates the order they appear in the text). The second column gives the name of the poetical metre the poem belongs to. The third column indicates the syllabic analysis of the poem and the final column gives the ‘key’ which Murphy ascribed these metres in his *Early Irish Metrics*.

**Section one: the levying of the bórama and Find mac Cumáill**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Poems</th>
<th>Metre</th>
<th>Metre description</th>
<th>Murphy ‘key’</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>01 Fithir is Dáirine</td>
<td>Ái freisligi</td>
<td>$7^1 \ 7^2 \ 7^1 \ 7^2$</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>02 Tuathal Techta in talman</td>
<td>Séimhí móir</td>
<td>$8^2 \ 7^1 \ 8^2 \ 7^1$</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>03 Dénaid dúin bar comairli</td>
<td>Ái freisligi</td>
<td>$7^1 \ 7^2 \ 7^1 \ 7^2$</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>04 A Find in n-érgi ri báig</td>
<td>Deibide scailte fota</td>
<td>$7^x \ 7^{x+1} \ or \ 2 \ 7^x \ 7^{x+1} \ or \ 2$</td>
<td>63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>05 Mo Líng Liath Cellach Bróen bil</td>
<td>Rannaigecht dialtach scailte</td>
<td>$7^1 \ 7^1 \ 7^1$</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>06 Rot fhais i mBroccross</td>
<td>Rinnard bec</td>
<td>$5^2 \ 5^4 \ 5^2$</td>
<td>34 and 61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>07 Ross mBrocc indiu is conair chúain</td>
<td>Rannaigecht dialtach scailte</td>
<td>$7^1 \ 7^1 \ 7^1$</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>08 Ross mBruicc bale buredach</td>
<td>Cúicsrethaid</td>
<td>$6^3 \ 6^5 \ 5^1, \ 6^3 \ 6^3 \ 6^1$</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>09 Mor in gním daringned sund</td>
<td>Deibide scailte fota</td>
<td>$7^x \ 7^{x+1} \ or \ 2 \ 7^x \ 7^{x+1} \ or \ 2$</td>
<td>63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 In cath ac Cnámros ni chelam</td>
<td>Dechnad cumnaistic</td>
<td>$8^2 \ 4^2 \ 8^2 \ 4^2$</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11 Athbaid Loegaire mac Neil</td>
<td>Rannaigecht dialtach scailte</td>
<td>$7^1 \ 7^1 \ 7^1$</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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### Section two: the ‘Cath Belaig Dúin Bolg’ episode (or CBDB)\(^{891}\)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Poems</th>
<th>Metre</th>
<th>Metre description</th>
<th>Murphy ‘key’</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>12 Failet sund aisceda rí</td>
<td>Deibide scailte fota</td>
<td>7(^x) 7(^x+1) or 2 7(^x) 7(^x+1) or 2</td>
<td>63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13 M’áel trébend torcháilach</td>
<td></td>
<td>7(^3) 7(^3) 7(^3) 7(^3) 7(^3)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(14) Guidim Comdid cumachtach</td>
<td>Casbairdne</td>
<td>7(^3) 7(^3) 7(^3) 7(^3)</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15 Tiagat techta úain co hAilech</td>
<td>Dían midseng</td>
<td>8(^2) 7(^3) 8(^2) 7(^3)</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16 Itchiúsa na merrgí</td>
<td>Rinnard dá n-ard</td>
<td>6(^2) 6(^2) 6(^2)</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17 Atchonnarc aslingthi n-ingnad</td>
<td>Sémaid n-gairit</td>
<td>8(^2) 3(^1) 8(^2) 3(^1)</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18 Dénaid dún ar cotach</td>
<td>Rinnard ailech</td>
<td>6(^2) 6(^2) 6(^2)</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19 Lussán Aeda meic Aínmerech</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20 Dénaid dún ar cotach</td>
<td>Aí freisligi</td>
<td>7(^3) 7(^3) 7(^3)</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Section three: Moling and the remission of the bórama\(^{892}\)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Poems</th>
<th>Metre</th>
<th>Metre description</th>
<th>Murphy ‘key’</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>21 Cuce seo ro dalus</td>
<td>Aí freisligi</td>
<td>7(^3) 7(^3) 7(^3)</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22 Inmain tríar a Christ grind glúair</td>
<td>Deibide n-imrinn fota</td>
<td>7(^3) 7(^3) 7(^3)</td>
<td>73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23 Turchan duín a Thuathail</td>
<td></td>
<td>6(^2) 6(^2) 5(^1) (?)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24 Érig a Mo Líng</td>
<td></td>
<td>5(^1)/6(^1) – 5(^1)/6(^1) – 6(^1)/6(^1) x2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25 In-anmum na Trinóíti</td>
<td>Cró cummaisc etir casbairdni ocus lethrannaigecht [móir]</td>
<td>6(^2) 5(^1) 6(^2)</td>
<td>62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26 Fínnachta a Huíb Néill</td>
<td></td>
<td>Meter completely irregular</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Poems</th>
<th>Metre</th>
<th>Metre description</th>
<th>Murphy ‘key’</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>27 Dríbor drábor</td>
<td>Rannaigecht bec bec</td>
<td>4(^2) 4(^2) 4(^2) 4(^2)</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28 Crist conic mo chrí</td>
<td>Lethrannaigecht mór</td>
<td>5(^1) 5(^1) 5(^1) 5(^1)</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29 Andiu cia cheng laid chuaca</td>
<td>Rannaigecht fota recomarcach</td>
<td>7(^2) 7(^2) 7(^2)</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30 A mo Chomdú cumachtach</td>
<td>Casbairdne</td>
<td>7(^3) 7(^3) 7(^3)</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31 Corbar cairrge ar dairge donna</td>
<td>Forduan</td>
<td>7(^2) 7(^2) 7(^3)</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>32 Suidem sund suide n-ága</td>
<td>Rannaigecht fota recomarcach</td>
<td>7(^2) 7(^2) 7(^2)</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>33 A Brigit bennach ar sét</td>
<td>Rannaigecht dialtach scailte</td>
<td>7(^1) 7(^1) 7(^1)</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix B: A Selection of Poems from the Bórama

I have imposed my own moderate punctuation on the LL diplomatic edition to correspond better with my translation. In few instances where I have directly imposed changes to the original the text is not represented in italics.

Section one: the levying of the bórama and Find mac Cumaill

05 Mo Lling Lúath Cellach Bróen bil

LL ll. 37908 – 37927

Rannaigecht dialtach (commonly called rannaigecht mór) (71 - 71 - 71 - 71)

Finn mac Cumaill meets up with his companions, the three sons of Fiacha son of Conga; Moling the Swift, Cellach the Bald and Braen. It foretells of Moling at Broccross and Tech Moling, Finn speaks:

1. Mo Lling Lúath, Cellach Bróen bil, tri meic Fiacha cosin neim.
   Druiu nDubglaise i faillet airm, níba úadib ainm fair sein.
   Swift Moling, Cellach, good Braen, three sons of Fiacha of malefic power.
   Drum Dubglass is the place where they are (used to be),
   it was not from them the name on that [place].

2. Doragat sunda dá n-éis, bid glan a séis immon ross,
   bo chichlet895 angil ó Día, níba lía dulli dorr.
   They will come to this place after them,
   Their melody will be clear about the Ross,
   the angels of God will alight,
   they will not be fewer than leaves on a tree.

   Daraga na ndíaid don glind, Mo Lling fáid, co cétaib cros.
   Brendan of Birr, (and) Brendan the seer,
   it is not feebly, that they will come to the Ross.
   He will come after them to the valley,
   the prophet Moling, with hundreds of crosses.

4. Dia dom dítin, Dia dom fis,
   Dia dom chométh d'iplib doss.
   Co ragba ra hannmain Find tairngires Mo Lling sin ross.
   God for my sheltering, God for my knowing,
   God for guarding me in the shelters of trees.
   So that he may take up the great name of Finn he who predicts Moling in the Ross.

5. Tellach Brenaind sin Druiu, in tellachsa, tellach Find.
   In tres tellach, as dech lem,
   tellach as ferr Teg Mo Lling. M.
   The hearth of Brendan in the Drum,896 that hearth, is the hearth of Finn.
   The third hearth, which is preferable to me,
   the hearth which is best at the House of Moling.

895 Cf. DIL, p. 315 for fo-clíoch.
896 Possibly a reference to Drum Dubglass in the first verse.
08 Ross mBruicc bale buredach

LL ll. 38083 – 38125

Ochtfhoclaich \( (7^3 - 7^3 - 7^3 - 6^2 - 7^3 - 7^3 - 6^2) \)

Énán na huarboithe ‘of the Chilly Booth’, a companion of Find mac Cumaill has a vision regarding the Bórama, recites this poem.897

1. Ross mBruicc, bale buredach
   os tuind Berba bánglaine.
   Talcind ina tromdámaib,
   contrebfat re thaib;
   bid é in t-inad ardúasal,
   bid cend uide aithrech,
   i n-amsir na nám.

   Broccross, a bellowing place
   over the Barrow’s crystal white wave.
   Adze-heads in their oppressive hostings,
   will be dwelling by its side;
   it will be the noble high place,
   it will be the destination of pilgrims,
   in time of the saints.

2. Aille uathmar eidnenach,
   inad na n-oss n-altaide,
   ros bia Bréainind borrfadach,
   atchonnarc im súan.
   Gáir na Gairbe gainmige
   ra tul tunne tulgurme,
   glend ailenach áar.

   A terrible ivy-clad rock,
   the dwelling place of the wild deer,
   proud Brendan will have it,
   I saw in my sleep.
   The cry of the sandy Garb
   against the crest of a blue-fronted wave,
   in cold island-filled glen.

3. Taidiu corach camlintech.
   Ba hur cairrggi cráebglassi.
   doroset sund sochaide
da hímethchecht ar Día.
   Da céit náem co nárglaine
   munter Comded cumachtaig.
   Mo Lling lúam na fírinne
cid fota, daría.

   The Taidiu of the curving pools.
   Under a rocky shoreline of a branching stream.
   the multitude will reach this place
   journeying to it on account of God.
   Two hundred saints with brightness
   the people of the mighty Lord.
   Moling steersman of justice
   though it be long, he will arrive.

4. Atchuala na haifffrenna,
   atchondarc na saltracha,
   na sreith táeb ra táeb.
   Cromcind ataconnacsu
   cona crannaib cromcenna.
   Atchonnac na Talcenna,
   taidbsiu na náeb.

   I heard of the Masses,
   I saw the psalters,
in their lines side by side.
   Bowed heads I saw
   with their bent-headed staffs.
   I saw the adze-heads,
   the apparition of the saints.

5. Mo Ling luam na fírinne,
fáid Meic Maire, mòrglonnaig.
Misse fora chomairge
co bráth o 'ndiu immach.
Beit clerig na comnaide
úas altorib anglide.
Doraga fer foluamnach
atúaid a mMaig Rath.

Moling steersman of justice,
the prophet of the son of Mary, of mighty deeds
I am under his protection till Doomsday from today henceforth.
Clerics will be dwelling
over angelic altars.
A fluttering man will come
from the north out of Mag Rath.

6. Taige ardda airerda,
cruaidi & commarta,
filet sund innocht.
Epscuip & ancharait,
uasail. & ailethraig,
dá n-eis i rRoss mBrocc. R.

[They are] noble pleasant dwellings,
hardy and very strong,
which are here tonight.
Bishops and anchorites,
nobles and pilgrims,
after them in Broccross. R.

898 Lit. ‘on his protection’.
Section two: the ‘Cath Belaig Dún Bolg’ episode (or CBDB)\textsuperscript{999}

12 Failet sund aisceda ríg

\textit{LL} ll. 38333 – 38368

\textit{Deibide scálte fota} (7\textsuperscript{1} - 7\textsuperscript{2} - 7\textsuperscript{1} - 7\textsuperscript{2})

When Máedóc Ua Dúnlainge visits Brandub mac Echach and presents him with gifts, a flesh-fork, a cauldron, a shield and a sword.\textsuperscript{900} He then recites this poem:

\begin{enumerate}
\item \textit{Failet sund aisceda ríg,}
\textit{a mèic Echach, cen imsnìm:}
\textit{aél co mbennaib braine,}
\textit{sciath is chlaidem is chaire.}

Here are presents for a king,  
oh son of Echach, without woe:  
a flesh-fork with protruding prongs,  
a shield and a sword and a cauldron.

\item \textit{In t-aél a llus\textsuperscript{901} in bíd.}
\textit{Iss ed as chubaíd ra hardríg.}
\textit{In coire do bruith na n-om,}
\textit{ra orddaig, Crist in comgor.}

The flesh-fork on account of the food.  
That is what befits a high king.  
The cauldron for cooking of the raw,  
Christ the pious, ordained it.

\item \textit{In sciath ra hucht in cha\textsuperscript{th},}
\textit{i n-agid na n-anflatha.}
\textit{In claideb do chlód na cath,}
\textit{bíd acut, a mèic Echach.}

The shield before the breast in battle,  
against the tyrants.  
The sword for subduing of battles,  
it will be yours, oh son of Echach.

\item \textit{Conlaíd, cèrd Brigit ní chél}
\textit{is é doringni in n-aél.}
\textit{Grésach\textsuperscript{902} doringne in caire}
\textit{do mac Néill do Láegaire.}

Conlaed, Brigit’s craftsman who does not conceal  
it is he who made the flesh-fork.  
Lastly was made the cauldron for the son of Néill, for Lóegaire.

\item \textit{Claideb Crimthaind sciath Ennai,}
\textit{is uaimse darogébai.\textsuperscript{903}}
\textit{Aél mèic, ind éicis find,}
\textit{coire Dubthaig ó Duiblind.}

The sword of Crimthann, the shield of Ênna,  
it is from me ...  
The flesh-fork of a son, of a bright poet,  
cauldron of Dubthach from Dublin.

\item \textit{Dorat Laegaire na lend}
\textit{do Dubthach, d'ollom Herend.}
\textit{Dorat Dubthach, dían a gal,}
\textit{d'Ífac, do mac a sethar.}

Lóegaire gave the mantle  
to Dubthach, to the chief poet of Ireland.  
Dubthach gave it, eager his ardour,  
to Fíac, to the son of his sister.
\end{enumerate}


\textsuperscript{900} Stokes, ‘The Boroma’, pp. 56-7, §45.

\textsuperscript{901} Cf. \textit{DIL}, p. 441, 1. los Ila.

\textsuperscript{902} Buttimer suggests that Grésach is the name of Lóegaire's craftsman. Buttimer, ‘The Bórama’, pp. 221-2.

\textsuperscript{903} Uncertain meaning.
   *Dorat Ailill damsa iar sain, dosbiurtsa duitse, a Branduib.*

   Fíac gave it to Dúnlang, for the time,
   Dúnlang gave it to Ailill.
   Ailill gave it to me then,
   I gave it to you, oh Brandub.

8.  *Mathi na cruid beri latt, aéil is chore conmart; claiideb Crimthaínd arnat chuir scíath Ennai, is comderg ra fuil.*

   Good the items of wealth you carry with you, flesh-fork and very strong cauldron;
   Crimthann’s sword placed before you
   Énna’s shield, it is very red with blood.

9.  *Is messi, M’Aedóc na mmed, tussu, Brandub, ri Lagen; missi ac crábud,’s a(c) comaid, tussu ic éirge ra folaid. F.*

   It is myself, Máedóc of the balances,
   yourself, Brandub, king of Leinster;
   I am at devotion, and at protecting them,
   yourself rising up against their grievances.

---

904 This quatrain is missing from Lec version.
17 Atchonnarc aslingthi n-ingnad

LL ll. 38549 – 38558

Sétnad ngairit (8² - 3¹ - 8² - 3¹)

Brandub mac Echach and the king of Ulster made peace. This is the vision that Conchobar mac Nessa had of the pact made between Leinster and Ulster.905

1. **Atchonnarc aslingthi n-ingnad da mbá im súan.**
   *In fitir nech úaib a fidrad issin tsluag.*
   I saw a strange vision when I was asleep.
   Does anyone of you, know its significance in the host

2. **Atchonnaccus dabaich nglaine co néim n-óir; acum ar certlár mo thaige ic Brega ic Bóinn.**
   I saw a large vat of crystal with a sheen of gold;
   beside me in the very middle of my house at Brega by the Boyne.

3. **Trian na dabcha d'fuilib dóene, ingnad dál; ni rabí acht oentrian do lemnacht ara lár.**
   A third of the vat was the blood of men, a strange share;
   there was not but one third of milk on its surface.

4. **Trían aile ba fín forclid, ingnad lemm; daíne cromcenna ros timchell dar Muir Mend.**
   The other third was noble wine, strange to me;
   men with bowed heads going around it across the Irish sea.

5. **Lagin uile, ciarsat ile, linib glond; tucussa dóib sérch mo chríde & mo chond. At.**
   All Leinster, though they be many, great their deeds;
   I give in to them love of my heart and my good sense.

---


906 Taking *fidrad* as *figrad* here, as this seems more probable.
18 Dénaid dún ar cotach

LL ll. 38565 – 38572

Rinnard (rinnard ailech) \((6^2 - 6^2 - 6^2 - 6^2)\)

The king of Ulster, after explaining Conchobar mac Nessa’s vision, recites this poem.\(^{907}\)

1. **Dénaid dún ar cotach**,  
   rop cotach trí bithu,  
   risna fedaib fína,  
   risna rígu a lLifiu.  
   Make for us our covenant,  
   may it be a covenant forever,  
   with the trees of wine,  
   with the kings from the Liffey.

2. **Brigit aca chomét,**  
   M’Aedóc o Dún Inne,\(^{908}\)  
   Mo Lling,\(^{909}\) thes na Táeden,  
   Abbán, Caemgen Glinne.  
   Brigit guarding it,  
   Máedóc from Dún Inne,  
   Moling, south of the Taídiu,  
   Abbán, Caemgen of Glendalough.

3. **Epscop Sinchean sochla,**  
   Mo Chalmóc on Chaba;  
   is Mo Biu na rográd,  
   Comgall, Colman Ela.  
   Famous bishop Sinchean,  
   Mo Chalmóc from/of Caba[(u)s]/Coba;\(^{910}\)  
   and Mo Biu of the great love,  
   Comgall and Colmán Elo.

4. **A lucht na da chóiced**  
   clothaige in bar scélaib,  
   narap dál bas sía  
   ra taib dá denaid. D.  
   Oh, people of the two provinces,  
   famous in your tales,  
   let there be no agreement more lasting  
   aside from the one that you make.

---

\(^{908}\) Lec has Dún Choindi. \(OG\), p. 380.  
\(^{909}\) The name of Moling is missing from the Lec.  
\(^{910}\) Cf. Chapter 3: The saints in the \(Bòrama\) and Appendix C for Mo Chalmóc.
Section three: Moling and the remission of the bórama

21 Cuce seo ro dalus

LL ll. 38755 – 38770
Ai freisligi (7³ - 7² - 7³ - 7²)
Moling, when a messenger is sent to him about the tribute to bring him to the assembly of the king of Leinster.

1. Cuce seo ro dalus
   is and dogén mo thrátha;
   ní scér rissin n-árusa,
   naco tí lathe brátha.

   To this I was summoned
   and there I will make my time;
   I will not part from my abode,
   not until Judgement Day may come.

2. Is andso bías m'accarda,
   mo thaidiú úasin tuile;
   ní mór mo sáith cotulta,
   cot attach, a Meic Muire.

   And it is here my refuge,
   my watercourse over the full tide;
   it is not great my fill of sleep,
   beseeching you, oh Son of Mary.

3. Ross nEidnech na habnaire
   Ross nDubglassi co ndremna;
   Druim nDaíle, Druim nDamgaire,
   Ross Bruic ar brú na Berba.

   Ross Eidnech of ....
   Ross Dubglass with raging madness;
   Drum Daile, Druim Damgaire,
   Broccross on the bank of the Barrow.

4. Me Mo Lling na firinne,
   Teg Mo Lling bías ar m árus;
   do déoin rig na dilinne,
   is cuceseo ra dálus. Cuce.

   I am Moling of righteousness,
   the House of Moling will be
   the place of my abode
   for pleasing the God of the Flood,
   it is to this I was summoned.

---

912 Lec has an extra quatrain for this poem, comes after the last quatrain.
914 Unknown, may possibly be a proper noun, either a person’s name or a place-name, it is not attested anywhere else.
22 Inmain tríar a Christ grind glúair

LL ll. 38773 – 38788

Deibide n-imrinn fotá (7\(^1\) - 7\(^2\) - 7\(^1\) - 7\(^2\))

A description of Moling’s community, he recites this poem as he prepares to go to the king of Leinster.\(^915\)

1. Inmain tríar, a Christ grind glúair, 
gragas lemsa ar cend in búair; 
Forannán, Aed mac Senaig 
is Colmán ó Chluain Chredail.

Dear the trio, oh Christ pleasant and bright, 
who will go with me for teh sake of the cattle; 
Forannán, Aed son of Senach 
and Colmán from Killeedy.

2. Inmain tríar na tarraill cess 
doragat lemsa rom less; 
Dubthach, Dubán dichlis brón 
& Cuán o Chluain Mór.

Dear the trio which sickness doesn’t reach 
they will come with me for my benefit; 
Dubthach, Dubán who conceals sorrow / 
which sorrow conceals 
and Cuán from Clonmore.

3. Inmain cóiciur comol nath, 
Álgenach is Fulartach; 
Mo Menóc, Miloc na mind 
& Findbarr fial forfind.

Dear the quintet of poetic agreement, 
Álgenach and Fulartach; 
Mo Menóc, Miloc of the insignia 
and noble fair Findbarr.

4. Inmain cethror, comol n-án, 
Elchomach & Aedán; 
Sárnatan, Colmnatan cain, 
noco limsa nach inmain. In.

Dear the quartet, a splendid agreement, 
Elchomach and Aedán; 
Sárnatán, Colmnatán fair, 
there is not anyone who is not dear to me.

---

Tuathal son of Ailill, king of Uí Muredaig suggests that they send Moling to ask the men of Tara to stop demanding the tribute.\footnote{Lec only has the first verse of this poem.}

[Bran speaks:]

1. \textit{Turchan duin, a Thuathail,}
   \textit{maic Ailella uathmair,}
   \textit{cia gebas Laigniu a Luathmaig,}
   \textit{tacair rind tria baig?}
   \textit{Cia do n\'{e}maib Lagen,}
   \textit{fedaib, maigib maigen;}
   \textit{cia n\'{a}em don dreim dagfer}
   \textit{dingbas dind in plaig?}

   Prophesy to us, oh Tuathal, son of terrible Ailill, who will take the Leinstermen out of Leth Moga, gathered against us through their fighting? Which of the saints of Leinster, in woods, in plains of places; which saint of the number of good men will ward off from us the plague?

2. \textit{Inn \'{i} Brigit buadach,}
   \textit{l inn e Fintan sluagmar,}
   \textit{l inn \'{e} M\'{a}edoc ruarach,\footnote{DIL, p. 513.}
   \textit{l Mo Lasse stuagmar,}
   \textit{l inn \'{e} [...]}\footnote{MS illegible.}

   Is it victorious Brigit, or is it Fintan of the large company, or is it astute/deceitful Maedóc, or is it stooped Mo Lasse, or is it ............

3. \textit{Inn \'{e} Brenaind Gabra,}
   \textit{l inn e C\'{a}innach amra,}
   \textit{l inn \'{e} Lacht\'{a}in la\'{i}ngel,}
   \textit{dingbas n\'{i} assar cind?}
   \textit{No inn \'{e} Fiac Temrach,}
   \textit{l Tigernach trednach,}
   \textit{l inn \'{e} Fiachra find?}

   Is it Brendan of Gabair, or is it wonderful Cainnech, or is it Lachtán fully white, who will ward off the thing away from us? Or is it Fíac of Tara, or fasting Tigernach, or is it handsome Fiachra?

4. \textit{Cia, don chóiciur chéolach,}
   \textit{a hoentelluch thréorach;}
   \textit{Dagán, epsecp Eogain,}
   \textit{& Abb\'{a}n a\'{i}ngel,}
   \textit{& Caimgen cóir.}

   Who, from the musical quintet, from the single powerful household; Dagán, bishop Eogan, and Abbán the angel, and just Caemgen?


\footnote{Lec only has the first verse of this poem.}
5. *Inn é Mo Chua Chlúana*
   Dolcain cosna bua,\(^{920}\)
   cona sessiur buad,
   béras úan in cis;
   inn é Colum Tire,
   l inn é Baethín brigach,
   l inn é M’Oedóc Ferna,
   febla in fer cen scís.
   Is it Mo Cua of Clondalkin with the victories,
   with his victorious sextet,
   who will bear from us the tax;
   is it Colum of Terryglass,
   or is it powerful Baethín,
   or is it Máedóc of Ferns,
   excellent the man without fatigue.

6. *Inn é in Gall cráibdech,*
   l Ithairnaisc álgen,
   l inn e, eps cop Colmán,
   l Comgán na glindi?
   Is it the devout Gall,
   or mild Itharnaisc,
   or is it, Bishop Colmán,
   or Comgán of the glen?

7. *Nó inn e Berchan rocháid,*
   l Mo chua mac Lonain,
   l inn é Mo Lling?
   Or is it noble Berchan,
   or Emín without pettiness,
   or Mo Chua son of Lonán,
   or is it Moling?

8. *Nó inn irscartad comlaind,*
   ra Fínnachta in tsluaig?
   'ma tuitfet meic flatha,
   béras anfír úaind?
   Or is it the driving out (of the enemy) in conflict,
   or is it a face against distress,
   against Fínnachta of the hosts?
   Or is it hardness of our battle,
   in which will fall sons of princes,
   which will carry the injustice from us?

[Tuathal speaks:]

9. *Mo Lling lassar daiged,*
   tond línta na n-aíreir,
   dogena less cáich.
   He is the silk banner over the hosts,
   he will do the benefit of each one.
   Moling a blaze of fire,
   a wave that fills the shores,
   he will do the benefit of each one.

10. *Is é in sról dar slúaga*ib,
    is é in long ar liamain,
    is e in kalaind míis.
    He is the silk banner over the hosts,
    he is the vessel in motion,
    he is the kalend of the month.
    He is the silk banner over the hosts,
    he is the vessel in motion,
    he is the kalend of the month.
    The star of victorious Brocc(ross),
    we will hear, I have heard,
    who will lift the tax from us.

11. *Is é in t-usce fichthech,*
    is í in chaindel chridrech,
    is uapar\(^{921}\) in rád.
    He is the bubbling water,
    he is the glowing candle,
    it is pride to say it.
    He is Daniel of the Gaels,
    he is a pilot of the Taídiu,
    grandson of Daig of the companies.

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\(^{920}\) Possibly *buada* ‘victories’.

\(^{921}\) *Uapar* is *úabar* ‘pride’.
[Bran speaks:]

12. Ech cacha ríg ruirech, 
screpol cacha cuiled, 
 uam do mMo Lling. 
 Unge d’ar cach aiccme 
 .......... in n-acme 
 d’u Feradaig Find. 

The horse of each of the provincial king, 
a screpol of each pantry, 
from me to Moling. 
An ounce of gold from each sept 
 ............ of the tribe 
of the descendants of Feradach Find.

13. Screpol cacha deoraid 
 nochon .......... ar 
 eter tair is tčar. 
 Caeru cach mná cerna, 
 samasc cacha selba, 
 do mac Failleáin fial. 

A screpol of each stranger 
 ................. 
 between east and west. 
A sheep of each .... woman, 
a heifer of each property, 
to the son of generous Fáellán.

[Moling speaks:]

14. Ragaid missi ria, 
crop deoin re Dia, 
coro gabor, mo dúain. 
 In bórama saidbir, 
 berar úaib bar Lagnib, 
 co bráth nocho nerthar. 

I will go before him, 
so that it would be pleasing to God, 
that it may be bright, my poem. 
The wealthy bórama, 
that is carried from you your 
Leinstermen, 
forever until doom.

15. Rosíasa tír nAeda, 
 nocho nfaigiu̯b caemn̠a, 
 ic iarraid bar cruid. 
 Ragatsa bar conair, 
crop soraid, 
 dar toraib cach tuir. Tur. 

I will reach the country of Aed, 
I will not ... protection, 
searching for your cattle. 
I will go on your path, 
that it may be easy, 
across the multitude of each / every sorrow.

922 MS illegible. 
923 MS illegible. 
924 According to OG, p. 635, a place situated in south-west Donegal, could possibly refer to an unspecified place.
After the suggestion of sending Moling to Finnahcta, Bran recites this poem (and possibly Moling as well).\textsuperscript{925}

[Bran says:]

1. Érig, a Mo Lling,
\begin{flushright}
co mbúaid chrábuid grind;
dena ní is less lind
& eirgg fathúaid;
narap grían tria thech,
narap dál ma sech,
corop sochor sluig.
\end{flushright}

Go, oh Moling,
with triumph of diligent piety;
do something which is beneficial for us
and go northwards;
so that there may not be a sun through the
house,
so that there may not be a division beside that,
so that there may be a good contract of a host.

2. Corop rathmar ciúin,
\begin{flushright}
narap é in là liúin,
narap dígair dúairc,
nira trágbas cess,
nirap fes na cúairt.
\end{flushright}

So that there be full of gentle grace,
so that it not be a day of destruction,
that there be no intense sorrow,
nor diminishing apprehension,
that there not be knowledge of the journey.

3. M’echsa is m’ erriud gnáth,
\begin{flushright}
béra úaim re cách,
co tí bráth bid búaid.
Rot fia Ros Cain,
is rot fia Dún mBrain,
rat fia Gáisit Glúair.
\end{flushright}

My horse and my familiar equipment,
you will carry from me for everyone,
till judgement will come, it will be victorious.
You will have Roskeen,
and you will have Dún Brain,
you will have Gáisit Glúair.\textsuperscript{926}

[Moling says:]

4. Dot mac is dott ua,
\begin{flushright}
rige dóib dorua,
ní chelim ar cách;
in a tardais dam,
bid móte do blad,
nóco tora in bráth.
\end{flushright}

To your son and to your descendants,
The kingship will come to them,
I do not hide it from anybody;
that which was given to me,
it will be the greater for fame,
until the day of Judgement may come.

5. Borrama bar mbúair,
\begin{flushright}
noco berthar úaib,
a Brain Ardhchind áin;
cén bersa for nim,
nís bérat na fir
do chlannaib Néill náir.
\end{flushright}

The cattle-tribute of your cattle,
Will not be taken from you,
oh splendid Bran Ardhchenn;
as long as I carry in heaven,
the men of the descendants of noble Níall
will not carry it.

\textsuperscript{925} Stokes, ‘The Boroma’, pp. 102-3, §130.

\textsuperscript{926} OG, p. 435, uncertain place, possibly somewhere in Leinster.
[Bran says:]

6. Derggfaide bar rind
   itbeir rib Mo Lling,
   bid áigsech bar n-ord;
   Fínnachta ro fáeth,
   mar ra thuitt Aed,
   i mBelaig Dúin Bolg.
   Fierce cry, your keenness
   Moling says to you,
   it will be terrifying your battle cry;
   Fínnachta will fall,
   just as Aed fell,
   in the Battle of Dún Bolg.

7. Ra thuitt Faelchu féig
   & Róen mac Néill,
   fácsat a fadb;
   dofaeth Dáre dían,
   la Bran Find na ngiall,
   i cath Ruis da Charn.
   Keen-sighted Fáelchú fell
   and Róen son of Níall,
   they left their spoils;
   swift Dáre fell,
   along with Bran Find of the hostages,
   in the battle of Ros dá Carn.

8. Na furig do báig
   acht érig ra dáil,
   do briathar bláith bind;
   rot fia cocholl sróil,
   bia armo lethláim lóir
   is érig a Mo Lling. E.
   Don’t hold back your fight
   but rather come to the meeting,
   to the smooth melodious word;
   you will have a silken cowl,
   sufficient will be on my one hand
   and arise, oh Moling. E.

927 Derggfaide, compound of derg and faíd possibly. Derg as an intensifier ‘fierce cry’.
26 Fínnachta a Huíb Néill

LL ll. 38988 – 39015

Moling speaks this pangyric after Fínnachta remitted to him the tribute till Doomsday.\footnote{928}{Stokes, ‘The Boroma’, pp. 106-7, §138.}

1. Fínnachta a Huíb Néill,  
amal gréin atrach.  
Is í in bárc úasin tuind,  
is í in tond úas tracht.  
Fínnachta of the Ui Néill,  
Rose like the sun.  
He is the ship above the wave,  
he is the wave over the shore.

2. Is é in cath ar tír  
arlná lamat rig a ngress;  
is é rí Temra ca tliath\footnote{929}{Uncertain meaning.}  
iss é in tríath da tic a lles.  
He is the battle on the land  
Because of which kings do not dare to attack;  
he is the king of Tara who ......  
he is the king to whom comes their benefit.

3. Is é tuile glond ri gail,  
is é in tond immaig ’s amach;  
is é rí na Temrach tuaid,  
is é int Íarn cruaid resin cath.  
He is a tide of violence against fury,  
he is the wave inside and outside;  
he is the king of Tara in the north,  
he is the harsh iron before the battle.

4. Is é cride cerna Cuind,  
bile Temra, tind i tind.  
Is é in Fínnachta nach fand,  
is é in crand fingarta find.  
He is the heart of Cerna of Conn,  
the royal tree of Tara, force against force.  
He is the Fínnachta who isn’t weak,  
he is the tree of the lustrous vineyard.

5. Atchuala ra senaib sund,  
ferr molad na cech mod,  
ná fitir Fínnachta fial,  
connach\footnote{930}{Lit. connach is co + nach ‘that ... not’.} cian maras in crod.  
It is heard by the old ones here,  
‘it is better praising than every honour,’  
who knows noble Fínnachta,  
not as long as the wealth remains.

6. Téit in crod a seilb cach aín,  
ac síl n’Adaim im garuair.  
Báegul cach nech, fo nim nár,  
téit ’ma sech in saegul suail.  
The wealth go into possession of everyone (of them),  
of the race of Adam for a short time.  
A danger on each one, under the high heaven,  
goes past each in the small world.

7. Corpre is Cormac is Art,  
Cond ra riced rígleptha.  
Ciar gabsat Temair co tend,  
dar lem, is ferr Fínnachta. F.  
Coirpre and Cormac and Art,  
Conn who reached the royal beds.  
Although they took Tara strongly,  
according to me, Fínnachta is better.
28 Crist conic mo chrí

LL ll. 39038 – 39055

Lethrannaigecht móir\(^{931}\) (5\(^1\) - 5\(^1\) - 5\(^1\) - 5\(^1\))

The poem Mo Lling recites to bring back the son of Fínnachta.\(^{932}\)

1. Crist conic mo chrí,  
   nachum thair tríst tré  
   corop glan mo gléo  
   céin beo for bith ché  
   Christ who is master of my body,  
   let there may not come a curse on me through it  
   so that my combat may be pure  
   while I am in this world.

2. Dondgilla co tí,  
   a rí, 'ca tá in réo,  
   mad cet ra Mac nDé,  
   corop é in mac béo.  
   Let Dondgilla come,  
   oh king, whose is the dense darkness,  
   if the son of God allows it,  
   that he may be the living son.

3. Corop é in mac béo,  
   mac Fínnachtaí in tslúaiag,  
   mad béo, mac in mail,  
   ar dáil co dia lúain.  
   May he be the living son,  
   son of Financhta of the army,  
   if he is alive, the son of the prince,  
   our agreement is till Monday (Doomsday).

4. Cían garit co bráth,  
   bud é in guth gnáth grind,  
   in lúansa ra láud,  
   bid é lúan Mo Lling.  
   A short period till Doomsday,  
   this was the well-known pleasant sound,  
   the Monday has moved,  
   it will be the Monday of Moling.

5. Bid dál fota hí,  
   niba dál dar aíss,  
   ní lúan tratha foiss,  
   acht lúan bratha braiss.  
   It will be a long agreement  
   it will not be an upside down agreement,  
   it isn’t a Monday of a restful time,  
   but Monday of violent Judgement day.

6. Erin suas co héim,  
   do réir Chomded cáid,  
   a Dondgillai déin,  
   narap léim sech láim.  
   Rise up promptly,  
   to the will of the holy Lord,  
   oh swift Dondgilla,  
   let it not be a false leap.

7. Ar Dia dogní in síd,  
   narap.dll iar scís,  
   is teg atá in pháis,  
   conna dig darís.\(^{933}\)  
   For the sake of God who makes the peace,  
   let it not be retribution after tiredness,  
   it is a house that is in suffering, (?)  
   that it may not go over him.

8. Oenmac Muire is mó  
   uas cach cuire ĭchí,  
   Comde nimi nuí,  
   mo chomge is mo chri. C.  
   The only son of Mary who is greater  
   over each troop which you see,  
   Lord of clear heaven,  
   my protection and my body.

\(^{931}\) Also given the name dechnad mbecc in Early Irish Metrics by Murphy, p. 57.


\(^{933}\) This quatrain is missing from Lec.
29 Andiu cia chenglaid chuaca

LL ll. 39098 – 39149

Rannaigecht fota recomarach (7² - 7² - 7² - 7²)

Adomnán speaks a satirical poem about Fínnachta and how he remitted a tribute he had no right to do.934

1. **Andiu cia chenglaid chuaca,**  
   in rí crínliath cen déta.  
   In dál ro maith do Mo Lling,  
   deithfr don ching, nis n-éta.  

   Today though he fastens the cloak,  
   the withered king without teeth.  
   The pleasant meeting with Moling  
   it is fitting for a warrior, he gets not.

2. **Damad messe,** Fínnachta,  
   flaith Temra,  
   co bráth nocho tibéraind,  
   nocho dingenaind na nderna.  

   If it were me, Fínnachta,  
   who was the ruler of Tara,  
   never would I give it,  
   I would not do what he did.

3. **Cach rí nach maithend a chís,**  
   is fata bít a scéla,  
   maígr dorat in dáil dorat,  
   intí is lac is dó is méla.  

   Every king who does not remit his tax,  
   his legend is long(-lived),  
   woe to him who made the agreement  
   he has made,  
   that one is weak and to him it is shameful.

4. **Doarnactar do gáesa,**  
   is ar baesa co mbine,  
   maígr rig ro maith in císa,  
   a Ísu nemda nime.  

   They have ended, your wisdoms  
   and our follies, with wrong-doing,  
   woe to the king who remits the tax,  
   oh heavenly Jesus of heaven.

5. **Sochla cach nech ó threbas,**  
   is maígr lenas do líathu,  
   is fata in dálsa, ma cate,  
   bid fate comma,  
   935  
   fíachu.  

   Famous each person when he ploughs,  
   and woe to him who follows old warriors,  
   it is long the agreement, if austere,  
   it will be ... the fine.

6. **Damsam rísea ruadas chrú,**  
   ro thairnfind mo bidbadú,  
   ra thócebaínd mo dindgna,  
   ropat imda m'airgalú.  

   If I were a king who reddens blood,  
   I would subdue my enemies,  
   I would raise my stronghold,  
   That they may be many my battles.

7. **Roptaís imda m'airgalá,**  
   mo bretha niptís gúacha;  
   ropits fira mo dála,  
   ropits lána, mo thuatha.  

   Many would be my battles,  
   they would not have been false  
   my judgements;  
   any arrangements would have been just,  
   they would be filled, my territories.

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934 Stokes, ‘The Boroma’, pp. 112-3, §154. This poem is also found in FA, pp. 30-33.
935 The meaning of this sentence is unclear.
936 This quatrain is missing from Lec version.
8. Roptis imfaicsi m'airde,  
roptís daingne mo daingne,  
in dálsa, cia ma tearmaing,  
noco lecfaind re Laigne.  
Visible would be my qualities,  
solid would be my fortress,  
the covenant, though it should happen,  
I would not leave Leinster.

9. Guidimse itgi for Dia,  
nachom tháir bás l baegul;  
coro thérna indiu Mo Lling,  
ní thaeth do rind l d'faebur.  
I pray a prayer to God,  
that death or danger may not come to me;  
may Moling escape today,  
may he not be killed by a point or a edge.

10. Mac Faelleáin fer dar múru,  
ní claifider for cúlu,  
rá fitir rúna Meic Dé,  
rofitir Mac Dé a rúnu.  
Son of Fáellán, a man across the walls,  
do not turn your back,  
he knows the secrets of the Son of God,  
the Son of God knows his secret.

11. Tri .l. salm cach dá,  
iss ed geibes ar Dia;  
tri .l. bocht séol sairthe\(^{937}\),  
iss ed biathas cach n-aidche.  
350 psalms each day,  
that is what he gives before God;  
350 poor men ...,  
are what he nourishes each night.

12. In bile búada bissig,  
in fissid cosna fessaib;  
long lerda fofúir fáilte,  
tond Berba barce Bresail.  
The tree of victory (and) progress,  
the learned one with the knowledge;  
a ship of the sea has found welcome,  
the wave of Barrow, of the ship of Bresal

13. In long d'ór is án inne,  
in clár d'ór osna clanna,  
écne Dubglaise duinne,  
fiúaim tuinne fri halla. A.  
The ship of gold is of brilliant quality,  
the plank of gold over the kindreds,  
the salmon of dark Dubglass,  
the sound of a wave against the cliffs.

---

\(^{937}\) Uncertain meaning.
32 Suidem sund suide n-ága

LL ll. 39186 - 39197

Rannaigecht fota recomarcach \((7^2 - 7^2 - 7^2 - 7^2)\)

When Moling reaches the place where Moling's Cross stands he spoke this.\(^{938}\)

1. *Suidem sund, suide n-ága,*
   *éirgem ra bága búada,*
   *cip é bess for greiss Colaim,*
   *ní bía a choland fo chúana.*

   Let us sit here, a seat of battle,
   let us arise with a boast of victory,
   whosoever be under Colum Cille’s protection,
   his body will not be attacked by wolves.

2. *Mo mallacht ar Finnacht,*
   & *mallacht Ríg nime;*
   *ro impá form Fínnachta,*
   *niba airdite, a fine.*

   My curse on Fínnachta,
   and curse of the King of Heaven;
   Fínnachta has turned against me,
   it will not be higher, his kindred.

3. *A Brigit Chilli Dara,*
   *a Meic Thail ó Chill Chuilind,*
   & *a Meic Muire,*
   *is let cech suide suídim. S.*

   Oh, Brigit of Kildare,
   Oh, Mac Táil of Kilcullen,
   and oh, son of Mary,
   it is yours, every sitting which I sit.\(^S\).

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33 A Brigit bennach ar sét

LL ll. 39210 – 39321

Rannaigecht dialtach \( (7^1 - 7^1 - 7^1) \)\(^939\)

Moling speaks this when he reaches Kildare on his escape from Fínnachta.\(^940\)

1. **A Brigit, bennach ar sét,**
   
   **nachar táir bét arar cúairt;**
   
   **a challech, a lLifi lán,**
   
   **co rísem slán ar tech úait.**
   
   Oh Brigit, bless our way,  
   let evil not come on upon our circuit;  
   oh nun of full Liffey,  
   that we may reach our home safely  
   through your help.

2. **A Brigit, bennach ar sét,**
   
   **bí féin ’car n-imchomet,**
   
   **cid cian cid garit ar techt,**
   
   **da spirut nar comaitecht.**
   
   Oh Brigit, bless our way,  
   be yourself at our guarding,  
   though it be long or short our journey,  
   your holy spirit escorting us.

3. **A Brigit bennach, rédig mu rót,**
   
   **a challech óg émid út;**
   
   **tair dar cobair cu ba chét,**\(^941\)
   
   **corop soraid ar sét cút.**
   
   Oh blessed Brigit, smooth my path,  
   oh young nun swift yonder;  
   come to our assistance ...,  
   that our path be smooth with you yonder.

4. **Bladfocul,**
   
   **a Christ tair dom anaccul.**
   
   **A Brigit scar ósmo chind,**
   
   **do bratt find dom anacul.**
   
   A famous phrase,  
   oh Christ come to my protection.  
   Oh Brigit, unfold above my head,  
   your white cloak for my protection.

5. **A Meic Tháil,**
   
   **a chlerig urddinti áin.**
   
   **A Brigit i lLifi Luirc,**
   
   **meic uilc ní thiset nar ndáil.**
   
   Oh Mac Táil,  
   oh noble ordained cleric.  
   Oh Brigit in Liffey of Lurc,  
   let the sons of evil not meet us.

6. **A Mael Ruain,**
   
   **a Michil árchangil úaig.**
   
   **Nírbar lobair, corbar tréin,**
   
   **corop éim ar cobair úaib.**
   
   Oh Máel Ruain,  
   oh Michael perfect archangel.  
   May we not be weak, may we be strong,  
   that it may be prompt our assistance from you.

7. **Itge thend**
   
   **Mo Chua Cluana Dolcain lem;**
   
   **ma tá Uxaille na chill**
   
   **táet co gluc bind arar cend.**
   
   A vigorous prayer  
   Mo Chua Clondalkin with me  
   if it is Uxaille of the church  
   let him come with a melodious bell on our behalf

---

\(^{939}\) Irregular metre, is certainly some kind of *rannaigecht* metre.


\(^{941}\) Uncertain meaning.
8. Béo mo rí,  
marid, méraid, Mac Dé Bi.  
Ar cach rámut ar bith che,  
ria slúag namat conar ti.  

Alive my king,  
he lives, he will live, the Son of the living God.  
Oh every road throughout this world,  
before the host of enemy ...

9. Nert Dé lend,  
arña ragbaiter ar n-ell,  
a Chaimgin cháid, ma tait it glind,  
rá báig Mo Lling tócaib cend.  

The power of God with us,  
That our troop may not be taken,  
oh holy Cóemgen, if you are in your glen,  
Moling declared: ‘lift your head’.

10. Comgan béo  
dom anacul ar cach gléo,  
Mu Lassi cu cétai bám,  
& ar nín araen leo.  

Living Comgan  
for my protection for each fight,  
Mo Lasse with hundreds of saints,  
and our protection with any of them.

11. Lestar óir,  
Aed mac Eogain Cluana Móir,  
imda rigrad imma lecht,  
rop línmar oc teocht ‘nar tóir.  

A vessel of gold,  
Aed son of Eogan of Clonmore,  
many kings / warriors around his grave,  
may they be abundant in going to our help.

12. Tipra glain,  
Dílgedach mác Cairpri chain,  
do mathib domain in fer,  
mo chen a chobair ind fir.  

Spring of clearness,  
Dílgedach son of fair Cairpre,  
for the goods of the men of the world,  
welcome, oh help of the man.

13. Sruith in dám,  
Dagán & Baethín bán,  
dar n-anacol ar cach ngört,  
na hágumár oic na hág.  

Venerable the company,  
Dagán and white Baethín,  
to protect us on each field,  
let us not fear evil nor battle.

14. Episcop Ith,  
Crud & Elcho cen chleith;  
guidet in Comdid fo leith,  
dar mbreith sech coibdín sech creich.  

Bishop Ith,  
Cruad and Elcho without deception;  
they pray to the Lord separately,  
for our carrying past troops of soldiers,  
past plunder.

15. Episcop Ith Atha Fadat,  
sechna sluagu nar sagat,  
immaind acaid ar cach ngléo,  
episcop Ith dar n-imdegleo.  

Bishop Ith of Aghade,  
the evading of the army approaching us,  
around us with us on each fight,  
Bishop Ith to our protecting.

16. Admoniursa, Mothaíreán,  
a chomhairteir ro balc,  
rom ainsce, cacha trátha,  
episcop Atha Fadat.  

I pray, Mothaíreán,  
his protection it is very great,  
sustain me, each period of time,  
Bishop of Aghade,

17. Ar cach n-olc itágursa,  
bághursa mac nOengussa,  
álim Mothaíreán an bréó,  
tabrad céo darm chaímsusa.  

Against each evil I fear,  
I invoke the son of Oengus,  
I request Mothaíreán, the flame,  
let it bring a mist for my protection.

---

942 Uncertain meaning.
943 I take this to be read as do mathib fer in domain. This verse is different from the rest, defective.
18. A chalech ón Chetharlocht,
a dind callach sonaide,
a Crón ingen Setnai,
bennach sét mo chonaire.

19. A Thacain, ailthíthir áin,
fail i tír Hua Crimthannain;
ní thiset námait nar ndáil,
ní rabat 'car n-imagbáil.

20. Cluin ar núal,
a M’Enoc Ruis Muchnig múaid,
a Choluim meic Cathbaid áin,
a Choluim cháid o Chlúain Úail.

21. In buarsa thuc atúaid,
slán rom faíце, slán rom fúair,
a Chelláin, a chell for sléib,
tair fo béis in bennáin búaín.

22. M’Aedóc mín,
ticed dar ceach saebrót sáer,
Colum Cilli, Comgall cáid,
Mo Lling, na ndáil mas hí chóir.

23. A Mundu, rédig mu rót,
a Abbáin, caímaig ar sét;
a M’Aedóc dar toraib túath,
na hágam úath na héc.

24. Cross Dé bí,
ra bruinne cach uilc fo thrí,
úair nat ágammar Mac nDé,
cia bé ní ágammar ní.

25. Atrácht umnum as cach aird,
Atrácht d’imdegail mo luirg,
ingen Taláin ard a grád,
Atracht do lár Maigi Luirg.

26. A Cholmain Sléibe in Messa,\textsuperscript{944}
atát i péin mo cho (ssa),
a epscuip Átha Fadat,
is úair charat innossa.

\footnote{\textsuperscript{944} Unknown place-name.}
27. A Rí rún,  
a náemPatraic, fil i nDún,  
cepeth leth tíasom ar sét,  
rop soraid bes cach ráen rún.  
Oh King of secrets,  
oh, saint Patrick, who is in Downpatrick,  
though it be half we go on our path,  
may it be smooth indeed each secret path.

28. Tair dar ndín,  
a Muiri, a mathair in Ríg,  
a Émnat, a Fidnat án,  
a Cholmnat bán is a Bríg. A.  
Come to our protection,  
oh Mary, mother of the King,  
oh Emnat, oh splendid Fidnat,  
oh fair Colmnat and oh, Brigit.
Appendix C: Table of Saints

In this table information has been gathered on each and every saint that has been discussed in chapter three. The main column which is numbered, gives the name as it appears in the *Bórama*, below is the name of the saint as he or she is most commonly referred to as, and the following column gives various readings of his or hers name. The places that the saint is mainly associated with comes next, followed by the genealogy of the saint as it is most commonly represented to be. The family connection between the saints can be further studies with a look at Appendix D, which gives the family tree of many of the saints that are mentioned in the *Bórama*. The column ‘notes’, gives further information which may not be mentioned in the discussion of the saint at hand in the chapter, and may also refer to familial connection with other saints represented in the table. The column marked ‘feastday(s)’ gives the dates on which the saint is commemorated on and also in which martyrologies entries for the saint will be found. The final column gives the entry in the annals for the date of death for the saint.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Also</th>
<th>Associated places</th>
<th>Genealogy</th>
<th>Notes</th>
<th>Feastday(s)</th>
<th>Obit</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Abbán</td>
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<tr>
<td>Abbán of Killabban and Moyarne</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ebán, Moab(b)u, lat. Abbanus. (<em>DIS</em>)</td>
<td>Cell Abáin (Killabban, Co. Laois) and Magh Arnaide (Moyarne, Co. Wexford) in Leinster.</td>
<td><em>Abban Maige Arnaide</em> (CGSH §287.1, DIS, pp. .51 – 2)</td>
<td>He is said to have been contemporary of many saints, including Finian of Clonard, Brendan of Clonfert, Colum Cille, Munnu and Moling. Brother of Dubán, nephew to Cóemgen of Glendalough (CGSH §287.1 – 3)</td>
<td>16 March, 27 October (MT, FÓ, MG, MD)</td>
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<td>2. Adomnán</td>
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<tr>
<td>Adomnán of Iona</td>
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<td>Iona, Scotland.</td>
<td><em>Adamnan m. Ronan m. Tindi m. Aeda m. Colum m. Setna m. Fergus m. Conaill m. Neill Naegiallaig</em> (CGSH §340, DIS, pp.</td>
<td>Only referred to within the prose text of the <em>Bórama</em>. Wrote <em>Vita Columbae</em>, 7th century Life of Colum Cille.</td>
<td>23 September (MT, FÓ, MG, MD)</td>
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<td>3. Aed mac Senach</td>
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<td>53 -5)</td>
<td>22 September (MT, MG, MD)</td>
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<td>Aed mac Senach</td>
<td>- 22 Inmain tríar a Christ grind glúair</td>
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<tr>
<td>Aedán</td>
<td>Glen dá Locha (Glendalough, Co. Wicklow) in Leinster.</td>
<td>Brig ingen Chobtaig m. Crimthaind m. Enna Ceindsealag m. mathair ... Easpoic Aedain et Aeda m. Ainnirech rig Eirind (CGSH §380.1) Epscop Aedain m. Mane m. Fergus Laebeirg (CGSH §181.13) (DIS, pp. 72 – 73)</td>
<td>Bishop of Glendalough, only present in the prose text of the Bórama. Half brother to Áed mac Ainmerech, king of Ireland, through his mother. Possibly also of Cill Rannairech (Kilranelagh, Co. Wicklow) as indicated by poem Lecht Cormaic meic Culennáin.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Aedán</td>
<td>- 22 Inmain tríar a Christ grind glúair (v.4, l.2)</td>
<td>Too many possible candidates.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Algenach</td>
<td>Glen dá Locha (Glendalough, Co. Wicklow) in Leinster.</td>
<td>- 22 Inmain tríar a Christ grind glúair (v.3, l.2)</td>
<td>No one found by this name in the martyrologies or the annals.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Atráchta ingen Talán</td>
<td>- 33 A Brigit bennach ar sét (v.25, 1.1-4) – identified as ingen Talán of Magh Lurg</td>
<td>Atracht of Killaragh Athrachta, Etracta, ingen Talán Cell Athrachta (Killaragh, Co. Sligo) in Connaught. Athracht ingen Thalain m. Dubthaig m. Rossa m. Imchada – sunn chomraignis ; Comgoll Bennchair – m. Feidlimthe m. Caiss m. Fiachact Araide o taid Dal nAraide (CGSH §398.1, DIS pp. 81 – 2)</td>
<td>Seems to be concentrated in and around Connacht.</td>
<td>11 August (MT, MG, MD)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Baethín</td>
<td>23 Turchan duin a Thuathail (v.4, l.6)</td>
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<tr>
<td>9. Baethín</td>
<td>33 A Brigit bennach ar sét (v.13, l. 2)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Baethín of Ennisboyne</td>
<td>Baethín, Baodán, Báeth, Inis Baithín (Ennisboyne, Co. Wicklow) in Leinster.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Baethine</td>
<td>Baethine m. Finnach m. Echdach m. Bairr m. Cairthind m. Cormaic m. Lugnae m. Eogain m. Guare m. Eirc (CGSH §156) Trea ingen Ronain m. Colmain m. Corpre ingen rig Lagen mathair Baithini ... (CGSH §722.65) (DIS, p. 88)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cluain an dobor (Cloney, Co. Kildare) in Leinster.</td>
<td>Ennisboyne ‘which appears to have formed part of the Parochia Ginelachensis. (A. Mac Shamhráin, Church and Polity, p. 134)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mobaí dna m. Sinill m. Nadfraich (CGSH §129, DIS pp. 85-6)</td>
<td>22 May (MT, FÓ, MG, MD)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Possibly a Leinster localisation for Baethán of Iona. Of the Glendalough paruchiae. (A. Mac Shamhráin, Church and Polity, p. 175 – 6) Cloney ‘would feature among the properties of Glendalough. (A. Mac Shamhráin, Church and Polity, p. 126, 213)</td>
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<td>13 December (FÓ, MG, MD)</td>
<td>AT 633.4, AI 634.1</td>
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| 10. Berchán | 23 Turchan duin a Thuathail (v.7, l.1) |
| Móibí Cláirenech | Berchán, Glas noeden (Glasnevin, Co. Dublin) in Leinster. |
| Móibí Chlarinech apstal m. Beónaid m. Bresail m. Ailgil m. Idfra m. Athraí m. Lugnaí m. Beagdaill m. Airt Cirp m. Corpre Niad (CGHS §317, DIS pp. 457 – 8) | A guarantor of CA |
| A guarantor of CA Features in Vita Sancti Coemgeni. | 12 October (MT, FÓ, MG, MD) |
| 29 November, (FÓ, MG, MD) | AU 545.1, AT 540.1, AI 544.1 |

<p>| 11. Brendan | 05 Mo Líing Liath Cellach Bróen bil (v.3, l.1) – referred to as Brendan of Birr |
| 23 Turchan duin a Thuathail (v.3, l.1) | Brendan of Birr, Brénainn, Biorra (Birr, Co. Offaly) in Leinster. |
| Sometimes confused with his namesake and contemporary Brendan of Clonfert. | 29 November, (FÓ, MG, MD) |
| Sometimes confused with his namesake and contemporary Brendan of Clonfert. | AU 565.2, 572.6, |
|   | brendinus Senior (CGSH, DIS) | dechoin m. scellain m. nastair m. taphail m. branchon m. airmora m. achir m. imchada m. dubthaig m. rosa m. imchada (CGSH §124, DIS pp. 114 – 15) | navigatio brendani recension 6 (probl. 14th c and later) contains account of brendan of birr and brendan of clonfert were at clúain iraird, when brendan of birr was chosen to go search for the land of promises, tīr tairngiri) (kenny) He features in two lives, but not his own. | 9 May (MT) | 215 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 12. Brendan | 05 Mo Liáth Logh Lúath Cellach Bróen bil (v.3, l.1) – referred to as Brendan the prophet | brendan of clonfert Brénainn cluan ferta (Clonfert, C. Galway) in connacht. | there is a considerable corpus of texts concerning brendan of clonfert. | 16 May (MT, FO, MG, MD) | AI 573.2, AFM 553.2, FA 572 |
| | | brenaind apstal m. findloga m. olchon m. altai m. ogamain m. fídhchuiri m. delmnai m. ennae m. fuilascaig m. astamain m. mogaed, qui dicitur ciar, m. fergusu m. rosa (CGSH §127.1, DIS pp. 115 – 17) | | |
| 13. Brigit | 12 Failet sund aisceda ríg (v.4, l.1) | brigit ingen dubthaig m. demri m. bressail m. dein m. conlahda m. art cuirp m. corpse niad m. cormaic m. oengusa mind m. echach find fuath airt m. feidlimid rectada m. tuathail techtmair etc (CGSH §2, DIS pp. 123 - 5) | brigit was considered the chief saint of leinster, second only to patrick in the irish tradition. (DIS). Brigit has both irish and latin lives. In the battle of allen, which is considered to be a sequel to the bórama, Brigit appears as a vision protecting and watching over the leinstermen. | 1 February (MT, FÓ, MG, MD) | AU 577.3, 583.5, AT 574.2, AI 578.1, AFM 576.2 |
| | | brigit of kildare Cell Dara (Kildare, Co. Kildare) in Leinster. | | |</p>
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<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Cainnech</th>
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<tr>
<td>14.</td>
<td>Cainnech</td>
<td></td>
<td>23 Turchan duin a Thuathail (v.4, l.2)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>- Cainnech of Aghaboe</td>
<td>Coinneach,</td>
<td>Achadh Bo (Aghaboe, Co. Laois) in Leinster.</td>
<td>Cainnech m. Lugthig m. Lugdach m. Daland m. Echdach m. Fidchuiri m. Fergusa m. Rosa m. Imchada m. Fiachu m. Cais m. Isis m. Airirich m. Conlai m. Corpre m. Orb m. Fael m. Corpre Auloim m. Fergusu m. Rosa m. Rudraige (CGSH §123.1, DIS pp. 138 – 40)</td>
<td>11 October (MT, FÓ, MG, MD)</td>
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<td>15.</td>
<td>Cellán</td>
<td></td>
<td>33 A Brigit bennach ar sét (v.21, l.3)</td>
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<td>16.</td>
<td>Cóemgen</td>
<td></td>
<td>18 Dénaid dán ar cotach (v.2, l.4) – identified as Cóemgen of Glendalough</td>
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<td></td>
<td>- 23 Turchan duin a Thuathail (v.4, l.5)</td>
<td>Cóemgen of Glendalough</td>
<td>Caemgin, Glen dá Locha (Glendalough, Co. Wicklow) in Leinster.</td>
<td>Cóemgen m. Coemloga m. Coemfeda m. Crinfeda m. Cairbh m. Fergusu Laebdeirg m. Fothaid m. Echach Lamdeirg m. Messin Corbb m. Con Corbb (CGSH §250, DIS pp. 148 – 50.)</td>
<td>3 June (MT, FO, MG, MD), 11 May (MT, MG, MD), 16 October (MT, MG, MD)</td>
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<tr>
<td>17.</td>
<td>Colmán</td>
<td></td>
<td>22 Inmain triar a Christ grind gláair (v.1, l.4) – identified as Colmán of Cluain Credail</td>
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<td></td>
<td>- Cumíne Fota of Clonfert</td>
<td>Colmán, Colum, Cluain Credail (Cell Ite, now Killeedy, Co. Cumíni Fota m. Fiacha m. Fiachrach</td>
<td>Bishop of Clonfert, coarb of Brendan of Clonfert. (AJ)</td>
<td></td>
<td>12 November (MO, MG, MD)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Name</td>
<td>Place</td>
<td>Date and Notes</td>
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<tr>
<td>Colmán</td>
<td>Cluain Ferta (Clonfert, Co. Galway)</td>
<td>m. Garrini m. Duach Iarlati m. Mani m. Corpore m. Cuirc m. Lugdech m. Ailella Flainn Bic (CGSH §232, DIS pp. 243 – 5)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Munster, Leinster and Connacht</td>
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<td>AI 661.1, AFM 661.1, FA 662</td>
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<tr>
<td>Colmán Elo</td>
<td>Lann Elo/Ela (Lynally, Co. Offaly) in Leinster.</td>
<td>Colman Elo m.Beodgna m. Moctae m. Cunnida m. Oengusa m. Fiacle m. Mail m. Carthaig m. Laire m. Lugdach m. Larine (CGSH §311, DIS pp. 203 – 5)</td>
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<td>26 September (MT, FÓ, MG, MD), 3 October (MT, FÓ, MG)</td>
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<td>AU 611.3, AT 609.3, AI 613.1, AFM 610.1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Colmán</td>
<td></td>
<td>Sliab Messa (possibly Sliab Mis (possibly Co. Antrim). (OG, p. 610) in Ulster.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Colmán</td>
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<td>Too many possible candidates, probably one of the many Leinster saints</td>
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<tr>
<td>Colnmat/Colnmatán</td>
<td></td>
<td>Possibly at Kilcullen (Old Kilcullen, Co. Kildare) in Leinster.</td>
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<td>Possibly the nun Moling meets when he is on the run from Finnahcta. (Stokes ‘The Borama’, pp. 114 – 5, §159)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Columba of Iona</td>
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<td>Loyalties lay with the Uí Néill, but because of his ties with Leinster through his mother was unable to give aid to Aed</td>
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<td>9 June (MT, FÓ, MG, MD)</td>
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<td>AU 595.1, 601.4, AT 593.1,</td>
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<td>Neil Noigiallaig m. Echach Mugmedoin m. Muredaig Tirig etc (CGSH §8) Crimthan ainm baisdig Choluim Cille et Eithni ingen Dimai m. Nai do Chorbraide Fanud a mathair (CGSH §397, (§651)) (DIS pp. 211 – 14)</td>
<td>mac Ainmerech in his battle against the Leinsterment. (Bórama)</td>
<td>AI 597.1, AFM 592.2, FA. 595</td>
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<td></td>
<td>- <strong>33 A Brigit bennach ar sét</strong> (v.20, l.3)</td>
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<tr>
<td>24.</td>
<td><strong>Colum</strong></td>
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<td>Cluain Uail in Leinster? (OG, p. 271)</td>
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<td>- <strong>33 A Brigit bennach ar sét</strong> (v.20, l.4)</td>
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<td>25.</td>
<td><strong>Colum</strong></td>
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<td>- <strong>23 Turchan duin a Thuathail</strong> (v.5, l.5) – identified as Colum of Tíre</td>
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<td>26. Comgall</td>
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<td>- 18 Dénaid dán ar cotach (v.3, l.4)</td>
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<td>- 33 A Brigit bennach ar sét (v. 22, 1.3)</td>
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Comgall of Bangor</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bennchor (Bangor, Co. Down), patron of Dísert Diarmata (Castledermot, Co. Kildare)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ulster and Leinster</td>
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Comgall of Killeshin</th>
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<tr>
<td>Glenn Uissen (Killeshin, Co. Laois) in Leinster.</td>
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<tr>
<th>Comlaed</th>
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<tr>
<td>- 12 Faíllet sund aisceda ríg (v.4, l.1) – referred to as Brigit’s craftsman</td>
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<tr>
<th>Conleth of Kildare</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Roncend (MT), Conláed cráibdech</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

| Conlaed - i. cunnail aed - Craibdech m. Cormaic m. Oengusa |

| Brigit’s bishop and craftsman (CGSH). Reportedly buried under the altar of the church of Kildare, along with Brigit. |

| 13 December (FÓ, MG, MD) |

| 27 February (MT, FÓ, MG, MD) |

| 8 May (MT, FÓ, MG, MD) |

| 10 May (MT, FÓ, MG, MD) |

| 3 May (MT, FÓ, MG, MD) |

| 5 April (MT, FÓ, MG, MD) |

<p>| 13 December (FÓ, MG, MD) |</p>
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</tbody>
</table>
| **30. Cruad** | 33 A Brigit bennach ar sét (v.14, l.2) Cruad Cruaidh (DIS, p. 237) 26 October (MG, MD)
|   |   |
| **31. Cuán** | 22 Inmain triar a Christ grind gláir (v.2, l.4) Cuán of Cluain Mór Cluain Mór Maedóg (Clonmore, Co. Carlow) (OG, p. 268) in Leinster. *Dagan Inbir Doole - i. nomen ammis - m. Colmádán m. Conaill m. Étain m. Sinill m. Conaill m. Cathair m. Airmora m. Nastair m. Fothaird m. Echach Lamdeirg m. Messin Corb m. Con Corb* (CSGSH §256, DIS, pp. 251 – 2)
|   |   |
| **32. Dagán** | 23 Turchan duíin a Thuathail (v.4, l.3) 33 A Brigit bennach ar sét (v.14, l.2) Dagán of Ennereilly Daghnán, lat. Daganus Inber Doile (Ennereilly, Co. Wicklow) in Leinster. *Brother of Menóc of Glenealy and Rossminogue.* 13 September (MT, FÔ, MG, MD) AT 642.6, AI 641.1, AFM 639.1
<p>| | |
|   |   |
| <strong>33. Dílgedach mac Cairpre</strong> |   |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>34. Dubán</th>
<th>22 Inmain tríar a Christ grind gláair (v.2, l.3)</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dubán of Monasterevin</td>
<td>Ros Glaisi (Rosglas / Monasterevin, Co. Kildare) in Leinster.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Abban Maige Arnaid 7 Cilli Abbain m. Lagnig m. Cainnig m. Labrada m. Cormaic m. Con Corbb. Et Daman et Miaca fratres eius, i. i Fid Mor i. i Cluain Fata et Senach et Lithgein et Dúban et Tomdenach i Russ Glassi, septem fratres sunt. Mella nomen matris eorum, soror Sancti Coemgin (CGSH §287.1 – 3, DIS, p. 275)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>He is brother of Abbán an according to the genealogy, nephew of Cóemgen of Glendalough.</td>
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<tr>
<th>35. Dubthach</th>
<th>22 Inmain tríar a Christ grind gláair (v.2, l.3)</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dubthach moccu Lugair</td>
<td>Dubthach of Dublin</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>... Dubthaig m. Lugair m. Lugdech m. Ruaid m. Rosa m. Marthened m. Congail m. Chlaringnig m. Ailella m. Anglonnaig m. Oengus Umaiill (CGSH §305, DIS pp. 275 – 6)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Features in VT along with Fiac of Sletty. A fili. He does not have a feast-day.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ca. 5th century</td>
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</tbody>
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<tr>
<th>36. Elcho</th>
<th>33 A Brigit bennach ar sét (v.14, l.2)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pupa of Inishmore</td>
<td>Aelchú, Aolchú, Inishmore (Co. Galway) in Connaught.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Aelchu, cui nomen Pupu Airne, m.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>14 June (MT, FO, MG, MD)</td>
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<td>ca. 654 (MD)</td>
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Does not appear in the annals or the martyrologies.
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Cáilbe, Elcho, Nem, Neamh, Pupa, Pupu</strong></td>
<td><strong>Faelchair m. Edalaig</strong> <em>(CGSH § 379.1, DIS, p. 532)</em></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>37. Elchomach</strong></td>
<td>- <strong>22 Inmain tríar a Christ grind gláair</strong> <em>(v.4, l.2)</em></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Aelchumach?, Aelchomach?</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>38. Emin</strong></td>
<td>- <strong>23 Turchan duin a Thuathail</strong> <em>(v.7, l.2)</em></td>
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<td></td>
<td>Emín of Monasterevin <em>(Rosglas)</em></td>
<td>Ros Glaisi (Rosglas / Monasterevin, Co. Kildare) in Leinster.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Iamnám im. Ingen Sinill mathair Émin Ruis Glais <em>(CGSH §697.2, DIS, pp. 291 – 2)</em></td>
<td>22 December <em>(MT, FÓ, MG, MD)</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>39. Émnat</strong></td>
<td>- <strong>33 A Brigit bennach ar sét</strong> <em>(v.28, l.3)</em></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>40. Eogan</strong></td>
<td>- <strong>23 Turchan duin a Thuathail</strong> <em>(v.4, l.3)</em> identified as Bishop</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Eogan of Ardstraw</td>
<td>Lat. Eugenius</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Ard Sratha (Ardstraw, Co. Tyrone) and Cell na Manach <em>(Kílnamanagh, is in the Dublin parish of Tallaght)</em></td>
<td>Episcop EoganAird Sratha m. Cainnig m. Epscuip Erc m. Cuirbb <em>(CGSH §251, DIS, pp. 295 – 6)</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ulster and Leinster</td>
<td>Cell na Manach was ‘certainly claimed by Glendalough’. <em>(A. Mac Shamhráin, Church and Polity, pp. 180 – 1)</em></td>
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<td>23 August <em>(MT, FÓ, MG, MD)</em></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>41. Fiachra</strong></td>
<td>- <strong>12 Faiet sund aisceda ríg</strong> <em>(v.6, l.2; v.7, l.1)</em></td>
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<td>- <strong>23 Turchan duin a Thuathail</strong> <em>(v.3, l.5)</em> – identified as Fiac of Tara</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Fiac of Sletty</td>
<td>Sléibte (Sletty, Co. Laois) in Leinster.</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Fiac:Sleibthi m. Ercada m. Féc m. Darra Barraig m. Cathair Moir <em>(CGSH §286, DIS, pp. 315 – 6)</em></td>
<td>Features in VT along with Dubthach.</td>
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<td>12 October <em>(MT, FÓ, MG, MD)</em></td>
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<td>ca. 5th century</td>
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fiachra of Sletty</th>
<th>Fiachna</th>
<th>Sléibte (Sletty, Co. Laois) in Leinster.</th>
<th>Fiachra m. Fiac (cf Fiac of Sletty) (DIS, pp. 316–7)</th>
<th><em>Fiac et Fiachra eius filius cum eo i Sleibti</em> ‘Fiac and Fiachra his son along with him in Sletty’. (MT)</th>
<th>12 October (MT, FÓ, MG, MD)</th>
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<td><strong>43. Fidnat</strong></td>
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<td><strong>44. Findbarr</strong></td>
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<td>Finnbarr of Killegar</td>
<td></td>
<td>Cell Adair (Killegar, Co. Wicklow) in Leinster.</td>
<td>Finnbarr Cilli Adgair m. Aeda m. Connois m. Foramain m. Oescaín m. Fothaid (CGHS §255, DIS, p. 335)</td>
<td>The Glendalough diocese ‘apparently extended into part of south-east Co. Dublin around Killegar ...’ (A. Mac Shamhráin, <em>Church and Polity</em>, p. 212)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Finnbarr of Little Island</td>
<td></td>
<td>Inis Doimle (now Little Island, Co. Waterford) (OG, p. 464) in Leinster.</td>
<td>Finnbarr Insi Domle m. Aeda m. Dallain m. Liathain m. Briuin m. Eogain m. Airt Chirp m. Corpre Niaid (CGSH §6, DIS, p. 335)</td>
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<td>4 July (MT, FÓ, MG, MD)</td>
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<td><strong>45. Fintan</strong></td>
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<td><em>Turchan</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>Munna of Tagmon</td>
<td>Fintan, mac Tulchan, Munnu, Munna</td>
<td>Tech Munna (Taghmon, Co. Wexford) in Leinster.</td>
<td>Munnu m. Tulchain m. Trena m. Dega m. Dubthaig m. Maain m. Cuirc m. Fiacha Riatai (CGSH §155) Mundu m. Tulchain ar slight Fiachach Araidi m. Feidlimid Rechtmaire (CGSH §546) (DIS, pp. 505–7)</td>
<td>A guarantor of CA</td>
<td>21 October (MT, FÓ, MG, MD)</td>
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<td><strong>46. Forannán</strong></td>
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<td>AU 635.5, AFM 685.4</td>
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<td>22 <em>Inmain</em></td>
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<td>No.</td>
<td>Name</td>
<td>Location</td>
<td>Title/Role</td>
<td>Dates/References</td>
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<td>47.</td>
<td>Forannán of Kildare</td>
<td>Cell Dara (Kildare, Co. Kildare) in Leinster.</td>
<td>Among the guarantors of CA.</td>
<td>AU 698.5, AT 698.3, AI 697.1, FA 698</td>
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<td></td>
<td><strong>Fulartach</strong></td>
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<td>48.</td>
<td>Gall</td>
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<td>- 23 <em>Turchan duin a Thuathail</em> (v.6, l.1)</td>
<td>Gall of Lullymore</td>
<td>Gall cráibdech</td>
<td>Llcach (Lullymore, Co. Kildare) in Leinster.</td>
<td>Gall of Lullymore (AFM 730.5, MG, MD)</td>
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<td>49.</td>
<td>Ith</td>
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<td>- 33 <em>A Brigit bennach ar sét</em> (v.14, l.1; v.15, ll.1,4; v.16, l.4; v.26, l.3) – identified as bishop of Áth Fadat</td>
<td>Ith of Aghade</td>
<td>Fioth, Ioth</td>
<td>Fioth, Ioth (Aghade, Co. Carlow) in Leinster.</td>
<td><em>DIS</em> (p. 360)</td>
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<td>50.</td>
<td>Itharnaisc</td>
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<td>- 23 <em>Turchan duin a Thuathail</em> (v.6, l.2)</td>
<td>Itharnaisc of Clane</td>
<td>Claeanad (Clane, Co. Kildare) in Leinster</td>
<td><em>Secht meic Oengus m. Aeda m. Eirc m. Echach Munremuir m. Oengusa Fír ut ante genealogia Berhcain i. Mothrianóc Ruscaig. Itharnaisce Cloenta. Eoganan Leccaig, Mochollu Dresnada, Mothairean Tilcha Forchein, Toscan Arda Breccain, Agatan ar ur Ethni</em> <em>(CGHS §209, DIS, p. 384)</em></td>
<td>Brother of Mothareán</td>
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<td>51.</td>
<td><strong>Lachtán</strong></td>
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<td>23 Turchan duin a Thuathail (v.3, l.3)</td>
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<td></td>
<td><strong>Lachtán of Freshford</strong></td>
<td><strong>Lachtain of Freshford (v.3, l.3)</strong></td>
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<td>Lachtain, Lachtín, Lachtóc, Molachtoc, Lachtnéne, Lachtnain</td>
<td>Achadh Úr (Freshford, Co. Kilkenny) in Leinster.</td>
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<td><strong>Lachtain Achaid Úr m. Turbín m. Nuachair m. Carthind m. Caiinnig m. Cairpre Músc</strong> (CGSH §212, DIS, pp. 387 – 8)</td>
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<td>19 March (MT, FÓ, MG, MD)</td>
<td>AT 629.2, AFM 622.3</td>
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<tr>
<th>52.</th>
<th><strong>Mac Táil</strong></th>
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<tr>
<td>-</td>
<td>32 Suidem sund suide n-ága (v.3, l.1, 2)</td>
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<td>-</td>
<td>33 A Brigit bennach ar sét (v.5, l.1)</td>
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<td><strong>Mac Táil of Kilcullen</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Kilcullen (Old Kilcullen, Co. Kildare) in Leinster.</td>
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<td>11 June (MT, FÓ, MG, MD)</td>
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<tr>
<th>53.</th>
<th><strong>Máedóc</strong></th>
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<td>-</td>
<td>12 Failet sund aisceda ríg (v.9, l.1)</td>
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<tr>
<td>-</td>
<td>18 Dénaid dán ar cotach (v.2, l.12) Possibly an amalgamation of Máedóc Ua Dúnlainge and Máedóc of Ferns.</td>
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<tr>
<td>-</td>
<td>23 Turchan duin a Thuathail (v.2, l.13)</td>
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<td>-</td>
<td>33 A Brigit bennach ar sét (v.11, l.12) – identified as Aed mac Eogan of Cluana Móir</td>
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<td></td>
<td><strong>Máedóc Ua Dúnlainge</strong></td>
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<tr>
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<td>Aed mac Eogan of Clommore (Clomore, Co. Carlow) in Leinster.</td>
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<td>11 April (MT, FÓ, MG, MD)</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
| 54. Máedóc | - 18 Dénaid dún ar cotach (v.2, l.2) Possibly an amalgamation of Máedóc Ua Dúinlainge and Máedóc of Ferns.  
- 23 Turchan duin a Thuathail (v.5, l.7) – identified as Maedóc of Ferns  
- 33 A Brigit bennach ar sét (v.22, l.1; v.23, l.3) | Máedóc of Ferns, Áed, Eda, Ferne (Ferns, Co. Wexford) in Leinster. | Moedóc Ferne m. Setnai m. Eirc m. Feradaig m. Amalgada m. Muridaig m. Cairthind m. Colla Uais (CGSH §63, DIS, pp. 432 – 6) | 31 January (MT, FÔ, MG, MD) | AU 625.3, AT 627.8 |
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<tr>
<td>55. Máel Rúain</td>
<td>- 33 A Brigit bennach ar sét (v.6, l.1)</td>
<td>Máel Rúain of Tallaght, Tamlacht (Tallaght, Co. Dublin) in Leinster.</td>
<td>Mael Ruain Tamlachta m. Colmain m. Senain m. Agnidi m. Moctai m. Cunnda m. Fiaccu m. Mail (CGSH §316, DIS, pp. 445 – 6)</td>
<td>7 July (MT, FÔ, MG, MD), 10 August (MT)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>56. Milóc</td>
<td>- 22 Inmain triar a Christ grind gláair (v.3, l.3)</td>
<td>Mosiloch, Bithê, Dobî, Mobî, Inis Cùscraidd (Inch, Co. Down) in Ulster.</td>
<td>A guarantor of CA.</td>
<td>Fosterling of Moling (MT)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>57. Mo Biu</td>
<td>- 18 Dénaid dún ar cotach (v.3, l.3)</td>
<td>Mo Biu of Inch, Bithê, Dobî, Mobî, Inis Cùscraidd (Inch, Co. Down) in Ulster.</td>
<td>Dobiu m. Congaill m. Circ m. Araide m. Columbia m. Caimin m. Buain (CGSH §152, DIS, p. 106)</td>
<td>22 July (MT, FÔ, MG, MD), 29 July (MT, MG, MD)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>58. Mo Chalmóc</td>
<td>- 18 Dénaid dún ar cotach (v.3, l.2) – identified as being from Cabai(Cabaus)/Coba</td>
<td>Colmán of Dromore, Mo Chalmóc, Drum Mór (Dromore, Co. Down) in Ulster.</td>
<td>Mochołmoc Dromma Moir m. Conraithim m. Corcrain m. Lugdach m. Rosa m. Imchada (CGSH §99, DIS, pp. 108)</td>
<td>Possibly a part of the race of Uí Echach Coba, a branch of Dál nAraide, in Ulster</td>
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<tr>
<td>No.</td>
<td>Mo Chua</td>
<td>Mo Chua mac Lonán</td>
<td>Mo Enóc</td>
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<tr>
<td>59.</td>
<td>Mo Chua (Crónán) of Clondalkin</td>
<td>Mo Chua mac Lonán of Timahoe</td>
<td>Menóc of Rossminouge and Glenealy</td>
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<td></td>
<td>- 23 Turchan duin a Thuathail (v.5, l.1) – identified as being of Clondalkin</td>
<td>- 23 Turchan duin a Thuathail (v.7, l.3) – identified in the poem as mac Lonán</td>
<td>- 22 Inmain triar a Christ grind gláir (v.3, l.3) – identified as Mo Menóc</td>
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<td>24 December (MT, MD)</td>
<td>24 December (MT, MD)</td>
<td>29 December (MT, MD)</td>
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<td>6 August (MT, MD)</td>
<td>6 August (MT, MD)</td>
<td>6 August (MT, MD)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Cluan Dolcán (Clondalkin, Co. Dublin) in Leinster.</td>
<td>Mo Chua Tigi Mochua m. Lonain m. Senaig m. Oengusa m. Lugna m. Breduilib m. Airt Chirp m. ... (CGSH §5, DIS, pp. 468 – 9)</td>
<td>Caeltigern ingen Chaemloga sír Chaemgin mathair cetri mac Colmada .i. Dagain Inbir Daele et Moboe 7 Molibba et Ménoc Glinni Faidli (CGHS §722.72) Coemoc siur Chaemgin mathair Dagain m. Colmada 7 Mobae m. Colmada 7 Menóc Glinni Faidli 7 Ruis Mó Menóc 7 Molipa m. Araide de Dál Araide</td>
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<td>Cronan didiu m. Lugada m. Nathi m. Dolbaig m. Setnai m. Conandla m. Oengusa m. Alella Cethig m. Cathair Moir (CGSH §243.2, DIS, pp. 233 – 4)</td>
<td>Brother of Dagán of Ennereilly, son of Colmmanan. Possible double Énna of Kilnamanagh (Co. Dublin) Identified by Mac Sháhráin as being part of the familia Coemgeni. Glenn Faidli is also part of the monastic possessions of Glendalough. (A. Mac Shamhráin, Church and Polity, pp. 175 – 8, 193).</td>
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<td>Cluain ‘had close connections with Glendalough’. (A. Mac Shamhráin, Church and Polity, p. 36)</td>
<td>The relics of Cóemgen and Mo Chua were taken on a circuit together in 790. (A. Mac Shamhráin, Church and Polity, p. 173)</td>
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<td>(CGSH §722.102) (DIS, p. 452)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mo Lasse</td>
<td>Mo Lasse of Lethglenn</td>
<td>Molling, Lúachra</td>
<td>Latin Live survives in Codex Salmanticensis.</td>
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<td>62.</td>
<td>23 Turchan daín a Thuathail (v.2, l.4)</td>
<td>Molling Lúachra, Tech Moling (St. Mullins, Co. Carlow) in Leinster.</td>
<td>By the tenth century there are evidence of dual abbacies which link Ferns, Tech Moling and Tallaght, 'not to mention the establishment by the familia MoLing of a new foundation at Timolin [a nunnery] ... which was probably at this time part of the Glendalough parochia. (A. Mac Shamhráin, Church and Polity, p. 138)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>33 A Brigit bennach ar sét (v.10, l.3)</td>
<td>Molling Luachra m. Faelain m. Feredaig m. Eirc m. Fiachnai m. Oengusa m. Eogain m. Dega m. Labrada m. Bresail Belaig m. Fiachach Bacceda m. Cathair Moir (CGSH §249, DIS, pp. 487 - 90)</td>
<td>18 April (MT, FÓ, MG, MD)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mo Lasse of Lethglenn</td>
<td>Laisrén, Lasrán, Leisre, Lasse, lat. Lasrianus</td>
<td>Leth glenn (Leighlin, Co. Carlow) in Leinster.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Mo Lasse of Lethglenn</td>
<td>Molasse Lethglinni m. Cairill Chruaid m. Muredaig m. Forgo (CGSH §143, DIS, pp. 286 – 7)</td>
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<td>Moling</td>
<td>Moling Lúachra</td>
<td>Molling Luachra m. Faelain m. Feraidaig m. Eirc m. Fiachnai m. Oengusa m. Eogain m. Dega m. Labrada m. Bresail Belaig m. Fiachach Bacceda m. Cathair Moir (CGSH §249, DIS, pp. 487 - 90)</td>
<td>By the tenth century there are evidence of dual abbacies which link Ferns, Tech Moling and Tallaght, 'not to mention the establishment by the familia MoLing of a new foundation at Timolin [a nunnery] ... which was probably at this time part of the Glendalough parochia. (A. Mac Shamhráin, Church and Polity, p. 138)</td>
<td>17 June (MT, FÓ, MG, MD)</td>
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<td>63.</td>
<td>Moling</td>
<td>Moling Lúachra, Tairchell</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Cf chapter on Moling</td>
<td>Tech Moling (St. Mullins, Co. Carlow) in Leinster.</td>
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<td>Moling Lúachra</td>
<td>Tairchell</td>
<td>Moling Luachra m. Faelain m. Feraidaig m. Eirc m. Fiachnai m. Oengusa m. Eogain m. Dega m. Labrada m. Bresail Belaig m. Fiachach Bacceda m. Cathair Moir (CGSH §249, DIS, pp. 487 - 90)</td>
<td>By the tenth century there are evidence of dual abbacies which link Ferns, Tech Moling and Tallaght, 'not to mention the establishment by the familia MoLing of a new foundation at Timolin [a nunnery] ... which was probably at this time part of the Glendalough parochia. (A. Mac Shamhráin, Church and Polity, p. 138)</td>
<td>17 June (MT, FÓ, MG, MD)</td>
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<tr>
<td>MoLing Luachra</td>
<td>Tairchell</td>
<td>Tech Moling (St. Mullins, Co. Carlow) in Leinster.</td>
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<td>64.</td>
<td>Mothareán</td>
<td>Forannán, Mo-Thairen, Palladius, Torannán, Tulach Forchtern (Tullow, Co. Carlow) in Leinster.</td>
<td>Brother of Itharna. Possibly mentioned in the Bórama, near the end of the text, as one of those that cast a mist to protect Moling on his escape from Finnachta. (Bórama). Possibly a contemporary of Moling.</td>
<td>14 June (MT, FÓ, MG, MD)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mothareán of Tullow</td>
<td>Forannán, Mo-Thairen, Palladius, Torannán, Tulach Forchtern (Tullow, Co. Carlow) in Leinster.</td>
<td>Secht meic Oengusa m. Aeda m. Eirc m. Echach Munremuir m. Oengusa For ute ante genealogia Berchain .i. Mothraíomóis Roscaig, Itharnaiss Cloenta, Eogana Leckaig, Mochulli Dresnada, Mothairean Tilcha Forchtern, Troscan Arda Breccain, Agatan ar ur Ethni (CGHS</td>
<td>Brother of Itharna. Possibly mentioned in the Bórama, near the end of the text, as one of those that cast a mist to protect Moling on his escape from Finnachta. (Bórama). Possibly a contemporary of Moling.</td>
<td>14 June (MT, FÓ, MG, MD)</td>
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<td>65.</td>
<td><strong>Patrick</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>§209, <strong>DIS</strong>, p. 501</td>
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<td></td>
<td>- <strong>33 A Brigit bennach ar sét</strong> (v.27, l.2)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Patrick of Armagh</td>
<td>Patrick in Dun (Doun Patrick)</td>
<td>Ard Macha (Armagh) in Ulster.</td>
<td>Patriaí m. Calpraínid m. Fótaíde m. Odísí m. Corenúith m. Leoburírid m. Otaí m. Muírcí m. Oircí m. Leoí m. Maximí m. Cencréiti m. Phílistí m. Feríní m. Britíni (<strong>CGSH</strong> §1, <strong>DIS</strong>, pp. 526 – 31)</td>
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<tr>
<td>66.</td>
<td><strong>Sárnatan</strong></td>
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<td></td>
<td>- <strong>22 Inmain tríar a Christ grind gláair</strong> (v.4, l.3)</td>
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<td>Sárnat ingen Aed Gabalfada</td>
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<td>Sárnatt ingen Aeda Gabalfata m Senaig Chind Gámaí m. Eogain Aigne m. Eochach Brícc m. Nathí m. Fiachhrach (<strong>CGSH</strong> §385, <strong>DIS</strong>, pp. 548 – 9)</td>
<td>Shares affinity with Moling and is also represented among saints against (Leth Cuinn) northern Ireland.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sárnat of Barragh</td>
<td>Berrech (Barragh, Co. Carlow) in Leinster.</td>
<td>Sarnat ingen Echach m Baeth m. Náinníde m. Fíicí m. Ieirí m. Catbath (<strong>CGSH</strong> §4, <strong>DIS</strong>, p. 549)</td>
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<td>67.</td>
<td><strong>Sincheán</strong></td>
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<td></td>
<td>- <strong>18 Dénaid dún ar cotach</strong> (v.3, l.1)</td>
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<td>Sineall of Claoídhinis</td>
<td>Sincheall (Sinchean)</td>
<td>Claoiódhinis Shinill (Cleenish, Co. Fermanagh) in Ulster.</td>
<td>(<strong>DIS</strong>, p. 565)</td>
</tr>
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<td>68.</td>
<td><strong>Tigernach</strong></td>
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<td>- <strong>23 Turchan duín a Thuathail</strong> (v.3, l.6)</td>
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<td>Tigernach of Clones</td>
<td>Tigernán</td>
<td>Cluain Eois (Clones, Co. Monaghan) in Ulster.</td>
<td>Tigernach epscop Cluana Eois m. Córpre m. Fergnai m. Eannai</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>69. Tacán</td>
<td>33 A Brigit bennach ar sét (v.19, l. 1) – identified as being of the Úi Chrimthannán</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tacán of Curraclone</td>
<td>Tagán, Teige, Tecce</td>
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<tr>
<td>(Curraclone, Co. Laois) in Leinster.</td>
<td>(Curraclone, Co. Laois) in Leinster.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Techan m. Beraigh m. Senaig m. Nathi m. Daimine m. Cairpre Daim Argit (CGHS §69, DIS, p. 569)</td>
<td>Possibly also identified as Teige (Tecce) in the later martyrologies on 9 September. (MG, MD)</td>
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<td>9 September (MG, MD)</td>
<td>ca. 5th century</td>
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<td>70. Usaille</td>
<td>33 A Brigit bennach ar sét (v.7, l.3)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Usaille of Killashee</td>
<td>Uxaille, lat. Auxilius</td>
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<tr>
<td>A companion of Patrick. Cell Usaille belonged among the sites of Glendalough. (A. Mac Shamhráin, Church and Polity, p. 198)</td>
<td>19 March, 16 September (MT, MG) 27 August (MG, MD)</td>
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<td>AU 459.1, AI 460.1, AFM 454.3</td>
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